
TO: Paul Thompson
Manager of Long Range Planning

DATE: January 2, 2015

FROM: Lisa Bhopalsingh
Senior Planner

FILE: 6780 30

**SUBJECT: Regional Growth Strategy Indicators and Targets Project -
Recommended Indicators and Targets**

PURPOSE

To provide the results of community engagement and recommend a list of indicators and targets to monitor the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS).

BACKGROUND

On July 22, 2014, the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) Board directed staff to proceed with Stage 3 Community Engagement of a Board-approved project to select indicators and set targets to monitor annual progress towards the goals of the RGS.

Monitoring progress and evaluating the effectiveness of actions undertaken by the RDN and member local governments to achieve RGS goals, is part of being “*accountable for our decisions and actions*”, one of the sustainability principles that the RGS is founded on and a central theme in the RDN’s 2013-2015 Board Strategic Plan. The project, approved by the RDN Board in January 2014, is also consistent with the requirements of Section 869 of the *Local Government Act* and related RGS policies that provide direction to monitor the RGS and produce annual progress reports.

Attachment 1 outlines the timeline and five steps identified in the project Terms of Reference. This report on the results and analysis of community feedback received during Stage 3 also forms part of Stage 4 of the project by presenting a list of recommended indicators and targets for RDN Board consideration.

Process for Developing a Final List of Recommended Indicators and Targets

To date, the following tasks identified in Stages 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the project Terms of Reference have been completed and used to develop a final list of recommended indicators and targets:

Stage 1 – Background Information

- Monitoring Background Report prepared.
- Information sheets explaining monitoring, indicators and targets completed.
- Website with information on the indicators and targets project created.

- Terms of Reference for setting targets and choosing indicators to measure RGS progress, drafted and approved by the RDN Board January 28, 2014.
- List of approximately 100 potential indicators identified using prior monitoring experience, information currently collected by the RDN and other agencies, and new research.
- Using evaluation criteria established in the Terms of Reference, the list of potential indicators was narrowed down to a draft shortlist of 46 indicators. Suitable targets for the RGS goals were identified relating to the 46 shortlisted indicators.

Stage 2 – Verify Indicators and Targets

- Workshop held on March 31, 2014 with RDN staff and ‘relevant professionals’ comprised of RDN staff, and staff from member municipalities and provincial agencies. The purpose of the workshop was to review and verify the shortlist of indicators and targets for monitoring the RGS.
- Compiled and analysed workshop feedback. This included conducting additional research to create a refined list of approximately 20 recommended indicators and targets to be reviewed by RDN Board members. A list of ‘Future Indicators’ was also identified for use once data improved along with information considered useful as ‘Supporting Statistics’ that complimented the recommended indicators.
- Provided information on the outcome of the workshop to RDN Board members and received comments and direction on the draft list of recommended indicators and targets.
- Conducted further research and analysis based on feedback from RDN Board members. RDN Board members indicated support for the majority of the recommendations, resulting in a few changes to the draft list of indicators and targets.
- Prepared a draft report titled “Stage 2 – Confirmation of Indicators and Targets”. This report presented a draft list of 21 indicators and targets and the rationale for recommending their use.

Stage 3 – Community Feedback

- July 22, 2014 the RDN Board approved use of a draft list of indicators and targets to gather community feedback.
- Prepared and conducted an online survey to obtain feedback on draft list of indicators and targets. The survey ran from August to October 2014 and was advertised through the RDN website, social media, earned media (newspaper and radio), transit ads, libraries, e-mail lists and community notice boards.
- 258 people participated in the survey by providing responses to one or more questions.

Stage 4 – Finalize Indicators and Targets

- Survey results compiled.
- Prepared report titled “Stage 3 and 4 – Community Feedback and Recommended Indicators and Targets” (Attachment 2). This report summarizes the survey results and presents recommendations for the RDN Board to consider for a list of indicators and targets (Attachment 3).

Next Steps

Following approval from the RDN Board, the finalized indicators and targets will be used to initiate an ongoing RGS monitoring program. The results of monitoring will be communicated to the public and other interested parties through a variety of methods focusing on those that received a high level of support in the survey (including e-mail, the RDN website, and electronic newsletters and reports).

Efforts will also continue to explore suitable indicators and targets for Climate Change Adaptation (Goal 1) and Cooperation Among Jurisdictions (Goal 11).

Once a baseline has been established and data collected for the first year of monitoring indicators, staff will seek direction from the RDN Board regarding setting more specific measurable targets and aligning resources to achieve them.

