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# 2014 Annual Report

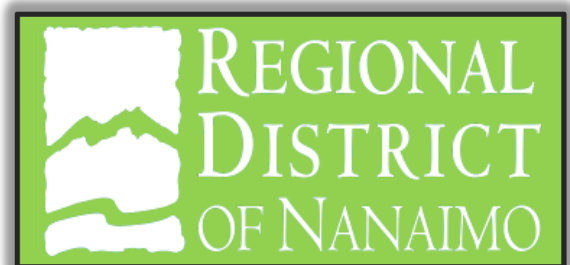
## Regional Growth Strategy

### Implementation & Progress

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February 27, 2015



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## 1 OVERVIEW

The Regional Growth Strategy (RGS)<sup>1</sup> is a strategic plan adopted by the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) Board that aims to establish a more sustainable pattern of population growth and development in the region over a twenty-five year period. The RGS encourages and directs most new development in the region within designated Growth Containment Boundaries, thereby keeping urban settlement compact, protecting the integrity of rural and resource areas, protecting the environment, increasing servicing efficiency, and retaining mobility within the region.

The RGS represents a commitment by the RDN and its member municipalities to take a series of actions to improve the quality of life for present and future residents of the region. Part of this commitment involves being accountable to residents about how the RGS is being implemented and the level of progress being made towards reaching the goals of the RGS.

The 2011 RGS addresses implementation in Section 5, stating that: *“Being accountable for progress towards achieving the goals of this RGS requires a commitment to implementation, target-setting, establishing indicators, and monitoring”*. Reporting on annual progress shows a commitment to implementation and fulfills a requirement under the *Local Government Act* *“to prepare an annual report on implementation and progress towards the goals and objectives of the RGS”* (RGS Policy 5.2.1).

This Annual Progress Report briefly describes the RGS purpose, vision and goals in order to set the stage for documenting actions taken in 2014 that showed progress towards implementing the RGS. Appendix 1 of this report also provides a summary of all actions taken to implement the RGS since it was updated in late 2011.

It is important to note that this Annual Progress Report does not attempt to measure how effective these implementation actions are, nor does it make recommendations for adjusting policies to improve performance. Performance indicators and targets to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the RGS have now been established. These indicators and targets will be used to measure and help evaluate the effectiveness of RGS policies in working towards the goals and vision of the RGS. The results of monitoring will be incorporated into the 2015 Annual Report.

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<sup>1</sup> On November 22, 2011, the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) Board adopted "Regional District of Nanaimo Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1615". This document replaced the 2003 Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) and represents the second time that the RGS has been fully reviewed and updated since it was first adopted in 1997.

## 2 RGS ROLE & PURPOSE

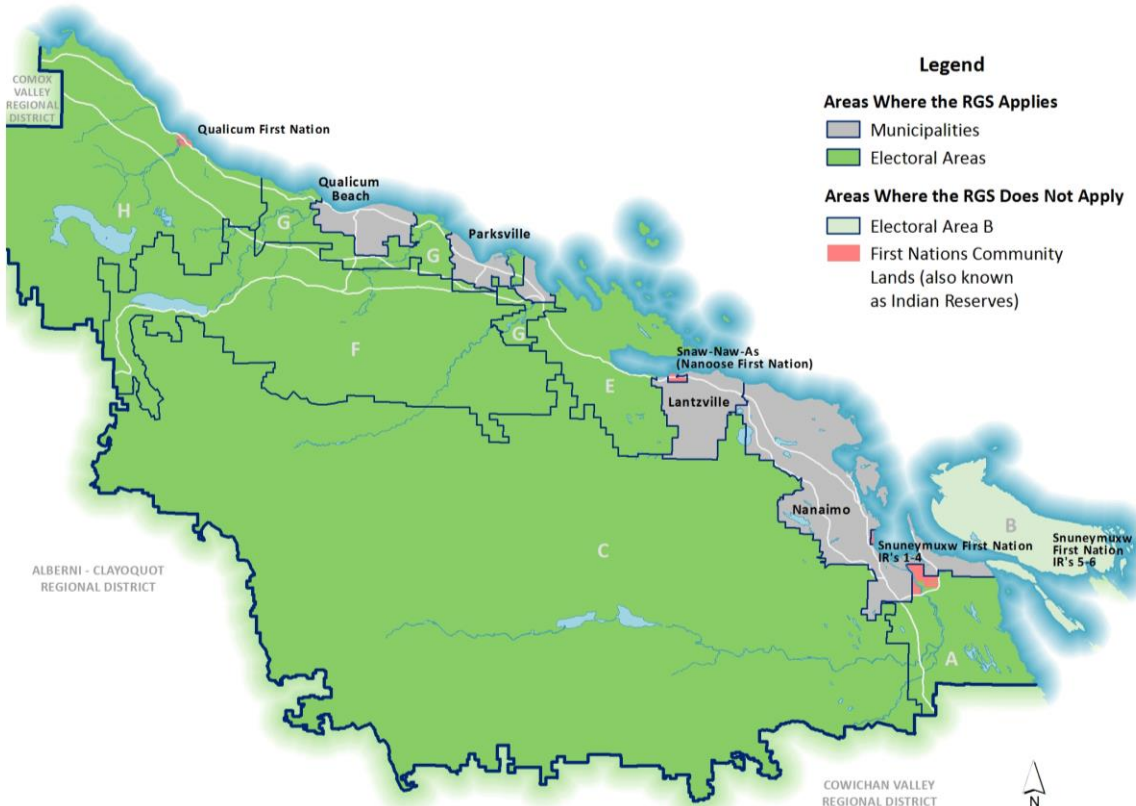
The purpose of the RGS is to "promote human settlement that is socially, economically and environmentally healthy and that makes efficient use of public facilities and services, land and other resources". Ultimately, it is a coordinated plan to manage growth in the region in a sustainable manner.

