



Supports Item No. 2  
P&E Committee Agenda  
April 8, 2010

POLICY REPORT  
URBAN STRUCTURE

Report Date: March 31, 2010  
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Meeting Date: April 8, 2010

TO: Standing Committee on Planning and Environment

FROM: Director of Planning in consultation with General Manager of Engineering Services; Director of Social Development; and General Manager, Vancouver Park Board

SUBJECT: City Comments on Draft # 2 of the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), *Metro Vancouver 2040*, dated November 2009

**RECOMMENDATION**

- A. THAT Council support the Goals and Strategies of the RGS draft #2 (November 2009), and also support the specific actions and other material in the draft RGS subject to revisions contained in the recommendations below.
- B. THAT - with respect to the inter-related topics of industrial land protection, job location, and Metro-level designation of urban land use categories - Council support the intent of the draft RGS, while also recognizing that the proposed designations represent a major jump in regional role and have consequently raised issues across the region; and therefore THAT Council request City staff to work with Metro staff, and other municipalities' staff, on further developing options for an alternate approach, as described in this report.
- C. THAT - with respect to affordable housing - Council request Metro to include in the RGS a commitment to collaborate with municipalities, and revise as necessary, the estimated future demand for rental housing that each municipality would be expected to meet.

- D. THAT - with respect to Conservation/Recreation designations in Vancouver - Council confirm continuing with the existing designations (from the Livable Region Strategic Plan and Vancouver Regional Context Statement Official Development Plan), and also confirm addition of John Hendry (Trout Lake) Park, New Brighton Park, CRAB Park at Portside, and waterfront parks along South and Southeast False Creek and the Fraser River - as described in this report and subject to Park Board endorsement and confirmation with the Port for CRAB and New Brighton.
- E. THAT Council endorse other proposed revisions to the draft RGS as described in this report and consolidated in Appendix C.
- F. THAT Council convey appreciation to Metro for the work to develop a new RGS for a sustainable and livable region; and THAT this report and its recommendations be sent to the Chair of the Metro Board and to Metro's Chief Administrative Officer and to the other municipal councils.

#### ***GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS***

The General Manager of Community Services recommends approval of the foregoing.

#### ***CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS***

The City Manager recommends approval of the foregoing.

#### ***COUNCIL POLICY***

The *Livable Region Strategic Plan (LRSP)*, the region's current RGS, was endorsed by Vancouver City Council in 1995 and adopted by the regional district in 1996.

The *Vancouver Regional Context Statement Official Development Plan*, which demonstrates how the City's plans and policies support the *LRSP*, was adopted by Council in 1999. (Vancouver's existing RCS will need to be replaced/updated once a new RGS is approved. A RCS is required by Provincial legislation from each municipality within two years following adoption of a RGS. A RCS requires regional Board approval initially, and for any later changes.)

Current Council priorities that are connected to the RGS include affordable housing; strong, safe, and inclusive communities; environment and sustainability; and creative capital and a growing economy.

#### **SUMMARY**

Metro has been working on a new RGS aimed at maintaining and improving livability and sustainability as the regional population grows from 2.2 million to 3.4 million by 2041. A new RGS will update/replace the current regional growth strategy from 1996, the *Livable Region Strategic Plan (LRSP)*.

The Metro Board released draft #2 of a new RGS in November 2009 and requested comments. Much of draft #2 is very similar to what was previously supported by

Council in draft #1 last year. Some positive changes have also been made, such as more emphasis on reducing GHGs and adapting to climate change.

Most of the comments on draft #2 in this report are quite straightforward in nature, including a request to incorporate collaboration with municipalities on housing targets; confirmation of continuing designation of City lands protected from development as part of the Conservation-Recreation area; and requests that the RGS include a map of regional transit and adjust the Metro Core boundary so it accurately reflects the relationship of this Urban Centre to transit initiatives in the Broadway corridor.

The most challenging aspect of the draft RGS has been its proposals related to job location and protection of industrial land. This is an area where the draft RGS is most different from the LRSP. The draft RGS seeks to prevent further erosion of industrial lands, limit sprawl of low density business parks and big box retail, and instead focus commercial and retail in urban centres close to where people live and work and well served by transit.

What has made it challenging is that the draft RGS policies are backed up by proposed new regulatory powers for Metro to intervene in what have been local land use decisions, through "designation" of area boundaries.

Vancouver Council previously supported the intent of the job location policies and also expressed some support for a possible regulatory approach. Designation of Industrial and Mixed Employment areas could be an effective way of providing more consistency across the region in living up to the objectives of the RGS.

However, the intention articulated by the plan for the metro municipalities to go from the LRSP with no economic policy, all the way to a new RGS with full regional land use regulation by the Metro Vancouver Board has proved to be a very challenging goal to meet in a timely way. Regional agreement on the draft RGS continues to seem elusive.

Therefore, this report recommends further work on developing options for an alternative regulatory approach. Such an alternative would include agreement on policy; detailed monitoring and reporting of land use change; and two options for a Metro Board role - one with a role for Metro Board commentary to start with, and leading to a phased-in approach to regulation as a future step; and the other with some regulatory authority now for lands defined as in the regional interest. (See pages 8-10 for details.)

### ***PURPOSE***

The purpose of this report is to recommend Vancouver comments on draft #2 of the RGS, for Council to convey to Metro Vancouver in response to the Metro Board request for input. (Draft #2 is titled *Metro Vancouver 2040* and dated November 2009.)

## ***BACKGROUND***

Metro Vancouver has been working with its member municipalities on a new RGS to replace/update the existing RGS (LRSP, 1996). Metro produced two drafts in 2009: draft #1 in mid April and draft #2 in November. At Metro's request, Council conveyed preliminary comments in April 09 and detailed comments in May 09 on draft #1. This report responds to Metro's request for comments on draft #2.

## ***DISCUSSION***

This section is divided into sub-sections to elaborate on each of the Recommendations. This section also contains a final sub-section on public input.

## **GOALS AND STRATEGIES (RECOMMENDATION A)**

Goals and Strategies form the basic outline of the draft RGS. These Goals and Strategies, and the resulting land use framework and Actions, are briefly described below. Recommendation A recommends support, subject to later sections of this report requesting revisions to some of the Actions and related material.

