2012

REGIONAL SNAPSHOT

SOUTH OKANAGAN REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY VOL 4 , 2012

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Okanagan River oxbow (Mike Biden)

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Introduction

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Indicators

Background

The south Okanagan region has been undergoing significant changes, from population growth and declines with associated development pressure, to a fundamental shift in agriculture brought on by the emergence of the wine industry in the valley

While these changes carry with them many positive benefits, such as economic growth and tourism, they also pose new challenges and force us to ask ourselves difficult questions about what the future should be for the south Okanagan.

The purpose of the south Okanagan Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) is to create a "big picture" vision for the south Okanagan over the next twenty years. In doing so, the RGS sets common social, economic and environmental objectives.

Once a RGS is adopted, the *Local Government Act* requires that ongoing monitoring be established to assess implementation and measure progress being made towards the stated objectives and an annual report on progress.

Indicators

In order to enable measurement of the progress being made in addressing the identified objectives, the RDOS created a set of Performance Indicators. In December of 2008, the RDOS released the RGS Baseline Study, which used the established performance indicators to build a baseline picture of the region against which future measurement might be compared, using the baseline year of 2006 .

Each year, a snapshot report will be released that uses a selection of performance indicators to measure progress. In 2011 several adjustments were made to the data collected for the indicators that reflect the ongoing quality control of this project.

The following is the fourth of the annual reports on the state of the region which compares 2011 and 2012 data. Annual fluctuations and differences in data may indicate different values but it is important to realize that these may be insignificant statistically.

Statistics and Indicators

Monitoring progress on implementing the RGS can be best accomplished with a long term perspective in mind. Annual fluctuations of data may perhaps be misleading from a statistical perspective and any trend information presented should be recognized as potentially insignificant.

"If you don't measure results, you can't tell success from failure"

- David Osborne & Ted Graebler

SECTION 1.

POPULATION GROWTH

INDICATOR:

Population Growth in the RGS Study Area

Estimated population

2011: 70,847 2012: 70,027

What is being measured?

The 2011population was based on Provincial Census data. The 2012 population is based on population estimates that are calculated by BC Stats, the provincial statistical agency. This indicator estimates the respective population growth rate of member municipalities. Population projections are not calculated for Electoral Areas by BC Stats, but are estimated based on percentage of Electoral Area populations.

Why is it important?

Population growth brings both benefits and challenges to a community. A growing population is integral to building a strong local economy. As the population grows more jobs are created to meet the demand for housing, retail goods and services. The challenge of a changing population is managing the growth in such a way that the values and character of the community remain strong.

If unchecked, development can have serious consequences on the environment, infrastructure, and, ultimately, on quality of life.

What does the RGS say?

The RGS doesn't specify whether population growth should be encouraged or discouraged.

Instead, the RGS provides policy direction that promotes sustainable development, if growth occurs.

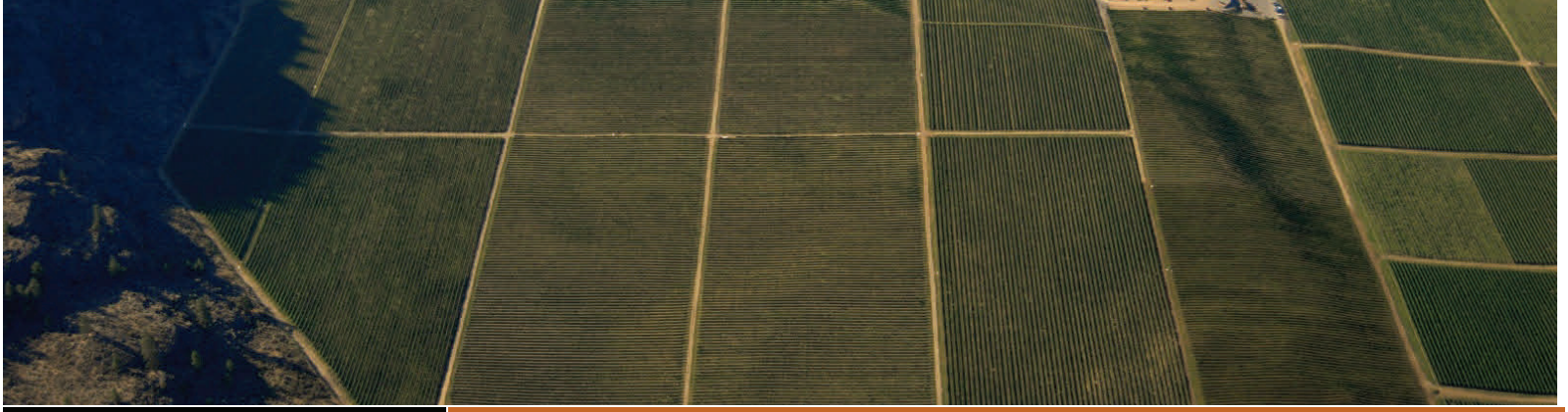
How are we performing?

