

To: CAO for the Regional and Corporate Services Committee

Date: 2019-09-10

From: Alison Stewart, Manager of Strategic Planning

File No: 6430-02-005

**Subject:** Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Major Amendment Bylaw No. 1562-2018 – Formal Acceptance

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### RECOMMENDATION

**THAT** the Fraser Valley Regional District Board formally accept Squamish-Lillooet Regional District *Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1062, 2008 (RGS Amendment Bylaw 1562-2018)*, per Section 436 (1) of the Local Government Act.

### STRATEGIC AREA(S) OF FOCUS

Provide Responsive & Effective Public Services

### BACKGROUND

The Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) initiated a major amendment of the SLRD *Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Bylaw No. 1062, 2008 (RGS Amendment Bylaw 1562-2018)* to address specific housekeeping items, clarify the implementation processes (including updates to the minor amendment criteria), address specific content gaps (namely food/agriculture and climate change) and amend mapping. Initiation of the amendment followed consideration of a review, as per the Local Government Act (LGA) section 452(2) five year review requirements. The changes do not impact the Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD), however changes to the minor amendment criteria have triggered a major amendment process that requires formal "acceptance" by SLRD member municipalities and adjacent regional districts.

### DISCUSSION

The SLRD RGS Amendment Bylaw 1562-2018, was given second reading, as amended at the July 25, 2019 SLRD Board meeting. The SLRD Board is required to submit the regional growth strategy to each municipality covered by the regional growth strategy, as well as the Board of each adjacent regional district for formal acceptance prior to third reading per section 436 of the LGA.

Regional growth strategies are high-level, long-term strategies that support collaboration across jurisdictions. The purpose of an RGS per the Local Government Act (LGA) is to "promote human settlement that is socially, economically, and environmentally healthy and that makes efficient use of public facilities and services, land and other resources". An RGS outlines the vision and priorities of a

region, and is referenced when making both short-term and long-term decisions that have the potential to affect a region as a whole.

Regional growth strategies support the management of issues that affect more than one jurisdiction and can perform the following functions (among others):

- Promote coordination among municipalities and regional districts on issues that cross jurisdictional boundaries;
- Promote coordination among municipalities, regional districts and First Nations as a means to establishing and maintaining meaningful and collaborative relationships;
- Strengthen links between regional districts and the provincial ministries and agencies whose resources are needed to carry out projects and programs; and,
- Communicate the region's strengths to potential investors while demonstrating that local governments, First Nations and stakeholders are proactively working together to address the key issues affecting the region's future.

In comparison to the FVRD, as a whole the SLRD's RGS has very similar long term goals of creating a sustainable region, balancing environmental, social and economic considerations on behalf of future generations. Regional growth strategies vary from one region to the next, reflecting the desires and visions of each respective region.

The SLRD has been updating its regional growth strategy since 2015. The RGS Review was intended to be an update rather than an overhaul of the current RGS. According to SLRD staff:

"Some content revisions and additions are proposed (i.e. the development of a Food Systems Goal and Climate Change Goal), but the focus is really toward implementation of the RGS and developing criteria, guidelines, and processes to support collective agreement and responsibility."

"...The RGS Review was initiated as a major amendment, as revisions to the minor amendment criteria are proposed. The RGS Review also provides an opportunity to address various housekeeping amendments (i.e. updating population, employment and dwelling unit projects; updating monitoring indicators; and updating terminology and references, etc.) reflecting the "living" nature of strategies, and to improve the function and relevance of the document. Some mapping updates are also proposed, reflecting member municipality OCP updates (comprehensive community processes not stand-alone amendments) and housekeeping amendments."

Revisions and content development largely reflect member municipality and SLRD Official Community Plan (OCP) objectives and policies as well as other community plans such as agricultural plans, climate action plans and transportation plans. Many of the changes are minor in nature, but changes to the minor amendment criteria have triggered a major amendment process that requires formal "acceptance" by SLRD member municipalities and adjacent regional districts.

The changes to the minor amendment criteria clarify what constitutes a minor amendment as determined by the SLRD Board. Minor amendments can include text and mapping changes required to

correct errors or reflect more accurate information and housekeeping items updating regional statistics, grammar and numbering changes that don't alter the intent of the RGS. Amendments that are not considered to be of regional significance in terms of scale, impacts or precedence or are consistent with the goals of the RGS are also considered minor.

Amendments that are not considered "minor" trigger a more extensive major amendment process as set out in the Local Government Act.

## **COST**

No costs are associated with this report.

## **CONCLUSION**

On receipt of the formal notification, FVRD staff has reviewed the amended regional growth strategy (RGS) in the context of FVRD Official Community Plans, the current regional growth strategy, as well as the draft update that is in preparation. The FVRD has two options:

- (i) Accept, by resolution, the amended regional growth strategy, or
- (ii) Respond, by resolution, to the proposing board indicating that the local government refuses to accept the major amendment.

On reviewing the proposed amendments, there are no implications for the FVRD and in many areas the SLRD RGS follows the broader goals of the FVRD's own RGS. As such, it is appropriate for the Board to formally accept Squamish-Lillooet Regional District *Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1062, 2008 (RGS Amendment Bylaw 1562-2018)*.

## **COMMENTS BY:**

**Stacey Barker, Director of Regional Services**

Reviewed and supported.

**Mike Veenbaas, Director of Financial Services**

No further financial comments.

**Jennifer Kinneman, Acting Chief Administrative Officer**

Reviewed and supported.