The first RGS was adopted in 1997 in response to residents' concerns about the impacts of rapid population growth and development in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Given that the impacts of growth cross jurisdictional boundaries, it was recognized that a coordinated approach to community planning was necessary to effectively address growth management issues.

The RGS provides a framework for member municipalities and the RDN to coordinate growth management issues that cross local government boundaries. The RGS also provides a mechanism to connect with provincial ministries and agencies who have jurisdiction in areas that impact land use and community planning and whose resources are needed to implement projects and programs. Inter-jurisdictional coordination is essential to protecting our environment and achieving a high quality of life for present and future residents in the region.

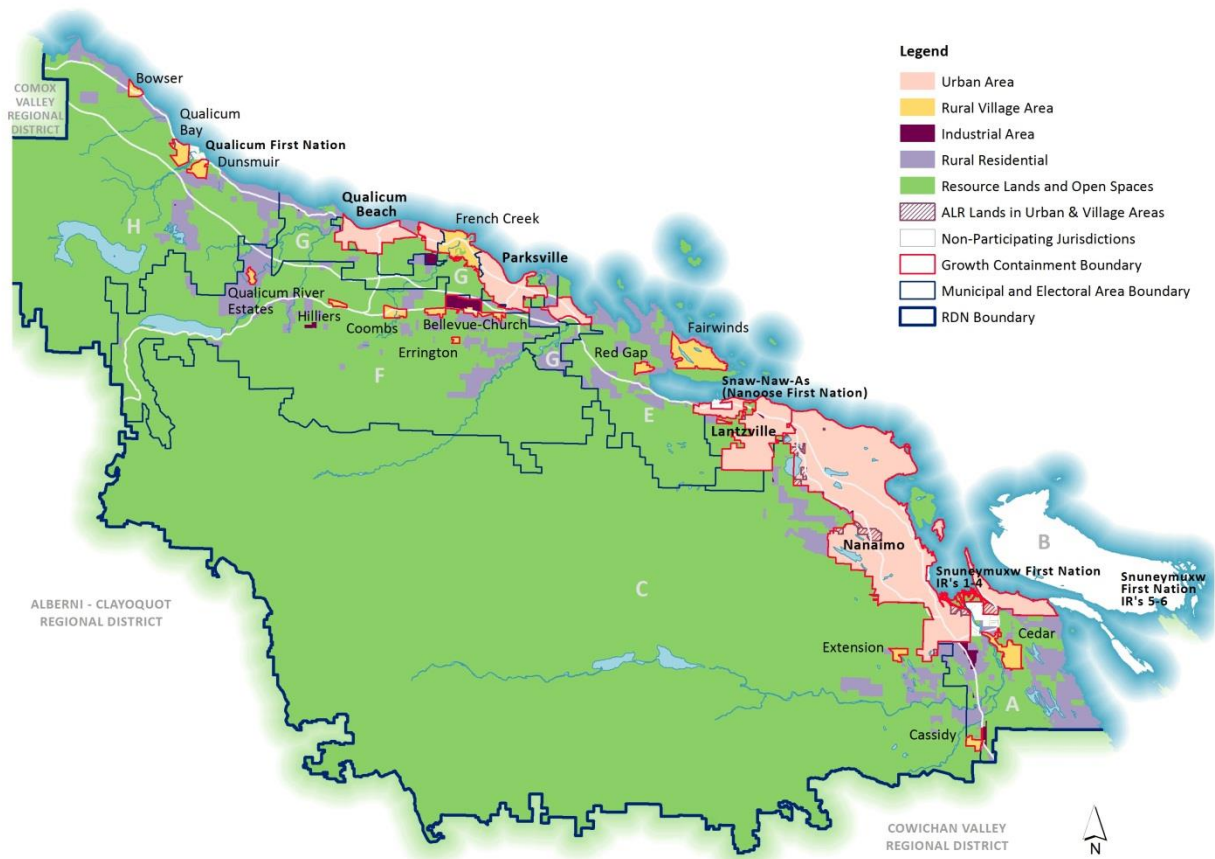
The RGS applies to six electoral areas and four municipalities within the region as shown by the map below. The RGS does not apply to Gabriola, Decourcy and Mudge Islands (Electoral Area B) as they fall under the jurisdiction of the Islands Trust. It also does not apply to lands under the jurisdiction of First Nations (Qualicum First Nation, Snaw-Naw-As (Nanoose First Nation) and Snuneymuxw First Nation).

**Map 1: RGS Application**



The RGS uses a line on a map called a Growth Containment Boundary (GCB) to separate areas designated for future growth from other areas where environmental protection and resource values are a priority. Lands designated as Urban Area within municipalities are intended to absorb the majority of the region’s future growth. In the RDN’s electoral areas, land designated as Rural Village Areas are intended to accommodate lower levels of growth more compatible with their rural settings. Development within the GCB (Urban and Rural Village Areas) is intended to be diverse and provide places for people to live, work, learn, shop and play. This may also include lands to be conserved to support ecosystem functions or other green space purposes. Land outside of the GCB is intended to support ecosystem functions and rural uses that require only limited infrastructure and services to be viable.

**Map 2: RGS Growth Containment Boundary and Land Use Designations**



### 3 RGS VISION

The vision of the RGS is documented below and represents the foundation for the goals and policies in the RGS.

