

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR  
AND COUNCILLORS*

**SUBJECT: METRO VANCOUVER'S REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY  
(RGS) OPTIONS**

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. **THAT** Council send a copy of this report to the Metro Vancouver Land Use and Transportation Committee, with a request that the comments presented herein be considered in preparation of the draft Regional Growth Strategy;
2. **THAT** Council send a copy of this report to Metro Vancouver member municipalities for information purposes; and
3. **THAT** Council send a copy of this report to the TransLink Board and the Provincial Minister of Transportation with a request to coordinate the incorporation of regional and municipal interests in the creation of a revised regional transportation plan that supports an updated Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) land use concept, as outlined in this report.

**REPORT**

The Community Development Committee, at its Open meeting held on 2008 February 26, received and adopted the attached providing an overview and comments on the *Choosing a Sustainable Future* public consultation document prepared by Metro Vancouver in support of the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) update.

This document offers the first opportunity for public and municipal comment on major elements of a renewed RGS to be forwarded to Metro Vancouver for consideration in preparation of a draft updated Regional Growth Strategy.

Copied to:	City Manager Director Finance Director Engineering Director Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services City Solicitor Director Planning & Building
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To: His Worship, the Mayor and Councillors  
From: Community Development Committee  
Re: Metro Vancouver's Regional Growth Strategy (RGS)  
Options  
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The comments and suggestions presented herein are intended to assist with the RGS update process. While adding time to the RGS update efforts, the Committee believes that the collaborative process outlined in the report will result in a stronger regional plan – one that will have broader understanding, support and commitment from Metro Vancouver municipalities; and one that will help ensure that Metro Vancouver continues to be a sustainable, liveable region as it grows in the future.

Respectfully submitted,

\*

Councillor C. Jordan  
Chair

Councillor D. Johnston  
Vice Chair

Councillor G. Evans  
Member

**TO:** CHAIR AND MEMBERS  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE

**DATE:** 2008 February 21

**FROM:** DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

**FILE:** 71000-01  
**Ref:** Metro Vancouver  
RGS Options

**SUBJECT:** METRO VANCOUVER'S REGIONAL  
GROWTH STRATEGY (RGS) OPTIONS

**PURPOSE:** To provide an overview and comments on the *Choosing a Sustainable Future* public consultation document prepared by Metro Vancouver in support of the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) update.

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  - a) the Metro Vancouver Land Use and Transportation Committee, with a request that the comments presented herein be considered in preparation of the draft Regional Growth Strategy;
  - b) Metro Vancouver member municipalities for information purposes; and
  - c) the TransLink Board and the Provincial Minister of Transportation with a request to coordinate the incorporation of regional and municipal interests in the creation of a revised regional transportation plan that supports an updated Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) land use concept, as outlined in this report.

**REPORT****1.0 BACKGROUND**

The Metro Vancouver Board of Directors adopted the Livable Region Strategic Plan (LRSP) in 1996. The plan serves as Metro Vancouver's Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) and has been lauded internationally – both for its visionary, progressive policies and for its reliance on the mutual cooperation of regional municipalities for its implementation.

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Metro Vancouver is currently in the process of updating the LRSP. As a tool for eliciting public input on the update, the organization has prepared a document entitled, "*Choosing a Sustainable Future for Metro Vancouver*" (distributed to Committee and Council under separate cover). It has also hosted several public meetings throughout the region to hear regional residents' views about proposals contained in the document.

The public consultation process was initiated in 2007 November, with submission of written comments from the public and other stakeholders requested by 2008 January. Staff informed Metro Vancouver that the City's comments would be submitted after the requested date. We were assured that our submission would be forwarded to the Metro Vancouver Land Use and Transportation Committee, along with late submissions from other municipalities. Regional municipalities first received copies of the *Choosing a Sustainable Future* public consultation document at the time of its public release on 2007 November 14.

This report provides an overview of the *Choosing a Sustainable Future* document, provides an assessment from the City of Burnaby's perspective, and proposes a City response to be forwarded to Metro Vancouver, member municipalities, TransLink and the Minister of Transportation. This is a goals based document that provides the first public opportunity to comment on a renewed regional plan framework. This work, through expected future consultation processes, is expected to lead to a draft RGS document for further City consideration and comment.

It should be noted that this report includes many excerpts from *Choosing a Sustainable Future*. For clarity, these excerpts (direct quotations) are displayed inside labelled boxes. All text outside of the boxes is commentary provided by City of Burnaby staff.

## 2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Choosing a Sustainable Future* document identifies eight issues (see page 6) for the updated Metro Vancouver Regional Growth Strategy (RGS). City of Burnaby staff agree that the issues identified by Metro Vancouver are priorities that should be addressed as the region moves forward in the years ahead.

Staff are recommending, however, that Metro Vancouver also give a more explicit recognition to the following issues in development of the draft RGS:

- *social issues* – a key element of sustainability, along with environmental and economic matters;
- *complete communities* – an important component of the LRSP that, while difficult to operationalize, continues to have merit;

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- *peak oil* – will have significant implications on future development patterns and livability in the region;
- *transportation choices*
  - *the Province's greenhouse gas reduction targets* – will have environmental, economic, and social implications for future regional decision making;
  - *appropriate plans for the pedestrian/cycle mode* – while acknowledging that it is most appropriate for shorter trips, walking and cycling is one of the most sustainable forms of transportation;
  - *the recent Provincial Transit Plan announcement* – major transportation investments will have significant implications for future land use in the region; and
- *food security* – the ability of the population to have access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food – preferably food that is produced locally – will be an increasingly important issue for regional sustainability over time.