Based on provincial population through the Census data of 2011 and the population projections for 2012, the south Okanagan has had a slight decrease of 820 people.

Presently, 77% of the population, or 53, 776 people, of the RDOS live within south Okanagan municipalities. Projections show that population generally is declining in rural areas.

The population data does not take into account the number of people who live in the area part time, often referred to as the 'shadow population' that may also play a role in future developments and often in rural areas.

Note: Population estimates show increases for both Penticton and Osoyoos.



SECTION 2.

AGRICULTURE

INDICATOR:

Amount of Land included in the ALR

Inclusions: 0 ha **Exclusions: 0.1 ha**

2011 2012

What is being measured?

This indicator tracks the success of the protection of agricultural land by measuring the amount of land that has been added or removed annually from the Agricultural Land Reserve within the RGS study area. This is determined through ALC applications approved for either inclusion or exclusion each year.

NOTE: *farming activities also occur on agricultural land that is not in the ALR, and land in the ALR may not be actively farmed.*

Why is it important?

Only 5% of BC's land is suitable for farming, making farmland a valuable commodity. With the goal of protecting agricultural land, the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) recognizes the importance of agriculture as an economic driver, and an important local food source.

Wineries and vineyards now form an important component of the agriculture and agri-tourism industries in the south Okanagan.

Within the south Okanagan, farming forms and integral part of the local and regional histories and economies.

What does the RGS say?

One of the key directives in the RGS is the protection of farmland and the agriculture industry in the south Okanagan by promoting the retention of farmland and by directing development to established growth areas.

The RGS goes further, recognizing the right to farm and promoting the enhancement of a sustainable local agriculture industry.

How are we performing?

Between 2011 and 2012, the Agricultural Land Commission approved 0.1 hectares (ha) to be excluded from the ALR. There were no applications approved for inclusion into the ALR.

13%

Percentage of land contained within the Agricultural Land Reserve for the RGS area

SECTION 3.

BIODIVERSITY & NATURAL SPACES

INDICATOR:

Annual & cumulative area of parkland and protected areas

Percentage of land base

2011: 10.9 2012: 11.4

What is being measured?

This indicator measures the total amount and percentage of total land area of parks and protected natural areas in the South Okanagan Regional Growth Strategy area. It includes lands zoned as a park and lands owned by Natures Trust of BC, The Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited and The Land Conservancy. Some minor data adjustments were made for the 2011 information and are now established for 2012.

Why is it important?

The Okanagan Valley supports some of the most rare flora and fauna in Canada. Several species exist only here and nowhere else.

From an environmental perspective parks and protected areas provide habitat and support biological diversity. Generally, the larger the park, the greater the habitat value.

From a social perspective, parks and protected areas provide focal points for community recreation, enhance aesthetic values, foster civic pride and encourage outdoor activities that contribute to personal health and vitality.

What does the RGS say?

The RGS recognizes at a fundamental level the intrinsic value of all components of the natural environment. The Strategy further acknowledges the relationship between a healthy environment and the quality of life enjoyed by residents of the south Okanagan.

The Nature Trust of BC has secured a 809 ha swath of grassland in the South Okanagan (photo by Nature Trust)

The policies of the RGS strongly support the conservation, protection and enhancement of ecologically sensitive lands and the retention of open spaces, parks and large rural holdings.

How are we performing?

The amount of land protected increased between 2011 and 2012 due to land status change and the purchase of important tracts of land by conservation groups. .