The region will be recognized for an outstanding quality of urban and rural life that is grounded in a strong commitment to protecting the natural environment and minimizing harm to life-sustaining ecological systems. Working in partnership with interested organizations, the RDN and its member municipalities are committed to achieving:

- High standards of environmental protection that preserve habitat, enhance ecological diversity, and maintain air and water quality;
- Enhanced food security in the region;
- Urban development that is contained and distinct in form and character from rural development;
- Complete, compact communities designed to provide housing that meets the needs of all households, and that provide excellent access to nearby workplaces, goods and services, learning institutions, recreation opportunities, and natural areas;
- Expansion and enhancement of mobility options that reduce automobile dependency;
- A strong and resilient economy based on agriculture, natural resource assets, tourism, and information age industries and services, such as health and education; and
- Efficient, state-of-the-art servicing, infrastructure and resource utilization.

### 4 RGS PRINCIPLES

The goals and policies of this RGS are grounded in the following sustainability principles that are intended to guide how decisions are made regarding the future life of the region:

- Decisions and actions have regard for local and global consequences;
- The interconnectedness and interdependence of natural and human systems are recognized and respected;
- The healthy functioning of ecological systems is nurtured;
- The qualities of place that create pride and a sense of community are nurtured;
- Efficiency, including the concept of zero-waste, is optimized;
- Equity amongst all citizens and across generations, including future generations is ensured;
- Decision-making processes are based on participation, collaboration and co-operation with citizens, other authorities and organizations; and
- We are accountable for our decisions and actions.

## 5 RGS GOALS

The RGS is based upon 11 goals (listed below) that work towards achieving the collective vision of regional sustainability. Policies in the RGS provide the direction to take specific actions to implement the RGS goals.

1. **Prepare for Climate Change and Reduce Energy Consumption** – Reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and energy consumption and promote adaptive measures to prepare for climate change impacts.
2. **Protect the Environment** – Protect and enhance the environment and avoid ecological damage related to human activity.
3. **Coordinate Land Use and Mobility** – Ensure land use patterns and mobility networks are mutually supportive and work together to reduce automobile dependency and provide for efficient goods movement.
4. **Concentrate Housing and Jobs in Rural Village and Urban Growth Centres** – Establish distinctive activity centres and corridors within growth containment boundaries that provide ready access to places to live, work, play and learn.
5. **Enhance Rural Integrity** – Protect and strengthen the region’s rural economy and lifestyle.
6. **Facilitate the Provision of Affordable Housing** – Support and facilitate the provision of appropriate, adequate, attainable, affordable and adaptable housing.
7. **Enhance Economic Resiliency** – Support strategic economic development and link commercial and industrial strategies to the land use and rural and environmental protection priorities of the region.
8. **Enhance Food Security** – Protect and enhance the capacity of the region to produce and process food.
9. **Celebrate Pride of Place** – Celebrate the unique natural beauty, culture, history, and arts of the region.
10. **Provide Services Efficiently** – Provide efficient, cost-effective services and infrastructure.
11. **Enhance Cooperation Among Jurisdictions** – Facilitate an understanding of and commitment to the goals of growth management among all levels of government, the public, and key private and voluntary sector partners.



## 6 IMPLEMENTATION – 2014

Section 5.2 of the RGS addresses implementation and identifies specific projects that are intended to work towards achieving RGS goals. Implementation is an important part of being accountable to RDN residents about what is being done to achieve the goals they identified as important.

### 6.1 Actions Supporting Education and Awareness

The RGS states that *“a public that is well-informed is more likely to participate in decision-making processes and to work with others to achieve common goals”*.

Throughout 2014, the RDN Long Range Planning Department took a continuous approach to education and raising awareness about the RGS and its implementation. This included regularly updating and providing information via website materials, RDN newsletters (Electoral Area Updates and RDN Perspectives), news releases and mail-outs.

Education and awareness of the RGS has also been included into all public engagement activities for the RGS Targets and Indicators project listed later in this report. Furthermore, the public engagement initiatives of a variety of RDN departments have also served to raise awareness of the RGS.

### 6.2 RGS Targets and Monitoring

The RDN initiated a process in January 2014 to select indicators and establish targets to evaluate the effectiveness of the RGS policies to achieve the RGS goals. Since the RGS is meant to influence decision making and not necessarily to prescribe actions, the only way to monitor the success of the RGS is to measure specific characteristics (or indicators) of a sustainable region. Indicators ensure that the RDN and local government partners are making decisions that are consistent with the RGS goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, preserve rural resource lands, protect environmentally sensitive areas and improve mobility options such as transit or cycling.

Activities in 2014 to develop the RDN targets and indicators included:

- The RDN held a workshop on March 31, 2014 with knowledgeable professionals from the RDN, member municipalities, and provincial agencies to refine the set of possible indicators. The RDN prepared a report on the results of the workshop which included a set of recommended indicators and targets.
- Using the results from the knowledgeable professionals’ workshop, RDN staff worked with the RDN Board members to develop the draft set of recommended indicators and targets.
- Based on the feedback from the relevant professionals and the RDN Board, the RDN presented the draft list of recommended indicators and targets for community feedback. The community engagement was conducted through an online survey in the Fall of 2014. Approximately 300 people participated in the survey.



The RDN Board approved the final list of indicators in January 2015, and provided direction to staff to proceed with the monitoring program using the recommended set of indicators and targets.

### 6.3 RGS Implementation Projects



#### Agricultural Area Plan

The RDN initiated the Agricultural Area Plan (AAP) RDN Bylaw and Policy Update Project, the first implementation project as part of the AAP Implementation Action Plan (2014-2106). The primary objective of the project is to review the existing RDN RGS, Official Community Plans (OCPs) and regulatory bylaws to:

- Ensure consistency between policies and regulations;
- Remove regulatory barriers and obstacles that hinder agriculture and aquaculture;
- Promote sustainable practices that support agricultural production and preserve farm land; and,
- Protect against the impact of non-farm use.

