

To: Regional and Corporate Services Committee

Date: 2023-07-13

From: Robin Beukens, Planner II

File No: 6430-51-2011-01

Subject: First Reading of Fraser Valley Future 2050 Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw 1706, 2023

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Fraser Valley Regional District Board give first reading to the bylaw cited as *Fraser Valley Future 2050 Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1706, 2023*.

AND THAT a letter be sent by the Chair of the FVRD Board to affected local governments to notify them that *Fraser Valley Future 2050 Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1706, 2023* has received first reading and offer to present the RGS to respective Councils or Boards.

BACKGROUND

The Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) is a strategic, high-level policy document for coordinating planning in the Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD) and for informing provincial priorities. An RGS is a framework for planning and coordinating the activities of local governments, the provincial government, and other agencies to ensure that the region as a whole is working toward a common future.

The update of the Regional Growth Strategy is nearing completion. The final version of the Regional Growth Strategy (**Appendix 1**) is being brought forward for first reading as the first step in the formal approval process. Throughout the RGS update process, staff have followed the Board-approved RGS Consultation Plan, which does not include provision for a public hearing. This plan meets the requirements of s.434 of the *Local Government Act (LGA)*. After 1st reading, FVRD staff will offer to present the final version of the RGS to member municipalities and adjacent regional districts, who as affected local governments, must formally accept the RGS prior to approval from the FVRD Board. Once this is complete, the RGS will return for second reading and the statutory 60-day referral period per s. 436 of the *Local Government Act* will be initiated.

DISCUSSION

Since the draft RGS was presented to the FVRD Board in December 2022, the following have occurred:

An Intergovernmental Advisory Committee (IAC) meeting was held on January 27, 2023. This meeting included staff from member municipalities, adjacent regional districts, provincial ministries, First Nations elected officials and staff, and agencies such as BC Transit, Agricultural Land Commission,

Fraser Health, University of the Fraser Valley (UFV), and Destination BC. The RGS was broadly supported by those in attendance.

IAC participants were also provided with an opportunity to provide written comments or meet individually after the IAC meeting. Affected local governments, including member municipalities and adjacent regional districts, who must formally accept the RGS per the LGA, did not identify any major concerns with the draft RGS.

FVRD staff met with staff from member municipalities to discuss the RGS and presented to councils when requested. This was to ensure that any outstanding concerns were addressed and that there was general support for the RGS in advance of 1st reading.

The FVRD continued to meet with Indigenous communities and agencies that requested additional meetings to discuss the RGS. The final draft of the RGS reflects this extensive engagement with Indigenous communities and agencies. The People of the River Referral Office (PRRO), in particular, were instrumental in helping to update the RGS to ensure it was reflective of the interests of the 17 Stó:lō First Nations communities it represents. Last month the FVRD informed PRRO that the RGS was nearing conclusion and checked to see if any further engagement was required; PRRO verified that all communities affiliated with PRRO had been engaged and did not request further engagement.

RGS Changes since December 2022

These updates are based on new census information and recent engagement with local governments and Indigenous communities and agencies.

The following changes have been made since the December 2022 draft.

- **Added Sts'ailes** to the land acknowledgement.
- Updated population projections to reflect latest provincial estimates.
- Based on feedback, added reconciliation to titles and text of p.14 Indigenous Peoples and Communities and p.16 Defining Growth.
- Amended text on p.38 to clarify the role of the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) in regulating lands in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).
- **Add policy 7.3.h “Collaborate with adjacent regional districts in preparing for emergency events that have impacts across jurisdictional boundaries.”** This was added based on a request to consider cross-boundary impacts of natural disasters on adjacent regional districts.
- Split policy 8.1c into two separate policies (8.1c and 8.1d), to clarify that GHG targets will be updated to better align with the *Clean BC Roadmap to 2030* and that the monitoring methodology will be updated to reflect current best practices. The monitoring results will not dictate GHG targets, rather, they will allow the FVRD to track performance and take actions to keep or get back on track to meeting its goals. The intent remains to collaborate with municipal partners and use modelling to update the targets as one of the first actions of RGS implementation.

- Changes to the major and minor amendment criteria on p.57:
 - Added as a minor amendment policy amendments that do not alter the intent of the RGS.
 - Added text clarifying that amendments related to “**municipal special study areas**”, as identified in the RGS, will be considered a minor amendment.

Next Steps

As the RGS moves forward to completion, there is a sequence of events that must take place prior to formal adoption of the RGS:

July – August – notification of 1st Reading and offer to present the proposed RGS to Councils/Boards of affected local governments (member municipalities and adjacent regional districts).

September – presentations to affected local governments where requested.

October – 2nd reading of *Fraser Valley Future 2050 Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1706, 2023* and start of 60-day referral period for affected local governments per s. 436 of the LGA.

December – end of 60-day referral period for affected local governments to formally Accept the RGS by resolution.

January – 3rd reading and adoption of *Fraser Valley Future 2050 Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1706, 2023*.

Member municipalities will have two years from adoption of the RGS to submit to the FVRD Board proposed updated regional context statements reflecting the new RGS.

COST

N/A

CONCLUSION

The RGS is a strategic, high-level policy document for coordinating planning in the FVRD and for informing provincial priorities. The RGS is a framework for planning and coordinating the activities of local governments, the provincial government, and other agencies to ensure that the region as a whole is working toward a common future. The update of the RGS is nearing completion. *Fraser Valley Future 2050 Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1706, 2023* is being brought forward for first reading as the first step in the formal approval process. This process requires formal acceptance from all affected local governments prior to adoption by the FVRD Board.

It is important to note that RGS adoption is not an endpoint. RGS implementation is already underway and will continue to be implemented through ongoing collaboration with member municipalities, the Province, Indigenous communities, and other agencies.

COMMENTS BY:

Alison Stewart, Manager of Strategic Planning: Reviewed and supported

Stacey Barker, Director of Regional Services: Reviewed and supported

Kelly Lownsborough, Director of Corporate Services/CFO: Reviewed and supported.

Jennifer Kinneman, Chief Administrative Officer: Reviewed and supported.