Goals and Strategies: The Goals and Strategies are shown in Table 1 on the next page. For the most part, the Goals and Strategies in draft #2 are the same as in draft #1. A positive difference is that draft #2 puts greenhouse gas reduction and climate change adaptation more front and centre (Goal 3 and Strategies 3.3 and 3.4). In addition, both drafts of the RGS differ from the LRSP in important ways by putting a new focus on the economy (Goal 2) and on affordable housing (Strategy 4.1 in Goal 4).

Land use framework: A land use framework for the region to accommodate growth to 2041 is a key aspect inherent in the Goals, Strategies, and Actions. This consists of the following elements:

- An Urban Containment Boundary where growth and development would occur.
- Outside the Urban Containment Boundary are areas protected from urban development. These are the Agricultural Areas, Conservation-Recreation Areas, and Rural Areas. This brings forward from the LRSP what was called the "green zone."
- Inside the Urban Containment Boundary, the main focus for growth and development is in mixed use Urban Centres which contain the highest density residential and the main office and retail activities, as well as cultural and institutional uses, and are well-connected by transit. The secondary focus for growth and development, primarily residential with supporting commercial, is in nodes or corridors along Frequent Transit routes (called Frequent Transit Development Corridors).
- For economic activity, large scale commercial development is located in the Urban Centres. An important role is also played by job-only Industrial Areas and Mixed Employment Areas which provide locations for jobs and economic activity that need out-of-Centre locations. Industrial Areas are often located where well served by road, rail, and water.

The land use framework in draft #2 is the same as in draft #1, except that draft #2 introduces a new job-related land use category, Mixed Employment (more on this in a following section).

**Table 1: Draft RGS Goals and Strategies (Draft #2 - Nov 2009)**

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 Frequent Transit Development Corridors
	1.3 Protect the region's rural lands from urban development
2. Support a sustainable economy	2.1. Promote patterns of land development patterns 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 promote agricultural viability with an emphasis on food production
3. Protect the region's environment and respond to climate change	3.1 Protect the lands within the Conservation and Recreation areas
	3.2 Protect and enhance natural features and connectivity throughout the region
	3.3 Encourage land use and transportation patterns that reduce greenhouse gas emissions
	3.4 Encourage land use and transportation development that increases adaptive capacity to withstand natural hazards and climate change impacts
4. Develop complete and resilient communities	4.1 Provide diverse and affordable housing choices
	4.2 Develop healthy and complete with access to a range of services and amenities
5. Support sustainable transportation choices	5.1 Coordinate land use and transportation decisions to encourage the use of transit, high-occupancy vehicles, cycling, and walking
	5.2 Connect land use and transportation to support the safe and efficient movement of goods and service vehicles

**Actions:** Each Strategy has a number of Actions for follow-up, separated into those for follow-up by Metro; by municipalities; and by other agencies and levels of government. Most of the follow up is for municipalities through their Regional Context Statements (RCS).

For example, RCSs would be expected to show for each municipality: "Policies for Urban Centres which encourage higher density residential and commercial uses and other high trip-generating uses and a range of institutional, community, cultural, entertainment and recreation facilities."

Last April and May, Council supported the draft #1 Goals and Strategies, land use framework, and most of the Actions. Recommendation A now supports the revised draft #2 Goals and Strategies and most of the Actions, subject to Recommendations B, C, and D as discussed in the following sections of this report.

### JOB LOCATION, INDUSTRIAL PROTECTION, AND URBAN LAND DESIGNATIONS (RECOMMENDATION B)

One of the newest parts of the draft RGS, when compared to the existing LRSP, is the introduction of economic considerations related to land use, particularly for protection of the region's industrial land supply through Goal 2. Also new is the accompanying proposal for Metro to have a stronger regulatory role over municipal land use decisions. Recommendation B recommends support for the intent and suggests implementation system alternatives. Details are provided below.

Metro's Intent: Industrial land, like agricultural land, is the most vulnerable to short-term demand for change, and once redeveloped to other uses cannot be reclaimed. Metro staff has particularly identified the following interrelated challenges that they believe the RGS should address:

- Erosion of the region's supply of industrial
- Dispersal of business parks and big box sprawl onto industrial land
- Undermining the goal of concentrating activity in Urban Centre
- Auto-dependent development

For Vancouver, in addition to regional issues, maintaining industrial land and related job land is important in the city context. Vancouver objectives are two-fold: to protect a land base for jobs and economic activity and to facilitate new economic activity in job areas. City staff has been working in liaison with the Vancouver Economic Development Commission and academic expertise at UBC.

In particular, industrial and related job areas can achieve a number of Council priorities:

- Intensification of economic activity: 5000 new jobs were created between 2001 and 2006 on city lands that have industrial types of zoning. New buildings are increasingly dense and urban.
- Creative and green jobs: Creative and high tech businesses are located not only in the CBD and areas like Yaletown, but also in industrial zoned areas, depending on the types of businesses and their location needs. Similarly, many green businesses have chosen to locate in the city's industrially-zoned areas.
- Contribution to greenest city: A green city is a "complete" city with land for a broad economic base, to allow for diverse job opportunities and a full range of goods, services, and supplies in close proximity to each other and to city residents and businesses. A complete city also has room to locate City core services (e.g., waste transfer station, works yards) as these services grow with the growth of population and jobs.
- Resiliency: Industrially zoned areas have adapted over time from "old economy" functions to important locations for "new economy" functions, and continue to evolve and transition in their economic contribution. Future scenarios illustrate some of the new job-related demands that might be placed on these lands, for

example, if peak oil and high energy costs result in a need for “re-localization” of more economic activities such as manufacturing.

To maintain resiliency, land use policy and zoning needs to be kept up to date. One question often asked about this policy is whether to introduce residential onto the jobs land base. However introducing residential raises land values considerably, which can cause speculation, vacant land, and property tax increases on existing businesses. 90% of the city's land base does allow some mix of residential and jobs. The 10% of the city's land base that is job-only zoning accommodates 50% of the city's jobs.

