

May 22, 2009

TO INTERESTED PARTIES:

RE: City Comments on Draft Regional Growth Strategy: Metro Vancouver 2040 (February 2009)

Following the meeting of the Standing Committee of Council on Planning and Environment on Thursday, May 21, 2009, Vancouver City Council approved the following:

- A. THAT Council conveys support for the Goals and Strategies (as listed in Appendix A of the Policy Report dated May 12, 2009, entitled "City Comments on Draft Regional Growth Strategy: *Metro Vancouver 2040* (February 2009)").
- B. THAT Council conveys support for the overall regional land use concept (summarized in above-mentioned Appendix A) which consists of a clear urban containment boundary that protects green areas and limits the extent of urban development; focuses growth in urban centres and along key transit corridors; maintains a regional industrial land base; and connects land use and transportation to support transit, walking, cycling and goods movement; AND FURTHER THAT Council acknowledge to Metro that the accompanying targets for dwelling units and employment are consistent with Vancouver zoning and policy, noting that they are a minimum not a maximum.
- C. THAT Council conveys support for regional land use regulation for the Urban Containment Boundary, Agricultural Area, and Conservation/ Recreation Area, AND FURTHER ADVISES THAT additional comments will follow on more detailed aspects of the Conservation/ Recreation Area, after upcoming consideration by the Board of Parks and Recreation and Council.
- D. THAT, with respect to the proposed regional land use regulation for urban development lands (Urban Centres, Frequent Transit Development Corridors, Industrial Areas, Industrial/Commercial Areas), Council supports the intent of protecting a core regional industrial base. Council recognizes the need to identify strategic industrial land in the region and to protect it for industrial use through regional regulation, with the details of the regulatory process to be worked out together with all municipalities. Furthermore, Council supports the need for regional land use input for other urban development lands (Urban Centre, Transit Development Corridors, Mixed Industrial/Commercial areas). The approach for industrial land use regulation should allow for an acceptable level of flexibility and municipal self-determination; and subject specifically to the following:
 - i. Respect for existing municipal plans and policies, and of planning processes underway rather than basing policy only on already built development;

- ii. Consideration of a wider range of uses permitted in industrial areas, such as film and sound production studios, rehearsal studios, and broadcasting stations, as well as selected types of non-ancillary offices that are limited to a portion of the total buildable density such as the Mt Pleasant industrial area;
 - iii. More clarity about the process and timing for the Regional Context Statement amendments that would be required before a municipality could effect a zoning change; and development of a timely and efficient process for both Metro and municipalities;
 - iv. A focus on industrial land specifically for the regulatory approach, with a different level of regional input for other lands such as Urban Centres, and a focus on the Metro Board's specific role, rather than including other reviewing agencies like the Province and TransLink;
 - v. Flexibility for municipalities to permit non-industrial land uses at rapid transit stations, along with criteria for industrial land protection at these locations, such as described in this report, to better combine industrial land protection with increased transit ridership;
 - vi. Commitment in the Regional Growth Strategy to additional work as described in this report; i.e., on-going monitoring and reporting, and especially the development of a more comprehensive strategy tool kit for industrial and commercial land, for the longer term.
- E. THAT, to better address affordable housing issues, Council conveys the need for a comprehensive Regional Housing Action Plan to be prepared by Metro, along with the requirement for municipal Housing Action Plans, through a collaborate process and partnership among all levels of government, the private sector, the public, and community partners; AND THAT Metro engage regional stakeholders to review the estimates of future rental, ownership and affordable housing demand to identify a more equitable and achievable policy direction for municipal housing.
- F. THAT Council conveys additional more detailed comments, questions, and suggestions on the proposed actions, maps, and tables as recorded in Appendix B of the Policy Report dated May 12, 2009, entitled "City Comments on Draft Regional Growth Strategy: *Metro Vancouver 2040* (February 2009)".
- G. THAT Council requests that the next draft of *Metro 2040* be reviewed by member municipalities prior to Metro Board initiation of the formal regional plan approval process of public hearing, concurrence, and possible dispute resolution -- with the goal of preparing a draft regional growth strategy that will start its formal process being both effective and partnership-based, AND FURTHER THAT the timing for approval be adjusted to accommodate Olympic commitments.
- H. THAT Council send this report and its recommendations to the Metro Board, the Regional Planning Committee, Metro's Chief Administrative Officer, and other Metro member municipalities.