The vision statement proposed for the region is generally appropriate and worthy of support (focused on establishing a livable and sustainable region). The statement as presented, however, is relatively generic and should be revised to articulate a vision that more specifically reflects Metro Vancouver's unique identity and concerns. The resulting vision should be one that is locally grounded while reflecting all three realms of sustainability (social, economic, environment). It should also be inspirational and extend beyond Metro Vancouver's organizational responsibilities.

The *Choosing a Sustainable Future* document identifies five goals (see page 9), each with its associated strategies and options for implementation. The implementation options involve a choice amongst three (and in some cases two) approaches, which typically involve:

- a) a statement of broad goals or directions;
- b) proposed guidelines which municipalities are expected to work towards or adhere to; or
- c) regional regulations to which municipalities must comply.

It should be noted that the Metro Vancouver materials lack specific information on the proposals to be implemented. Further, sufficient detail has generally not been provided to allow for a full understanding of the particular implications of the various strategy implementation options. As such, staff were generally unable to identify a clear preference for a given option without raising various questions or adding caveats. We also concluded that the optimum response for some strategies would involve further detailed work, requiring additional collaboration to obtain consensus amongst partners. In most cases, however, Option A (broad goals), Option B (proposed guidelines), or a combination thereof would generally constitute the

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preferred approach from a Burnaby perspective. We further concluded that Option C (regional land use regulation) would, in most cases, not be appropriate (nor likely be acceptable) for implementation of the proposed strategies.

With respect to next steps in the process, the Metro Vancouver staff report to the 2008 February 08 Land Use and Transportation Committee states the following:

*“The proposed next step is to prepare a draft Regional Growth Strategy as a basis for further consultation with municipalities and the public. It is anticipated that the Land Use and Transportation Committee will develop the Draft Strategy during February and March 2008. Once the committee's review is complete, it will be forwarded to the Metro Vancouver Board for release for consultation. Following consultation on the Draft Strategy, a Final Strategy will be prepared for consideration by the Board.”*

In sum, it is believed that the review of the Regional Growth Strategy is timely and that Metro Vancouver has put forward some useful proposals to assist with preparation of an updated RGS. That said, in order to gain broad support for the strategy, it is important to ensure that its implications and options have been fully explored and understood by the affected parties – something that has not been possible through the current RGS update process. It is thus recommended that Council send a copy of this report to Metro Vancouver's Land Use and Transportation Committee and member municipalities. Given the relationship of the RGS to regional transportation infrastructure, it is also recommended that this report be sent to the TransLink Board and the Minister of Transportation. Following future completion of a draft RGS for the region, staff will prepare a further report for Committee and Council considerations.

### **3.0 REGIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT**

The legislative requirements for Regional Growth Strategies are contained in Part 25 of the *Local Government Act*. The requirements were originally specified in the *Regional Growth Strategies Act*, adopted by the Province in 1995.

As indicated, the LRSP was adopted and accepted as Metro Vancouver's RGS in 1996. Under provisions of the *Local Government Act*, regional districts are required to prepare annual reports on implementation and progress in achieving their regional growth strategy objectives. Further, at least once every five years, regional districts are required to consider whether their RGS must be reviewed for possible amendment.

Metro Vancouver began preparing annual reports regarding implementation of the LRSP in 1999. In 2001, it indicated that it would be reviewing the LRSP within the context of a broad regional framework: the Sustainable Region Initiative. The LRSP

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is seen as one of several management plans under Metro Vancouver's jurisdiction that fall within its Sustainable Region Initiative.

In 2006, Metro Vancouver informed the Minister of Community Services of its intent to initiate a process to amend the LRSP, pursuant to the *Local Government Act*. Since that time, Metro Vancouver staff have arranged numerous technical workshops and meetings to review various components of an updated RGS with municipal planning staff and other stakeholders throughout the region. Burnaby staff participated in the meetings and workshops and provided written comments on draft discussion documents and other material prepared for the RGS review.

In 2006 and 2007, in conjunction with the Metro Vancouver review of the LRSP, the Ministry of Community Services undertook a review of the overall RGS process. Through the Ministry's review, about one hundred people from throughout the province (e.g., representatives from First Nations, local government officials) were interviewed, with the aim of:

- Better understanding their experience with the existing legislative framework;
- Identifying possible adjustments to the RGS legislation; and
- Developing a best practice body of knowledge.

The summary report on interview findings, dated 2007 December, states that a number of actions are required from the Province and others to amend this governing legislation. While legislative changes are anticipated, to date, the Ministry of Community Services has not indicated the specific nature or content of any changes being contemplated. Amendments to the RGS legislation could, of course, have implications for the current review of Metro Vancouver's RGS.

#### 4.0 CITY OF BURNABY CONTEXT

In conjunction with requirements of Part 25 of the *Local Government Act*, municipalities are required to prepare a Regional Context Statement (RCS) to indicate how their Official Community Plans (OCPs) relate to the RGSs. Further, the legislation makes provision for the Regional Context Statements to indicate how their respective OCPs would be made consistent with the RGS over time.

Burnaby's OCP, which was adopted in 1998, provides a contemporary statement of directions for the management of growth in the city to the year 2006 and beyond. Its accompanying RCS indicates how the OCP relates to and helps to advance the four fundamental strategies of the adopted LRSP:

- Protect the Green Zone
- Build Complete Communities
- Achieve a Compact Metropolitan Region

- Increase Transportation Choice.

Section 866(4) of the *Local Government Act* specifies that a municipality “must review the regional context statement at least once every 5 years after its latest acceptance by the (regional district) board and, if no amendment is proposed, submit the statement to the board for its continued acceptance.” City Council resubmitted Burnaby’s Regional Context Statement to the Metro Vancouver Board for continued acceptance in 2003. Unless we are notified otherwise, it is assumed we will need to resubmit Burnaby’s RCS for continued acceptance again this spring.

