

# Neighbourhoods for a Sustainable Vancouver

April 6, 2010

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

Dear Mayor and Councillors:

## **Re: City of Vancouver Comments on Draft Regional Growth Strategy, November 2009**

Please accept and include this as our comments on the City of Vancouver Comments on the Draft Regional Growth Strategy, November 2009.

We are concerned that there has been no public consultation on the City's comments, and that the public have had only one week (over a long weekend) to scrutinize and respond to these comments prior to their being brought to Council. The City's comments should reflect the concerns of citizens, which we feel it does not.

### **Resolution -**

At the NSV forum on January 27, 2010, representatives of groups from all across Vancouver unanimously approved the following resolution.

**"Be it resolved** that we do not support Metro or TransLink influence on land-use planning in Vancouver, as proposed in the Regional Growth Strategy draft of November 2009, and request a new revised draft that supports neighbourhood-based planning processes."

### **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. Although there is some mention of this in the City's comments, it is not strong enough. All city park space should be part of the green zone, not just some. Also, all conservation, recreational and agricultural land should require unanimous support of the Metro Board to be redesignated for development. Of particular concern is the 50% + 1 vote for approving conversion of green zones to industrial use, as this would discourage more intensive use of existing industrial-zoned land and facilitate 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 Corridors. We note that the City does not object to Frequent Transit Development Corridors and the City requests that the map of the Frequent Transit Network that the Corridors are based on be put back into the RGS. We disagree with this.
4. The City's comments also seems to imply that the entire Broadway / UBC Line Corridor should be included in the Metro Core designation, rather than only Central Broadway (Burrard St. to Main St.) as it is currently. Most of the Broadway / UBC Line Corridor would not be appropriate for the kinds of development in a downtown Metro Core. This apparent redesignation of the boundaries of the Metro Core is inaccurate, and would further undermine local area community-based planning.
5. 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. The land use designations discussed in 3 above help facilitate TransLink's influence and we oppose this.
6. We conditionally support coordinated ratios of rental housing to ownership throughout the region, with some flexibility to reflect differences in supply and demand between municipalities. However, to protect public benefits and constrain land costs (for affordability), these should be regulation-based inclusionary policies, not incentive-based like Vancouver's current STIR program.

As discussed above, we request that some public consultation be undertaken and reflected in the City's comments, which to date has not occurred. Please revise the City's comments to address the issues we have raised.

Regards,

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

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