

ITEM 11
MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 47
COUNCIL MEETING 89/07/10

RE: DRAFT LIVABLE REGION STRATEGY
MUNICIPAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT the recommendations of the Director Planning & Building Inspection be adopted.

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TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER 1989 JULY 05
FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING & BUILDING INSPECTION OUR FILE: 01.227.1

SUBJECT: DRAFT LIVABLE REGION STRATEGY

PURPOSE: To update Council on the status of preparation of the Livable Region Strategy and to recommend comments, for Council's consideration, to be forwarded to GVRD.

RECOMMENDATION

1. THAT Council support the goals of the renewed Livable Region Strategy as a useful framework for raising and discussing issues of regional importance and initiating further actions.
2. THAT a copy of this report be forwarded to the Administrator, Policy Development, Development Services Department, GVRD, 4330 Kingsway, Burnaby, B.C., V5H 4G8.

REPORT

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to update Council members on the preparation of a renewed Livable Region Strategy, and to present for Council consideration, comments on the Draft Livable Region Strategy document to be forwarded to the Technical Advisory Committee of GVRD.

2.0 BACKGROUND

At their meeting of 1988 March 14, Council considered a report from the Director Planning & Building Inspection regarding the preliminary directions for a renewed Livable Region Strategy. In that report it was concluded that the strategy as presented generally reinforced municipal policy and provided a useful framework for raising and discussing issues of regional importance. It was also suggested that to make the regional strategy a more practical and relevant framework for local policy and decision making, the following should be considered:

- i) make provision for a clear statement of the general regional roles for individual municipalities, including where appropriate, the Regional Strategy to be expressed in statistical terms at both the regional and municipal levels.
- ii) be subject to a cooperative action program between member municipalities.
- iii) possibly contain the inclusion of a 'social development' theme and regional facilities and services framework.
- iv) include consideration of the impact of transportation improvements on local residential areas as an influence in planning for improved mobility in the region.

These comments were forwarded to the Technical Advisory Committee of the GVRD. Comments from municipalities were considered, and a new draft strategy document has been prepared.

The Technical Advisory Committee has once again requested that Municipal Councils comment on the draft.

On May 8, 1989, GVRD Development Services Staff made a presentation on the draft Livable Region Strategy to Municipal Council. A copy of the draft document is available for review by Council in the Aldermen's office. The public may view a copy at the front counter of the Planning and Building Inspection Department.

3.0 THE DRAFT LIVABLE REGION STRATEGY

For more than a decade, the Livable Region Strategy which was completed in 1976, identified a vision for the future of Greater Vancouver. This strategy was a cooperative municipal effort that has provided a context for regional and municipal development.

It is suggested that a contemporary statement of the Livable Region Strategy, like the original strategy, will be advisory, with an emphasis on goals and a broad development concept for the region. The strategy would be implemented largely through the concepts being absorbed into municipal regulatory documents and capital programs, and through providing a context for focusing intermunicipal and inter-governmental action. At this point, there is little attention to priority setting, evaluating options or recommending specific action plans. The goals and strategies are summarized in Appendix A to this report.

There are some fundamental differences between the original Livable Region Proposals (LRP) and the updated Livable Region Strategy (LRS). The LRP, being a response to the rapid growth of the 1960's and 1970's, recommended a significant change in the way regional growth occurred; for example, the establishment of regional town centres. The contemporary LRS strives to build on our past successes in regional growth management efforts while being mindful of the need to balance employment and labour force growth.

The goals and strategies contained in the LRS are less directive than the original document. This is of course related to the strategy's purpose in providing a consensus building vision for the future. There is concern that the strategies could be widely interpreted in specific implementation actions by different municipalities and therefore the purpose of the strategy could be lost. As work on the strategy proceeds, the GVRD should be encouraged to develop a clearer statement of the general regional roles for individual municipalities so that the broader regional vision can be realized.

The original LRP was the subject of an extensive public review process that strived to ensure the validity of the proposed goals. The current document has been prepared by regional staff in close consultation with municipal representatives. To ensure that the proposed vision is acceptable to the community, some wider consultation may be required.