ALTERNATIVES

1. That staff proceed with initiating a program to monitor the RGS using the recommended list of indicators and targets as described in the attached report.
2. That staff not proceed with initiating a program to monitor the RGS using the recommended list of indicators and targets as described in the attached report and, be provided with alternate direction.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Long Range Planning Department budget for 2015 includes funds to cover costs associated with Stage 5 – Initiating a Monitoring Program and developing a web based reporting system as outlined in the project Terms of Reference.

It is anticipated that once a system of collecting and reporting data is established, the costs of updating and reporting will be lower in subsequent years. As noted in earlier reports, the costs of regularly monitoring the RGS will be lower if the list of indicators remains focused on a practical number that shows meaningful progress towards the RGS goals and, are either provided free of charge or, can be developed at a low cost in-house.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

This project is consistent with the RDN Board Strategic Plan 2013-2015 as detailed below:

Monitoring and Communication

The Board Strategic Plan establishes RDN Board values for being '*Transparent and Accountable*' and identifies strategic priorities for '*Monitoring and Communication*' that directly relate to monitoring the RGS: "*Monitoring progress is necessary to determine the effectiveness of our actions. Projects can be measured against criteria or targets that highlight their intended effects. Over time, such measurements demonstrate which actions are most successful....*" (Page 19).

Regional Collaboration and Cooperation

Consultation during Stage 2 of this project, with 'relevant professionals', included staff from the RDN member municipalities. This worked towards the Board Strategic Plan action to "*foster a cooperative working environment between staff at the RDN and in the region's municipalities*" (2-b, Page 23) and enhance regional cooperation at higher levels.

Community Engagement

The approach to public consultation involved in Stage 3 of this project and the overall purpose of this project is aligned with direction in the Board Strategic Plan to “*Engage residents and other stakeholders about RDN decision-making and progress toward regional goals and objectives*” (4-a, Page 23).

As documented in the RGS Monitoring Background Report and Terms of Reference, prior monitoring efforts involved a high level of consultation with ‘relevant professionals’, community members and other stakeholders. Many of the recommended indicators in this report have been used in past RGS monitoring and have already been endorsed by the community and RDN Board through past consultation processes.

Given the extent of prior community and stakeholder input on suitable RGS indicators, the approach to public consultation focused on providing opportunities for stakeholders and the wider community to ‘confirm’ the draft list of recommended indicators and targets.

Community engagement during Stage 3 of this project concentrated on using an online survey which proved to be quite successful in terms of number of participants. Community feedback from the survey was compiled and used to recommend a final list of indicators and targets for the RDN Board to consider (Attachments 2 and 3).

As outlined in the attached report, the survey results confirm clear support from the majority of respondents for the 21 indicators and targets presented for community feedback. Based on feedback from the survey and other stakeholders, the indicators and targets received overall support. While the draft indicators stay the same, the wording for some of the indicators and targets has been modified based on feedback showing the need for clarification. One additional indicator, measuring surface water quality, has also been moved from the “Supporting Statistics and Future Indicators” list to the core list as data is now consistently available. This brings the list of core indicators to 22.

Subject to Board approval, Stage 5 of the project will involve initiating a monitoring program using the Board approved list of indicators and targets and, communicating the results in a meaningful manner to community members and different interest groups.

Managing Regional Growth

Under the area of Strategic and Community Development, the Board Strategic Plan (page 25) identifies implementing the Regional Growth Strategy and specifically establishing “*performance targets to monitor how development across the region is consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy.*” Using indicators to monitor whether or not progress is being made to achieve growth management goals will enable the RDN to determine the effectiveness of actions being taken and the need to adjust them.

Aside from a few ‘specific’ targets already endorsed by the Board through other processes (e.g. Solid Waste Management Plans, Water Service Plans), the majority of proposed targets for the RGS are ‘directional’. These directional targets show the RDN’s intent to generally work towards improving the performance of an indicator without committing to a specific level of improvement in an established timeframe.

Comments received through the survey indicate a desire to see specific targets set for more indicators. It is recommended that consideration of establishing more specific targets be undertaken after baseline data has been established for indicators in the first year of the monitoring program. Setting more

specific targets will require RDN Board direction because for targets to be realistic and achievable within a set time frame decisions have to be made about priorities on actions to achieve targets.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS

This staff report provides an update of activities undertaken to complete the Regional Growth Strategy Indicators and Targets Project. These activities are consistent with actions identified in the project Terms of Reference approved by the Board in January 2014. Staff research, feedback from ‘relevant professionals’ and, direction from the RDN Board was used to develop a list of 21 draft indicators. The RDN Board approved using the draft list to obtain community feedback.