The LRSP and Burnaby’s OCP have provided a sound policy foundation for guiding growth both in Burnaby and the Region over the past ten or so years. It is anticipated that an updated RGS would establish a renewed framework for the region and would set a context for a future update of Burnaby’s OCP and Regional Context Statement.

## 5.0 CHOOSING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR METRO VANCOUVER DISCUSSION PAPER

The *Choosing a Sustainable Future* public consultation document identifies eight issues to be addressed in the updated Metro Vancouver RGS. It also provides a vision statement, five goals, and eleven associated strategies, with optional implementation approaches for each. The information in the document is at a very high conceptual level. It does not provide specific details from which to draw sound conclusions on the preferred implementation measures for many of the strategy options.

In the discussion below, an overview and staff comments are offered on the issues, vision, goals, and strategies sections of the document. The comments recognize further detailed material will need to be prepared by Metro Vancouver in consultation with regional municipalities to develop a full appreciation, understanding and general consensus for draft vision, strategy, proposals and implementation approaches for a renewed RGS for the Region.

### 5.1 Issues

Key issues identified by Metro Vancouver staff for the updated RGS are as follows:

What are the key issues facing Metro Vancouver?	
a)	“The growth challenge: keeping the region livable”
b)	“A place to live for everyone: improving housing diversity and affordability”
c)	“An economic hub: competing in a global economy”
d)	“Living with nature: protecting the region’s natural assets”
e)	“Becoming resilient: reducing energy use and adapting to climate change”
f)	“Transportation choices: maintaining accessibility for people and goods while minimizing environmental impacts”
g)	“Looking beyond: coordinating growth in the broader region”
h)	“Governance and finance: coordinating planning and investment”



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**Staff Comments:**

It is believed that the foregoing issues are salient, covering critical concerns that will affect the region in the years ahead. It is also acknowledged that there is merit in consolidating the many and diverse issues facing the region into a relatively small, digestible number of categories, as is done in the *Choosing a Sustainable Future* document.

These points noted, we would offer the following suggestions for consideration in the preparation of the updated RGS:

- With the exception of affordable housing, no explicit *social concerns* are identified. It is acknowledged that Metro Vancouver and its member municipalities have less direct control over social matters than they do over land use, transportation, and other issues examined in the document. Nonetheless, given the sustainability thrust of the document, the lack of a social component is a clear omission – especially as so much emphasis is placed on economic and environmental considerations in the RGS review. Further, even though the regional and municipal roles may be limited with respect to social issues, such issues have a profound impact on overall livability and cohesion in the region. ***It is thus suggested that a more explicit recognition of social issues (e.g., immigrant settlement, poverty, community services, culture, early childhood development) be included in the forthcoming draft RGS.***
- The document does not explicitly refer to *complete communities* – one of the four fundamental strategies of the current LRSP. For economic, environmental, and social reasons, the need for Metro Vancouver residents to work, live, and pursue recreation opportunities in their own communities is even more crucial than it was when the LRSP was adopted – and will continue to grow more crucial in the future. ***The updated RGS should not only include discussion of complete community objectives; it should also acknowledge the enormous personal and societal paradigm shifts that such a pursuit will engender and the benefits to the region that would be gained.***
- *Peak oil* concerns are acknowledged, but in a very muted way (i.e., “Uncertainty about the viability of long term supply of fossil fuels will likely mean more expensive energy costs”). ***The reality is that we will inevitably have much higher energy costs in the future and could be forced, by lack of supply and associated price increases, to dramatically reduce our fossil fuel consumption. Metro Vancouver may wish to directly take peak oil concerns into account in the development of the RGS and associated plans and policies to shape the region’s future.***
- With respect to transportation choices, ***the updated RGS should also acknowledge:***

- The need for future regional strategies to respond to the *Province's greenhouse gas reduction targets*;
- The need to make appropriate plans for the *pedestrian/cycle mode*; and
- Implications for regional land use and transportation planning of the recent *South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Act* (new TranLink legislation), the proposed Provincial transportation vision for the region, and the *Provincial Transit Plan* announcement for the updated RGS.
- With respect to economic or natural assets issues, *the updated RGS should include reference to food security concerns* – a critical issue for the future sustainability of the region.

## 5.2 Vision

The *Choosing a Sustainable Future* document puts forward the following vision statement for the region:

**What are the key issues facing Metro Vancouver?**

*"Metro Vancouver will be a livable and sustainable region. It will be a region of well-designed, connected and diverse communities where people of all ages, incomes, and origins can live, work and play in safety and comfort. The conservation of land, water and energy resources will drive regional decision-making. Valuable farmland and natural areas will be protected and enhanced. An affordable and efficient transportation system will support economic prosperity, healthy living, and community well-being."*

### **Staff Comments:**

The focus on establishment of a livable and sustainable region is generally appropriate and worthy of support. The vision as presented, however, is relatively generic. It does not contain elements that are unique to Metro Vancouver – elements that could provide inspiration and help in garnering support for the proposals in the forthcoming RGS. The resulting vision should be one that is locally grounded while reflecting all three realms of sustainability (social, economic, environment). As Metro Vancouver is not solely responsible for implementing the regional vision, the vision statement should be broader and attempt to capture all aspects of the region from individual to community assets, local culture, shared values, and common resources. *It is thus proposed that, for the updated RGS, efforts be made to articulate a vision that more specifically reflects the unique and distinct character and quality of Metro Vancouver's identity, concerns, assets and aspirations.*

## 5.3 Goals Proposed by Metro Vancouver for the Updated RGS

As discussed below, the *Choosing a Sustainable Future* document identifies five goals relating to regional growth patterns, affordable housing, the economy, natural assets, and the transportation system.

