

To: Regional and Corporate Services Committee

Date: 2023-12-07

From: Robin Beukens, Planner II

File No: 6430-51-2011-01

Subject: Second Reading of Fraser Valley Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw 1706, 2023

RECOMMENDATION

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

AND THAT a letter be sent by the Chair to notify each affected local government that *Fraser Valley Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1706, 2023* has received second reading and that the Fraser Valley Regional District is initiating the 60-day referral period requesting formal acceptance of the Regional Growth Strategy pursuant to section 436 of the *Local Government Act*.

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 Regional Growth Strategy update is nearing completion. 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).

DISCUSSION

The Regional Growth Strategy received first reading on July 27, 2023. Letters were sent from the FVRD Chair to member municipalities and adjacent regional districts offering to provide presentations on the Draft RGS to respective Boards and Councils.

Presentations were made to the following affected local governments:

- City of Abbotsford
- City of Chilliwack
- City of Mission
- District of Hope
- District of Kent

- Village of Harrison Hot Springs
- Metro Vancouver Regional District

Staff also offered to present to Thompson-Nicola Regional District, Squamish-Lillooet Regional District, and the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen. No major concerns were expressed by any of the affected local governments.

Based on instructions from the Board, the following adjustment/changes have been made to the draft plan:

- Under Goal 2 *Economic Strength & Resiliency*, Section 2.3 ‘**Protect and support employment lands**’ has been re-numbered as Section 2.1 to give the importance of employment lands a more prominent location in the RGS. **Section 2.1 “Create opportunities for employment and education”** has been re-numbered as Section 2.3.
- Under Goal 6 Transportation & Mobility, Map 8, the words “**or replacement**” were added to the transportation priority related to the Agassiz-Rosedale Bridge.

Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1706, 2023 (Appendix 1) is being brought forward for second reading. After second reading, as affected local governments, each member municipality and adjacent regional district will be asked to formally accept the RGS prior to its adoption by the FVRD Board. Formal acceptance of a regional growth strategy requires a resolution by respective Boards and Councils. Once acceptance resolutions are received, the RGS will return for third reading and adoption by the FVRD Board.

Affected local governments can accept the Regional Growth Strategy, or not accept and indicate by resolution the provision(s) it objects to and the reasons for objection. If a local government fails to respond within 60 days of receiving notification, it is deemed to have accepted the plan.

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.

Bylaw Approval Process

- July 27, 2023 – 1st Reading
- September-November 2023 – presentations to affected local governments as requested.
- December 2023 – 2nd reading of bylaw updating the Regional Growth Strategy.
- January 2024 – start of 60 day referral period for affected local governments to accept the RGS.
- March 2024 – end of 60 day referral period.
- April 2024 – 3rd reading and adoption of *Fraser Valley Future 2050 Regional Growth Strategy*.

COST

N/A

CONCLUSION

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. 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. *Fraser Valley Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1706, 2023* is ready to proceed to second reading. After second reading, affected local governments will be asked to formally accept the plan. Once acceptance resolutions are received, the RGS will return for 3rd reading and adoption by the FVRD Board.

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

COMMENTS BY:

Alison Stewart, Manager of Strategic Planning: Reviewed and supported

Stacey Barker, Director of Regional Services: Reviewed and supported.

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

Jennifer Kinneman, Chief Administrative Officer: Reviewed and supported.