

24.0 Boundary Extensions

Goals

Provide a process for consideration of boundary extension applications.

Undertake a study to determine the feasibility and desirability of extending the City's boundary to include lands in the Swan Lake Corridor.

Work with the Regional District of North Okanagan on the identification and redesignation of Rural Protection Lands, as outlined in the Regional Growth Strategy, that serve the City's growth strategy.

Guiding Principles Met

- Foster prosperity for people, business and government
- Protect and preserve green spaces and sensitive areas
- Ensure housing meets the needs of the whole community
- Create a culture of sustainability
- Protect agricultural land
- Create strong, compact and complete neighbourhoods

Context

For many years, the City has accepted and supported boundary extension applications for lands contiguous to and within an ultimate City of Vernon boundary, identified to provide general guidance in the consideration of boundary extension applications. This property by property approach is time consuming for all parties and tends to reflect individual property interests as opposed to the goals and interests outlined in the City and Regional District of North Okanagan's (RDNO) long term planning, development and infrastructure phasing.

Further, there are concerns related to the trend towards boundary extension to facilitate residential densification. Allocations of increased density far from the City Centre and designated neighbourhood centres are contrary to the growth strategy embodied in this plan. Attention must also be paid to the rural-urban interface to ensure that the residential subdivision pattern does not encroach into or serve to fragment ALR lands, particularly on the City's eastern boundary.

With the adoption of the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) on September 21, 2011, specific areas for growth and future growth, as well as rural areas intended to be protected from the pressures of urban development were identified. As a result of the RGS, the City's boundary extension policies need to evolve to reflect these new regional designations.

As such, pursuant to RGS policy UC-2.4, the City will support a block boundary extension process along its boundary in the rural protection area to address issues of failing on-site septic systems where the properties are immediately adjacent to City infrastructure. Individual or small block boundary extension applications will not be accepted. In order to meet the intent of the RGS policy, properties annexed for this purpose will be included in Development District 3, the Hillside Residential and Agricultural District, and be rezoned to an agricultural zoning district. This further supports RGS policy UC-1.2.8, whereby municipalities are to recognize the rural protection boundary in their Official Community Plans. The endorsement of RDNO is required prior to the initiation of a block boundary extension process.

Where a boundary extension application falls within the designated rural protection area, but serves the City's growth strategy and is in keeping with the RGS goal of compact, complete communities, it is necessary to receive RDNO approval prior to the boundary extension process on the redesignation of the lands as growth or future growth area, as appropriate.

In addition, the relative costs and benefits of the extension of the municipal boundaries in the Swan Lake Corridor should be examined. This corridor is identified as a future growth area in the RGS and the extension of servicing is key to realizing significant development potential. As the development of this area is beneficial to the entire sub regional area given the potential to provide significant new highway oriented commercial development, it is desirable to work with RDNO and Electoral Areas B and C to ascertain the feasibility and desirability of extending the City's boundary to include this corridor.

The RGS also speaks to the need for the Government of British Columbia to review and update municipal expansion policies, ensuring that the process is equitable, transparent and inclusive. The City strongly supports this initiative.

Supporting Policies

- 24.1 Review boundary extension applications annually, in conjunction with Official Community Plan amendment applications.
- 24.2 Recognize the rural protection boundary as embodied in the Regional Growth Strategy.
- 24.3 With the support of RDNO, support a block boundary extension process where connection to the City sewer system can replace failing septic systems and where the property is immediately adjacent to City infrastructure and contiguous to the City boundary. Pursuant to the RGS (Goal UC-2.4), such

lands are not to receive additional development potential, and will be included in Development District 3, the Hillside Residential and Agricultural District and rezoned to an agricultural zoning district. Do not accept individual or small block boundary extension applications.

- 24.4 Work with RDNO and Electoral Areas B and C on the possibility of a boundary extension to include the Swan Lake Corridor, a designated future growth area, to accommodate the extension of servicing required to realize significant commercial development.
- 24.5 Where a boundary adjustment application falls within the designated rural protection area, and serves the City's growth strategy, require the Regional District of North Okanagan's approval on the redesignation of the lands as growth or future growth area in the RGS, as appropriate, prior to extension of the City boundary.
- 24.6 Do not support the extension of City services outside the municipal boundaries.