- GOAL 1: Accommodate growth in a sustainable and compact metropolitan structure**  
*"Metro Vancouver's urban growth will be concentrated in compact communities with access to a range of housing choices and close to employment and service centres. Transit-oriented development patterns will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support more efficient use of urban land."*
- GOAL 2: Offer diverse and affordable housing choices**  
*"Metro Vancouver will offer a diverse range of housing types and an adequate supply of housing at all affordability levels to meet the needs of residents."*
- GOAL 3: Support and strengthen a diverse regional economy**  
*"Metro Vancouver will be a region with a strong and diversified regional economy by providing the land base and infrastructure needed to sustain both traditional and new economy activities."*
- GOAL 4: Protect and enhance the region's natural assets**  
*"Metro Vancouver will be a region with a natural environment which will continue to provide a wealth of services that residents and visitors enjoy and value. The fertile farmlands of the region will continue to provide fresh local food while our waterways will allow salmon and other species to thrive. Metro Vancouver will sustain these local and global assets for future generations."*
- GOAL 5: Create a sustainable regional transportation system**  
*"Metro Vancouver will offer sustainable travel choices that support local and regional access, healthy living, a prosperous economy, and a compact pattern of development."*

**Staff Comments:**

Staff undertook a comparison or mapping of the goals proposed for the updated RGS to the goals contained within the adopted LRSP, the issues identified by Metro Vancouver (above) and the additional issues identified by the City of Burnaby (above). Based on this analysis we offer the following observations:

- The goals proposed for the RGS are generally suitable, supportable and appropriate.
- The goals proposed for the RGS are consistent with the goals contained within the adopted LRSP with the following exceptions:
  - The LRSP goal of "building complete communities" has been diluted to "...a compact metropolitan structure". The principle of complete communities should remain part of the RGS goals to provide a policy basis to address issues of urban sprawl, increased auto dependence, longer trip distances and the need to manage investment in additional supporting infrastructure.
  - The RGS goals of "...housing choices" and "...diverse regional economy" are introduced in the RGS as stand alone goals for the first time.

- The goals proposed for the RGS do not directly address the identified issues of “looking beyond” and “governance and finance” as identified by the region.
- The goals proposed for the RGS offer a direct or moderate relationship to the additional issues identified by the City of Burnaby (peak oil, transportation choices, and food security) with the exception of:
  - complete communities; and
  - social issues.

#### 5.4 Strategies Proposed by Metro Vancouver for the Updated RGS

For each of the five goals put forward in the *Choosing a Sustainable Future* document, associated strategies and options for implementation are identified and discussed in this section under each of the five goals. The implementation approaches involve a choice amongst three (and in some cases two) options, which typically involve:

- a) a statement of broad goals or directions;
- b) proposed guidelines which municipalities are expected to work towards or adhere to; or
- c) regional regulations to which municipalities must comply.

Goal 1:	<i>Accommodate growth in a sustainable compact metropolitan structure</i>
Strategy 1:	<i>Focus regional growth in centres and along transit corridors.</i>
<i>“Why is this strategy important?”</i>	
<i>The regional growth strategy needs to deliver sufficient development capacity to accommodate over 800,000 people and about 400,000 jobs by 2031. To advance livability and sustainability, this growth needs to be accommodated while ensuring housing choice and affordability, supporting a prosperous economy, building great places to live and work, protecting the region’s natural assets, making travel more efficient, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Increasing densities and connecting housing, jobs, and services to frequent transit is critical to Metro Vancouver’s sustainability.</i>	
<i>The strategy of concentrating growth in centres and transit corridors builds on the success of a strong Metropolitan Core, the regional and municipal town centres and the transit network. In the newly developing parts of the region, residents need a practical transit option. Identifying additional transit corridors that link centres together as well as linking neighbourhoods to centres will provide greater accessibility, contribute to attractive urban places and allow for the more cost-effective delivery of high quality transit services throughout the region. This approach enhances sustainable living and reduces environmental impacts. It also facilitates business synergies because housing, jobs and services are close to each other.”</i>	

For Strategy 1, Metro Vancouver identified the following three implementation options.

Option A would state a general goal regarding the role of centres and corridors as a focus for growth.

**"A. State general goals for focusing development in centres and corridors.**

*The regional growth strategy's broad goals and policies would state that centres and corridors should be the primary location for jobs, shops, services and housing. Municipalities would determine the location and development character of centres and corridors."*

Option B would use a map and introduce guidelines on uses to be encouraged in centres and corridors.

**"B. Identify regional and municipal town centres and transit corridor locations on a map and provide general guidelines.**

*This option is similar to the current plan and the growth strategy would state general goals and identify the locations of the centres and corridors on a map. It would include general guidelines on the types of uses to be encouraged in the centres and corridors."*

Option C expands upon Option B, introducing targets for densities, jobs, and parking standards in centres, corridors, and transit station areas.

**"C. Designate major centres, transit station areas and corridors on a regional map; provide housing and job targets, transit service expectations, minimum density guidelines, and maximum parking guidelines.**

*The regional growth strategy map would designate the regional and municipal town centres, transit stations areas and key transit corridors. Specific guidelines such as housing and job targets, minimum densities and maximum parking standards would be established for the centres and transit station areas."*

**Staff Discussion and Comments:**

Strategy 1 of the *Choosing a Sustainable Future* document builds upon the LRSP approach for growth management. While continuing to focus on centres, the current proposal also calls for corridors to play an increasing role in accommodating growth.

Through its OCP and earlier plans, Burnaby has concentrated its growth and development in its four town centres: Metrotown, Brentwood, Lougheed, and Edmonds with a more limited specialised role for historical corridors such as Kingsway, Edmonds and Hastings. The City's approach has been consistent with the LRSP. It has also facilitated orderly development in the city and, in turn, led to the continued development of vibrant town centre areas in each of Burnaby's four quadrants with focused shopping streets in key corridors.