Yours truly,



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Att: Appendices A and B

Draft Metro Vancouver 2040 Goals, Strategies, and Land Use Concept

The *draft Metro Vancouver 2040* is centred on five Goals, each with key Strategies, as repeated in Table 1 below. These are supported in Recommendation A.

Table 1: Draft Metro 2040 Goals and Strategies

Proposed Goals	Proposed Strategies
1. Create a compact urban area	1.1. Contain urban development within the Urban Containment Boundary
	1.2. Focus growth in Urban Centres and in Frequent Transit Development Corridors
	1.3 Encourage land use and transportation development that reduces greenhouse gas emissions
	1.4 Protect the region's rural lands from urban development
2. Support a sustainable economy	2.1. Promote patterns of land development that support a diverse regional economy and employment close to where people live
	2.2 Protect the region's supply of industrial land
	2.3 Protect the region's supply of agricultural land and encourage its use for food production.
3. Protect the region's natural assets	3.1 Protect the region's conservation and recreation lands
4. Develop complete and resilient communities	4.1 Provide diverse and affordable housing choices
	4.2 Develop complete, inclusive communities with access to a range of services and amenities
	4.3 Minimize risks from natural hazards and adapt to the impacts of climate change
5. Support sustainable transportation choices	5.1 Connect land use and transportation to support transit, walking and cycling
	5.2 Connect land use and transportation to support an efficient regional roads and goods movement network

The Goals and Strategies in Table 1 largely play out in a proposed regional land use form that is summarized in Table 2 below. The land use concept is generally supported in Recommendation B. The further question of how this concept should be implemented through various degrees of regional or municipal regulation is a separate discussion and reflected in Recommendations C and D.

Table 2: Draft Metro 2040 Land Use Concept

Proposed Land Use Elements	Summary Description
Agricultural Area and Conservation/ Recreation Area	Together, these areas were formerly known as the Green Zone. Most of the lands are Agricultural Land Reserve or are publicly-owned lands like parks
Rural Area	This reflects municipal plans for areas with very low density residential
Urban Containment Boundary	The Urban Containment Boundary is the region's urban growth area. It defined the urban area, as opposed to the non-urban area created by the Agricultural Area, Conservation/Recreation Area, or Rural Area.
Within the Urban Containment Boundary are the following elements	
Urban Centres	Various levels including: Vancouver's Metropolitan Core, Regional Centres, and Municipal Centres. Centres serve as focal points for the growth of major office, retail, and high density housing, and as transit hubs.
Frequent Transit Development Corridors	Corridors are intended as a focus for medium and higher density housing growth, with local commercial (either along a whole corridor, or at selected locations), but not seen as locations for significant office concentrations which are intended for Urban Centres
Industrial Areas	Existing industrial areas, intended to be protected for industrial types of activity and some limited ancillary commercial
Industrial/Commercial Areas	Industrial areas where stand-alone office and retail is allowed. Because the draft Plan concentrates major office and retail in Urban Centres, additional Industrial/Commercial areas would not be encouraged

(In addition to the tables above, draft *Metro 2040* contains Actions, Tables, and Maps too numerous to copy here, but many of which are part of the discussion throughout this report.)