These points provide a city context for why industrial and related job land is important, and why ways to protect an economic land base in the region has been supported by the City.

Draft RGS Proposal: The draft RGS takes steps forward compared to the LRSP by addressing the need for a jobs/economy land base as a key component of broader economic development. The draft RGS specifically includes both policy and regulation:

- Policy: The draft RGS includes a Goal, Strategies, and Actions related to land base protection and job location. As a result, the RGS would require each municipality to show in its Regional Context Statement (RCS) how local plans and policies focus significant commercial activity in Urban Centres well connected to transit, and protect Industrial and Mixed Employment areas for other types of jobs and economic activity. This is backed up by detailed maps that show where these lands are located.
- Regulation: The draft RGS also introduces a new regulatory role for Metro. The new regulatory role is through proposed designations of land uses and boundaries for Industrial and Mixed Employment areas (and Urban Centres and other areas). Designation means that the uses and/or boundaries could not be changed by municipalities through the normal local rezoning processes without Metro Board approval.

The regulatory proposal is because of Metro's concern that there has been no way of ensuring that the policy directions are carried out - that municipalities find it easy to say “yes” to development because it is in the local interest, even if the development is not in the regional interest, because there is no guarantee of a consistent approach among all municipalities together.

While there is much agreement across the region on the issues related to industrial land and job location, the topic of designation has been one of the most challenging parts of the RGS discussions. In draft #2 of the RGS, Metro provides some response to municipal concerns in the following ways:

- Industrial lands have been divided into Industrial Area and Mixed Employment. Mixed Employment permits commercial and industrial (not residential). The draft RGS sees this as a one-time-only land use - i.e., existing Mixed Employment areas can be identified, but this land use should not in future expand onto more Industrial land. Mixed Employment seems to respond to a request from Vancouver

City Council that land use at transit stations in industrial areas can be more intensive, although the RGS is still unclear on the extent to which Mixed Employment could further intensify as commercial.

- To respond to concern that the designation approach goes too far in giving the region regulatory control over municipal land use decisions, the maps in the RGS would become designations only after each municipality completes (within two years) its RCS for approval by the Metro Board. While this does provide a less centralized approach to designation, it is still true that RCSs would be judged against the RGS, and all future boundary changes would require Metro Board approval.

Comments on draft RGS proposal: Vancouver Council supported last spring a possible regulatory designation approach in concept. Designation of Industrial and Mixed Employment areas could be an effective way of providing more consistency across the region in living up to the objectives of the RGS. Issues in following up on this approach have been as follows:

- The regulatory approach would be a big change. By contrast, the LRSP has designations only for non-urban land -Agricultural and Conservation-Recreation. These are lands mostly already in the Agricultural Land Reserve or publicly-owned, as opposed to the new proposal which is directed at all private lands within the urban boundary where growth and development takes place and where municipal land use decisions play out.
- Crafting the details of a regulatory approach has similarities to writing zoning by-laws for the region and a rezoning amendment process. Even after more work by Metro in draft #2, many issues still remain as to how a regulatory approach would be carried out in terms of its legal and practical details. For instance, what Metro's evaluation criteria would be; how the timing of Metro's response would affect desirable private rezoning applications; what the fees would be and who would pay them; what stakeholders and members of the public would be notified and by whom. Significant time and attention is still needed to develop an efficient and workable system from both a regional and municipal perspective.
- The proposed regulatory approach has also raised question in other municipalities about the details of how the system would work and several have expressed strong consternation about the new regulatory approach in principle.

Alternate proposal (with options): Much has been achieved by Metro to date. Awareness of the issues is much greater across the region, and the draft RGS includes policies, actions, and maps never included in the LRSP. However, the readiness of Metro and all the municipalities to go from the LRSP with no economic policy, all the way to a new RGS with full regional land use regulation, as proposed in the draft RGS, has proved to be a very challenging goal to meet in a timely way. Regional agreement on the draft RGS continues to seem elusive.

Recommendation B is to work with Metro staff and staff from other municipalities on further developing alternative approaches to what is proposed in the draft RGS. The elements of this alternative would be as follows:



- Retain Industrial and Mixed Employment Areas in the RGS as part of the region's land use framework, and set a broader outline of land uses for these areas including more outcome-based, rather than prescriptive, directions. (Appendix A provides a draft.)
- Retain maps with detailed boundaries for Industrial and Mixed Employment areas in the RGS, to provide for measurement and monitoring. (Vancouver's maps are in Appendix B.)
- Use the detailed maps as a basis for Metro staff to provide frequent (e.g., quarterly) reports to the Metro Board and public, identifying the location of all boundary changes and the net impact on the amount of Industrial and Mixed Employment land, and any other observations pertinent to the issues.
- Carry forward with, and further develop, Metro's work to develop job location and land base strategies that go beyond regulation, and also to raise awareness generally of the need for an economic land base.
- Work on two options related to further regulation:

Option #1: Change the implementation system from a "regulation" system to what might be called a "challenge" system, with a phase-in to a more regulatory approach in future.

Metro staff would be notified by municipalities of pending municipal boundary or land use changes, so that the Metro Board may choose to provide formal and public comment where it identifies important RGS objectives are not being met - but Metro would not have ultimate control over the decision.

A second part of this option would be a commitment to develop a regulation system, for instance within two years, unless monitoring shows reversal or slowing of trends - by including in the RGS a commitment to what the legislation describes as an "Implementation Agreement" between Metro and member municipalities. This would allow the time necessary to work out the details of how such a system would function, including criteria, timelines, roles, costs, notifications.

Option #2: Develop a system which includes more 'teeth' to the challenge system at this time (rather than developing a more regulatory system in two years).

This option, unlike Option #1, would provide the Board with approval authority over a municipal decision. This would be through a system that provides for the Board to "challenge" municipalities where upcoming decisions would not be in a defined "regional interest." ("Regional interest" might be defined to include, for example, aspects such as: industrial areas well served for goods movement by rail, water, and major road; and areas with large land parcels or areas with small parcels experiencing continuing municipal change.)