The attached report summarizes community feedback and confirms that the RDN is generally on the right track with the draft list of indicators and targets. Feedback was used to make minor clarifications to the wording of the indicators and targets. Changes to data availability allowed for the inclusion of an additional indicator previously identified as a “Supporting Statistic” and “Future Indicator”. The result is a list of 22 recommended indicators and targets considered suitable for monitoring the RGS on an annual basis (Attachment 3).

The process of setting targets and selecting indicators is central to monitoring progress towards RGS goals. Monitoring progress ensures that the RDN and member local governments are aware of the impacts and effectiveness of their decisions on creating a more sustainable and resilient community. The purpose of choosing indicators, setting targets and measuring progress towards RGS goals is to enable the RDN to better understand the effectiveness of actions being taken. In addition to meeting legislative requirements, this is part of the RDN’s commitment to being accountable to citizens.

RECOMMENDATION

That staff be directed to proceed with initiating a program to monitor the RGS using the recommended list of indicators and targets identified in the attached report.

Report Writer

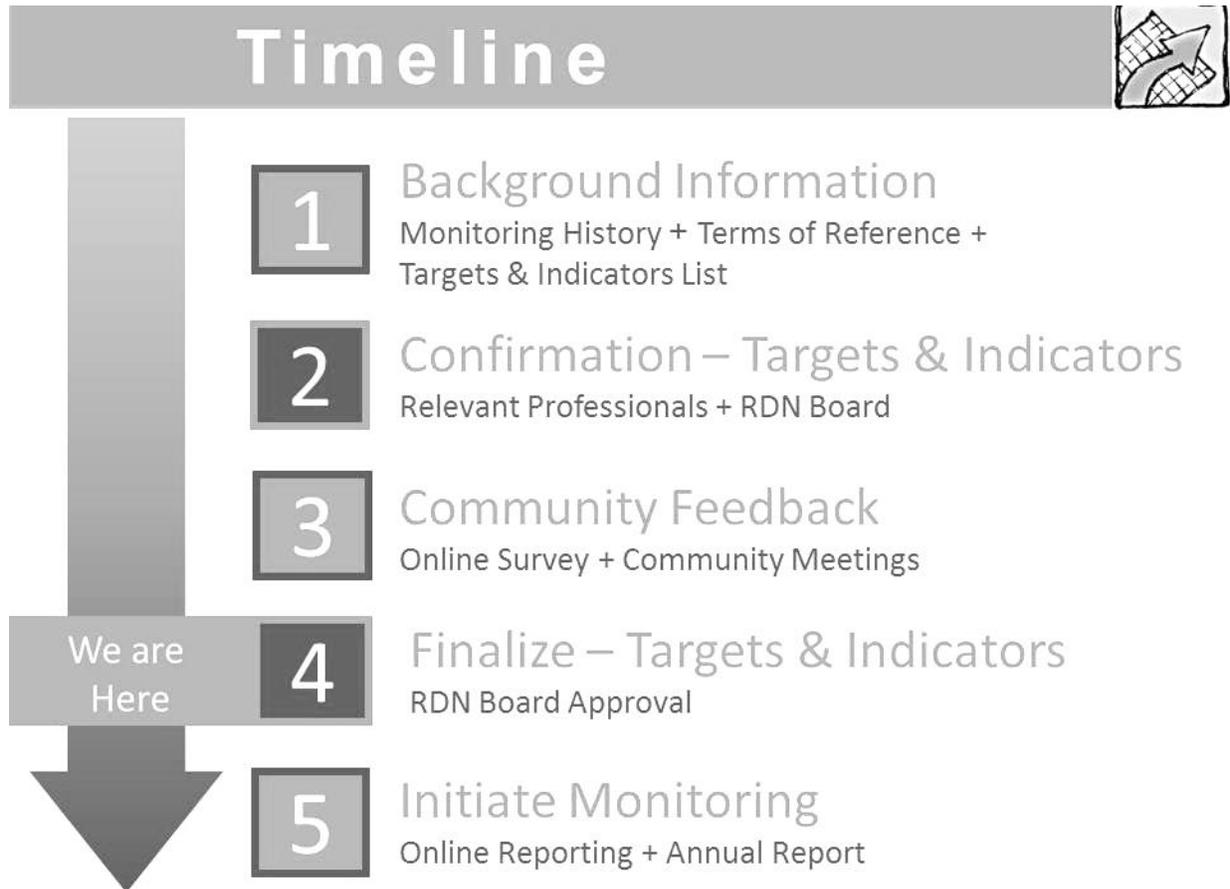
General Manager Concurrence

Manager Concurrence

CAO Concurrence

Attachment No. 1

Project Timeline / Board Approved Process for Setting Targets and Selecting Indicators



