

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT



TO: Committee of the Whole

FROM: J. Zaffino, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: July 2, 2026

RE: Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw Review – Public Notice Fees (X2022.001-RGS)

Administrative Recommendation:

THAT the Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw Review Consultation Plan be amended so that notification of upcoming public information meetings be provided by the following means:

- Newspaper advertisement;
 - Voyent Alert notification system;
 - Posting to the project web page; and
 - Posting to the public notice posting place in the Regional District office.
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Alternatives:

1. THAT public notice in support of the ongoing Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw Review be provided by the following means:
 - TBD

AND THAT Bylaw No. 3134.14, being a bylaw to amend the 2026-2030 Five-Year Financial Plan to authorize the use of \$15,000 from the RGS operating reserve to fund postcard mailouts to residential properties, be read a first, second and third time and be adopted.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to seek direction from the Board in relation to its preferences for public notification in support of the ongoing Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Bylaw Review.

Strategic Priorities: Operational

Background & Analysis:

At its meeting of January 22, 2026, the Committee of the Whole considered draft South Okanagan Regional Growth Strategy Amendment Bylaw No. 2770.02, 2026, and resolved to initiate the bylaw.

At its meeting of February 19, 2026, the Committee of the Whole resolved to adopt the South Okanagan Regional Growth Strategy Review Consultation Plan (2026) as appropriate consultation for the purpose of Section 434 of the *Local Government Act* (LGA).

The Consultation Plan prescribed a course for implementation scheduled to be completed in 2026, including the holding of multiple public information meetings (one online and two in-person in Naramata and Okanagan Falls).

To apprise residents of these meetings, staff further committed to sending notices “to all affected property owners in partnership with the municipalities”, with the intent that this would be in the form of postcards to be bulk mailed to residential properties in the South Okanagan.

Legislative Requirements

Under Section 434 of the *LGA*, the Regional Board “must adopt a consultation plan that, in the opinion of the board [emphasis added], 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; and
- the provincial and federal governments and their agencies.

Analysis:

In implementing the Consultation Plan adopted by the Board in February, Staff have become aware of significant costs associated with postcard notification to affected property owners.

Namely, the anticipated cost to print postcards through a third party and deliver through Canada Post is quoted to exceed \$13,000. In comparison, the annual advertising budget for the RGS is \$2,000.

While other funds are available within the RGS operating reserve to accommodate this method of notification, Administration considers this cost to be significant, and the Board may wish to consider alternative approaches to notifying residents of upcoming public information meetings.

Administration is recommending that public notice of these meetings be provided in the same manner typically provided for other land use projects.

This includes notification through the Voyent Alert mass notification system, posting a digital copy of the notice to the project webpage, and posting a paper copy of the notice in the Regional District’s public notice posting place (i.e. the message board in the entryway to the RDOS office at 101 Martin Street).

This change would only affect notification of upcoming public information meetings and would not affect consultation with other groups as prescribed by the Board’s Consultation Plan.

Alternative:

Alternatively, the Board may choose to proceed with the planned postcard notification or modify the list of proposed alternatives.

As the proposed 2026 revisions to the RGS Amendment Bylaw primarily relate to changes in the rural areas (i.e. removal of Naramata, Kaleden and Gallagher Lake as growth areas), the Board could also consider notifying a smaller subset of property owners by postcard.

By way of example, limiting postcards to properties within the South Okanagan Electoral Areas (i.e. Areas "A", "C", "D", "E", "F" and "I") and excluding properties within the municipalities is anticipated to reduce the cost by 50% (e.g. the total cost would be approximately \$6,500).

Summary:

In summary, the amended notification methods are seen to be appropriate for the project scope and consistent with existing practices for Regional District land use projects.

Removing the proposed postcard notification to affected properties will also reduce costs associated with this project.

Financial Implications:

If the Board chooses to proceed with postcard notification to the South Okanagan electoral areas and municipalities, authorization from the Board will be required to use approximately \$15,000 from the reserve fund to supplement the advertising budget.

Communication Strategy:

The proposed changes are within the scope of the Consultation Plan adopted by the Board and satisfy the requirements of the *Local Government Act* as well as the Regional District's Development Procedures Bylaw No. 2500, 2011.

Will a PowerPoint presentation be presented at the meeting? Yes

Respectfully submitted:

Ben Kent

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Endorsed By:



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