Other Questions, Concerns, & Suggestions Regarding the Draft *Metro Vancouver 2040*

The following table provides detailed City staff responses to the draft *Metro 2040* (February 2009) for items not covered in the main body of the Council Report. The following abbreviations are used:

- **RGS:** Regional Growth Strategy - Under Provincial legislation, the *Metro Vancouver 2040* draft regional plan is a Regional Growth Management Strategy.
- **RCS:** Regional Context Statement - Under Provincial legislation, after a regional growth strategy is adopted, each municipality must prepare a RCS to show how municipal plans and policies are consistent with the regional strategy. The RCS must be submitted to, and approved by Metro, as must be any further amendments to it.
- **UC:** Urban Centre
- **MTC:** Municipal Town Centre
- **FTDC:** Frequent Transit Development Corridor
- **FTN:** Frequent Transit Network

Goal 1 - Create a Compact Urban Area Strategy 1.2 - Focus growth in Urban Centres (UCs) & Frequent Transit Development Corridors (FTDCs)		
Proposed Metro Requirement		Description and City Staff Comments
1.2.3 (b) (bullet 5)	Municipal Action	Identify policies that reduce residential and commercial parking requirements within UCs.
	City Staff Response	This wording does not recognize actions that have already been taken and does not establish any base from which a reduction should be made. Staff suggest that it would be more workable if the instruction were "to establish, or maintain, lower parking requirements in UCs and at transit stations, than in other areas."
1.2.4 (b) (bullet 2)	Municipal Action	Identify policies which reduce residential and commercial parking requirements within FTDCs
	City Staff Response	See response to 1.2.3 (b)
1.2.4 (b) (bullet 3)	Municipal Action	Identify policies which ensure development within FTDCs does not detract from the viability of industrial areas.
	City Staff Response	Staff are unclear on the meaning and intent of this action. One area of concern arises where a FTDC includes an industrial area. The City supports location of job-rich uses, such as office, at rapid transit stations. As such, staff are unsure how this action would be applied.
1.2.10	Actions by Other Gov't & Agencies	The province review development proposals impacting provincial highways for consistency with the RGS.

	City Staff Response	This is a new action and staff are unclear how it would work and what the benefits and costs are. Only Highway 1 goes through Vancouver proper, but the Stanley Park Causeway, Lions Gate Bridge, UBC arterials and Oak Street Bridge are all provincial highways that connect with Vancouver's borders. The wording of this action is so broad that many Vancouver developments could be found to impact both Highway 1 and these other connecting locations. Staff look for Metro response to a number of questions including: Under what authority would this review be made (i.e. legislation)? What criteria would be used to guide such a review? How would these criteria be established? Which Ministry would be involved? At what stage of development review would this occur and what is the process? What are the timing, staffing and resource implications?
Figure 2 -	Guidelines for Urban Centres and FTDCs	The guidelines describe the role and land uses the Metro Core as an Urban Centre.
	City Staff Comments	Vancouver's Metro Core extends from 16 th Ave north to Burrard Inlet between Clark Drive on the east and Burrard Street on the west. Land uses within this area are largely consistent with the guidelines, but also include industrial areas that serve the downtown, the Port and other parts of the city and region. Staff suggests adding 'supporting industrial uses' to the land use activities for the Metro Core.
Maps 1 & 5	Map 1 -Urban Containment Boundary Map 5 - Conservation/ Recreation Area	Map 1 shows the area boundary for Urban Containment. Map 5 shows the Conservation/Recreation area.
	City Staff Comments	Map 1 and 5 are inconsistent and should be reconciled. Map 1 shows some, but not all, Conservation/ Recreation Areas, and thus might imply that the Urban Containment Boundary for urban growth and development overrides some protected areas. Staff suggest that all Conservation/Recreation areas be shown on Map 1, and if not, annotation of the Maps are needed to explain the apparent contradiction.