A centres-based approach to growth management has served Burnaby and the region in focusing new growth that is well served by transit in a complete community context. While there may also be merit in focusing more growth along corridors, it is difficult to make that determination from the information provided by Metro Vancouver to date. Additional clarification would be required on such matters as:

- the criteria to be used in designating corridors
- the intended function and characteristics of corridors
- the number and location of proposed corridors
- the share of growth to be allocated to corridors and potential of corridors to compete with and, in turn, compromise the future development and effectiveness of centres
- the ability of corridors to contribute to a sense of community and place (versus promoting strip development)
- the actual need for additional corridor development (i.e., Metro Vancouver acknowledges that current municipal OCPs have already allocated sufficient land for urban development to accommodate the region's projected residential growth to well beyond 2031).

With respect to the options identified for Strategy 1, Option A would provide considerable latitude to municipalities; however, it would be relatively ineffective in shaping growth and would be a retrenchment from the current LRSP approach (i.e., as stated, it is not clear that centres or corridors would even be identified on a RGS map). In general, this option is not supportive of regional or local objectives to shape and manage new growth for the overall benefit of the region.

Option B would be similar to the current LRSP approach, but would also involve the designation of corridors and introduction of land use guidelines (i.e., for desirable uses in centres and along corridors). As indicated, Burnaby and the region have been well served by the centres-based approach to growth management. While the expanded focus on corridors may also have some merit, it would be prudent to clarify the various issues cited above before fully endorsing such an approach. In addition, information is not currently available on the particulars or purpose of possible land use guidelines proposed to be established in a renewed RGS.

Expanding on the preceding option, Option C would also involve specification of targets (e.g., for housing and jobs) and guidelines (e.g., for minimum development densities and regional parking regulations). Further information and analysis of the implications of specific proposals would be required to determine whether and on what basis this regional approach to land use regulation could be supported.

**Suggested Approach:**

Based on the information available, Option B would appear to have the most merit. Significant questions remain to be addressed in regard to this option, however. In collaboration with Metro Vancouver and regional municipalities, it would be necessary to clarify the details of the specific proposals (e.g., purpose and particulars of proposed guidelines), as well as the local and regional benefits of moving from a centres to a centres/corridor approach.

Goal 1:	Accommodate growth in a sustainable compact metropolitan structure
Strategy 2:	Establish defined areas for urban growth.
<p><i>"Why is this strategy important?"</i></p> <p><i>Managing the region's land base in ways that most effectively balance environmental, social and economic considerations is fundamental for ensuring future generations are able to enjoy the benefits of this region. This strategy provides for continued growth in the newly developing areas but places a heightened emphasis on the proportion of growth in established areas versus newly developing areas and helps avoid scattered development. Current municipal Official Community Plans (OCPs) have already allocated sufficient land for urban development to accommodate the region's projected residential growth to well beyond 2031.</i></p> <p><i>Identifying the footprint for urban growth in the plan will help ensure growth occurs in a coordinated way and facilitates cost-effective delivery of infrastructure, including transportation, utilities and community facilities. Maintaining a compact urban footprint helps reduce trip lengths by keeping homes, jobs and services closer together. This pattern of development reduces pressure on the Green Zone and rural areas, improves air quality and reduces greenhouse gas emissions."</i></p>	

For Strategy 2, Metro Vancouver identified the following three options.

Option A would state a general goal on development of a compact metropolitan region.

**A. State general goals for developing a compact metropolitan region.**  
*The regional growth strategy would offer high level guidance and would not propose a regionally defined area for growth. Each municipality would determine land use allocations within their Official Community Plans.*

Option B would designate an urban zone and a green zone.

**B. Designate an Urban Area and a Green Zone on a regional map.**  
*This option is similar to the current plan. The Green Zone would continue to be both a boundary for urban growth and a means to preserve the region's natural assets and agricultural land. All other lands would be designated for general urban purposes.*

Option C would designate an urban zone, a rural zone and a green zone.

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**C. Designate Urban, Rural and Green Zone land uses on a regional map to distinguish between land to be developed at urban densities, land to be developed at rural densities and lands to be protected from development.**

The regional growth strategy would designate an urban area that includes all lands currently designated for urban development in Official Community Plans. The strategy would also designate rural areas that would include isolated areas (currently low density residential, open space and other uses in Official Community Plans) that are not conducive to urban development. The Green Zone's function would be to protect the region's natural assets.

**Staff Discussion and Comments:**

The need for an effective strategy for containment and management of growth in the region is acknowledged. While the Green Zone has been a useful tool in this regard, it has also posed some administrative challenges including: lack of consistency in the lands being designated by municipalities, difficulties amending the boundary of the zone, and lack of clarity regarding permissible land uses in the zone.

As specified in Strategy 2, the previous commitment to a Growth Concentration Area (GCA) is omitted. Rather, new urban growth would be accommodated anywhere in the region exclusive of protected Green Zone lands. From a growth management perspective, this appears to be a step back from regional efforts to direct and shape the location of growth. The approach does not, in itself, provide a framework that would meet the stated objectives contain in the statement of purpose for "...a heightened emphasis on the proportion of growth in established areas versus newly developing areas and helps avoid scattered development...." The strategy in itself will also not necessarily "... help ensure growth occurs in a coordinated way and facilitates cost-effective delivery of infrastructure, including transportation, utilities and community facilities ...." In combination with a stronger centres approach and re-statement of complete communities objectives, the Green Zone would provide a policy basis to guide growth, but would not necessarily facilitate the shaping of new growth beyond current trends.

With respect to options being proposed for Strategy 2, Option A would be a step back from the current LRSP approach. It would remove the existing Green Zone designation and place the onus on regional municipalities to specify appropriate land use allocations in their OCPs. With only high level guidance being provided on growth areas by Metro Vancouver, there is a concern that individual OCPs may not collectively address the region's interests. If pursued, Option A could thus have a detrimental effect on the region's natural area and growth containment objective.

