

DISTRICT OF SQUAMISH

BYLAW NO. 2223, 2012.

A bylaw to amend the District of Squamish
Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2100, 2009.

WHEREAS the District of Squamish deems it necessary and appropriate to amend Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2100, 2009;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the District of Squamish, in open meeting assembled, enacts as follows:

1. This bylaw may be cited as "District of Squamish OCP Bylaw No. 2100, 2009, Amendment Bylaw (Regional Context Statement) No. 2223, 2012."
2. District of Squamish Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2100, 2009 is amended as follows:

By amending 'Part 2, Community Context, Subsection 7, Regional Context Statement' with the text contained in Schedule 'A'

READ A FIRST this day of 2012.

READ A SECOND TIME this day of 2012.

PURSUANT TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, NOTICE WAS ADVERTISED ON
AND 2012.

PUBLIC HEARING HELD on the day of 2012.

READ A THIRD TIME this day of 2012.

APPROVED BY THE SQUAMISH LILLOOET REGIONAL DISTRICT
this day of 2012.

ADOPTED this day of 2012.

Rob Kirkham, Mayor

R. Arthurs, General Manager, Corporate Services

Regional Context Statement

Introduction

On June 28, 2010 the Squamish Lillooet Regional District adopted a Regional Growth Strategy (RGS). The RGS contains strategic directions to promote socially, economically, and environmentally healthy settlements, and to ensure efficient use of public facilities, land, and other resources. It establishes nine major goals, as well as a section on implementation and monitoring:

- Goal 1: Focus Development into Compact, Complete, Sustainable Communities
- Goal 2: Improve Transportation Linkages and Options
- Goal 3: Support a Range of Quality Affordable Housing
- Goal 4: Achieve a Sustainable Economy
- Goal 5: Protect Natural Ecosystem Functioning
- Goal 6: Encourage the Sustainable Use of Parks and Natural Areas
- Goal 7: Create Healthy and Safe Communities
- Goal 8: Enhance Relations with Aboriginal Communities
- Goal 9: Improve Collaboration among Jurisdictions

The *Local Government Act* requires that each member municipality prepare a Regional Context Statement (RCS) following adoption of the RGS. The intent of this RCS is to indicate how Squamish's Official Community Plan (OCP) conforms to the provisions of the RGS, outlining:

- a. the extent to which the OCP is consistent with the RGS, and,
- b. if it is not consistent, how the municipality intends to bring itself into consistency over time.

The District's Regional Context Statement is a key implementation mechanism for the RGS. It maintains the District's authority to make local planning decisions, while ensuring that the Council and the Regional Board agree upon matters of legitimate regional interest.

RGS Strategic Directions

This section of the RCS illustrates how the District of Squamish will assist in achieving the nine goals established in the Regional Growth Strategy. Where changes to the District's OCP are required for consistency with the RGS, proposed actions are also outlined.

Goal 1: Focus Development into Compact, Complete, Sustainable Communities

The Regional Growth Strategy aims to encourage compact, complete sustainable communities as the basis for land use planning throughout the region. The efficient use of land is promoted, fostering greater transportation choices, the protection of agricultural land, natural areas and open spaces, and opportunities to live and work in the same community.

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The RGS directs major settlement growth to 'Urban Areas,' which are set out in a series of RGS Settlement Planning Maps. Within the District's OCP mapping, lands that are intended for current and future development are generally consistent with the RGS maps. One inconsistency is identified: The 'Urban Area' polygon in the RGS Squamish Settlement Planning Map (Map 1a) does not accurately reflect the correct boundaries of Squamish's northern neighbourhoods, which fall south of the Cheekeye Special Study Area (OCP Area Planning Map, Schedule I). The RGS map would benefit from a housekeeping amendment to create better alignment between the two documents and accurately reflect future development in the District. ***(See policy gap 'A' in Table 1.)***

The District's OCP prevents major development in the 'Non-Settlement Areas' designated in the RGS. Growth Management and Area Planning policies limit development in the community to comprehensively planned and complete residential communities suitable for efficient and cost effective delivery of services. Parks, natural areas, environmentally sensitive lands, and the Agricultural Land Reserve are identified as Limited Use.