The project may lead to amendments to RDN bylaws for the electoral areas, including the RGS, OCPs, zoning bylaws and sign bylaws. Activities in 2014 included:

- A review of RDN regulations and policies to identify barriers to agriculture.
- Development of a discussion paper on barriers to agriculture and possible options to address those barriers.
- On October 24, 2014, the RDN held a workshop with farmers, senior government staff and agricultural organizations to discuss the obstacles to farming in the region.
- Following the workshop, the RDN sought the feedback from electoral area residents on draft obstacles and approaches through an online survey.
- Meetings with agricultural organizations and other stakeholders.

The results will inform recommendations on which obstacles to farming require further action by the RDN.

As part of the AAP Implementation Plan, the RDN also implemented policies relating to agricultural promotion and economic development. These actions are:

- Research was conducted and correspondence sent to the Province regarding farm tax assessment.
- The RDN created a web site for agriculture related activities to assist with communication.

## Affordable Housing

An Affordable Housing Action Plan approved in 2011 identified actions for the RDN and partners to undertake over the next few years. For 2014 the following projects were completed or initiated:

### Secondary Suites Regulations

The RDN concluded the Secondary Suites Project with the adoption of secondary suite zoning amendment bylaws on May 27, 2014. Secondary suites are now permitted in most residential and rural zones in Electoral Areas A, C, E, F, G, and H. The RDN also adopted a Board Policy to provide direction on how existing and new suites will be treated for enforcement of the zoning bylaws and to assist the owners to meet basic life safety aspects of the BC Building Code. The bylaw amendments help increase the amount of market housing, consistent with the objectives and actions of the RDN Housing Action Plan.

### 2014 Affordable Housing Online Resources

The web based resource guide on affordable housing for renters, homeowners and housing providers was updated during 2014. The website provides access to a comprehensive list of contacts for a wide range of housing topics targeting different needs. This includes information on market rental, supportive and emergency housing. This is the only resource of this type in the region.

### Emergency Shelter and Food Materials

The RDN updated a brochure and poster to be carried on RDN buses to direct people in need to emergency shelter and food resources. The brochure gives information for emergency shelters, extreme weather shelters, hot meal programs and food banks in the region. The brochure also provides bus route information to find the services. The poster, displayed at the front of all RDN buses during times of cold and wet weather, provides information for emergency and extreme weather shelters in the region.

### Capacity Building to Address Homelessness

In 2014, the RDN distributed the remaining funding received from Island Health to build capacity to address homelessness. The money was held in the RDN Capacity Building to End Homelessness Reserve Fund, to be used for projects that address homelessness in the region. The following grants were approved in 2014:

- On February 25, 2014 the RDN Board allocated \$45,000 from the reserve fund to the Nanaimo Regional John Howard Society for a Rental Support Program.
- On March 25, 2014 the RDN Board allocated \$58,000 from the reserve fund to the Society of Organized Services to continue the work of a Homelessness Coordinator for one year.
- On April 22, 2014 the RDN Board allocated \$18,000 from the reserve fund to People for a Healthy Community (PHC) to continue a program that helps those at risk of homelessness attain and maintain safe and suitable housing.
- On June 24, 2014 the RDN Board also allocated \$5,000 from the reserve to PHC to conduct a homelessness survey on Gabriola Island.

- On November 25, 2014 the RDN allocated the remaining funds, \$24,000 to Manna Homelessness Society to deliver food and supplies to the less fortunate, and \$43,390 to the First Unitarian Fellowship of Nanaimo to operate a cold-wet weather shelter and housing placement program.

No further funding is available through the Reserve Fund, however the RDN initiated research and met with service providers regarding the establishment of a new service to provide funding to address social issues in School District 69.

## 6.4 RDN Actions that Implement the RGS

In addition to the projects to implement the RGS noted above, the RDN undertook numerous actions across all departments that contribute to achieving the goals of the RGS.

### Green Bylaw Amendments

The RDN initiated a project to review current electoral area land use bylaws and regulations to identify barriers to green building features, systems and technologies, and to propose regulatory changes. Through the project, the RDN identified bylaw amendments to remove barriers to renewable energy systems, passive design features and rainwater harvesting equipment. The bylaw amendments will be considered by the RDN Board in 2015.

### Fairwinds Development Process

On July 22, 2014, the RDN Board adopted the two zoning amendment applications and phased development agreements for the Lakes District and Schooner Cove neighbourhoods. The amendments establish the zoning and servicing standards for the long term development of the communities in conformity with the Lakes District and Schooner Cove Neighbourhood Plans. These initiatives within the Fairwinds Rural Village Centre are consistent with the growth containment and environmental protection goals of the RGS. Consultation efforts regarding the new zoning and phased development agreement are also consistent with RGS Goal 9 - Celebrate Pride of Place and Goal 11 - Enhance Cooperation Among Jurisdictions.

### Northern Community Economic Development Service

In order to further RGS Goal 7 - Enhance Economic Resiliency, the RDN continued to deliver programs in 2014 relating to the Northern Community Economic Development Service in order to provide support for economic development initiatives in the City of Parksville, the Town of Qualicum Beach and Electoral Areas 'E', 'F', 'G', and 'H'. The Program allows the RDN Board of Directors to contribute to eligible projects that advance the Board's vision for a resilient, thriving and creative local economy. This function provided almost \$40,000 in local economic grants in District 69 communities.