4.0 CHANGES IN DRAFT DOCUMENT RELATED TO PREVIOUS COMMENTS

As noted previously, Council considered a report at their meeting of 1988 March 14 regarding preliminary directions for a Livable Regional Strategy. The following discusses how the draft document addresses concerns previously raised.

- 4.1 Make provision for a clear statement of the general regional roles for individual municipalities, including where appropriate, for the Regional Strategy to be expressed in statistical terms at both the regional and municipal levels.

The strategy document clearly states that it is intended to be a general framework, with an emphasis on broad regional development goals and directions. It endeavors to identify the areas of concern in regional development and the general areas for action. More detailed analysis and actions on particular aspects of the strategy, such as the regional economy, transportation and the environment will result from work focused in those areas. The desire to include a clear statement of the general regional roles for individual municipalities remains and should be restated.

- 4.2 Be subject to a cooperative action program between municipalities that can advance the proposed strategy.

It is intended that the regional strategy be endorsed by the GVRD and its member municipalities as a shared statement of goals for Greater Vancouver and broad directions for action. There are two main avenues of implementation. First, the strategy is intended to provide a basis for actions by the GVRD to direct future regional work in specific areas and provide a context for regional services. Second, the concepts are to provide a regional context for municipalities, especially for Official Community Plans and action programs.

The success of the Livable Region Strategy will depend on the degree to which its ideas and concepts are embraced by member municipalities. Therefore, to reinforce municipal 'ownership' of regional development strategies, the GVRD is encouraged to establish a strong program of cooperative municipal action.

The Municipality of Burnaby, given its central location in the Burrard Peninsula between the City of Vancouver and the rapidly expanding outer suburban areas has a vested interest in ensuring that an orderly regional growth management strategy is developed and conformed to by the regional community. Towards this end, consideration should be given to requesting the Minister of Municipal Affairs to include, under Section 945 (2) (g) of the Municipal Act, the provision of a regional context for Official Community Plans prepared and adopted within the Greater Vancouver Regional District.

4.3 Include a social development theme and regional facilities and services framework.

Since the preparation of the discussion paper in 1988, a number of studies were undertaken. One involved an examination of regional social issues to be considered for inclusion in the Livable Region Strategy. This work resulted in the inclusion of a new goal dealing with the need to support and enhance diversity and vitality through well-designed physical development and a rich cultural environment. In addition, social development themes have been added to other goals, specifically "A Healthy and Safe Region" (well developed social services), and "An Equitable Region" (employment, social facilities, housing and public transportation).

4.4 Include consideration of the impact of transportation improvements on local residential areas as an influence in planning for improved mobility in the region.

The goal related to accessibility emphasizes the need to create a jobs to labour force balance in all parts of Greater Vancouver and develop a cost-effective and balanced set of improvements to road and transit. The GVRD should again be encouraged to consider the impact of those improvement on local neighbourhoods in any specific implementation actions.

5.0 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

While each of the goals of the strategy touches in varying degrees upon the general principles of sustainable development, there is no one goal which explicitly expresses the broader goal of ensuring an ecologically sustainable region. It is recommended that the GVRD be encouraged to consider the inclusion of this goal in the Livable Region Strategy.

6.0 THE NEXT STEPS

Comments from Municipal Councils on the renewed Livable Region Strategy will be reported to the Development Services Committee on 1989 July 12 and the Board in late July. The adoption of the goals and strategies of the Livable Region Strategy is seen as being the first step in initiating further discussion about the vision for the future of the region and for working together to resolve complex problems involving transportation, the environment, the economy, etc.

7.0 CONCLUSION


Staff support the concept of a renewed Livable Region Strategy and conclude that the goals of the strategy as outlined in the draft document generally reinforce municipal policy and provide a useful framework for raising and discussing issues of regional importance and initiating further action. To make the Livable Region Strategy a more practical and relevant framework for local policy and decision making, GVRD is encouraged to consider the following:

- i) As work on the strategy proceeds, a clearer statement of the general regional roles for individual municipalities should be developed so that the broader regional vision can be realized.
- ii) That a wider program of consultation with the public be considered to ensure that the proposed vision is acceptable to the community.