Although there is regulatory power given to the Metro Board in this 2<sup>nd</sup> option, it is still different from the current RGS proposal because this option would not require

all municipal changes to boundaries to be reviewed by the Metro Board for approval, as some would be defined as local rather than regional in interest. Such a system would still need to address issues of timeliness, roles of TransLink and other reviewers, costs and fees, and public and stakeholder notifications.

### **AFFORDABLE HOUSING (RECOMMENDATION C)**

The draft RGS introduces (in Strategy 4.1) more of a focus on affordable housing than the LRSP. This is a positive recognition of the importance of this issue across the region. However, there are some issues about RGS requirements for municipal action. Recommendation C requests the RGS to include continued collaboration with municipalities on targets for rental and ownership ratios, as described below.

Municipalities are expected to meet “estimated future demand” for rental units as defined in tables in the draft RGS. The demand estimates are based on applying the regional tenure split (65/35 owner/renter) to every municipality in the region. This is a reasonable place to start, but it is not an appropriate end point as it does not allow for the significant municipal variation that exists in the region.

In the case of Vancouver, we currently have over 50% of households in rental housing. Agreeing to the current iteration of the RGS would mean setting a target that would water that proportion down over time. This may or may not be appropriate, but it is a decision that should be made by City Council. For other municipalities, the estimates would be so high compared to existing rental stock as to be completely unrealistic.

City staff discussed this with Metro when draft #1 was under review. This led to some new wording in draft #2 about municipal collaboration. However, draft #2 says that Metro will collaborate with municipalities on policies to meet the demand estimates. City staff believes, instead, that the RGS should be clear that it is not only the policies to meet the demand estimates that should entail collaboration after the RGS is approved, but also the demand estimates themselves.

Recommendation C therefore requests Metro to change wording to Section 4.1 as in italics here: “estimated future demand as set out in Table A.3 and *which will be revised through collaboration with member municipalities.*”

### **CONSERVATION-RECREATION DESIGNATIONS (RECOMMENDATION D)**

The draft RGS continues the LRSP approach of designation of what was known as the “green zone.” These are areas protected from development. Recommendation D supports continued designation of Vancouver lands already in the green zone in the LRSP, and suggests adding some new regionally significant green space, primarily to continue to acknowledge the importance of waterfront parks. (In the new draft RGS, the green zone is divided into two parts: Agricultural areas and Conservation-Recreation areas).

Agriculture: For Vancouver, the specific area for Agricultural designation in the draft RGS is carried forward from the LRSP and Vancouver RCS, continuing to follow the same boundary as the Agricultural Land Reserve in Vancouver - i.e., in Southlands.

Conservation-Recreation - Existing Designations: For Vancouver, the specific areas for Conservation-Recreation in the draft RGS carry forward all the designations from the LRSP/RCS, including Stanley Park, Queen Elizabeth Park, Renfrew Ravine, waterfront walkways and parks, Central Valley Greenway, and Langara and Fraserview golf courses. (Park Board staff is working with Metro staff to resolve some minor mapping errors to ensure correct legal boundaries for these areas).

The draft RGS also carries forward the Grandview Cut and the Arbutus Corridor. (There is a note in Vancouver's RCS ODP that these areas are submitted for inclusion in the Green Zone "which the Transportation Plan proposes are considered for a combination of rail, transit and greenway uses." This dual transportation-recreation use is also confirmed in the Arbutus Corridor ODP.)

Conservation-Recreation - New Designations: In addition to the carry forwards from the LRSP and Vancouver RCS, the following are recommended in this report for addition to Vancouver Conservation-Recreation designated areas in the new RGS:

- John Hendry (Trout Lake) Park: John Hendry is a regionally significant park that was nominated for the green zone by Council as part of the Vancouver RCS (1999), but since then there has been no opportunity to update the RGS until now. Draft #2 of the new RGS shows John Hendry included.
- New Brighton Park: This is also included in draft #2 of the RGS in keeping with the regional significance of waterfront parks and walkways. Its inclusion should be subject to Park Board confirmation with the Port, as it is on Port land.
- CRAB Park at Portside: Also waterfront and also subject to Park Board confirmation with the Port.
- False Creek South Shore Parks: The LRSP and Vancouver RCS were inconsistent in whether parks adjacent to waterfront walkway were or were not included. To be consistent, False Creek South Shore Parks should be added, along with the waterfront walkway. This would also bring the RGS up to date with the new South East False Creek waterfront walkway, parks and wildlife island.
- Fraser River waterfront: This is more of a clarification than addition. The LRSP and Vancouver RCS did include the Fraser River "waterfront" with a conceptual line, but did not specify the parks, as was done with most other Vancouver waterfront walkways and parks. This would now include waterfront walkways and parks along the frontage including Deering Island Park, the Shaughnessy Street park site, Riverfront Park, Gladstone Park, and new walkways and park in East Fraser Lands

All of the above would be subject to endorsement by the Park Board.

#### **OTHER SUGGESTED REVISIONS (RECOMMENDATION E)**

In addition to the items identified in Recommendations B through D, there are a number of other recommended revisions to draft #2 of the RGS as identified in Appendix C. Many are clarifications. Key items are as follows:

Provide a more accurate Metro Core boundary: The Metro Core boundary in the draft RGS misses much of south and east of False Creek, including the important Broadway-UBC line rapid transit corridor. Although the boundary is meant to be more symbolic than legal, it does need to more closely match the City's Metro Core boundary and, specifically, to reflect the areas' important relationship to major regional transit corridors.

Provide a regional transit map (instead of Map 9): The RGS contains no map of the existing or future transit network. This makes Urban Centres appear to be 'floating in space' unrelated to transit (even though this is not the case). The link between land use and transportation is central to public understanding and support for the RGS.

Map 9 is the only transit-related map in the draft #2 RGS. It divides the region into three generalized "transit markets" - i.e., "established" (Vancouver, Burnaby, New West, Richmond); "emerging" (NE sector, Surrey, Delta, and eastward); and "local" (North Shore). It suggests that "shaping land use" is only possible in "emerging markets." This is not entirely accurate (e.g., Cambie Corridor).

