



REPORT

To: Chair and Directors

Report Number: DS-BRD-457

From: Development Services

Date: February 20, 2025

Subject: Draft Regional Growth Strategy

RECOMMENDATION: [Corporate Unweighted]

That the Regional Board receive the report titled “Draft Regional Growth Strategy – DS-BRD-457” for information.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

The Regional Growth Strategy project is nearing completion, and we are pleased to present the draft strategy for review and comment.

PROJECT TIMELINE:

- May 26, 2022:** The Regional Board authorized staff to apply to UBCM for a grant to support the development of a Regional Growth Strategy.
- February 2, 2023:** The Regional Board authorized a supplemental budget request to fund the Regional Growth Strategy.
- July 20, 2023:** The Regional Board authorized the contract award for the Regional Growth Strategy to EcoPlan International.
- November 16, 2023:** Staff and EcoPlan presented to the Regional Board at the Committee of the Whole introducing the project and presenting the draft vision statement.
- April – May, 2024:** Presentations were made at every municipal council to share information about the project.
- May 20, 2024:** Staff shared the June 2024 public engagement events schedule with the Regional Board.
- June 8 – 12, 2024:** Staff, EcoPlan and Pinna (Consultant for the Regional Climate Resiliency Plan Project) hosted public engagement events throughout the region to gather feedback on the Regional Growth Strategy and Regional Climate Resiliency Plan.
- November 7, 2024:** Staff and EcoPlan presented the “What we Heard” report to the Regional Board which summarized the results of the public engagement events held throughout the region and online.

Next Steps:

Staff is preparing for the final round of engagement where comments will be sought on the draft Regional Growth Strategy. Staff will be presenting the draft to each member municipality from February to March 2025 and anticipates that the draft Regional Growth Strategy will be presented for 1st and 2nd Readings at the March 20, 2025 Regional Board meeting.

Once 1st and 2nd Readings are given, staff will prepare for the Public Hearing. Once the Public Hearing is held, the municipalities will have 60 days to provide a formal resolution of acceptance, or non-acceptance of the strategy. After all responses are received staff will prepare a report for 3rd Reading and Adoption.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

1. That the Regional Board provide further direction.

STRATEGIC PLAN RELEVANCE:

- Not Applicable to Strategic Plan

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION(S):

The project is entirely funded through federal and provincial grants.

COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATION(S):

The Draft Regional Growth Strategy will be shared on the PRRD's ['Have Your Say'](#) webpage and will be shared with all member municipalities.

OTHER CONSIDERATION(S):

None at this time.

Attachments:

1. Draft Regional Growth Strategy

External Links:

1. [RFP Award 54-2023 Regional Growth Strategy](#) – See Item 8.11 on the Regional Board Meeting Agenda dated July 20, 2023
2. [EcoPlan International & Peace River Regional District RE: Regional Growth Strategy Intro Project Overview](#) – See Item 4.2 on the Committee of the Whole Meeting Agenda dated November 16, 2023
3. [Regional Growth Strategy Vision Statement](#) – See Item 9.18 on the Regional Board Meeting Agenda dated November 16, 2023
4. [Regional Growth Strategy and Regional Climate Resiliency Plan Public Engagement Events](#) – See Item No. 8.14 on the Regional Board Meeting Agenda dated May 30, 2024
5. [Planning Department and EcoPlan International Re: Regional Growth Strategy "What We Heard" Report](#) – See Item 4.2 on the Committee of the Whole Agenda dated November 7, 2024
6. [Regional Growth Strategy – Project Update](#) – See Item 13.1 on the Regional Board Meeting Agenda dated November 7, 2024