

Perspectives

A REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO PUBLICATION | SUMMER 2012

Agricultural Area Plan Update

The Regional District of Nanaimo has partnered with the Investment Agriculture Foundation of B.C. to develop a region-wide Agricultural Area Plan with input from farmers, food producers and consumers. The intent of this Plan is to increase public awareness and support for agriculture in our region.

The Draft Agricultural Area Plan is now available online after extensive public dialogue including focus groups, open houses, and one-on-one conversations with individuals in the community. All RDN residents are encouraged to read the recommended goals and actions identified in the Draft Plan and to provide comments. To view the Draft Plan, please visit the Agricultural Area Plan web site at www.growingourfuture.ca and click on "Get Involved". The Technical Background Report, additional information and engaging videos about 'Agriculture in Action' in our region are also available on the web site.

The Agricultural Area Plan process is a region-wide initiative that began in early 2011. It is funded in part by the RDN, and by the Investment Agriculture Foundation of B.C. through programs it delivers on behalf of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture. Upland Consulting is guiding the project in collaboration with the RDN's Agricultural Advisory Committee.

In addition to the Draft Plan, the process has included the completion of an agricultural land use inventory and the development of a technical background report and a public consultation report.

For more information, please contact the RDN Development Services Department at 250-390-6510 or email agriculture@rdn.bc.ca.

Regional Growth Strategy Adoption & Implementation

In late 2011, the Regional District of Nanaimo Board of Directors updated the Regional Growth Strategy, officially replacing the 2003 Regional Growth Strategy and encouraging a more sustainable pattern of population growth and development in the region over the next 25 years.

The updated strategy includes several sustainability goals addressing climate change, groundwater protection, food security, affordable housing and economic development. It also encourages the majority of new development to remain within designated growth containment boundaries around urban areas in RDN member municipalities and the rural village centres of the Electoral Areas. Having more compact growth is essential to creating more resilient, sustainable communities where residents are able to walk, cycle or use transit to access services, commute to work, or participate in community activities.

The RDN is currently taking a variety of actions to meet the sustainability goals identified in the RGS, including the following for 2012:



Choosing Indicators & Targets to measure progress towards RGS goals



Industrial Lands Supply & Demand Study to determine whether existing land supply is sufficient to meet anticipated demand consistent with sustainability goals



Rural Village Centres Study to assess the potential of all village centres to develop into mixed-use centres



Alternative Forms of Rural Development to consider options for more sustainable forms of residential development in rural areas
<http://island-planning.net/rural-development>

To read the Regional Growth Strategy, and learn more about how it is being implemented visit www.rdn.bc.ca and click on **Services/Long Range Planning/Regional Growth Strategy**.



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- 4 Transit Service Expansion

www.rdn.bc.ca



watershed



drinking
water



recreation



economic
development

Regional Services Review

In 2011 the RDN completed a Regional Services Review that focused on economic development, drinking water and watershed protection and cost-sharing for District 69 recreation facilities. The process involved examining a number of RDN funding formulas and making changes to better reflect the benefit to residents.

As a result of the Regional Services Review, the RDN has now established Economic Development functions in its northern and southern communities, and has expanded the Drinking Water and Watershed Protection Program to include all Electoral Areas and municipalities. Both initiatives are described in detail below. **These new functions demonstrate the RDN Board's commitment to working together for the mutual benefit of all RDN residents.**

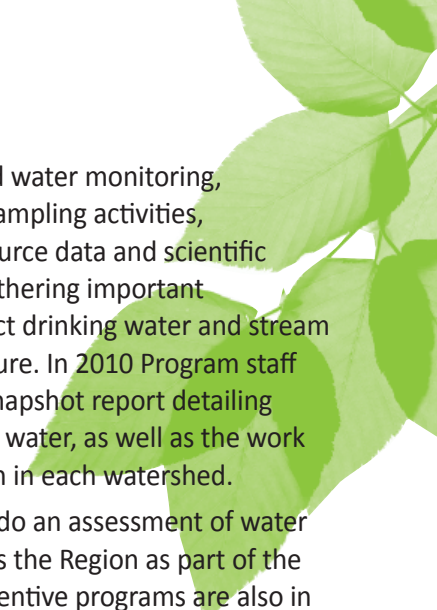
Drinking Water & Watershed Protection Program

The Drinking Water Watershed Protection Program (DWWPP) is now provided throughout the Regional District of Nanaimo, with all four municipalities and seven Electoral Areas working together to fund this important service. The Program assists the RDN Board in its decision-making by collaborating with local community groups, provincial and federal government agencies, municipalities and residents to learn more about drinking water in the Region. It also works with residents to protect shared water resources.



**DRINKING WATER
WATERSHED
PROTECTION**

When the RDN established the Program in January, 2009, the service was provided in Electoral Areas only. As a result of the 2011 Regional Services Review, the RDN Board determined along with its member municipalities, that the service should be region-wide. Nanaimo, Parksville and Qualicum Beach joined the service in 2011, while Lantzville began participating in the spring of 2012.



Through increased ground water monitoring, volunteer-based stream sampling activities, compilation of water resource data and scientific studies, the DWWPP is gathering important information to help protect drinking water and stream health now and in the future. In 2010 Program staff completed a watershed snapshot report detailing residents' concerns about water, as well as the work the DWWPP is focusing on in each watershed.

In 2012, the DWWPP will do an assessment of water supply and demand across the Region as part of the Water Budget Project. Incentive programs are also in place for residents who purchase rainwater harvesting cisterns or efficient toilets for their homes.

For more information about the Program, visit www.rdn.bc.ca and click on **Services/Drinking Water & Watershed Protection**. For more information about water protection incentives, please visit www.rdnrebates.ca or call 250 390 6560 or 250 954 3792.