Generally, it is not clear how the categorizations provide guidance and they seem to imply that areas shown as "emerging" should be transit priorities. They also seem to pre-empt existing TransLink studies (which the City is a partner in) on the Broadway-UBC Line and regional network studies. Replacing Map 9 with a regional transit map would be a more effective way of demonstrating the relationships that have been, and should be, considered between land use and transit.

Clarify the role of TransLink: Draft #2 of the RGS identifies a number of situations in which TransLink would be asked to comment on municipal initiatives. The draft needs to define TransLink's role in these situations more clearly.

Provide an economic vision and context: The RGS focus on industrial and agricultural lands as important components of the regional land use base, can make it appear that these are the two key drivers of the Metro economy. There are only two sentences that suggest a broader economic context. More weight needs to be given to the economic vision and broader context and the role of the RGS within in.

Clarify that Conservation-Recreation areas inside the Urban Containment Boundary are not intended for urban development. This is not as clear as it could be and thus has been of public concern. It should be made clear that the Urban Areas do not override Agricultural and Conservation-Recreation Areas and that the same designation applies to Conservation-Recreation areas both inside and outside the Urban Containment Boundary.

A consolidated list of all recommended revisions is in Appendix C.

## **PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER INPUT**

Several public events were held by Metro across the region for draft #1 and draft #2, some of these in the City of Vancouver. Vancouver staff provided Metro staff with lists of Vancouver stakeholders; put links on the City's web page; and attended the Vancouver events.

Members of the public and stakeholders have also contacted Vancouver staff directly with questions or issues. When Council considered draft #1 of the RGS last May, several delegations provided their input directly to Council. The various interested groups and individuals were notified that this report will be at Council.

Several issues discussed earlier in this report reflect public and stakeholder interest. In particular, several of the recommended revisions to the draft RGS listed in Recommendation E respond to Vancouver groups or individuals who pointed out the need for clarification of TransLink's role and of Conservation-Recreation areas within the urban boundary. This report also notes that the new draft RGS has more emphasis on GHG reduction and climate change adaptation, and recommends that a regulatory system not be implemented before further work. Both of these were topics of public and stakeholder concern.

#### *FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS*

There are no financial implications.

#### *PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS*

There are no personnel implications.

#### *CONCLUSION*

Metro Vancouver has been working on a new RGS. Draft #2 was released at the end of 2009 for comments. The draft RGS provides an outline of a livable and sustainable future as the region grows to accommodate another 1.2 million people by 2041.

This report supports most of the draft RGS including all of the Goals and Strategies that form the basis of the document, and also requests a number of revisions, mostly straightforward requests for clarity and corrections.

This report also supports a key new direction of the RGS, as compared to the LRSP, which is to prevent further erosion of industrial lands, limit sprawl of low density business parks and big box retail, and focus commercial and retail in urban centres close to where people live and work and well served by transit. Since the regulatory aspect of this direction has been the most challenging to obtain agreement on across the region, this report puts forward options for an alternate approach, to be further developed by Metro staff working with City staff and other municipalities.

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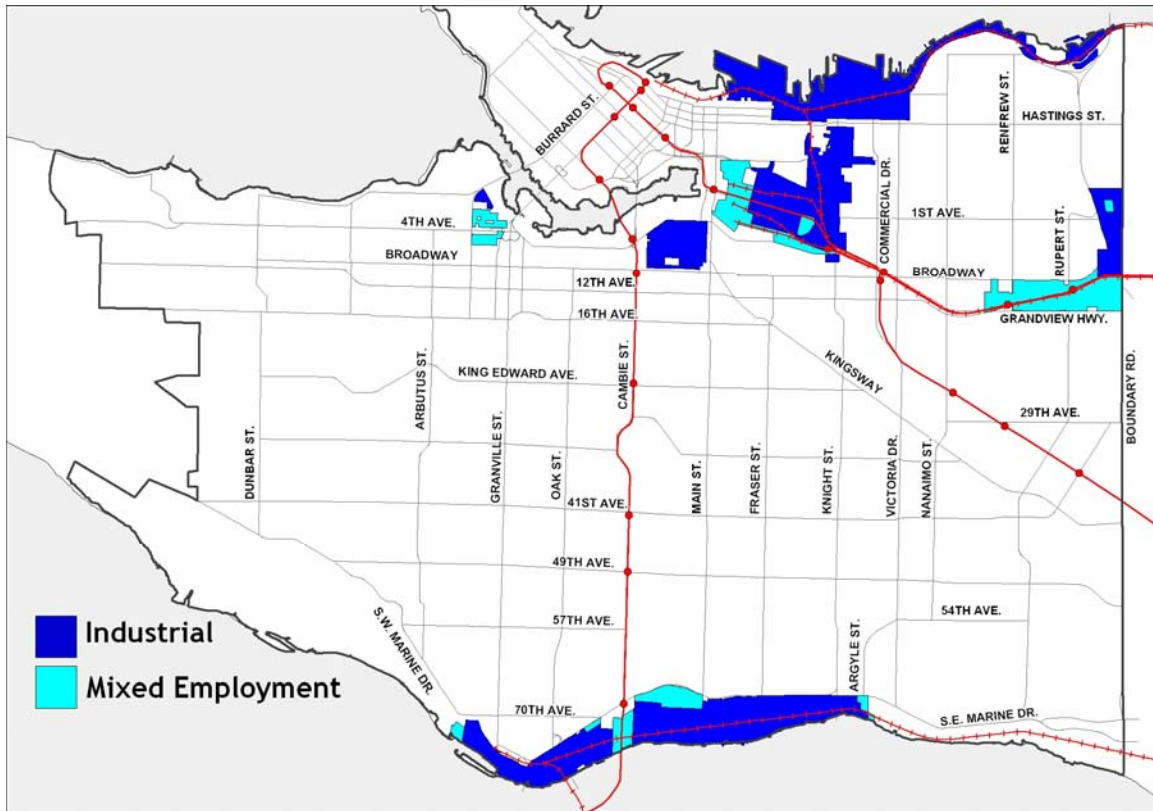
Proposal for RGS Industrial and Mixed Employment Area Descriptions

This is modelled on draft RGS Figure 3 which provides these headings to describe expectations for Urban Centres and Frequent Transit Development Corridors. Applying this model to Industrial and Mixed Employment would mean that all urban land use categories in the RGS would have the same types of guidelines. This proposal is intended to include a combination of land uses and outcome-based, or performance-based, criteria. This figure would replace existing statements in draft #2 RGS related to uses in these areas.