## Emergency Planning and Disaster Resiliency

RDN action for emergency planning and preparedness in 2014 have been consistent with direction in RGS Goal 2 to Protect the Environment, including to ‘work with senior governments and property owners to ensure appropriate safeguards are in place to protect property and life from potential hazards.’ In particular, the RDN continued to hold events to improve emergency awareness, such as through outreach with the Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness program. The RDN’s Emergency Operations Centre also responded to winter storm emergencies for two floods and one landslide.

## Transportation Services

RDN Transit plays a key role in helping achieve many of the eleven RGS Goals including Prepare for Climate Change, Protect the Environment, Coordinate Land Use and Mobility, Economic Resiliency, Provide Efficient Services and Cooperation Among Jurisdictions. During 2014 specific activities included 25 new Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) buses, a new CNG Compressor Station and accessible bus pads in the City of Nanaimo.

## Solid Waste

The RDN Solid Waste Department continued to achieve the RGS goal to Provide Efficient Services by pursuing an approach to eliminate the need for waste disposal. Consistent with the RGS direction to achieve ‘zero waste’, the RDN has a region-wide diversion rate of 68% and the second lowest provincial annual per capita disposal rate of 347 kg. During 2014, RDN Solid Waste also continued with its review of the Regional Solid Waste Management Plan.

## Parks Planning

During 2014 the RDN undertook numerous actions to plan and develop parks and trails. These actions directly support several RGS Goals including to Prepare for Climate Change, Protect the Environment, Coordinate Land Use and Mobility, Economic Resiliency and Pride of Place. In January, the RDN Board adopted Parks and Trail Guidelines to provide consistent direction for the planning and design of Community and Regional parks and trails. Also, in January the RDN Board adopted a Community Parks and Trails Strategic Plan for Electoral Areas E, F, G and H.

The RDN also completed projects to create new or undertake improvements to existing trails and other park amenities throughout all regional and community parks. Examples include the completion of the Cedar skateboard and bike park, and upgrades at Horne Lake Regional Park and Moorecroft Regional Park. The RDN also initiated the Fairwinds Regional Parks Management Plan and completed the Benson Creek Management Plan in 2014.

## Recreation Programs and Facilities

The RDN's recreation programs and facilities play an ongoing role in furthering RGS Goal to Enhance Economic Resiliency and Celebrate Pride of Place by providing sports and cultural amenities that boost the attractiveness of the region as a place to live and visit. These include ongoing delivery of recreation programs and maintenance of facilities throughout the RDN. Through 2014, the RDN expanded existing recreation programs and continued to attract sports tournaments for youth, adults and seniors.

## Climate Change Actions and Energy Efficiency Measures

All of the aforementioned land use, parks and recreation planning and transportation initiatives support RGS goals for reducing GHG emissions and energy consumption. In addition to these initiatives the RDN also undertook several other specific actions to support these goals:

- Organized the fifth annual RDN Green Building Speaker Series and Open House Tours to showcase the latest green building practices in the region and provide education and awareness about ways to reduce the energy and environmental impacts of development. The RDN also coordinated a community symposium on Climate Science, in partnership with the City of Nanaimo.
- Continued to deliver the 2014 Green Building Incentive Program, with over \$26,410 in incentives provided to regional residents. This includes providing rebates for woodstove exchange and home energy assessments as well as rainwater harvesting and well upgrade rebates through the Drinking Water and Watershed Protection program.
- Ensured that all new RDN buildings and renovations completed in 2014 met best practices for energy efficiency and water conservation.
- Continued to support the implementation of Green Building Policies for all RDN facilities.
- Distributed funding for projects under a Corporate Climate Action reserve fund, including the release of over \$100,000 to enable investments in higher efficiency infrastructure, vehicles and equipment owned by the RDN.

For more activities see section 6.5 *Collaborative Actions*.

## Watershed Protection

The RDN undertook the following projects in 2014 to support RGS goals for protecting drinking water and watersheds and the provision of efficient services:

- Continued with the Community Watershed Monitoring program.
- Launched the Water Use and Reporting Centre program in partnership with municipalities.
- Completed the Team WaterSmart education outreach program including workshops, community events and school visits.
- Completed irrigation audits with a focus on strata communities.

- Completed WellSmart and SepticSmart workshops.
- Continued the rainwater cistern and rural water quality rebates as part of the RDN Green Building Incentive program. The RDN issued a total of 33 rainwater harvest and 14 well upgrade rebates.
- Completed the Small Water Systems working group annual meeting.

For more activities see section 6.5 *Collaborative Actions*.

## 6.5 Collaborative Actions

Many of the studies, actions and ongoing departmental activities described in this report involve collaboration with member municipalities, other levels of government and community based groups. Below are some specific examples of past or ongoing collaborative actions to implement RGS Goal 11 – Enhance Cooperation Among Jurisdictions:

### Municipalities and Regional Context Statements

In 2014, the Town of Qualicum Beach updated the Regional Context Statement in its Official Community Plan to be consistent with the 2011 RGS. The updated Regional Context Statement was accepted by the RDN. The Regional Context Statement explains how an Official Community Plan is consistent with the RGS and addresses how any inconsistencies will be dealt with over time. The other member municipalities (City of Nanaimo, District of Lantzville and City of Parksville) updated their Regional Context Statements in 2013.

### Town of Qualicum Beach RGS Amendment Development Application

The Town of Qualicum Beach and RDN staff reviewed a request to amend the Regional Growth Strategy to expand the Town's Growth Containment Boundary (GCB) to coincide with the municipal boundary.

