

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT



TO: Committee of the Whole

FROM: J. Zaffino, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: January 22, 2026

RE: Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Bylaw Review (X2022.001-RGS)

Administrative Recommendation:

THAT the South Okanagan Regional Growth Strategy Amendment Bylaw No. 2770.02 be initiated.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide options in relation to the proposed amendment of the South Okanagan Sub-Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Bylaw.

Strategic Priorities: Operational

Background & Analysis:

The on-going review of the RGS Bylaw has been the subject of multiple previous Planning and Development (P&D) Committee meetings.

At its meeting of August 3, 2023, the P&D Committee resolved that Amendment Bylaw No. 2770.02 be revised to include the following:

- 1. the removal or reduction of Naramata as any sort of growth area (e.g. Rural Growth Area or Village Settlement Area);*
- 2. the removal of Kaleden as any sort of growth area (e.g. Rural Growth Area or Village Settlement Area); and*
- 3. revised Climate Action policies.*

Most recently, at its meeting of September 4, 2025, the P&D Committee considered a draft RGS amendment bylaw reflecting the direction from the August 3, 2023 meeting and a draft Okanagan Valley OCP bylaw that is proposed to be completed in tandem with the ongoing RGS amendments.

At this meeting, the P&D committee resolved to direct staff to hold individual workshops for the RGS amendments and the OCP bylaw prior to Board initiation.

In preparation for the RGS workshop, the participating Electoral Area Directors and Municipal Directors were provided a redlined copy of the RGS bylaw for review and comments.

Analysis:

Further to the direction provided by the Committee at its meeting of August 3, 2023, draft Amendment Bylaw No. 2770.02 has been updated as follows:

- Revising the “Energy Emissions and Climate Change” section of the bylaw to reflect new provincial direction on climate change;

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- Replacing “Map 3” with a new “Growth Management Map” schedule to improve land use decisions involving lands outside of Primary Growth Areas;
 - Updating the “Population and Demographics” section to reflect 2021 census data;
 - Adding new language under “Housing and Development” to clarify that an “urban containment boundary” shall be established by an official community plan of a local government and that a “growth area” is not an “urban containment boundary” for the purpose of Section 481.3 of the *Local Government Act*; and
 - Updating the objectives and policies under the “Village Settlement Area” designation that applies to Naramata, Kaleden and Gallagher Lake to limit the provision of housing, services, and amenities and maintain the small-town character of these areas.

Administration is supportive of these changes on the basis that they will provide better clarity on the extent to which future growth is to be provided in the Electoral Areas and the pre-conditions for that growth to occur (e.g. basic community infrastructure such as water and sewer systems).

Director Feedback:

A summary of feedback received from participating Directors is included with this report as Attachment No. 1.

With regard to this feedback, where typos or other “errors” have been identified by Director’s these will be reviewed by staff for correction. With regard to other comments that have been provided, direction from the Board regarding these is required.

While Administration considers the draft amendment bylaw to reflect the most recent direction from the Board at its meeting of August 3, 2023, the option to further augment the scope of the amendment bylaw to reflect this feedback is available to the Board.

The scope of such a project would need to be confirmed by the Board and included in the 2026 Strategic Priorities Work Plan. This would require adjusting the 2026 Work Plan by deferring projects representing a corresponding number of FTE hours to 2027.

Alternative:

Alternatively, if the Board does not wish to initiate the draft RGS amendment bylaw, the options presented at the August 3, 2023, P&D remain available, including:

1. status quo (i.e., proceed with the June 2022 versions of the amendment bylaw);
2. revise the amendment bylaw (based on feedback); or
3. abandon the project (i.e., resolve to not proceed with the amendment bylaw).

Summary:

In summary, the revisions to draft Amendment Bylaw No. 2770.02 align with previous Board direction to provide clearer direction on managing growth outside of the current “primary” and “Rural” growth Areas” and to remove Naramata and Kaleden as any sort of growth area.

Administration also considers that the draft Okanagan Valley OCP Bylaw will free up additional staff time and resources for other ongoing project work.

For this reason, staff is recommending that the draft RGS amendment bylaw be initiated.

Financial Implications:

Financial implications related to the RGS amendment bylaw will primarily be related to the provision of infrastructure funding. This is because communities designated for future growth should be prioritized for infrastructure funding (e.g. water and sewer upgrades) over the next 20 years.

There are only so many locations within the Electoral Areas capable of accommodating future growth in a responsible way and if these are removed from the RGS, then infrastructure funding will need to be prioritized to other locations.

Depending on the scope of public and agency engagement desired for this project, the Board may also wish to consider using the services of a planning consultant to assist with public engagement activities (NOTE: funds may be available within the RGS budget to assist with this).

Communication Strategy:

If this amendment bylaw is initiated, Administration will prepare a draft consultation plan for consideration at a forthcoming committee meeting in accordance with the *RDOS Board Communications Policy* and the *Local Government Act*.

Specifically, Section 434 of the Act, which requires that the Board “must adopt [emphasis added] a consultation plan that, in the opinion of the board, provides opportunities for early and ongoing consultation with, at a minimum, the following”:

- its citizens;
- affected local governments;
- first nations;
- boards of education, greater boards and improvement district boards;
- the Provincial and federal governments and their agencies.

Alternatives:

1. THAT the South Okanagan Regional Growth Strategy Amendment Bylaw No. 2770.02 be revised as follows:
 - a) *TBD*
2. THAT the South Okanagan Regional Growth Strategy Amendment Bylaw No. 2770.02 be abandoned.