Several important habitat tract of lands were purchased or had status change throughout the RGS area. Included in these are Nature Trust BC, the TLC and the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

SECTION 4.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

INDICATOR:

Housing starts by structural type & average house price

Average house price

2011: $302, 478 2012: $314,494

What is being measured?

This indicator measures the percentage mix of new housing starts by structural type, that is the number of buildings that are single family and those as multi-family. The average annual housing price calculated from homes sales is also measured.

Why is it important?

The range of housing types found within the total number has the potential of indicating overall community sustainability.

Specifically, developing complete communities that are accessible to their residents requires a mix of housing types. Generally, multi-unit dwellings are more affordable than single detached dwellings.

Multi-family units may serve to increase housing affordability and variety. This is a Kiwanis housing project in Penticton.

CPI adjusted: $303,300 (2011: $295,467)

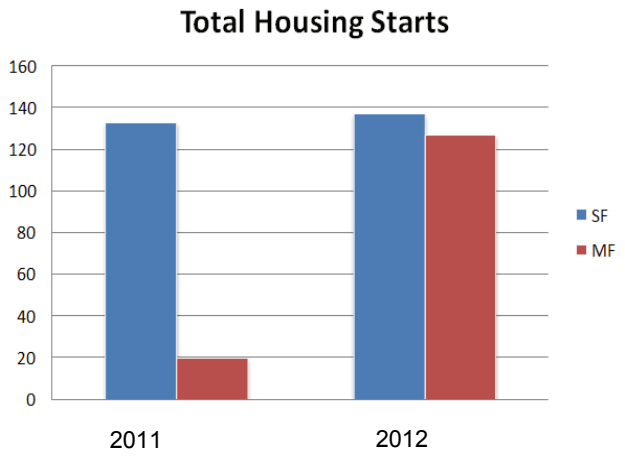
The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is an indicator in consumer prices experienced by Canadians. It is obtained by comparing, over time, the cost of a fixed good (eg Housing) using a constant base year cost . The base year used for the CPI is 2010.

What does the RGS say?

The RGS strongly encourages the development of compact, complete communities in the south Okanagan. In order to achieve this, the RGS promotes "accessible" housing, which addresses a number of barriers to housing, including affordability.

How are we performing?

Average house prices appear to have increased in most areas within the RGS. Jurisdictions where the average selling price dropped were Oliver and Summerland.



SECTION 5.

ENERGY USE

INDICATOR:

total energy consumption

Per Capita total consumption (GJs)

2011: 20.32 2012: 19.41

What is being measured?

In the south Okanagan, the two primary sources for energy are electricity and natural gas. This indicator measures the total amount of energy used in in the south Okanagan, both per capita and in total. One GJ is equal to 277.8 kWh of electricity or 26.1 m^3 of natural gas, or 25.8 litres of heating oil.

This indicator averages the total amount of consumption of electricity and gas and divides that amount by the estimated 2012 population to obtain the per capita use.

Why is it important?

Residential building energy consumption shows how much energy residents of the south Okanagan consume. Total energy use would include all other activities such as industrial and commercial. The generation of energy is associated with environmental impacts to land, air and water resources. However, different sources of energy have different environmental impacts. For instance, natural gas results in significant greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and other air emissions, while hydro-electric power generation may cause harm to water resources and to habitat.

What does the RGS say?

The RGS supports that efficient management of community energy use and carbon emissions is one aspect of building sustainable communities. The reliance on non-renewable fossil fuels poses serious challenges to our long term sustainability.

In addition, the Strategy encourages the efficient use of infrastructure to reduce the cost burden of constructing additional infrastructure services.

How are we performing?

According to data collected for 2011 and 2012 from Fortis Gas and Electricity there does appears to be a slightly downward trend in overall energy consumption.

It appears that the per capita consumption is slightly higher for electricity users than those using natural gas. Electricity use per capita amounts to 21.92 and gas per capita use amounts to 16.90.

One Gigajoule (GJ)

Of gas will cook over 2500 burgers, or , keep a 60 watt bulb lit continuously for six months

SECTION 6.

WATER MANAGEMENT

INDICATOR:

water consumption

Litres per capita (combined use)

2011: 896 2012: 849

What is being measured?