Figure 1 Guidelines for Industrial and Mixed Employment Areas

TYPE	DESCRIPTION AND LAND USE ACTIVITIES	TRANSPORTATION CHARACTERISTICS
Industrial	<p><u>Industrial uses</u> - land uses such as manufacturing, processing, wholesale, warehousing, distribution, works yards, transportation, port facilities, rail yards, logistics, utilities, repair, commercial laundries/cleaning, works yards, construction companies, trade schools, bakeries and catering businesses, recycling, biomedical facilities, research and medical laboratories, multimedia (sound and film studios, radio and tv broadcasting), artists, commercial photography, printing.</p> <p><u>Retail and office uses</u>- Limited - to maintain land value stability and in order to not undermine urban centres as the focus for a mix of uses and the highest concentrations of where people live, work, and shop.</p> <p><u>Residential uses</u> - Not included - due to issues of land value and property tax impacts and compatibility of uses.</p> <p><u>Other characteristics</u>: All buildings suitable for industrial use (e.g., high ceilings, loading bays, construction standards)</p>	<p>Good access to regional roads, rail, and/or water</p> <p>Good access to local business customers</p>
Mixed Employment	<p>Land uses: office; retail; industrial; and institutional uses; not residential; uses that cannot easily locate elsewhere</p> <p>Scale and type of uses that do not undermine Urban Centres</p> <p>These areas are not expected to expand onto additional industrial land.</p>	<p>Good access to transit preferred</p>

### Vancouver Map of Industrial and Mixed Employment Areas



NOTE: The above map illustrates how Vancouver zoning and land use policy fits into the draft RGS-defined land use categories of Industrial and Mixed Employment. (For actual Vancouver zoning and land use policies, refer directly to Vancouver Zoning Map and Vancouver Land Use and Development Policies and Guidelines.)

**Consolidated List of Recommended Revisions to draft #2 RGS**

All Vancouver comments are listed or referred to here. The comments are grouped by the main sections of the draft RGS.

**Abbreviations**

RGS = Regional Growth Strategy

RCS = Regional Context Statement

**LAND USE DESIGNATIONS**

Draft RGS Reference (Nov 2009)	Topic	Issues and Recommended Revisions
Map 1 - Land Use Designations (p.11)	Missing transportation network	<p><b>Issue:</b> This map that summarizes the RGS long-term land use vision for the region is missing any transportation linkages. This makes Urban Centres appear to be ‘floating in space’ unrelated to transit (even though this is not the case). The link between land use and transportation is central to public understanding and support for the RGS.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> At minimum, the map should include the existing networks, and where supported by TransLink, major future network additions could be added. Future transit plans should also be included in the document (in a way that also acknowledges TransLink’s separate authority).</p> <p>Also applies to other maps in the document</p>
	Metro Core boundary and relation to rapid transit	<p><b>Issue:</b> The Metro Core boundary misses south and east of False Creek, including the important Broadway UBC rapid transit area. (However, if the current map symbol were extended to include these areas, it would obliterate Metro Core industrial areas)</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Align the boundary to more closely match the City’s. One solution would be the use of a transparent symbol so that industrial areas within the Metro Core are visible. (Since the Metro Core is already a unique map symbol, it should be possible to adjust it in a way that works.)</p> <p>Also applies to Map 3 and Map 5.</p>
Urban Designations (pp 10 - 11)	Which land uses are “designated”	See alternative proposal in Council report.



## GOAL 1: CREATE A COMPACT URBAN AREA

### Goal 1 - Strategy 1.1 Contain urban development within the Urban Containment Boundary

RGS Reference	Topic	Issues and Recommended Revisions
Map 2 - Urban Containment Boundary (p.15)	Confusion between Conservation/ Recreation Areas and areas for urban development	<p><b>Issue:</b> Most of Vancouver is inside the Urban Containment Boundary, including many designated Conservation/Recreation Areas. Map 2 which shows the UC Boundary does not show the C/R Areas. Some members of the public have worried that this means the C/R Areas are available for urban development.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Need clarity that designated Conservation/Recreation areas are not available for development even if within the Urban Containment boundary. (Also need clarity if these designated boundaries can be changed by a 2/3 vote or a 50%+1 vote)</p>

### Goal 1 - Strategy 1.2 Focus Growth in Urban Centres and Frequent Transit Development Corridors (FTDCs)

RGS Reference	Topic	Issues and Recommended Revisions
1.2.3 (e)/(f) (pp. 16-17)	General Urban Area: how set and relation to transit	<p><b>Issue:</b> General Urban has no description. It seems to be a default areas. Section (f) (ii) is further confusing because it seeks to make lower density areas (presumably it means General Urban areas?) "support transit service" - not clear how the RGS intends local density areas to relate to transit unless this is meant to suggest that even low density areas should be dense enough to support at least some level of transit?</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Clarify.</p>
1.2.6 (a) (p. 17)	Identifying future transit routes and locations	<p><b>Issue:</b> Says that the province and TransLink will work with Metro and member municipalities to identify the location of future rapid transit routes and stations. However, there are also other stakeholders within the region to be included in this work.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Replace current wording with "work with Metro Vancouver, municipalities, <i>and other stakeholders ...</i>"</p>
Figure 3 (p. 18)	Industrial areas in Metro Core	<p><b>Issue:</b> The description for the Metropolitan Core does not include industrial uses; however Vancouver's Metro Core does include industrial areas for the Port, railroad, and other region and city serving uses.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Add "<i>region- and city-serving industrial uses</i>" to the Metropolitan Core description and land use activities in Fig 3.</p>