Option B is similar to the current LRSP approach. Notwithstanding the administrative challenges noted above, the Green Zone has been an effective tool for protecting natural areas and managing growth in the region. Through the RGS update process, an opportunity exists for improving the effectiveness of the Green Zone approach, and for re-establishing the commitment of regional municipalities to the purpose and intent of Green Zone lands to be designated in the renewed RGS. Further consultation with regional municipalities is required, however, to re-confirm



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designated Green Zone lands and address local issues that may have arisen since adoption of the LRSP.

Option C would add an additional element to the growth management framework: rural zones. The rural zones would include low density isolated areas that are not conducive to urban development (e.g., low density residential and open spaces). From the information provided, it is unclear what the actual value of such a designation would have for regional growth management purposes.

***Suggested Approach:***

Of the foregoing approaches, Option B would appear to have the most merit. As indicated, the process of updating the RGS may provide an opportunity for addressing some of the administrative challenges with Green Zones, making the approach an even more effective, and confirming local support for this mechanism well into the future.

GOAL 2:	Offer diverse and affordable housing choices
STRATEGY 3:	<i>Increase housing supply and diversity, including housing for low and moderate income households.</i>
<i>"Why is this strategy important?"</i>	
<i>One of the biggest challenges for the region over the coming years will be to provide an ample supply of the right type of housing in the right locations to meet the needs of a diverse and growing population. Increasing densities in existing residential areas will provide more housing opportunities and will ensure that local schools, shops and services can be sustained. The increased supply may also help reduce pressure on house prices and rents.</i>	
<i>Access to affordable housing is critical for family well-being, quality of life, and economic prosperity. All municipalities across the region should have an adequate stock of affordable housing. The rental housing sector is the main source of accommodation for many low and moderate income households. About 35 per cent of all households across the region rent their homes and the region continues to experience tight rental market conditions. A healthy supply of market and non-profit rental housing is required.</i>	
<i>The provincial and federal governments have a critical role in providing non-profit housing and in providing incentives to encourage private rental housing, while local governments can use the land development process to provide additional opportunities for affordable housing. The draft Metro Vancouver Regional Affordable Housing Strategy provides detailed actions."</i>	

For Strategy 3, Metro Vancouver developed the following three options:

Option A would include general goals to promote increased housing supply and affordable housing.

**"A. State general goals to promote increased housing supply and affordable housing.**

*This is the current plan approach. A broad goal statement encourages municipalities to provide more supply and diverse housing types. The plan also includes a target for ground-oriented housing".*

Option B would include targets for housing supply and for affordable housing by sub-region and require that each regional municipality prepare a Municipal Housing Action Plan.

**"B. Establish targets for housing supply and for affordable housing by subregion and require municipalities to prepare Municipal Housing Action Plans."**

*Targets for overall housing supply and for affordable housing by subregion would be included in the strategy. Municipal Regional Context Statements, or associated Housing Actions Plans, would identify specific objectives and actions for increasing housing supply, diversity, and affordability to respond to subregional targets. Measures could include identifying specific areas for increased density and applying appropriate zoning, using density bonusing, and introducing creative zoning strategies to promote additional housing stock in all residential areas."*

Option C would specify requirements for regional municipalities regarding such matters as parking regulations, development cost charges, and inclusionary zoning.

**"C. Establish region-wide provisions to stimulate the production of affordable housing.**

*Under this option, region-wide requirements would be included in the regional growth strategy which would provide a uniform approach to such matters as reduced parking regulations, development cost charges, and inclusionary zoning. (Inclusionary zoning means that all developments over a certain size would be required to dedicate a percentage of the new units as affordable housing. Some Metro Vancouver municipalities already have inclusionary zoning as do many jurisdictions in the United States and Europe.)"*

***Staff Discussion and Comments:***

Ensuring the availability of a sufficient supply and diversity of housing is critical for the future growth and well being in the region. Housing affordability is a particular concern, one that is exacerbated by the Lower Mainland's heated real estate market, the lack of recent rental housing construction, and the significant cuts that have occurred in senior government housing programs since the 1990s.

Several groups face particular challenges in meeting their housing needs (e.g., low income families and individuals, people with disabilities or mental health issues, single parent households, seniors, recent immigrants, and young people leaving their parental home). Further, with about 35% of households across the region renting their homes, it is important that a healthy supply of market and non-market rental housing continue to be available into the future.

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In 2007 March, Council received a comprehensive report from the Community Development Committee regarding affordable housing and homelessness. The report provided background context on senior government housing programs and responsibilities. Noting that Burnaby has the second highest number of non-market housing units of any municipality in the region, the report outlined a range of initiatives that the City had pursued to facilitate affordable housing over the years, including (but not limited to) the following:

- Rental conversion controls
- Lease of City land to non-profit and coop housing providers
- Administration of the Federal Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP)
- Fast track approval process for affordable housing proposals
- Density bonusing for affordable housing
- 20% affordable housing policy on large publicly-owned residential land developments

Also, since the report was adopted, the City established a more flexible approach for the allocation of Housing Reserve funds obtained through the density bonus program. Through the new approach, organizations developing affordable housing projects in the community are now able to apply for City funding support to enhance the viability of their proposed developments.

Notwithstanding the importance of affordable housing for community well being – and the efforts the City has and will continue to play in supporting development of affordable housing - it is important to stress that the Provincial and Federal Governments have the prime responsibility for housing programs and funding. To this end, the City has consistently indicated that its role on the matter is that of facilitator (as opposed to a direct provider). The Metro Vancouver Affordable Housing Strategy, adopted in 2007 November, articulates a similar position:

*“(The Affordable Housing) Strategy recognizes that regional and municipal governments are limited in the actions that they can take. It also recognizes that a successful response to the housing needs across Metro Vancouver requires action across all levels of government.”*

With respect to the options put forward for Strategy 3, Option A would be a continuation of the current LRSP approach with respect to housing. Under the option, municipalities would be encouraged to respond to regional housing goals – as Burnaby and several other municipalities have been doing. The option would provide municipalities with considerable flexibility.