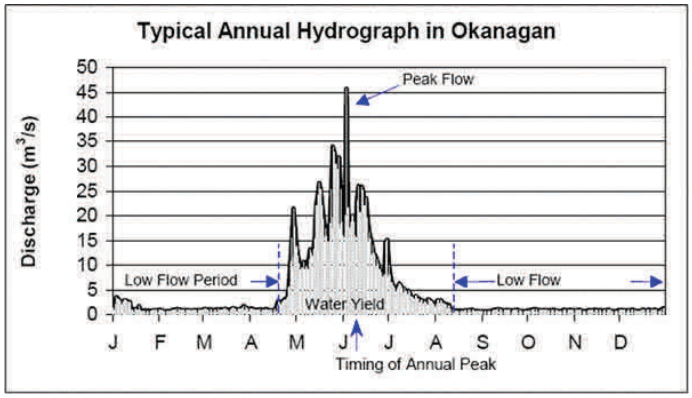
This indicator uses the data collected from eight water utilities of the South Okanagan. These utilities include: Penticton, Summerland, Osoyoos, Oliver (including rural Oliver), Faulder, Sage Mesa, West Bench, and Naramata.

Why is it important?

In the South Okanagan, water availability is a concern. With the population growth and increases in water demand for agriculture, there is a potential shortfall in supply relative to demand in the next decades.

Outdoor domestic use accounts for about 25%, of water used in the Okanagan, indoor domestic 7%, agricultural irrigation accounts for approximately 55%, with commercial and other users making up the rest of consumptive water use. The shift to viticulture in many parts of the study area may use overall less water but relies heavily on water supplies in the early fall, a time when supplies are typically at their lowest level.

There have long been concerns that our water



supply is over allocated; licenses have been given for more water than is actually available.

What does the RGS say?

The RGS promotes water sustainability through conservation and related best practices. This policy includes 10 actions for communities, organizations and governments to work collaboratively to ensure that water remains available for all future uses.

How are we performing?

Starting in 2011, this indicator uses data from several water utilities. The new BC Water Use Reporting Centre developed by OBWB has assisted with the ability to collect consistent data information.

Residential use of water only amounts to approximately 246 litres / day per capita. The average domestic water use in Canada is 329 litres/day.

SECTION 7.

MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE

INDICATOR:

Municipal solid waste disposed per capita

Average daily waste (kg/person/day)

2011: 2.02 2012: 3.38

What is being measured?

This indicator provides data on the annual amount of municipal solid waste (MSW) disposed in landfills or incinerated by residential, commercial, institutional, demolition, land clearing or construction sources.

Total MSW includes both actual waste being landfilled and the amount being diverted.

More specifically, this indicator is measured in kilograms (kg) of solid waste per person per year and consists of measurements taken from the Campbell Mountain. Data does not include other diverted waste that includes propane tanks, tire, oil and oil filters, and oil containers.

Why is it important?

By taking measures to reduce waste, such as recycling, composting and diverting waste, we can reduce the environmental impact that solid waste represents.

In addition, reducing the volume of solid waste that goes to RDOS landfills extends the lives of the facilities, reducing the need for additional landfills and the associated capital costs.

What does the RGS say?

The Infrastructure section of the RGS speaks directly to reducing solid waste production by promoting and encouraging targets for waste reduction, by developing best practices and by supporting public awareness and action around waste management.

The growth strategy also addresses waste reduction by directing the efficient use of existing infrastructure over the development of new infrastructure.

How are we performing?

Data between 2011 and 2012 shows that although the total amount of waste increased; it is important to note that the actual amount of diverted waste increased from 0.66 kg/person/day up to 2.05 kg/person/day. This indicates that **overall there is less landfill waste and more diverted waste.**

In 2012, the amount of landfilled waste was 1.33 kg/pp/day and amount diverted was 2.05 kg/pp/day. This indicates that almost 60% of waste is being diverted from the landfill.

SECTION 8.

SOCIAL, CULTURAL & THE ARTS

INDICATOR:

Crime rate

Crime rate per 1000 population

2011: 70.25 2012: 70.75

What is being measured?

This indicator measures the number of Criminal Code offenses (excluding traffic offenses) per 1,000 population. Criminal Code offences include property (e.g. break and enter, theft, fraud, mischief), violent (e.g. homicide, sexual and non-sexual assault, abduction, robbery) and other crimes (e.g. prostitution, gaming & betting, disturb the peace).