### First Nations

Throughout 2014, RDN staff and elected officials met primarily with staff and elected officials from First Nations with existing village sites within the region (Qualicum, Snaw-Naw-As and Snuneymuxw). Discussions involved various planning and implementation projects related to regional growth, development applications, parks, transit, emergency planning and utilities. While some meetings were to address specific matters related to land use planning, development, and servicing agreements, others were focused on strengthening relationships in order to facilitate stronger collaboration on issues of mutual concern. Key outcomes included:

- Coordinated attendance of First Nations, RDN Elected Officials and RDN staff at various special events hosted by the RDN or First Nations. These include Cedar Skate Park Opening, Snuneymuxw First Nation National Aboriginal Day Celebration and Community building Ground Breaking, RDN Watershed Tour, RDN Inaugural Board Meeting.

- The RDN helped facilitate successful outcome to the concerns of Snaw-Naw-As (Nanoose First Nation) related to the Fairwinds re-zoning and phased development agreement.
- Liaised and coordinated with First Nations and Vancouver Island University regarding bringing the Witness Blanket art installation to the region.
- Worked with two First Nations to draft protocols for the RDN to follow to acknowledge First Nations Traditional Territory.
- The RDN worked with First Nations to address concerns related to treated effluent leak from storm damaged sewer outfall pipe at Morningside Park in Nanaimo.
- The RDN Emergency Operation Centre worked with the Snuneymuxw First Nation to address the Nanaimo River flood risk in Electoral Area A (Cedar) and collaborated on a joint response.
- The RDN initiated and followed up on opportunities for collaboration with First Nations.
- The RDN initiated ongoing maintenance of respectful relationships with First Nations elected officials and staff.

### **Adjacent Regional Districts and Municipalities**

The RDN continued to host and participate in meetings to network and liaise with staff at adjacent regional districts and staff at member municipalities. On an ongoing basis, outside of these meetings, RDN staff maintains professional relationships that enable effective communication and collaboration. This allows for the RDN to share information on RGS implementation activities in order to support adjacent jurisdictions having long term plans and taking actions consistent with the direction of the RGS.

### **Nanaimo Airport Land Use Planning Process**

Furthering RGS Goal to Enhance Economic Resiliency and to Enhance Cooperation Among Jurisdictions, the RDN continued with the second of three phases of the Nanaimo Airport Land Use Planning Process in 2014. During the year, the RDN held several meetings with the Nanaimo Airport Commission related to Phases 2 and 3 of the Nanaimo Airport Planning Process. In addition, a terms of reference was adopted for an Advisory Committee who will provide advice to the RDN during Phases 2 and 3 of the process.

Phase 2 involves developing a Memorandum of Understanding between the RDN and Nanaimo Airport Commission that outlines a process and principles for developing a Land Use Plan for the airport. A preliminary draft of the Memorandum of Understanding was prepared.

The RDN will complete Phase 2 and initiate Phase 3 in 2015. Phase 3 will involve creating a Master Development Plan for the airport and as necessary amendments to the Electoral Area 'A' Official Community Plan and zoning bylaw. This process is intended to provide greater certainty for all stakeholders regarding future development and land use at the Nanaimo Airport.



## Seaweed Harvesting

The RDN communicated concerns to the Ministry of Agriculture regarding the seaweed harvesting licences issued along the foreshore of Deep Bay – Qualicum Bay. Both the RDN and the Ministry met and established a commitment to continue the dialogue on seaweed harvesting as to minimize the impact on the community and the environment. The Ministry has also indicated that the seaweed harvest will not continue if it cannot be done with very little impact. The commitment builds on RGS goals to Protect the Environment, Enhance Rural Integrity and Cooperation Among Jurisdictions.

## Transit Future Plan

The Regional District of Nanaimo and BC Transit completed a 25-year Transit Future Plan for the RDN. The Transit Future Plan envisions the ideal RDN transit network 25 years from now, and describes what services, infrastructure and investments are needed to get there. The plan supports local community goals and objectives, such as strengthening the link between transportation and land use in order to support sustainable growth. Consistent with RGS Goals Coordinate Land Use and Mobility, sustainable transportation will assist in reducing transportation-related emissions and improving the overall quality of life in the region.

# 7 MEMBER MUNICIPALITIES ACTIONS

In addition to collaborating with the RDN on various initiatives identified earlier in this report, the RDN's member municipalities have also undertaken their own studies and actions that support achieving RGS goals. The following information was provided by each jurisdiction.

## 7.1 City of Nanaimo

### **RGS Goal 1 - Prepare for Climate Change and Reduce Energy Consumption**

- Initiated a review of the Corporate Climate Change Plan.
- The Community Sustainability Action Plan was updated with a Realtor Energy Efficiency Program (REEP). In 2014, the program included six training sessions on promoting home energy assessments, a draft training manual for realtors, incentive program to encourage realtor training and a home energy webpage created in partnership with the Real Estate Board.
- The City held a Climate Science Symposium on the latest climate science. The symposium was in partnership with the RDN.
- The City worked with BC Hydro to co-ordinate the Home Energy Rebate Offer, as a means to offer financial savings to residents who purchase more energy and water efficient appliances.

### **RGS Goal 2 – Protect the Environment**

- Completed an update of the Water Conservation Strategy.
- Continued to implement initiative and opportunities consistent with the Blue Community designation.

**RGS Goal 3 – Coordinate Land Use and Mobility**

- Council approved the completed Transportation Master Plan. The Master Plan was developed with input from the Regional District with regards to transit planning.
- Continued with general amendments to the Official Community Plan, to recognize the RGS Growth Containment Boundary, as well as road classification changes.
- Worked with the Island Corridor Foundation to increase the viability of the E&N rail line, including work to establish a terminal facility in the Wellcox yard.

**RGS Goal 4 – Concentrate Housing and Jobs in Rural Village and Urban Growth Centres**

- The City continued to adhere to development within the Growth Containment Boundary, and advised potential applicants of plan Nanaimo goals and policies regarding multi-family developments and mixed use corridor zoning. In this regard, the City encourages infill development at higher densities.

