



**Council Member Motion  
For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of July 6, 2017**

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**Date:** July 3, 2017

**From:** Councillor Ben Isitt

**Subject:** City of Victoria Policy in Regional Growth Strategy Mediation

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**Background:**

The Capital Regional District is entering into mediation with several local governments, aimed at reaching agreement on amendments to the Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw.

Council has decided that the City of Victoria should participate as an intervenor in this mediation, and it is therefore recommended that the following policy be adopted to guide the City's participation, aligned with the position of several local governments with respect to encouraging compact and complete communities, discouraging urban sprawl, and retaining effective growth management tools for a sustainable region. (See attached resolutions)

**Recommendation:**

That Council adopt the following position in the Regional Growth Strategy mediation process in support of the positions of Central Saanich, Highlands, North Saanich, Saanich and View Royal with respect to encouraging compact and complete communities, discouraging urban sprawl and retaining effective growth management tools:

1. Endorsing concerns expressed by the District of Central Saanich that policies 2.2 (1) and (2) need to be strengthened to avoid development and sprawl on rural lands in Electoral Areas which would be contrary to the objectives of the Regional Growth Strategy to support complete and compact communities, but Council is supportive of water servicing from localized community water sources.
2. Endorsing the position of the District of Highlands that the 2003 Regional Growth Strategy is a stronger tool to support managed growth for the benefit of the entire region, and that incremental sprawl affects biodiversity, increases greenhouse gases and fundamentally negates the values of a Regional Growth Strategy.
3. Endorsing the objection from the District of North Saanich to provisions 1.1 (Keep Urban Settlement Compact) and 1.2 (Protect the Integrity of Rural Communities) for the following reasons:
  - a) There are not sufficient integrated objectives and targets with respect to reduced development pressures contained in the RGS which would strengthen the protection of rural communities;
  - b) There are not clear population projections broken by municipality to provide sufficient certainty;

- c) There is not sufficient strength in aspirational targets such as the food systems target to ensure objectives are met, particularly containing development and meeting crop production goals;
  - d) Food systems targets are not linked to food security and climate change targets;
  - e) Meeting climate action targets are not linked specifically to rural communities, which have a high percentage of transportation by cars and a large agricultural land base, limiting their ability to meet climate change targets. The RGS does not fully integrate climate action considerations into all aspects of regional growth management;
  - f) The RGS ought to specifically demonstrate how land use designations in Regional Context Statements correspond to the RGS to limit growth; and
  - g) That urban containment boundaries are a more certain and effective approach to protecting rural communities than emphasizing urban growth areas.
4. Endorsing the objection of the District of North Saanich to provision 6.1 (Foster a Resilient Food and Agriculture System) for the following reason: the target of 5,000 ha is aspirational and not linked to population projections or food security.
5. Endorsing the position of the District of Saanich that in comparison to the existing 2003 Regional Growth Strategy, it would appear that the proposed 2016 Regional Growth Strategy reduces the emphasis on a regional and focused approach to sustainable growth management, and that the 2016 RGS can be strengthened through the following actions:
- a) Including a strong regional growth management hierarchy, which indicates the location of Centres where growth should be focused and investments in infrastructure and transportation facilities should be prioritized;
  - b) Applying stronger criteria to limit future water extensions outside the Growth Area boundary to prevent significant additional development in outlying Rural areas that would contribute to transportation issues, increase greenhouse gas emissions and divert development away from land inside the Growth Area boundary; and
  - c) Develop a robust monitoring and adaptation program to assess progress towards Regional Growth Strategy targets and objectives. In particular, the targets to accommodate 95% of new dwelling units within the Growth Policy Area and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 61% below 2007 levels will need to be evaluated on a regular basis.
6. Endorsing the objection of the Town of View Royal to provisions 2.2.2 and 2.2.4 for the following reasons:
- a) That additional development on rural and resource lands is at the expense of development of lands within the Urban Containment Boundary;
  - b) That additional development on rural and resource lands will contribute to further transportation challenges in the region, and does not allow for efficient public transportation, increases greenhouse gas emissions, and does not provide for jobs/housing balance;
  - c) That rural development will further contribute to GHG emissions by encouraging a high-carbon built form.

Respectfully submitted,



Councillor Isitt