

South Okanagan Regional Growth Strategy: Pilot for Water-Centric Action in British Columbia

BRITISH COLUMBIA

ALBERTA

Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen

WASHINGTON



In 2006, interviews with a Mayors & Chairs Focus Group identified common threads across regions, including:

Leadership: Alignment at a regional scale will help individual mayors lead the move from awareness (interest) to local action (practice) on-the-ground.



The South Okanagan pilot provides an opportunity for regional cross-fertilization of lessons learned because:

- It is the first *water-centric* regional growth strategy
- It includes a tool-kit to guide decision-making on the ground
- A monitoring plan will measure what matters

Connecting the Dots in the South Okanagan: Three Perspectives



- **John Slater:**
regional leader
Mayor of Osoyoos



- **Susanne Theurer:**
regional planner
Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen



- **Tom Szalay:**
municipal administrator
Town of Oliver



Regional Leader Key Message

Elected representatives are
starting to think and act
regionally as well as locally

By 'Design with Nature', we mean...



- Develop compact, complete communities
- Increase transportation options
- Reduce the loads on water, waste and energy systems
- Protect and restore urban 'green' space
- **Strive for a lighter 'hydrologic footprint'**
- **Achieve higher levels of stream, wet land and lake protection**



Regional Planner Key Message

To agree on where growth should occur,
urban and rural elected representatives
will have a new framework to dialogue
with one another

These objectives set the stage for building an urban-rural relationship in the South Okanagan:

- Consider setting growth boundaries around priority growth areas, which may or may not coincide with current municipal boundaries.
- Collaborate on fringe planning decisions on major development in the vicinity of rural/municipal boundaries.
- Consider entering into a memorandum of understanding on the process of determining municipal boundary extensions.



Municipal Administrator Key Message

To make informed decisions, elected representatives must first be informed.

To inform elected representatives, technical advisors must communicate using clear and understandable language

An example of informing decision-makers in the Town of Oliver so that they can make informed decisions



The March 2006 Working Session was the first step in a long-term educational process to change water-use habits, technologies and practices in Oliver

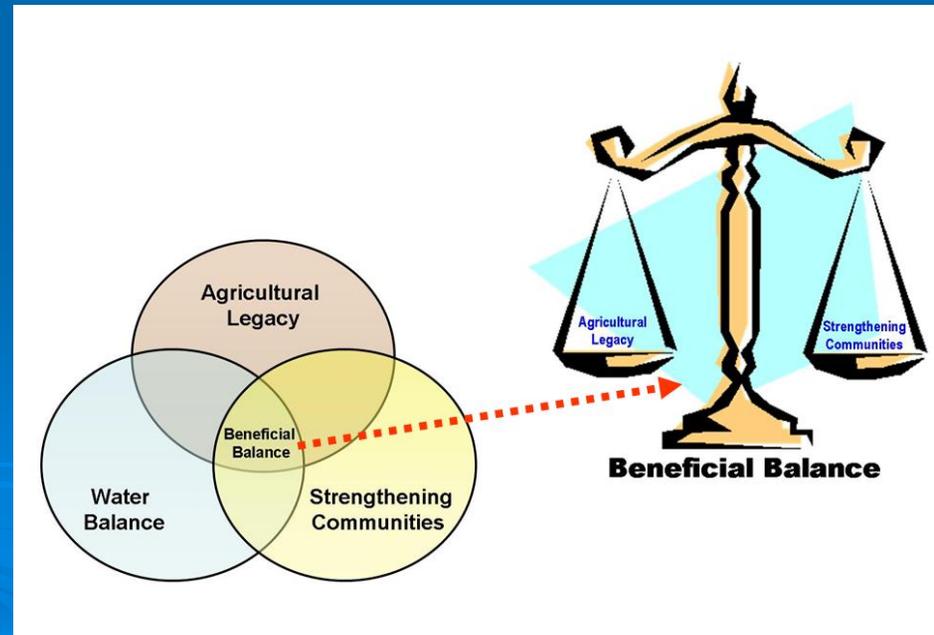
Lessons Vancouver Island elected representatives can learn from the South Okanagan experience

- Establish principles that provide clear direction regarding desired outcomes.
- Identify regional issues and then commit to developing shared solutions.
- Provide the people and resources necessary to do the job.

RGS Policy is based on six themes that emerged from a Community Forum: economy, environment, governance, human settlement, infrastructure, and social.

The RGS Toolkit highlights four threads relevant to all themes and provides information on innovative approaches and applying sound management practices related to each.

- **Growth**
- **Water**
- **Agriculture**
- **Housing**



What Next in the South Okanagan?

Select Indicators, Measure and Adapt

What gets measured tends to get done.
If you don't measure results,
you can't tell success from failure.
If you can't recognize success, you can't reward it.
If you can't recognize failure, you can't learn from it.

David Osborne and Ted Gaebler, 1992
Reinventing Government