**RGS Goal 6 – Facilitate the Provision of Affordable Housing**

- Initiated changes to update the Social Development Strategy in the Official Community Plan, including updates to end homelessness.
- Completed the construction of supported housing at Uplands Drive, with occupancy expected in February 2015. Construction commenced on a supported housing project on Boundary Crescent, with completion expected in the Summer of 2015.

**RGS Goal 7 – Enhance Economic Resiliency**

- Continued to address potential redevelopment opportunities along the waterfront through the South Downtown Waterfront Initiative. The City worked with property owners to enhance the waterfront and create an uninterrupted trail.
- Council supported objectives of the Nanaimo Economic Development Corporation, including for an application for Island Ferries Services Ltd. for a Building Canada grant.
- A project was initiated to improve access to Newcastle Island.

**RGS Goal 8 – Enhance Food Security**

- Continued work on drafting a Food Charter and Strategy for Nanaimo.

**RGS Goal 9 – Celebrate Pride of Place**

- The City continued to implement the Urban Forest Management Strategy by planting street trees in partnership with community associations.
- Work began to upgrade and improve the Departure Bay Section of the Waterfront Trail.
- Initiated the implementation of the 2014 – 2020 Cultural Plan for a Creative Nanaimo.
- Continued to update the Heritage Registrar, and initiated a Heritage Façade Grant and Heritage Tax Exemption process for the Free Press Building located at 223 Commercial Street. The City also continued with the promotion and awareness of Nanaimo's heritage resources.

**RGS Goal 10 – Provide Services Efficiently**

- Initiated a review of Development Cost Charges to encourage development within currently serviced areas of the City, as a means to reduce infrastructure costs.

**RGS Goal 11 - Enhance Cooperation Among Jurisdictions**

- The City continues all of the actions listed in the Regional Context Statement.

**7.2 District of Lantzville****Lantzville/Nanaimo Water Agreement**

A Water Agreement between the District of Lantzville and the City of Nanaimo to supplement the District's water supply was approved by Council. The agreement provides the community with a safe, secure and reliable source of water in the future. This agreement is consistent with RGS Goal 10: Provide Services Efficiently.

**Village Commercial Core Improvement Plan**

The District completed a draft Village Commercial Core Improvement Plan to establish a long term design vision for the form and character within the village core. The Plan is consistent with RGS Goal 3: Coordinate Land Use and Mobility, Goal 4: Concentrate Housing and Jobs in Rural Village and Urban Growth Centre, and Goal 9: Celebrate Pride of Place.

**Water and Energy Efficiency Rebates**

Lantzville continued to participate in the provision of green building incentives through the RDN, including incentives for rainwater harvesting, wood stove exchanges, solar hot water, home energy assessments, and residential vehicle charging stations. These actions are consistent with RGS Goal 1: Prepare for Climate Change and Reduce Energy Consumption, Goal 2: Protect the Environment and Goal 10: Provide Services Efficiently.

**Actions to Protect the Environment**

- Provided educational information to residents concerning water conservation and implemented water restrictions consistent with RGS Goal 1: Prepare for Climate Change and Reduce Energy Consumption, Goal 2: Protect the Environment and Goal 10: Provide Services Efficiently.
- Participated in the RDN's Drinking Water Watershed Protection Function consistent with RGS Goal 2: Protect the Environment and Goal 11: Enhance Cooperation Among Jurisdictions.
- Provided information to residents concerning outdoor burning consistent with RGS Goal 2: Protect the Environment.
- Participated in the Climate Action Revenue Incentive Program and are producing a report for 2014. This is consistent with RGS Goal 1: Prepare for Climate Change and Reduce Energy Consumption.

**Planning for Urban Agriculture**

The District completed a process in May 2014 to develop bylaws to support urban food production. The bylaw amendments permit market gardening operations as a home based business. This supports RGS Goal 7: Enhance Economic Resiliency and Goal 8: Enhance Food Security.

**Parks**

- Continued improving road accesses to adjacent ocean/beach public areas consistent with RGS Goal 3: Coordinate Land Use and Mobility, and Goal 9: Celebrate Pride of Place.
- Continued with the implementation of the Trails and Journeyways Strategy consistent with RGS Goal 3: Coordinate Land Use and Mobility, and Goal 9: Celebrate Pride of Place.

**Waste Reduction**

Lantzville continued to participate in the RDN's organic food waste collection program. This is consistent with RGS Goal 1: Prepare for Climate Change and Reduce Energy Consumption, and Goal 10: Provide Services Efficiently.

**7.3 City of Parksville****Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Reserve**

The City and Vancouver Island University have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to support and protect the Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Reserve designation.

**Transportation Upgrades**

The City is in the process of making upgrades to Temple and Bay Streets, major thoroughfares in the City including road, sidewalk, traffic light and bicycle lanes. The upgrades to Temple Street (Phillips to Chinook) are 50% complete and scheduled for completion in June 2015. The Chinook to Bay preliminary design are also complete.

**Growth Management**

The majority of the City is within the Growth Containment Boundary and the new OCP policies support directing growth to the City and offering a range of densities throughout the City. Also, directing growth to municipal areas within the Growth Containment Boundary helps to promote and preserve rural integrity.

**Rath Trevor Park Upgrades**

The Rath Trevor trail pedestrian bridge preliminary investigations were completed in 2014, with approvals expected in 2015.

**Englishman River Water Service**

The City of Parksville and the RDN completed a community consultation project for the Englishman River Water Service project (water intake, water treatment, aquifer storage), including a working group, public open houses and new online engagement platform.