RGS Reference	Topic	Issues and Recommended Revisions
Map 3 (p. 19)	Special Activity Areas: what and where	<p><b>Issue:</b> Map 3 legend includes "Special Activity Areas" but there is no description of what these are and the role they are intended to play. Vancouver staff presumes they are defined as being in non-Centre locations -- which could explain why VGH, GNW Campus, St. Paul's, etc. are not included as Special Activity Areas (because they are in the Metro Core).</p> <p>Also, previous City comments have requested that Women's &amp; Children's (which is in a non-Centre location) should be included as a Special Activity Area.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Add a description and rationale for showing Special Activity Areas (e.g., in, or similar to, Figure 3); and add Women's and Children's Hospital (4500 Oak St) to Map 3.</p> <p>Also applies to Map 5, page 26.</p>

## GOAL 2: SUPPORT A SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

### Goal 2 - Introduction

RGS Reference	Topic	Issues and Recommended Revisions
Introduction (p. 23)	The Metro Vancouver economy	<p><b>Issue:</b> The RGS focus on industrial and agricultural lands can make it appear that these are the two key drivers of the Metro economy. There are only two sentences that suggest a broader economic context. More weight needs to be given to the broader context and the role of the RGS within in.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Add context and RGS role.</p>

### Goal 2 - Strategy 2.1 Promote land development patterns that support a diverse regional economy and employment close to where people live

RGS Reference	Topic	Issues and Recommended Revisions
2.1.3, (p. 24)	Other employment location strategies and regional tax-base sharing	<p><b>Issue:</b> The thrust of the draft RGS for employment location is regulatory. However regulation alone won't locate jobs where desired. The draft does contain commitments by Metro for work to identify additional tools, including regional tax-base sharing. However, assumption of regional tax-base sharing may be overly simplistic, and description of a comprehensive approach to a wider strategy and range of tools is not easy to see as it is not described in one place.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Add a Metro commitment to develop a comprehensive strategic industrial land and job location policy and tool kit - and a requirement <u>for a more detailed terms of reference to be submitted to the Board for approval post-RGS.</u> (It may be necessary to pull together actions related to this in an appendix to present a more coherent approach because the RGS document structure currently locates bits and pieces across 4 sections.) <b>See also:</b> 1.2.2 (p. 16), and 2.2.2 and 2.2.3 (p. 25)</p>
2.1.4 (d) (p. 24)	Location of major commercial	<p><b>Issue:</b> Discourages "major commercial" outside of 'Urban Centres and commercial areas not well served by transit.' But the role of Mixed Employment Areas is not clear - presumably a Mixed Employment area well served by transit could be the location of major commercial. (Mixed Employment Areas are not mentioned at all in 2.1.)</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Define Mixed Employment areas and their characteristics and clarify that major commercial can be located in these areas near transit.</p>

Goal 2 - Strategy 2.2 Protect the region's supply of industrial land

RGS Reference	Topic	Issues and Recommended Revisions
2.2.4 b)(i), (ii), and (iii) (p. 25)	Land use flexibility in industrial areas	<p><b>Issue:</b> These actions seek to define what are, and what are not, appropriate uses in Industrial areas. However (ii) and (iii) would not allow uses that are already allowed in at least some Vancouver industrial zoning, such as office uses that are not just ancillary to industrial.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> (ii) and (iii) should be deleted and (i) should be replaced with a more performance based, or outcome-based, approach. A table for these areas like Table 3 for Urban Centres and Frequent Transit Corridors would be useful. (See Council Report Appendix A.)</p>
2.2.4 (d) (iii) (p. 25)	Expansion of Mixed Employment Areas	<p><b>Issue:</b> Expansion of Mixed Employment areas is discouraged, but it is not clear if this means expansion of their boundaries, or expansion of uses/densities within. (Vancouver staff assumes the former is what is discouraged).</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Clarify that Mixed Employment areas may densify/intensify within their boundaries, but are not intended to expand their boundaries</p>
2.2.5 (p. 25)	Role of TransLink and Province	<p><b>Issue:</b> Seeks to have review by TransLink, the Port, the Airport, and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, when changes to Industrial Areas, but no information on roles, criteria, and timelines.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Need to make clearer within context of new City-proposed approach.</p>
Map 5: Economic Areas (p. 26)	Vancouver's Industrial and Mixed Employment Areas	<p><b>Issue:</b> Locations and boundaries need updating and correction to align with City policy</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Revise Map 5 in accordance with map provided by City in Appendix B of Council Report (And change to Designation system, as per proposed new approach in Council report.)</p>

## GOAL 3: PROTECT THE REGION'S ENVIRONMENT AND RESPOND TO CLIMATE CHANGE

### Goal 3 - Strategy 3.1 - Protect the lands within the Conservation and Recreation areas

RGS Reference	Topic	City Staff Comments & Suggested Changes
Map 7 - Conservation and Recreation Areas (p. 34)	Vancouver's designated Conservation and Recreation Areas	See Council report.

### Goal 3 - Strategy 3.2 Protect and enhance the natural feature and connectivity throughout the region

RGS Reference	Topic	City Staff Comments & Suggested Changes
Figure 5: Regional Recreation Greenway Network (p 36)	Waterfront connections missing	<p><b>Issue:</b> For Vancouver, map shows regional greenway network concept around the Downtown peninsula, around False Creek, and along the Fraser in southwest of city - need to add along other city waterfronts. (Note: Figure 5 is not a designation map.)</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Expand the greenway network concept in Figure 5 to include the entire south side of Burrard Inlet and along full north side of Fraser River.</p>
Figure 6: The Region's Natural Features (p. 37)	Confusion between designated Conservation/ Recreation and other recreation lands	<p><b>Issue:</b> Both Figure 6 and Map 7 use the terms "Recreation and Conservation" to mean different things and label some of the same lands with the different meanings. (Figure 6 is not a designation map; Map 7 is a designation map.) Figure 6 includes all Vancouver parks, but most are not designations, nor should they be.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Not sure of need to include so much detail in the RGS. If so, need to more clearly distinguish the two types of areas (Conservation and Recreation areas that are designated -- versus local parks that are not designated)</p>

Goal 3 - Strategy 3.3 Encourage land use and transportation patterns that reduce greenhouse gas emissions