Map 2	Urban Centres	Map 2 shows the Urban Centres, Frequent Transit Development Corridors (to be identified in RCS') and the Frequent Transit Network Concept
	City Staff Comments	Map 2 uses a symbol for the Metro Core that does not match the actual boundaries of the Metro Core, but rather considerably under-represents it. Staff suggest using the City's actual Metro Core boundaries to better indicate this location (and for use in plan monitoring). Use of the actual Metro Core boundary will also show a better relationship between rapid transit lines and their connectivity to the Core. In addition, Vancouver has several Special Activity Centres that are in the Metro Core but because of the use of the smaller symbol they fall outside this boundary. Given the significance of the Metro Core and Surrey's Metro Centre, these two areas may be better represented with actual rather than symbolic boundaries. (The existing regional plan, the <i>LRSP</i> , uses the actual Metro Core boundaries.)
Goal 1 continued		
Strategy 1.3 - Encourage land use and transportation development that reduces greenhouse gas emissions		
Proposed Metro Requirements		Description and City Comments
1.3.4	Actions by Other Gov't & Agencies	The province work with Metro, TransLink and municipalities to reduce GHGs
	City Staff Response	The province should also work with the federal government to address the above action.
Goal 2 - Support a Sustainable Economy		
Map 4 - Economic Areas		
Proposed Metro Requirements		Description and City Comments
Map 4	Economic Areas	Map 4 shows Urban Centres, Industrial Areas, Special Activity Areas, Agricultural Areas
	City Staff Comments	Staff supports the introduction of Special Activity Areas to the land use concept to recognize the port, airport, and major universities. Staff recommend adding significant health precincts, such as Women's and Children's' Hospital to these areas as they have similar characteristics to the other uses (e.g., major economic generators) and similar planning and transit implications. Vancouver's industrial areas are significantly obscured by the width of the rapid transit lines. This is particularly evident at the Grandview-Boundary industrial area.

Goal 4 - Develop Complete and Resilient Communities		
Strategy 4.1 Provide Diverse and affordable housing choices		
Proposed Metro Requirements		Description and City Comments
4.1.1	Metro Action	Evaluate Regional Context Statements and Housing Action Plans to ensure that there is an adequate supply of housing to meet the full range of incomes and needs across the region and ensure that the requirements set out in Action 4.1.3 are met (see Action 4.1.3 below.)
	City Staff Response	The draft plan seeks to have Metro Vancouver take the role of enforcement and evaluation, instead of a role of policy leadership, support, and consultation. If housing issues are to be addressed in municipalities across the region, Metro will have to commit to assisting municipalities to do so, rather than simply evaluating municipal efforts.
4.1.2	Metro Action	Implement the Metro Vancouver Affordable Housing Strategy including exploring opportunities to increase the portfolio of units managed by Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation.
	City Staff Response	The draft RGS requires municipalities to develop very detailed Housing Action Plans. While Metro Vancouver commits to implementing the Regional Affordable Housing Strategy (RAHS), this strategy is very high level and lacks the analytical basis municipalities need to assist with specific Housing Action Plans .
4.1.3	Municipal Actions	Develop Regional Context Statements and Municipal Housing Action Plans.
	City Staff Response	Metro Vancouver should take the lead by developing a regional Housing Action Plan. The City will undertake a Housing Action Plan only after Metro has developed a regional Housing Action Plan on which municipal plans can be based.
Goal 4 continued		
Strategy 4.3 Minimize risks from natural hazards and adapt to the impacts of climate change		
Proposed Metro Requirements		Description and City Comments
4.3.1	Metro Action	Evaluate RCS' to help ensure land use decisions adequately consider risks from natural hazards and climate change and ensure regional requirements are met

	City Staff Response	Metro could take on more of a leadership role on compiling local climate projections. Staff suggest adding a new action: Metro will: (new possible action) Ensure that the best possible local climate projections are available for municipal planners so that the impacts of climate change can be considered.
Goal 5 - Support Sustainable Transportation Choices		
Strategy 5.1 Connect land use and transportation to support transit, walking and cycling		
Proposed Metro Requirements		Description and City Comments
5.1.1	Metro Action	Evaluate RCS's to support an increased share of person trips by transit, walking and cycling and a reduction in vehicle kilometres travelled and that the requirements for municipal actions are met.
	City Staff Response	This is a limited role for Metro, see comments below
	Metro Action	Previous drafts identified a more expanded Metro role in promoting accessibility and sustainable transportation choices and working toward achievement of mode share targets - including previous Actions for Metro to collaborate with TransLink and member municipalities to create linkages with TransLink's Regional Bicycle Plan and to ensure integration of TransLink's Regional Bicycle Plan and Regional Commuter Greenway Network with (Metro's) Regional Recreational Greenway Network.
	City Staff Response	Metro Actions for Strategy 5.1 have been reduced from eight items to one. The remaining Metro action is to evaluate RCS's. This appears to shift responsibility for achieving sustainable transportation entirely to TransLink and member municipalities. More Metro actions should be added to clarify their role. As one example, greenways are an important alternate transportation choice. A more significant Metro role in coordination, with TransLink and municipalities, should be included to achieve mode share targets and to assist in implementing regional bike ways and greenways. Metro should meet the same goals as the municipalities regarding accessibility and sustainable transportation standards for regional greenways and bikeways located on lands that they control.