Crime rates are reported by policing jurisdiction. For the south Okanagan, there are four policing jurisdictions: Summerland, Penticton, Penticton Provincial (RCMP), and South Okanagan Provincial (RCMP). The comparisons are based on the averages between 2011 and 2012.

Why is it important?

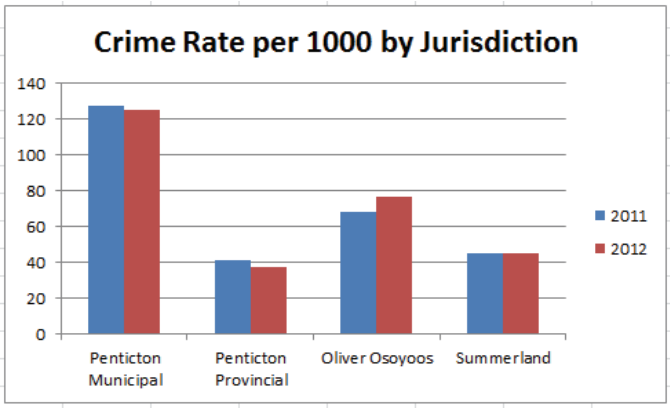
Crime rate statistics are used as an indicator of community safety, where the lower the crime rate is, the safer the community.

The RCMP patrols the entire RGS study area.

What does the RGS say?

One of the primary directives of the RGS is to establish "safe, culturally diverse and healthy communities."

The RGS proposes to achieve this by supporting emergency planning and by supporting the local police authority in its awareness programs for crime reduction.



How are we performing?

Crime rates have generally stayed steady or decreased in all areas, with a slight increase for Oliver/Osoyoos. This trend reflects the overall trend of decreasing criminal code offences since 2006 in the South Okanagan, and in BC generally.

Crime rates on average for the RGS area are lower than those of BC, where the average is 77 per 1000 for 2012.

SECTION 8.

SOCIAL, CULTURAL & THE ARTS

INDICATOR:
Total Length of Trails

Trails (km)

2011: 1861 (total) 2012: 1861

What is being measured?

The total length of trails in kilometers and use: cycling, mixed, motorized, non-motorized.

Cycling: 313 km Mixed: 195 km
Motorized: 449 km Non-motorized: 904 km

Why is it important?

Well planned trails and greenway systems contribute to a livable community by connecting people to nature and providing connections between neighbourhoods and key destinations. Trails promote a healthy lifestyle and encourage alternative transportation choices. Trails can also provide an economic benefit by attracting visitors to the area and can strengthen awareness of the heritage and natural history of an area.

What does the RGS say?

The RGS supports the creation of walkable neighbourhoods and pedestrian & cycle networks that offer both recreational and alternative transportation opportunities.

How are we performing?

Data from the Regional Trails Master Plan (RTMP) was used for this indicator. It provides the definition of a trail as embracing the broad range of trails primarily used for recreation but also function as transportation/ commuting corridors and tourism and economic assets.

Implementing the RTMP in 2012 is being done in several stages. These include acquisition, management, and capital improvements.

The acquisition stage is the first step in the development of any new trails. Acquisition includes negotiation with land owners or first nations to secure trail routes. Current RDOS tenures include provincial License of Occupation, provincial management agreements, and provincial permit to construct within a Right of Way.

After a trail is acquired, an appropriate level of maintenance needs to occur to ensure that the trail meets RDOS trail standards for public safety.

Capital Improvements are required to make major improvements that will improve the Regional trail network over the next ren years and provide a world class trail network that connects the communities in the region and beyond.

Successes in 2012 include:

- Tenure for the KVR between Kaleden to OK Falls
- A management agreement for the Oliver Dyke Corridor
- The Naramata KVR trail development concept plan
- A KVR bridge and culvert inventory
- Secured funding for the West Bench pedestrian corridor
- KVR Hayes Creek bridge replacement
- KVR Arawana Flume fencing

The KVR trail over Naramata attracts a number of visitors every year.

SECTION 8.