Consistent with the RGS, Smart Growth strategies are promoted throughout the Squamish OCP. Comprehensive redevelopment of the Waterfront Landing and the Oceanfront are part of the District's plans to revitalize the downtown and adjacent waterfront areas through compact, mixed-use development, focusing higher density in close proximity to the downtown core.

The RGS strategic direction to prevent resort development from creating urban sprawl and to ensure infrastructure is contained within a development boundary will be addressed through future OCP policy development. Council has directed that additional OCP policy be developed, in the form of a 'Destination Resort Special Study Area' to provide guidance for any resort development proposed for within the District's boundaries. ***(See policy gap 'B' in Table 1.)***

Goal 2: Improve Transportation Linkages and Options

The RGS encourages compact, mixed-use development as a proactive means of addressing regional transportation, which is reflected in the OCP's Growth Management, Community Services, Residential, Transportation, and Energy policies.

Support for a collaborative approach to a regional transportation system is provided through OCP policy covering marine transportation linkages, the Squamish Port, partnering on regional transit, and incorporating marine, air, and rail into the local public transit networks. The RGS strategic direction to improve the safety and reliability of the regional road network is addressed through Squamish's 2031 Multi-Modal Transportation Plan. The OCP also encourages the continued development of trails and bicycle routes that provide for safe hiking, biking, and commuting in the region.

The RGS directs that regional air service be approached in a collaborative manner. This is partially addressed through Squamish OCP policies identifying the importance of the Squamish Airport for commercial, industrial, and employment purposes. Developing a long-term vision for the airport and exploring its regional role, if any, is intended as a future policy exercise. Previous planning processes must be taken into account, in particular, the community referendum undertaken in 2000 that supported limiting use of the Squamish Airport to small-scale, local operations servicing the community. Any future policy exercise will be subject to the limitations supported by the community referendum, or any future referendums. ***(See policy gap 'C' in Table 1.)***

Goal 3: Support a Range of Quality Affordable Housing

The RGS strategic direction to consider a regional affordable housing strategy is addressed through the District's Residential OCP policies. The District commits to working in co-operation with other agencies and community groups to support residents with limited housing choices, and implementing its Affordable Housing Strategy, adopted in 2005. The OCP supports policies and regulations to ensure a range of housing forms and tenures, supports the development of secondary suites, maintaining a reserve fund for affordable housing, and where appropriate, density bonusing for development proposals that include an affordable housing component.

Goal 4: Achieve a Sustainable Economy

The RGS strategic direction to support further sector-based economic development strategies appropriate to the region is addressed throughout the OCP. The importance to the local economy of marine-based activities, the municipal airport, alternative energy technology, knowledge-based industries, forestry, film, and outdoor recreation are emphasized in the policies. Industrial land policies commit to protecting Squamish's employment land base in order to create a diversified economy, healthy tax base, and higher paying jobs.

The RGS encourages member municipalities to provide the basis for new agricultural investment and protection of the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). The District's OCP supports urban agriculture and the production, processing, sale, and distribution of locally grown products, and recognizes the importance of agriculture, but strong support for maintaining lands within the Agricultural Land Reserves and building the agriculture industry is not provided. To achieve alignment with the RGS, the District has committed to develop more in-depth policy to support local agriculture and the preservation of Squamish's agricultural lands through the future development of an Agricultural Area Plan. **(See policy gap 'D' in Table 1.)**

The RGS encourages further work to advance a regional strategy addressing Independent Power Projects (IPP) proposed within the SLRD and member municipalities, framed within the context of integrated watershed management. The District's OCP encourages participation in development of this regional strategy, addressing community values and environmental protection, as well as support for the development of low-impact, renewable energy sources.

OCP policies also support the RGS strategic direction to collaboratively enhance national and international awareness of the region's suitability for sustainable business investments.

Goal 5: Protect Natural Ecosystem Functioning

Consistent with the RGS, the OCP encourages a collaborative approach to inventorying and protecting ecologically sensitive areas through Sub-Area Plans, the Sea to Sky Sensitive Habitat Atlas, and the Squamish ecosystem mapping project.