Economic Development

The RDN Board established Economic Development as a regional service in November, 2011. The Service is provided separately for the participating Southern and Northern RDN communities.

The Southern Community Economic Development Service is a Service Agreement between the RDN and the Nanaimo Economic Development Corporation. This enables the RDN and the City of Nanaimo to work jointly with the Nanaimo Economic Development Corporation on activities that improve the economic resilience of communities in Nanaimo and Electoral Areas A, B and C.

The Northern Community Economic Development Service operates as a grant program, where the RDN Board contributes funding to eligible economic development initiatives that advance the Board's vision for a strong, thriving and creative local economy. This service is provided in the City of Parksville, Town of Qualicum Beach and Electoral Areas E, F, G and H.

Information about both services, including grant application information for the Northern Community Economic Development Service, is available at www.rdn.bc.ca. Information about the economic development service in Electoral Areas A, B and C is available at www.investnanaimo.com.

Camping in Regional Parks

If you're on the lookout for the perfect summer campsite, be sure to check out Descanso Bay Regional Park or Horne Lake Regional Park. Both Regional Parks are open for family camping and day use.

Descanso Bay Regional Park on Gabriola Island is a 40-acre oceanfront park ideal for kayaking. The Park is

located around the corner from the ferry terminal and adjacent to Cox Community Park with its great network of walking trails.

Horne Lake Regional Park is situated at the west end of Horne Lake right next to Horne Lake Caves Provincial Park. At 260 acres, the Regional Park provides plenty of space for waterfront camping, boating and exploring.

*For more information or to book a campsite at one of these regional parks, please call (250) 248-3252 or 1-888-828-2069, or visit www.rdn.bc.ca and click on **Services/Parks/RDN Camping**.*

Firefighting in the RDN

Fifteen fire departments operate 23 fire halls throughout the Regional District, providing fire protection for all four municipalities and most unincorporated areas.

The nine fire departments not administered by the RDN are administered and financed by municipalities and improvement districts.

All six RDN Volunteer Fire Department Societies are now seeking volunteers, and anyone interested in helping out is encouraged to contact their local Fire Department. RDN Volunteer Fire Department Societies include Bow Horn Bay, Coombs-Hilliers, Dashwood, Errington, Extension and Nanoose Bay. The RDN collects property taxes for these fire departments, and provides financing for their operations and capital expenses.

*For more information about fire protection in the RDN, including contact information for all Fire Departments, visit www.rdn.bc.ca and click on **Services/Fire Protection**.*



Descanso Bay Regional Park

Regional District of Nanaimo Transit Update

Transit riders in the RDN have more flexibility in their summer schedules now that **Regional District of Nanaimo Transit and BC Transit have increased service by over 5000 hours.**

In March 2012, RDN Transit began making more frequent trips to major hubs including Departure Bay Ferry Terminal, Vancouver Island University, Nanaimo Regional General Hospital and Woodgrove Centre. In addition, the new Route #99—Deep Bay offers Monday-only service from the Deep Bay area to Woodgrove Centre and back. (Please note that this service does not operate on statutory holidays.)



Transit buses are wheelchair accessible, and are equipped with bike racks to increase recreational and commuter travel options. Transit fares are \$2.50 for adults and \$2.25 for students and seniors. Children five and under ride for free. Monthly passes, DayPASSES, ProPASSES and books of transit tickets are also available.

RDN Transit is continuing to provide service improvements throughout the region. For more information on RDN Transit schedules and fares, call 250 390-4531 (Nanaimo area) or 250 954-1001 (Parksville/Qualicum Beach area) or visit www.rdn.bc.ca and click on **Services/Regional Transit**. Current transit information is also available on the RDN Transit Facebook and Twitter pages.

Green Bin Program — Compostable vs. Biodegradable Bags

Using bags to line your Green Bin or kitchen catcher is optional but if you do use liner bags, it's important to make sure you are using the correct kind. Compostable bags are designed to be used in curbside collection compost programs. The bags degrade quickly and do not affect the quality of the compost. Biodegradable bags degrade more slowly and, while they will work for material that is taken to a landfill, they can cause issues in a compost program.

When the collection staff finds inappropriate bags in the Green Bin the container is not collected and a non-compliance tag is left advising the resident of the reason.

Acceptable certified compostable bags will be identified by one of these two logos*:

**Paper bags do not require this logo*



Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI) US Composting Council



Bureau de Normalisation du Quebec (BNQ)

The following retailers within the RDN currently carry compostable bags:

49th Parallel Grocery (<i>Cedar</i>)	Naked Naturals Whole Foods (<i>Parksville</i>)
Back to Nature (<i>Qualicum Beach</i>)	Quality Foods
Canadian Tire	Real Canadian Superstore
Costco	Rona
Country Grocer (<i>Nanaimo</i>)	Save On Foods
Dollarama	Shoppers Drug Mart
Great Canadian Dollar Store	The Green Store (<i>Nanaimo</i>)
Harvest Thyme Whole Foods (<i>Gabriola Island</i>)	The Home Depot
HBC Zellers	The Soap Exchange (<i>Nanaimo</i>)
Home Hardware	Thrifty Foods
Island Cleaning Supplies (<i>Parksville</i>)	Tomm's Food Village (<i>Bowser</i>)
Island Natural Markets (<i>Nanaimo</i>)	Village Food Market (<i>Gabriola Island</i>)
Lantzville Market	Walmart
London Drugs	



Remember, you don't need to use liner bags in your Green Bin or kitchen catcher. You can place food waste directly into the containers and then rinse or wash as needed. Another option is to wrap food waste in newspaper, or use a paper food bag, cereal box or a paper milk carton (with the plastic spout removed) to collect scraps.

For more information about the Green Bin visit www.beyondcomposting.ca.