

Submission of the West Kitsilano Residents Association

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

Re: Regional Growth Strategy Draft

The West Kitsilano Residents Association is opposed to the adoption of the Regional Growth Strategy Draft without significant changes.

There are several problems with the current draft outlined in the submission of Neighbourhoods for a Sustainable Vancouver with which we are in agreement. Two of these issues are of particular and urgent concern to us.

First, the Strategy gives a too much control over local land use to non-elected and not directly accountable regional governance bodies such as TransLink and Metro Vancouver. While the overall goals of the RGS of reducing urban sprawl and coordinating major land use decisions across the region are supportable, there is no need for the Region and TransLink to be involved in local land use decisions. Effective democracy must accompany increased power. In particular, the Frequent Transit Development Areas or Corridors that will fall under the influence of TransLink will effectively remove local control over land use decisions in much of Vancouver and in our neighbourhood. We are adamantly opposed to having regional bodies make decisions that should be made at a city and neighbourhood level.

Second, we are opposed to the use of development to fund transit. The costs of improved transit should be paid for by polluters through use of funds raised by the carbon tax on gasoline. The most effective policies are those which directly encourage beneficial behaviours such as reduced vehicle use while taking the collected funds to provide viable alternatives to the undesirable behaviour. The closer the link, the more effective is the response. By linking transit to upzonings and massive development contrary to local wishes, you actually create opposition to transit improvements. Change in neighbourhood land use should provide benefits back to the neighbourhood to maintain neighbourhood livability.

We are disappointed that, despite the large population in Vancouver, there is no public hearing location in the city making it difficult for residents to attend the hearing in person. We hope that this is not a precedent for the future that will minimize public input on Regional Growth..

Thank you for your attention to these issues.

Jan Pierce
Per Board of Directors,
West Kitsilano Residents Association