The OCP encourages use of innovative development standards for stormwater management to preserve aquatic resources, and encourages the development of water conservation policies and programs.

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The RGS strategic direction to strive for continuous improvement of regional air quality via the Sea to Sky Air Quality Management Plan and Smart Growth principles is addressed through the OCP's Growth Management and Energy policies. The application of Smart Growth principles is required in all Sub-Area Plans. Transportation policies identify alternative transportation options and encourage reduction of single vehicle occupancy to improve air quality. Greenhouse gas reduction targets and actions are also established within the OCP.

The OCP contains policies requiring environmentally responsible management of weeds and invasive species. Community stewardship efforts, including Bear Smart programs and ecological restoration projects, are encouraged through the OCP's Environment policies. Bear Smart principles in waste management are a requirement of development, and striving for zero waste is encouraged. The preparation of a regional climate change strategy is supported.

The RGS encourages member municipalities to explore the possibility of adopting the Natural Step sustainability framework, which has strong support in the Sea to Sky Corridor. The Natural Step is a trademarked program that sets out a series of steps and principles that organisations can use to build strategies toward sustainability. Other sustainability frameworks, such as Smart Growth principles and transit-oriented design, are also implemented within the SLRD. To reflect the range of possible methods and frameworks for improving our communities, the District encourages a minor amendment to the RGS providing support for the Natural Step, Smart Growth, and other equivalent sustainability frameworks. ***(See policy gap 'E' in Table 1.)***

Goal 6: Encourage the Sustainable Use of Parks and Natural Areas

The RGS strategic direction to support existing provincial parks as recreational and natural areas, and support adventure tourism activities is reflected the OCP's Park policies. The importance of municipal and provincial parks within and adjacent to the municipality is recognized. There are a number of policies supporting green corridors, 'blue ways', an interconnected network of trails, and the Sea-to-Sky Regional Trail. RGS direction to explore options for managing green spaces at a regional level, and establishing a no-net loss policy is also reflected in the OCP. OCP policies direct the District to acquire land for parks and work with government agencies, community organizations, and private landowners to formalize and maintain a trail network. The District commits to engaging the community in the development of the trail system, assisting with the maintenance of trails and facilities, and partnering with local organizations to promote rock climbing and mountaineering activities.

Reflecting the RGS's direction to protect wildlife and other valued ecosystem components within the open space system, the District's OCP policies state that within developments, lands along water courses are to be incorporated into the open space system and stream crossings are to be minimized. On lands designated as 'Park,' management plans should balance ecological preservation with recreation. Areas for off-road motorized recreation should be identified in conjunction with other stakeholders, and noise and pollution associated with these activities must be managed.

OCP policies support the preservation of undeveloped Crown land designated as 'Non-Settlement Areas' in the RGS, and public access to these lands. Access to oceanfront locations, the Mamquam Blind Channel, local rivers, sea dykes, and other waterbodies are recognized as critical to the District's open space system.

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The RGS encourages municipalities to provide suitable recreation facilities for the growing population and tourism industry. The OCP's Park policies reflect this, stating that community parks and open space facilities are to be provided, including sports fields, natural areas, trails, and other special purpose areas. These amenities are intended to promote Squamish, and the region as a whole, as a world-class outdoor recreation destination. Water-based recreation, rock climbing, bouldering, mountaineering, and the provision of access, facilities, and services for these activities are supported.

Goal 7: Create Healthy and Safe Communities

The RGS strategic direction to work in conjunction with regional health authorities, local social development organizations, School Districts, the RCMP, and Tribal Police to promote public policy for a healthy community is supported by a range of OCP policies. Support for parks and trail networks, municipal services, youth programs, environmental principles, safety and reliability of the regional road network, and compact, walkable communities all contribute to a healthier Squamish. Additional policies for a community health address community gardens, universally accessible housing, aging-in-place, and management of hazard areas. The OCP's Community Services policies state that the District is to work with Vancouver Coastal Health, School District #48, government agencies, and other non-profit service providers to identify and address social needs and issues, and to maximize social service delivery.