SOCIAL, CULTURAL & THE ARTS

INDICATOR:

Public Funding for the Arts

Percentage of budget

2011: 16.7% 2012: 11.5%

What is being measured?

This indicator measures the percentage of funding committed to the arts and culture allocated from local government's budget each year, *including* capital expenditures.

Why is it important?

Financial support for arts, culture, diversity and heritage indicates a commitment to building community and fostering civic pride. As well strong support for these activities may better position a community to attract and retain economic development.

What does the RGS say?

The RGS supports and encourages a strong arts community and encourages the identification and protection of important cultural places.

How are we performing?

The overall averages decreased due to a significant drop for arts and recreation capital projects budget allocated within the City of Penticton, which went from 32% to a 0%. The overall arts related budgets, excluding capital expenditures, remains fairly consistent for all jurisdictions, ranging from 2% up to 15%.

Construction began on the new Frank Venables Theatre in Oliver

Analysis & Summary

Indicators

This Regional Snapshot Report uses a number of performance indicators that enable us to measure the progress being made in addressing objectives contained within the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS). An indicator is a measure that reveals a condition, a trend, or an emerging issue. This report, which is the fourth annual 'Regional Snapshot' uses data collected for the year 2012 and compares it to 2011 data. The first 'Snapshot' combined the years 2006 through to 2009.

There are limitations to the use of indicators. A region comprises many subsystems with complex relationships and interdependencies. Many indicators are too crude to capture any type of site specific condition, they also rely on 'after the fact' data information. Data capture for indicators may also have inconsistencies. However, to be able to perceive any trends with information, monitoring indicators continues to be a worthwhile exercise, particularly over the long term.

Trends

A number of indicators seem to point towards a positive move in meeting objectives contained in the RGS. These include: increasing biodiversity areas, decreasing energy use, decreasing water use, and increasing waste diversion. However, whether these indictors will prove to be consistent in the long term remains to be seen.

Data

Some of the data being used for monitoring in this report needed to be adjusted from the initial baseline report using 2006 data and from the previous 'Snapshot'. RDOS staff continue to fine tune and collect data for each of the indicators to adjust for any inconsistencies. Other plans such as the Trails Master Plan also provides extra data that can be incorporated into a meaningful indicator. It is anticipated that data issues will continue to be addressed to provide more consistent collection in future years. Some indicators proved to be more challenging than others to obtain useful regional information.

One of the new positive data collection tools was the BC Water Use Reporting Centre. This Reporting Centre allows utilities to provide current water use data and access historical data for trending. Data is now collected from eight water utilities within the RGS area.

Water quality both for the 'out of the tap' water and for the ambient lake and stream water quality also proved to be challenging to collect. The Province categorizes any water system with two more users as a community system but there is no central water monitoring agency that collects water quality data.

Looking Ahead

Future Updates

The next Regional Growth Snapshot report will be prepared using 2013 data should be ready later in 2014 or early 2015. Data received from the 2011 census will be continue to be made available as different components are released. However, given the demise of the mandatory Stats Canada 'long form' much of the data traditionally collected will no longer be as accurate therefore new measures may need to be decided.

A number of data issues were resolved for the 2011 report, and appear to working well for the collection of data for 2012.

Indicators may also evolve as better information becomes available. For example, OBWB has developed a new water use reporting tool to monitor many of the larger water utilities that has proven valuable for water data collection. This tool may be expanded to include smaller and private systems.

Working with member municipalities to ensure that data can be measured consistently is part of the ongoing implementation of the RGS. For example, water consumption, solid waste and building permit statistics.

A number of projects within the RGS area by both the RDOS and municipalities will continue to shape the future of the South Okanagan. Some of these projects, such as the Bio-diversity strategy, (Keeping Nature in Our Future) is a direct result of implementing the RGS, while others, such as the Trails Master Plan and a Regional Transit Study melds nicely into the goals of the RGS. I

In order to monitor the long term trends and results of decision making based, or not based, on the goals of the RGS, annual monitoring encompassing key indicators continue to play a vital role in measuring success.

The vision of the RGS is a long term commitment to manage growth that is rooted in sustainability. The RGS will help inform the shape, densities, location of future development and also informs communities on living more sustainability.

Rural, residential and natural landscape

G/Development Services/RGS/Monitoring/2012