5.1.2 (b)	Municipal Action	Develop RCS's which identify maps that illustrate how: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The FTN will be accommodated and supported by local land use decisions • Regional and local cycling routes promote a safe cycling network serving major destinations; and • Pedestrian facilities and connectivity will be improved to provide a safe and accessible walking network serving major destinations, schools and transit services
	City Staff Response	<p>Bullet 1: Staff request clarification on how mapping alone can show how the FTN will be accommodated and supported by land use decisions. One issue is the actual location of the future FTN; this should be referred to TransLink to carry out in collaboration with municipalities. This action should be linked to 5.1.3 which does include TranLink work on the FTN.</p> <p>Bullets 1-3: Maps may not be the most effective way of identifying support for cycling, walking and transit. Staff suggest that the wording be changed to state "maps or program descriptions"</p>
5.1.5	Actions by Other Gov't & Agencies	TransLink implement a regional bike plan and improve cycling capacity and safety in development of regional road networks.
	City Staff Response	Should be clarified that TransLink should implement a regional bicycle plan "in collaboration with Metro Vancouver and member municipalities".
Map 6	Frequent Transit Network Concept	This map shows the proposed UBC Line as "proposed rapid transit (rail or bus)"
	City Staff Response	In 2002, City Council reaffirmed its support for the extension of the Millenium Line as a subway servicing the Central Broadway Corridor to Granville. A review of options for the UBC Line is currently underway by TransLink. Accordingly, as the TransLink study results are concluded, there should be a process in place to update maps (i.e., remove references to bus rapid transit where appropriate) in both the draft and final version of the <i>Metro Vancouver 2040</i> document. The above comments are also relevant to Maps 2 and 8.
Goal 5 continued		
Strategy 5.2 Connect land use and transportation to support an efficient regional roads and goods movement network		
Proposed Metro Requirements		Description and City Comments
5.2.2 (c)	Municipal Action Metro Action	Protect existing and preserve potential future barge nodes and rail corridors where feasible and encourage goods movement by rail and water

	City Staff Response	Suggest that more flexibility for both people and goods movement by water be given (i.e. replace “barge” nodes with “marine” nodes.)
5.2.5	Actions by Other Gov’t & Agencies	TransLink, Port and rail companies examine ways to protect rail rights-of-way and freight access points to waterways.
	City Staff Response	Suggest that more flexibility for both people and goods movement, i.e., add “people movement” to freight access points to waterways.
5.2.6	Actions by Other Gov’t & Agencies	TransLink and province develop and implement a regional goods movement strategy....
	City Staff Response	This action by TransLink and the province should be clarified to be “in collaboration with Metro Vancouver municipalities”.
Section 8 Monitoring and Performance Measures		
Measurement Items		Description and Comments
Section 8	Monitoring	For each goal and strategy, Metro proposes performance measures to monitor annual progress
	City Staff Response	Staff suggest adding measures as follows:
		Goal 1: Strategy 1.2 - Focus growth in UCs and FTDCs - Add a comparison of development achieved to targets and guidelines contained in the growth strategy.
		Goal 1: Strategy 1.4 - Land use and transport to reduce GHGs - Add GHG measurement by Metro Vancouver sub-areas.
		Goal 2: Strategy 2.2 - Protect industrial land - Suggest adding measures of total industrial employment and employment growth in industrial areas (e.g., over time), and measures of employment density (e.g. jobs/hectare) to identify changes in job intensity over time.
Goal 5: Strategy 5.1 Connect land use and transport - Reference the transportation measurements to be developed by TransLink noted in Action 5.1.4.		