



Green House Gas and Energy Use

Possible Change:

The updated RGS will include targets and measures for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, reducing energy use, and improving air quality

What is meant by targets and measures for Green House Gas (GHG) emissions and energy use?

It is now universally recognized that increasing greenhouse gas emissions from human activities into the atmosphere are affecting the earth's climate and that governments urgently need to take action to implement effective measures that reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Along with most other local governments in BC, the RDN and its member municipalities have committed to reducing GHG emissions. As well, new legislation requires that GHG emission reduction targets and the measures to achieve the targets be included in the RGS. To make progress on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, it is imperative for local governments to set emission reduction targets for a specified period of time and identify the actions to meet those targets.

Why is GHG emission reduction important for regional sustainability?

There is a strong relationship between improving regional sustainability and reducing energy consumption and GHG emissions. The transportation sector, primarily the private automobile, are the largest source of GHG emissions in the region, about 63%.

Focusing population growth into existing urban areas will provide viable options to the automobile

and give people access to a range of clean transportation alternatives.

Emissions from buildings can be reduced through more compact forms of development as can the amount of energy spent on heating and cooling buildings. A typical single family dwelling uses 30% more energy than row housing and 114% more than apartments (Natural Resources Canada, Comprehensive Energy Database).

How can targets and measures be included in the RGS?

The Province of BC has passed legislation requiring the regional districts to include GHG reduction targets in the Regional Growth Strategies by May 31, 2011. The RDN, along with its municipal members, is currently developing a regional Community Climate Change Plan. This plan will outline the range of activities that the RDN and member municipalities can actually take to reduce GHGs, and the levels of reductions associated with each activity. With each member municipality and the RDN making a commitment to implement the Community Climate Change Plan, the plan itself will form a part of the Regional Growth Strategy, and the targets included in the plan will become the initial set of targets that the RDN will pursue. Official Community Plans (OCPs) could also include policies that decrease emissions and reduce energy consumption to meet the required targets.

