

Neighbourhoods for a Sustainable Vancouver

September 30, 2010

Mayor Robertson and Councillors
City of Vancouver
453 West 12 Avenue
Vancouver, B.C. V5Y 1V4

Dear Mayor Robertson and Councillors:

Re: Regional Growth Strategy - City of Vancouver Comments - Sept. 2010

Please accept this as our initial comments on the City of Vancouver report to Council on the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) to be considered at the Planning and Environment Committee Meeting October 7, 2010.

We were only made aware on September 27, 2010 of the request for our comments on the RGS by September 30, 2010. September 29 we received a link to the City's report. This timeline is completely unreasonable even for an individual to respond, far less a large stakeholder group such as ourselves. We request that this whole process be extended to allow adequate time to respond to such a far reaching proposal.

The change to Frequent Transit Development "Areas" rather than "Corridors" makes no difference because they still would cover the entire City of Vancouver. This would give Metro Vancouver, TransLink and the Province significant influence in land use planning, which we do not support.

We do not see any community support for the transfer of authority or influence over land use planning within the City of Vancouver to senior levels of government, other than for protection of green zones and industrial land to prevent sprawl. The proposed changes in the September Draft #3 of the Regional Growth Strategy do not address these previous concerns.

Further, we object to the Mayor entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Province without any public consultation that includes using property taxes to fund transit expansion, as well as mention of "capturing some of the increase in land value" along transit corridors and "efficient methods of obtaining appropriate zoning." This is extremely troubling for a host of reasons, including serious, problematic financial implications for the City of Vancouver. We question if it is allowed at all under the Vancouver Charter. We request a copy of this MOU.

Sincerely,

Ned Jacobs,
On behalf of the Steering Committee
Neighbourhoods for a Sustainable Vancouver

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