Option B would require a more specific commitment from regional municipalities to facilitate development of affordable housing in their communities – specifically by

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responding to targets (both for overall housing supply and for affordable housing) and by developing Housing Action Plans. With respect to targets, Council previously expressed concern with the approach, as part of its comments on the draft regional Affordable Housing Strategy. It is acknowledged that targets could serve as a useful indicator of need and provide an objective measure for monitoring response to the need. Before endorsing the approach, however, the following questions would need to be resolved:

- How would the targets be defined and set?
- What would be the effect or intent of the targets (i.e., would they be viewed as aspirations or obligations)?
- What types of housing would be included in the targets and how would the housing categories be defined?
- Would the existing share of affordable housing amongst regional municipalities be considered in the establishment of the targets?
- Would it be clear, in the establishment of targets, that the availability of senior government funding and programs is crucial to addressing core housing need (i.e., municipalities' role on the matter is limited to that of facilitator)?
- With the targets, would it be clear that local government has very little influence over market rental housing and may not be able to achieve established targets without implementing more interventionist policies which may not be supported by legislation, the development community, or affected local communities?

The other component of Option B - Housing Action Plans - could provide a useful tool for coordinating responses to affordable housing commitments at the local level. As indicated, Burnaby has a strong tradition of facilitating affordable housing over the years. Also, in the above-referenced 2007 March report, a commitment was made to explore a variety of other initiatives that could enhance the City's facilitator role with respect to affordable housing:

- Cooperating to make City land available for affordable housing
- Managing development cost charges and Permit fees
- Building flexibility in development standards
- Facilitating approval processes
- Supporting innovations in affordable housing types and forms
- Increasing densities
- Building innovations in housing policy

City staff are currently reviewing the implications of the foregoing initiatives and will be reporting our findings, conclusions, and recommendations to Committee and Council in the near future. In our report, we will also be reviewing the range of housing policies and responses that the City currently employs, and identifying approaches that should be pursued for the future. In effect, the report, should provide

a housing policy statement for Burnaby – one that can be used to guide our future efforts to facilitate a range of housing types in the community.

Therefore, while some additional clarification would be desirable concerning Metro Vancouver’s expectations regarding municipal Housing Action Plans, the City will be proceeding with its own policy work on the matter.

Option C is not supportable as it would, in effect, result in Metro Vancouver assuming municipal planning authority on such matters as parking regulations, DCCs, and inclusionary zoning. Also, it could raise unreasonable expectations regarding the ability of municipal governments to directly deliver affordable housing.

**Suggested Approach:**

Based on the foregoing, Option B potentially has the most promise (i.e., it could help facilitate a collective response on affordable housing concerns amongst regional municipalities, yet still respect local autonomy and differences). Before supporting this option, however, several matters would need to be clarified, particularly with respect to the establishment of targets. To this end, before the RGS is developed, Metro Vancouver should be urged to collaborate with regional municipalities to gain agreement on the details of the proposed housing arrangements. In the absence of the required collaboration and satisfactory resolution of the various issues identified above, Option A (general goals) may be the most suitable choice. Irrespective of which housing strategy is ultimately included in the renewed RGS, the City will continue to pursue development of its own housing policy statement – one that will clearly articulate the City’s “facilitator” role in responding to affordable housing issues in the future, while building on the City’s established commitments and programs with respect to affordable housing.

GOAL 3:	Support and strengthen a diverse regional economy
STRATEGY 4:	Maintain an adequate supply of industrial lands to meet the needs of the regional economy.
<i>“Why is this strategy important?”</i>	
<i>The regional economy needs industrial land to grow. Employment forecasts show a continued increase in all industrial sectors over the next 25 years, and the demand for industrial land to support activities such as warehouse, wholesaling, distribution, and repairs will continue to increase.</i>	
<i>Additional lands will be needed for container storage, freight forwarding, and other distribution functions, including truck parking facilities as well as for a wide variety of local-serving economic activities. Yet the supply of industrial lands has been declining in recent years, mostly as a result of the rezoning of industrial land to allow for residential or commercial uses.</i>	
<i>While industrial activities are best located in industrial or business parks, offices and retail uses work best in town centres where they can support pedestrian and transit-friendly communities and offer services and amenities for workers and residents alike. However, in practice it does not always work this way. Because of the savings on land prices or rent, some retail businesses and offices would rather locate in office parks in locations away from services and transit. In doing so they ignore the long-term cost with respect to congestion, pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and transportation and utility infrastructure.”</i>	

For Strategy 4, Metro Vancouver developed the following three options.

Option A would state the general goal of industrial land protection.

**"A. State the general goal of industrial land protection.**

*General goals would encourage municipalities to consider the significance of the industrial land base. The current plan has no policy for industrial lands".*

Option B would identify significant industrial land in the region on a map.

**"B. Identify on a reference map the region's significant industrial lands.**

*The regional growth strategy would state the importance of protecting industrial land. Industrial areas would be shown on a reference map in the regional growth strategy".*

Option C would designate a regional land use category for industrial land and specify permitted uses.

**C. Designate industrial land as a regional land use category with specific guidelines on permitted uses.**

*The regional growth strategy would include an industrial land use designation. Industrial uses include manufacturing, processing, repair, warehouse, distribution, transportation, utilities, biomedical facilities as well as office and retail uses that support industrial activities. Stand alone office and retailing uses would not be considered industrial activities."*

***Staff Discussion and Comments:***

This strategy proposes a land supply-side solution to accommodate future economic growth for industrial sectors. Metro Vancouver projections for regional industrial land include a high estimate for average annual uptake, which leads to the conclusion that there will be a shortage of such lands by 2031 (the period of the updated RGS).