The RGS directs that emergency planning be approached on a regional basis. In the District's OCP and the 2008 Squamish Nation Protocol Agreement, planning for fire protection, natural hazard management, and 911 emergency services are addressed. The OCP encourages hazard risk assessment and reduction strategies to be developed with senior levels of government.

Goal 8: Enhance Relations with Aboriginal Communities

The RGS strategic direction to support fair and timely resolution of aboriginal rights and title is addressed through the 2008 Squamish Nation Protocol Agreement. This agreement includes statements of intent to collaborate with the Squamish Nation on matters relating to land use, economic development opportunities on Crown land, and future treaty negotiations. Information sharing protocols and consultation tools for matters of joint interest, such as land use, servicing, and economic development, are addressed through the District's OCP. Referral requirements during the development or revision of District policy are also included in the OCP.

The 2011 Intergovernmental Cooperation Accord meets the RGS's strategic direction to encourage coordinated local government land use planning through discussions and referral processes with First Nations. The OCP sets out commitments to work with the Squamish Nation to harmonize land use and resource plans, and provide services to reserve lands under negotiated servicing agreements.

Goal 9: Improve Collaboration among Jurisdictions

The RGS encourages the development of regional working groups and memorandums of understanding to share information, collaborate with other jurisdictions, and resolve conflicts. The 2008 Squamish Nation Protocol Agreement, the 2011 Intergovernmental Cooperation Accord, and a range of OCP policies address this. For examples, under Growth Management, the District is directed to work in conjunction with the SLRD and member municipalities to manage growth through regional planning. The

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OCP also contains policy stating the District's commitment to participating in committees and planning exercises of regional interest, should they be established.

Monitoring and Implementation

As set out in Part 4 of the RGS, preparation and adoption of the RCS is a key implementation tool that serves to implement the RGS directives within the District's OCP. To measure progress in RGS implementation, the RGS sets out performance monitoring objectives and suggests key indicators for the nine RGS Goals. District policies addressing this include:

- i. a review of the Growth Management Strategy every five years;
- ii. support for coordination, cooperation, and monitoring of transportation at a regional level;
- iii. commitment to initiate a monitoring program within two years of OCP adoption;
- iv. a bi-annual review of District population projections, and dissemination of population data to other agencies; and,
- v. recognition that changes to the OCP may be required in response to changing conditions, community trends, and priorities.

The OCP also states that the District's OCP monitoring program is to reflect the monitoring recommendations made in the RGS. The District will consider incorporating RGS performance monitoring core indicators within the OCP monitoring framework.

RCS Implementation

The following table summarizes the implementation steps required to bring the District's OCP into consistency with the RGS overtime.

Table 1. Regional Context Statement Implementation

Policy Gap	Action	Timeline
A. The 'Urban Area' polygon in the RGS Squamish Settlement Planning Map (Map 1a) does not accurately reflect the correct boundary of Squamish's northern neighbourhoods.	Recommendation: That RGS Map 1a be amended according to the OCP to accurately reflect Squamish's northern neighbourhoods.	Dependent on SLRD process.
B. The OCP policy to guide appropriate resort development within the District boundaries requires additional detail and an in-depth policy exercise.	Further OCP policy will be developed, specifically, a new set of development parameters for the 'Destination Resort Special Study Area.'	2 - 5 years from adoption of the RCS.
C. The OCP does not provide a long-term vision for the airport, or explore its regional role, if any.	OCP policy will be developed, exploring regional air service planning, and reflecting previous planning exercises.	5 - 10 years from adoption of the RCS.

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D. Strong support for the preservation of agricultural lands and building the agriculture industry is lacking.	An Agricultural Area Plan will be developed.	2 years from adoption of the RCS.
E. The RGS encourages member municipalities to explore the possibility of adopting the Natural Step sustainability framework, which is not referenced in the OCP.	Recommendation: That the RGS be amended to provide additional support for equivalent sustainability frameworks.	Dependent on SLRD process.