**Storm and Sanitary Sewer**

A draft update to the storm and sanitary sewer master plan was completed.

**7.4 Town of Qualicum Beach**

**Qualicum Beach Fire Hall**

Construction began on a new fire Hall that will use 73% less energy than a fire hall built to modern building code. A number of other green building features are also incorporated into the design, such as use of on-site timber, on-site stormwater management and water conservation. It is being built to post disaster standards and can function as an emergency operations centre.

**Qualicum Beach Waterfront Master Plan**

The Town began a comprehensive waterfront master plan that will provide a long-term strategy of climate adaptation for the waterfront.

**Qualicum Beach Digital Media Studio**

The Town renovated the old train station into a shared workplace for digital media professionals and other “life style entrepreneurs” that live in Qualicum Beach for the lifestyle but that work remotely.

**Qualicum Park Village**

In collaboration with the Qualicum – Parkville Affordable Housing Society, construction began on a 34 unit multi-unit affordable housing project next to downtown Qualicum Beach.

**Secondary suite review**

The Town completed a review of secondary suites policies, resulting in the legalization of detached secondary suites in many areas of the Town.

## 8 IMPLEMENTATION - 2015

For 2014 the RDN will continue to make progress on the following implementation items:

1. Establishing a process and program to monitor, evaluate and periodically report on regional economic, population, social and environmental trends and progress towards achieving RGS goals and policies and the targets to be established as set out in Policy 4.
2. Establishing a Corporate Implementation Strategy that demonstrates how all the RDN's bylaws, services, and spending are consistent with the adopted RGS.
3. Continuing to undertake a series of studies and actions as identified in Table 3 of the RGS which identifies specific goals, actions, primary responsible agency and expected timeline for completion.
4. Continuing to build stronger relationships and pursuing protocol agreements with First Nations.
5. Strengthening relationships with major institutions such as Island Health, Vancouver Island University, School District 68 and School District 69 and organizations key to furthering RGS Goals (e.g. Chambers of Commerce, Economic Development Groups, non-governmental / community organizations).

## APPENDIX: SUMMARY OF RGS IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

RGS GOAL / SECTION	ACTION	STATUS JANUARY 2015
Section 5.0	Establish Targets & Indicators to monitor progress.	RDN Board has approved the list of targets and indicators. Reporting to start in 2015.
Section 5.0	Corporate Implementation Strategy to show how RDN activities are consistent with RGS.	To be initiated in 2015
1. Climate Change	Complete Community Energy & Emissions Plan.	Completed 2013
2. Environmental Protection	Advocate for provincial and federal government support to update and maintain SEI databases.	Ongoing
	Encourage the Province to regulate groundwater, require reporting on water use and protect water resources on a watershed basis.	Ongoing
3. Coordinate land use & mobility	Initiate discussions with provincial and federal transportation authorities to share data collection and analysis and prepare mobility strategy.	Participated in the City of Nanaimo's Transportation Master Plan. – Adopted in 2014
	Prepare industrial land supply and demand study and strategy (also applies to Goal 7).	Industrial Lands Study completed Spring 2013.
4. Concentrate housing & jobs	Prepare region-wide study of Rural Village Centres.	Rural Village Centres Study completed Spring 2013.
5. Rural integrity	Policy 5.13: Implementation - Study of options for more sustainable forms of subdivision - to limit sprawl and fragmentation on rural residential land.	Completed October 2012
6. Affordable housing	Identify next steps to addressing affordable housing issues.	Housing Action Plan Completed 2011.



RGS GOAL / SECTION	ACTION	STATUS JANUARY 2015
		Secondary Suites Bylaw Amendments completed in Spring 2014.
7. Vibrant, resilient economy	7.2 Support and encourage economic development.	Northern Community Economic Development Program Established 2012 with ongoing implementation.  Southern Community Economic Development Service Agreement completed 2012 with ongoing implementation.
	7.6 Collaborate in the preparation of a regional industrial land supply strategy and ensure that the region remains competitive in its ability to attract industrial development.	Industrial Lands Study completed Spring 2013.
	7.9 Collaborate in the preparation of a commercial (retail and office) land strategy to ensure that the supply, location, distribution, form and type of commercial development is consistent with sustainability and growth management objectives of the RGS and supports the continued vitality of the sector.	To be initiated.
8. Food security	Prepare study of agriculture in the region to identify issues and present and future needs of the agricultural sector.	Agricultural Area Plan (AAP) completed in 2012.
		Agricultural Area Plan 2014-2016 Action Plan completed November 2013.  Committee established in 2013 to oversee carrying out the Action Plan during 2014-2016.

RGS GOAL / SECTION	ACTION	STATUS JANUARY 2015
		Emergency Livestock Evacuation Plan approved in 2013.
9. Pride of Place	Ongoing activities through implementation and development of parks plans and OCPs.	<p>Cedar Main Street Plan adopted 2013.</p> <p>City of Nanaimo Cultural Plan, adopted in 2014 and now being implemented.</p> <p>RDN Community Parks and Trails Guidelines approved 2014.</p> <p>RDN Community Parks and Trails Strategy for Electoral Areas 'E', 'F', 'G' and 'H' approved 2014.</p> <p>Qualicum Beach Cultural Plan completed 2012 with ongoing implementation.</p>
10. Efficient services	Prepare strategy for servicing Rural Village Centres (See Goal 4).	Will be pursued for different Rural Village Centres as funding permits.
11. Cooperation among jurisdictions	Continue outreach initiatives to First Nations including signing of protocol agreements.	<p>Ongoing outreach initiatives and discussions on areas of mutual interest.</p> <p>First handyDART servicing agreement signed between Snaw-Naw-As and RDN in 2013.</p>