

ITEM 4  
MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 3  
COUNCIL MEETING 92/01/13

TO: ACTING MUNICIPAL MANAGER 1992 January 08  
FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING Our File: 01.215.5  
SUBJECT: DISCUSSION PAPER - "THE REGIONAL ROLE IN TRANSPORTATION  
AND LAND USE PLANNING IN THE LOWER MAINLAND"

PURPOSE: To provide a response to the discussion paper prepared by the Greater Vancouver Regional District concerning the appropriate regional role in transportation and land use planning in the Lower Mainland.

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RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT the GVRD Board be requested to provide a lead role in coordinating the preparation of a draft position on regional mandates following the upcoming policy workshop on regional governance for further consideration by member municipalities and other interested parties.
2. THAT a copy of this report be forwarded to Mr. Gordon Campbell, Chairperson, GVRD Board.

R E P O R T

1.0 BACKGROUND

Appearing on the Agenda from Council's Meeting of 1992 January 06 was a letter from Gordon Campbell, Chairman, Greater Vancouver Regional District inviting comment on a discussion paper prepared by the GVRD entitled "The Regional Role in Transportation and Land Use Planning in the Lower Mainland". The discussion paper focuses on the question as to whether there should be a renewed regional mandate, together with the appropriate authority, to address regional land use and transportation planning. This report provides a response to the discussion paper.

2.0 REGIONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

The discussion paper makes the point that the Creating Our Future program established a broad agreement about the kind of region wanted by Greater Vancouver residents. This agreement centres around a new sense of concern and urgency for environmental improvements and a heightened awareness of the linkages between environmental, regional and local issues. This concern is particularly critical when considering that about a half million residents are projected to be added to the regional population over the next 20 years. There is a widespread view that the region requires a contemporary and effective growth management strategy to improve, preserve and protect our quality of life.

Growth and development issues identified include:

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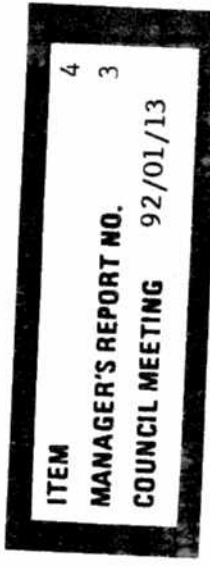
- How can we preserve and consolidate our major open space areas and agricultural lands?
- What is the appropriate share of future growth which each community in the region should accommodate?
- Where and how many regional town centres should be supported?
- Which policy changes are needed to protect our air and land resources by reducing our dependence on the private automobile?
- What transportation priorities and investments need to be made to meet our regional goals?

The Livable Region Strategic Plan and Long-Range Transportation Plan (Transport 2021) currently under preparation by the Regional District will be addressing these and other related policy questions. These documents in prescribing a land use and transportation development framework for the region as a whole will need to make difficult choices about regional and local interests.

A central issue is that the present approach to regional development is based upon consensus building amongst the member municipalities. As such, there is no formal mechanism to ensure that the directions and recommended actions of these plans will be universally implemented throughout the region. As the discussion paper points out, the "plans will have no teeth".

Five issues concerning the adequacy of the existing approach to regional planning identified in the paper include:

1. Jurisdictional adequacy - the existing system does not assess the regional implications of local decisions and ensure that regional interest prevail where appropriate.
2. Environmental adequacy - If we rely completely upon consensus, will we give enough weight to the interests of various ecosystems and the needs of future generations?
3. Social adequacy - are the interests of the disadvantaged, the aged, and the diverse ethnic groups adequately represented from a regional perspective?
4. Economic adequacy - does our present arrangement allow us to manage growth in a cost effective manner? How would the region finance new added responsibilities?
5. Geographic adequacy - do the existing GVRD planning boundaries adequately address the long term needs of the larger Lower Mainland region?



### 3.0 THE REGIONAL MANDATE - A PROCESS

To assist in the consideration of these and other related issues, a policy workshop has been arranged for 1992 January 22 and 23 to explore possible solutions to enhance decision making capability at the regional level in relation to planning, service delivery and administrative matters. The GVRD Board has sent out invitations to Municipal Councils of member municipalities to participate in this important workshop. The Acting Municipal Manager and members of this department will be in attendance.

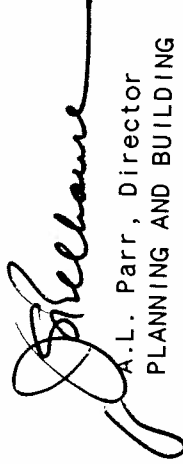
One of the objectives of the workshop is to generate options for changing our system of regional governance and assess each option in terms of criteria established by the participants. This would lead to the development of a suggested model for regional governance.

While this department has long felt there is a need for a renewed mandate for land use and transportation planning at the regional level, it is recognized that the various issues as outlined earlier are complex and require consideration and resolution. The possible financial implications of a renewed regional mandate for an added function such as transit could be particularly acute unless proper funding mechanisms are put in place.

The proceedings of the workshop will be very valuable in giving further consideration to the questions and issues raised in the region's discussion paper. It is the intention of the workshop organizers to distribute the proceedings in the form of a paper to the Lower Mainland Regional Districts and Municipalities, as well as the Provincial Government and interest groups for further discussion.

To help further focus and facilitate this initiative, staff are of the view that the regional community should play a lead role in defining the appropriate regional mandates for planning, service delivery and administration to best meet the needs of the region and member municipalities into the next century. As such, it is recommended that the Regional Board be requested to provide this lead role in coordinating the preparation of a draft proposal based on the discussions of the workshop proceedings for further consideration by the member municipalities and other interested parties.

Under this approach, Council will be in a better position to give further consideration to the questions and issues as raised in the discussion paper "The Regional Role in Transportation and Land Use Planning in the Lower Mainland".



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