

# Neighbourhoods for a Sustainable Vancouver

October 22, 2010

Metro Vancouver  
4330 Kingsway,  
Burnaby, B.C. V5H 4G8

By e-mail: [growth.strategy@metrovancover.org](mailto:growth.strategy@metrovancover.org)

## **Re: Metro Vancouver Draft Regional Growth Strategy, Sept. 2010 – Public Input**

We are a network of about 30 neighbourhood groups across the City of Vancouver. Please accept and include this as our initial comments on the Draft Regional Growth Strategy, September 2010. We intend to follow up with additional detailed comments after further discussions with staff and our member groups.

**Revise the schedule for public comments** - We are concerned that the time line for public input on this draft is not adequate. We request that the process for public comments be extended in order to allow for us to advise our network of groups across the City. Substantial concerns require further revision of the present draft. After such revision, another draft should be circulated for comment before referral to public hearing and ratification.

**Previous concerns not addressed** - Because the previous concerns raised in our January 29, 2010 letter to Metro Vancouver have not been adequately addressed, those concerns still apply. Many of the changes in the new draft raise additional new concerns.

We do not believe there is 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.

### **The main concerns are:**

1. The new draft is even weaker than the previous draft with regard to the region's most important roles: protection of green zones and prevention of urban sprawl.
2. The new draft continues to propose unsupportable levels of regional control over municipal Official Community Plans and municipal planning processes for development. This undermines the neighbourhood based local area planning which we support.

3. The new draft continues to allow TransLink to exert a heavy influence over land-use decisions in Metro Vancouver through its say in Metro Vancouver's Regional Growth Strategy and Regional Context Statements, and its role in the development of Frequent Transit Development Areas or Corridors. 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.

4. TransLink's provincial mandate to use real estate development as a source of funding based on the Hong Kong model is a systemic conflict of interest with TransLink's influence in land use policy.

5. The new draft has removed the Glossary with definitions and instead refers to the Municipal Act. Since the Municipal Act is under the control of the Provincial government, it could allow changes to definitions of the RGS without requirement of amendments to the RGS. Further, it raises concerns that rather than deal with the definitions that were previously criticized, these were removed and hidden under provincial legislation. This shows a lack of transparency in the RGS, and an unnecessary and unacceptable degree of Provincial control influence over Municipal Official Community Plans. The Glossary should be included in the RGS.

As discussed above, we request the schedule for public consultation be further extended.

Attached is our letter to the City of Vancouver in response to the City of Vancouver Comments on the RGS. We request that you include this in our submission to Metro Vancouver.

We urge you to put any new revised draft out for further public input prior to referral to public hearing and we look forward to working with you to ensure our concerns are better addressed in the Regional Growth Strategy.

Regards,

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

E-mail: [nsvancouver@hotmail.com](mailto:nsvancouver@hotmail.com)

Attachments: Letter to City of Vancouver

# 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

E-mail: nsvancouver@hotmail.com