Attachment No. 2

Stages 3 and 4 – Community Feedback and Recommended Indicators and Targets

Provided as a Separate Attachment

Attachment No. 3

List of Recommended Indicators and Targets

#	RECOMMENDED INDICATORS	RECOMMENDED TARGETS
	Goal 1: Prepare for Climate Change and Reduce Energy Consumption	
1	Total community GHG emissions	Reduce GHG emissions 33% below 2007 levels by 2020 and 80% by 2050
2	Per capita Non-Renewable energy use	Reduce per capita Non-Renewable energy use (% or #)
3	Total community energy use	Reduce total community energy use (% or #)
	Goal 2: Protect the Environment	
4	Total water consumption (residential and commercial)	Reduce average residential and commercial water use by 33% between 2004 and 2018
5	Surface water quality (Community Watershed Monitoring) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temperature • Dissolved Oxygen • Turbidity 	Improve surface water quality
6	Amount of land in protected areas (Ha)	Increase the amount of land in protected areas (Ha)
	Goal 3: Coordinate Land Use and Mobility	
7	Number of households within a set distance (400 m) of employment lands, shopping, schools, transit and recreation facilities	Increase the number of households living within close proximity to places to work, play, learn and shop
8	Per capita transit use	Increase per capita transit use
	Goal 4: Concentrate Housing & Jobs in Rural Village & Urban Growth Centres	
9	Population inside and outside the Growth Containment Boundary (GCB)	Increase the proportion of the population living within the GCB (%)
10	Diversity of land use (ratio) inside the GCB	Increase land use diversity inside the GCB
11	Density of dwelling units inside and outside the GCB <i>* Note GCB changes over time</i>	Increase the density of dwelling units within the GCB (%)

#	RECOMMENDED INDICATORS	RECOMMENDED TARGETS
Goal 5: Enhance Rural Integrity		
12	The number of new lots/units created through subdivision inside and outside the GCB	Increase the portion of development inside the GCB
13	Number of parcels with Farm Status	Increase the number of parcels with Farm Status
14	The amount of land classified as Private Managed Forest Land (PMFL)	Increase the amount of land available for natural resource uses (farming, forestry, outdoor recreation)
Goal 6: Facilitate the Provision of Affordable Housing		
15	The total number of rental units affordable to households with income below 50% of the median income for the region	Increase the portion of households living in housing that meets their needs (appropriate, adequate, adaptable, sustainable, affordable and attainable housing) (% or #)
16	The portion of units in each housing type inside the GCB (Diversity of housing types in the GCB)	Increase the portion of non-Single Family Dwellings inside the GCB (% or #; could have different targets for Urban Areas and Rural Village Centres)
Goal 7: Enhance Economic Resiliency		
17	[Unemployment] Employment Rate and Labour Participation Rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain an unemployment rate of between 3-6% • Increase the Labour Force Participation Rate
Goal 8: Enhance Food Security		
	Number of parcels with Farm Status (Same as Goal 5)	Increase the number of parcels with Farm Status
Goal 9: Celebrate Pride of Place		
18	The amount of publically owned land designated for parks and community use (including land in protected areas, community use parks, and recreational facilities such as pools, ice rinks, etc.) Similar to Goal 2	Increase the amount of publically owned land for parks and recreational facilities
19	Per capita length of maintained public trails (including trails, paths, laneways)	Increase per capita length of maintained public trails

#	RECOMMENDED INDICATORS	RECOMMENDED TARGETS
	Goal 10: Provide Services Efficiently	
20	Per capita waste disposal	Decrease the per capita amount of waste going to the landfill (amount of waste sent to the landfill per person) below 350kg/person *Note that this is an interim target pending the completion of the 2014 Solid Waste Management Plan
21	Per capita cost to provide water and sewer systems	Decrease per capita cost of water and sewer
22	Per capita length of roads (length of paved roads per person)	Decrease the per capita length of roads
	Goal 11: Enhance Cooperation Among Jurisdictions	
	See Future Indicators Table Staff will continue to explore options for a suitable indicator	