RGS Reference	Topic	Issues and Recommended Revisions
3.3.3 (b) (p. 38)	Priority of transportation modes	<p><b>Issue:</b> Transportation modes are not listed in Metro or Vancouver priority order</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Reverse the order of transportation modes, to be: walking, cycling, transit, high occupancy vehicles. Same issue and recommendation in Goal 5, Introduction (p. 47) and Goal 5, title of Strategy 5.1 (p. 48)</p>
3.3.3 c) (p. 38)	Evaluation of major development impacts on GHG's	<p><b>Issue:</b> Seeks to have municipalities establish criteria to evaluate major development projects for direct and indirect impacts on GHGs. However, interpretation of "indirect" is not clear - it should include, for example, induced traffic, but not life-cycle carbon assessments.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Clarify "indirect." Also - add to list of Metro actions: <i>Assist in identify best practices regarding measuring and mitigating GHGs in new development.</i></p>
3.3.3 e) (p. 38)	District energy	<p><b>Issue:</b> Seeks municipalities to support, where feasible and appropriate, renewable energy generation and district energy -- although does not specify how this would be implemented in land use planning and where opportunities might lie.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Add examples of how this might be achieved by municipalities. Also - add to list of Metro actions: <i>"Work with municipalities and utilities to map potential opportunities for renewable district energy systems."</i></p>

Goal 3 - Strategy 3.4 Encourage land use and transportation development that increase adaptive capacity to withstand natural hazards and climate change

RGS Reference	Topic	Issues and Recommended Revisions
3.4 general (p. 39)	Adaptation to climate change	<p><b>Issue:</b> Adaptation should play more of a role in understanding growth and sustainability.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> One potential action is for Metro to conduct an adaptation analysis for the region, to better understand the risks of climate change on infrastructure, natural systems, economy, etc. Also, Metro could commit to working with researchers and climate modelers to maintain current and localized projections of the range of anticipated climatic changes and communicate this info to municipalities.</p>
	Green infrastructure	<p><b>Issue:</b> Lack of discussion of green infrastructure - particularly important in the context of dealing with climate change.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Add</p>

## GOAL 4: DEVELOP COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

### Goal 4 - Strategy 4.1 Provide diverse and affordable housing choices

RGS Reference	Topic	Issues and Recommended Revisions
4.1.4 (c) (p. 42)	Estimates of housing need for rental	See Council report.

## GOAL 5: SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION CHOICES

### Goal 5 - Introduction

RGS Reference	Topic	Issues and Recommended Revisions
Introduction (p. 47) and 5.1 title (p. 48)	Priority of transportation modes	See comments above under Strategy 3.3.3(b) (p. 38): Put modes in priority order: walking is first, followed by cycling, transit, and high-occupancy vehicles.

### Goal 5 - Strategy 5.1 Coordinate land use and transportation decisions to encourage the use of transit, high-occupancy vehicles, cycling, and walking

RGS Reference	Topic	Issues and Recommended Revisions
5.1.3 (p. 48)	Regional parking policy	<p><b>Issue:</b> Seeks to have Metro work with TransLink and municipalities to develop a regional parking supply policy. However, a broader approach would be more suitable.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Substitute “parking <i>policy</i>” for “parking supply.” This would give more flexibility to consider other supportive measures such as parking pricing, and incentives for measures such as car-sharing and ride-sharing.</p>
5.1.4 (p. 48)	Data collection, forecasting, etc	<p><b>Issue:</b> Seeks to have Metro work with TransLink and the province to develop data collection and performance standards, but it does not mention municipalities.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Municipalities should be included in the list of agencies to be worked with.</p>
5.1.6 (a) and (b) and Map 9 pp. 48-49)	Transit priorities	<p><b>Issue:</b> Map 9 divides the region into different types of “transit markets” - e.g., “established” versus “emerging.” However, it is not clear how the categorization provides guidance. In addition, the categories appear arbitrary and oversimplify the geographic challenges and needs for transit in the region. For example, the “established” transit market of Vancouver contains some areas that are still “emerging”, such as Fraser Lands, while some areas designated as “emerging”, such as Surrey’s Central City area, would be more accurately described as “established.” Meanwhile, the RGS contains no map of the existing or future transit network.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Map 9 content should be deleted. Maps of existing and proposed transit need to be provided -- with acknowledgement of TransLink’s role (and acknowledgement</p>

RGS Reference	Topic	Issues and Recommended Revisions
		that it will be the role of municipalities to prioritize development along transit corridors).
5.1.7 (p. 49)	Role for Province	<p><b>Issue:</b> Asks that the province, through “legislation and other methods,” support Metro and TransLink to develop a regional Transportation Demand Management Strategy -- but does not clarify what the legislation should be aimed at.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Make it clear what the legislation being sought is intended to do.</p>



## IMPLEMENTATION

RGS Reference	Topic	Issues and Recommended Revisions
Section F - (pp. 52-57)	Designations etc	See Council report

## MONITORING AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

RGS Reference	Topic	Recommended Revisions
General (pp. 58-59)	Performance measures overall	Annual monitoring is an important aspect of the RGS, but may be so far somewhat overlooked in the efforts to respond to issues of RGS content and regulation. It would be useful to focus separately and specifically on monitoring - such as through upcoming meetings of Metro technical committees composed of planning and engineering transportation staff from throughout the region (TAC, MRTAC)
Goal 1 (p. 58)	Residential density	If possible, this should be a <u>net</u> measure of density (i.e., exclude streets, parks, etc.) to help identify comparable density achievement across the region.
Goal 1 (P. 58)	Percentage of new employment	Mixed Employment and Industrial areas should also be included. It would also be helpful to publish the base-line of existing employment in all these areas once the RGS and initial RCS' are adopted.
Goal 2 p. 58)	Job density	Add job density as a performance indicator (in Urban Centres, Frequent Transit Development Corridors, Mixed Employment Areas, and Industrial Areas).
Goal 4 (p. 59)	Residents in proximity to community facilities	A metric (e.g., 500 m) for 'proximity' should be provided to ensure comparability across the region.
Goal 5 (p. 59)	Vehicle km travelled	Add VKT -- consistent with 5.1.6.e) on p. 49.
<b>Glossary</b>		
Glossary (pp. 60-61)	Pedestrian, Transit & Cycle Friendly	Definition should include reference to cycling end of trip facilities such as showers and lockers at worksites.