Will a PowerPoint presentation be presented at the meeting? Yes

Respectfully submitted:

“Ben Kent”

B. Kent
Planner II

Endorsed By:



C. Garrish
Senior Manager of Planning

Endorsed By:



A. Fillion
Managing Director, Dev. & Infrastructure

Attachments: No. 1 – Director Feedback

Attachment No. 1 – Director Feedback

| Section | Comments |
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| Part 1: Introduction and Context – Introduction | Introduction environmental objectives should be specific what are we trying to protect?? |
| Part 1: Introduction and Context – Regional Context | The statement about rangeland in the grasslands below tree line incorrect, most rangelands are in the timberlands, specifically in logged areas. |
| Part 2: Regional policies – Vision | Bullet three needs to be an RDOS project to determine what the priorities are and where for sensitive ecosystems. Any and all biologists will tell you most sensitive ecosystems are located in the valley bottoms and most are within the municipal boundaries. Admittedly most are now compromised somewhat but should what is left be protected?? |
| Part 2: Regional Policies – Housing and Development (Policy 1A-1) | How was the 95% number for new growth in designated Growth areas by 2031 arrived at?? Judging by history and the current zoning I suspect 90% to be more realistic. |
| Part 2: Regional Policies – Housing and Development | What percentage does the housing needs assessment say is needed for the electoral areas?? |
| Part 2: Regional Policies – Housing and Development | Take issue with the 6th paragraph historic zoning did not affect the growth percentage in municipalities, most likely market demands and the fact that many people wanted and are still moving to safer less populated rural areas to get away from density (mainly pandemic response and criminal activity to a smaller degree). |
| Part 2: Regional Policies – Resort Areas (Policy 1B-2 & Policy 1B-3) | Typo 1B-2 and 1B-3. |
| Part 2: Regional Policies – Rural Areas | Under Rural Areas- the statement "Lands designated as rural areas are generally unsuitable for increased residential redevelopment" should be removed or define what increased residential is? |
| N/A | Really need a list of definitions thing such as infill, density, need to be defined. |

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| Part 2: Regional Policies – Agricultural Areas (Policy 1F-9) | Appears to support short term camping on Ag lands which is not currently allowed by our OCP's. The OCP's should change to allow short term camping. |
| Part 2: Regional Policies – Resource Area & Open Space Areas (Policy 1G-3) | Be careful what you wish for if larger parcel sizes are required then the smaller lots will have reason to subdivide and larger ones will not consolidate to meet that requirement. |
| Part 2: Regional Policies – Resource Area & Open Space Areas (Policy 1G-4) | What is a designated community watershed? Not sure I can support this change. |
| Part 2: Regional Policies – Radio Astronomy Research Area | DRAO typo identified rather than identifies or remove the is and it is C and I not D. |
| Part 2: Regional Policies – Radio Astronomy Research Area (Policy 1H-4) | Those properties should be split zoned not entirely sterilized. |
| Part 2: Regional Policies – Ecosystems, Natural Areas and Parks (Policy 2A-5) | Seems to go against keeping nature in our future, it should suggest that all municipalities have an environmental impact assessment to determine what if any highly sensitive areas are still left and preserve them. |
| Part 2: Regional Policies – Ecosystems, Natural Areas and Parks (Objective 2D) | Should maybe mention the collaborative leadership table. |
| N/A | The last point I would like to make is that there are many rural residential neighborhoods not on the mapping. They are those areas generally abutting the smaller municipalities like Osoyoos and Oliver and probably others should they not be recognized?? |
| Table of Contents | Figure 1 missing |
| Part 1: Introduction and Context – Population and Demographics | Are FN population numbers still unavailable? |
| Part 1: Introduction and Context – Population and Demographics | Loss of people in the peak earning years is concerning and may warrant mention, e.g. 45-49 and 50-54 category |
| Part 1: Introduction and Context – Population and Demographics | Can D & I be split in Fig 3? |

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| Part 2: Regional Policies – Strategy | Should we have more reference to support for and growth of broader or even South Okanagan initiatives in some / all of these 7 policy areas? |
| Part 2: Regional Policies – Housing and Development | Heritage Hills, Skaha Estates probably not capable of supporting modest growth. |
| Part 2: Regional Policies – Ecosystems, Natural Areas and Parks (Policy 2D-8) | Is 'Universal Metering' the right term? we are interpreting this as 1 size / brand fits all properties. I'd be more comfortable with the requirement for metering everywhere but accepting that different types are best suited for different property types. |
| Part 2: Regional Policies – Infrastructure and Transportation (Objective 3A-3) | 'Require publicly operated utilities as a general rule, and discourage... |
| Part 2: Regional Policies – Infrastructure and Transportation (Policy 3B-5) | Support sewer AND WATER services within Growth Areas and Resort Areas AND CONNECTING WITH ALREADY EXISTING RURAL RESIDENTIAL AREAS |
| Part 2: Regional Policies – Community Health and Wellbeing | Could we have some reference to promoting / exploring options leading to safe forms of RV living? |
| Part 2: Regional Policies – Regional Economic Development (Policy 5A-8) | Add agri-voltaics and vertical farming. |
| Part 2: Regional Policies – Engagement and Collaboration | Would prefer a picture of RDOS reps, with municipal reps. |
| Part 2: Regional Policies – Engagement and Collaboration (Policy 6B-2) | Develop a new or replacement for the 2013 Protocol Agreement. |
| Part 2: Regional Policies – Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation (Policy 7A-3 & Policy 7A-4) | How does RDOS 'encourage'? |
| Part 2: Regional Policies – Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation (Policy 7A-5) | That the RDOS advocate for the fed / prov gov'ts to extend and expand. |
| Part 3: Monitoring, Evaluation and Amendments – Amendments to the RGS | Would we therefore be required to allow FN to make representations? |