

Neighbourhoods for a Sustainable Vancouver

Nov. 16, 2009

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

Dear Mayor and Councillors:

Re: Cambie Corridor Planning Program and Draft Corridor Principles

Please accept this as our response to the open house on the Draft Corridor Principles for the Cambie Corridor. We are very concerned that many of the public's comments at the workshops have not been reflected in the open houses such as:

1. We are opposed to the broad nature of the corridor, the large area it covers, and that the planning program covers a "corridor" at all. We do not support Frequent Transit Development Corridors (FTDC) as proposed by Metro Vancouver's Regional Growth Strategy and TransLink's Transport 2040 because they cede too much influence and control over municipal local area planning to provincial and regional government. This Cambie Corridor appears to be a FTDC.
2. The first principle should not define supportive land use as "high" density since this implies it directs the entire corridor to be high density.
3. This planning program should be based on station nodes and limited to the adjacent sites with due consideration given to potential impacts on adjacent properties and the surrounding neighbourhoods, especially in regard to building scale and increases in motor vehicle use. Other planning in the area should be done through CityPlan Vision Implementation or local area planning. A special concern is the Cambie Village area, as adoption of these principles would jeopardize the small businesses that were fortunate to have survived the severe disruptions caused by Canada Line construction.
4. The existing purpose-built rental buildings should be protected from redevelopment since they already provide significant residential density and are more affordable and accommodating than rentals that could be obtained through new construction, even if replaced on a unit-for-unit basis. Inclusion of existing purpose-built rental buildings in the study area will result in land speculation and redevelopment pressures that are clearly not in the public interest. We are concerned that Council did not address this problem in July 2009 when they approved terms of reference for this planning program.

We urge Council to honor its election commitments to work with the community to find supportable approaches to land use planning. We support the Riley Park / South (RPSC) Cambie CityPlan Vision Implementation Committee recommendations and request that the RPSC Committee have a much more substantial role in the planning program. We would like to be included as a stakeholder as requested in July.

Regards,

Ned Jacobs
On behalf of the Steering Committee
Neighbourhoods for a Sustainable Vancouver
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cc Cambie Corridor Planning Program - cambiecorridor@vancouver.ca

Brent Toderian - Director of Planning