- iii) To encourage municipal 'ownership' of regional goals, a strong program of cooperative municipal action be established.
- iv) To include the consideration of the impact of transportation improvements on local residential areas as an influence in planning for increased accessibility in the region.
- v) To request that the Minister of Municipal Affairs include, under section 945 (2) (g) of the Municipal Act, the provision of a regional context for Official Community Plans prepared and adopted within the Greater Vancouver Regional District.
- vi) To include as a goal of the strategy, the need to ensure an ecologically sustainable region.

It is recommended that Council transmit the above comments to the Administrator, Policy Development, Development Services Department, GVRD.


BG/jp


A.L. Parr,
DIRECTOR PLANNING &
BUILDING INSPECTION

Attachments

LIVABILITY GOALS FOR GREATER VANCOUVER

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A REGION IN NATURE

The blending of urban development and the natural environment is a key source of Greater Vancouver's quality and identity. Many features arising from the region's natural endowment create this quality - the natural areas forming parks or wildlife habitat, the views of forested mountains, the access to sea, rivers and lakes, the clean quality of the air and water, and the urban landscaping, all bring nature into the built environment. This goal seeks to maintain and enhance Greater Vancouver's close-to-nature quality as the region grows and changes.

AN ECONOMY OF GROWTH AND CHANGE

Greater Vancouver is a trading region with a history based on international links. Its future prosperity depends upon building on those strengths and developing new and expanded niches in the international marketplace. A strong and vital economy is required to provide jobs, to renew industries to meet changing technology and markets, and to provide the public resources required to maintain the region's quality of life. This goal seeks regional development which creates a healthy climate for investment and employment growth while maintaining the region's livability.

ACCESSIBILITY FOR PEOPLE AND GOODS

Ease of access for people and goods is essential both for the region's quality of life and for its economic vitality. Accessibility involves both the development of transportation facilities, and the creation of a land use pattern which locates jobs and community services near to where people live. This goal seeks to create a region which provides reasonable accessibility to travel to work, shopping, or recreation areas, or to transport goods.

A HEALTHY AND SAFE REGION

Qualities of health and safety contribute significantly to the security inherent in a livable region. This involves clean air and water, a high standard of personal safety, and well-developed social services. It also involves other factors supporting physical and mental well-being such as good park and recreation services, adequate and good quality housing stock, a physical and spatial pattern which is functional and does not create undue stress in daily living, and the minimization of risks from natural or man-made hazards. This goal seeks to maintain and improve conditions of health and safety in Greater Vancouver.

A REGION OF DIVERSITY AND VITALITY

Greater Vancouver is a stimulating and enjoyable place to live. Its livability is greatly enhanced by the many different communities and interests which generate a vitality and energy. It presents a diversity of settings from the flat delta to the mountain slopes, from the intensely urban to the pastoral. It also presents a rich cultural diversity reflecting the wide range of ethnic backgrounds and cultural interests. This diversity and vitality should be supported and enhanced through well-designed physical development and a rich cultural environment.

AN EQUITABLE REGION

Greater Vancouver's livability should be shared by all the region's residents and communities. The costs and benefits of regional development should be equitably distributed, with particular attention given to improving the situation of the disadvantaged. This includes access to employment, equitably distributed social facilities and services, good housing, and high quality public transportation.

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AN EFFICIENT REGION

The Livable Region should be developed with the most effective use of public funds. This requires intermunicipal cooperation where there can be cost savings, and plans and policies that ensure cost-effective development of land use, transportation and services.

STRATEGIES FOR THE LIVABLE REGION IN THE 1990's

- Protect Greater Vancouver's natural environmental quality through the conservation of natural amenities, the maintenance and improvement of air and water quality, and urban landscaping.
- Improve accessibility for people and goods through achieving a jobs to labour force balance in all parts of Greater Vancouver, fully utilizing the existing transportation system, and developing a cost-effective and balanced set of improvements to transit facilities and services and roads.
- Help provide the setting, infrastructure and services necessary to develop a growing and changing regional economy, with particular attention to transportation, tourism, and export-oriented business services and technology-based manufactured products.
- Continue to develop downtown Vancouver and the regional town centres as major concentrations of higher density residential and commercial development, and as hubs for the transit system, and support the development of smaller centres as local foci for community services and transit.
- Improve Greater Vancouver's community life through providing for social well-being, creating an excellent education system, and enhancing cultural vitality.