Production, distribution and repair type businesses are important to support other sectors of the regional economy and need land as a basic requirement. However, the analysis of industrial land needs considered historical trends in land absorption with aggressive assumptions regarding future uptake, and did not account for other factors such as:

- Since the 1990s our region's economy has become increasingly knowledge and service based rather than commodity-based which is changing the distribution of job types and may reduce the long term demand for industrial land;
- The development capacity of existing underutilized industrial lands for intensification and redevelopment;

- New technology, particularly relating to information, new media and communications, is blurring the traditional lines between industrial, office and production classification of businesses, which also supports a greater mixing and intensification of uses;
- The updated RGS acknowledges that there will be a time in the future when industrial land is fully utilized. As such, policy for economic development should be considered in addition to addressing land supply. To compete in a global economy, the updated RGS should encourage regional cooperation to ensure the way the requirements of business are met is highly competitive through optimizing information, technology, infrastructure, and flows of energy and materials.

Option A provides the most flexibility for municipalities to continue to manage the region's industrial land supply. Municipalities' would need to demonstrate in regional context statements in their OCPs how they intend to manage growth to protect industrial land. Each municipality could then initiate its own process to identify designated industrial land for protection in community plans. Achieving the goal would require individual municipalities to maintain supply for the benefit of the region.

With Option B, it is not clear how the industrial land areas on the map would be selected or what would happen once the industrial lands were identified on a regional map in an adopted RGS plan. The updated RGS could potential include guidelines for acceptable uses on industrial land, criteria for converting industrial lands to other uses, or requirements for referral or approval for development applications. The potential criteria and decision-making for identifying significant industrial land, and for the level of flexibility for municipalities to continue to manage growth and process development applications efficiently would be of significant interest to regional municipalities under Option B. With further consultation with regional municipalities on specific proposals for industrial lands, determination of current local commitment to maintain industrial lands for future job growth, and development of a common understanding of the regional needs, objectives and associated guidelines and process, support for Option B may prove acceptable.

Staff suggest that Option C should not be supported because it would involve the Metro Vancouver Board decision-making through referrals and approvals for rezonings, that may not take into account differences amongst regional municipalities with regard to the market, purpose and long term planning for the industrial land base, and could significantly hamper the rational and sound transition of industrial lands to other necessary, although competing, urban uses. Further, guidelines for permitted uses may not allow cities to respond to 'new economy' business requirements for increasingly flexible space and mix of uses, or for synergistic businesses to cluster, which is particularly important for emerging and expanding sectors. For Burnaby, this approach could also be contrary to long establish plans for employment lands in designated centres

such as Discovery Place, Glenlyon, Lake City and other high quality, high amenity and high employment centres.

**Suggested Approach:**

With the information provided in the consultation document, for Strategy 4, Option A - *state the general goal of industrial land protection* - is the preferred approach. This provides the greatest flexibility for Burnaby to continue to manage land within the city. Currently, Burnaby's OCP identifies a spatial framework for employment lands which supports retention of key industrial lands, and is a key objective for the City in maintaining a healthy tax base, providing employment, and supporting development that is compatible with other city objectives. Subject to further consultation by Metro Vancouver on specifics of industrial land designations and use guidelines, to clarify the above issues and address concern for Option B, this option could prove to be acceptable and would provide a higher level of protection of the region's industrial and employment land base.

GOAL 3:	Support and strengthen a diverse regional economy
STRATEGY 5:	Facilitate the location of major commercial (retail, office and entertainment) activities in centre locations to enhance access for workers and customers and build prosperous, attractive centres in every subregion.
<b><i>"Why is this strategy important?"</i></b>	
<i>Strong commercial centres serving all of the subregions provide a number of benefits for communities and for the region. They help:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Maximize use of infrastructure by concentrating development in existing urban areas;</i></li> <li>• <i>Enable the cost-effective provision of transit;</i></li> <li>• <i>Increase the proportion of walking/cycling trips for work and other purposes;</i></li> <li>• <i>Provide opportunities for people of diverse ages, incomes and household sizes to live close to employment opportunities and services;</i></li> <li>• <i>Provide prime location choices for commercial activities;</i></li> <li>• <i>Create a lively, convenient and attractive civic focus; and</i></li> <li>• <i>Create synergies, for example, workers support shops and restaurants, residents and workers enjoy cultural and community service facilities located in the centre.</i></li> </ul>	
<i>In order to become true "mixed activity urban centres" and to provide employment opportunities in transit-accessible locations, the regional town centres and metropolitan core need to capture new office growth. However, the last decade has seen a trend for office jobs and retailing to locate outside of centres.</i>	
<i>The Metropolitan Core provides a focus for jobs, cultural and entertainment services for the entire region, the regional town centres provide a sub-regional focus, and the municipal town centres provide a local, community-serving function. All eight regional town centres play important roles in the sub-region they serve and each one is unique. Many of the centres have a long established historic role as an important centre such as Lonsdale, New Westminster, Langley, and Maple Ridge. Coquitlam, Richmond, and Metrotown have developed over the last 30 years. Surrey City Centre has been progressing well in recent years with the Central City office tower and the Simon Fraser University Surrey campus providing a significant development boost. As the south of the Fraser River communities continue to add jobs and population, strong centres in Langley City Centre and Surrey City Centre will play a key function in providing jobs close to home."</i>	



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For Strategy 5, Metro Vancouver developed the following three options.

Option A would include a map that identifies major centres and guidelines for locating major trip-generating commercial uses in these areas.

**"A. State the general goal of attracting and accommodating major commercial activities in centres.**

*This option would identify major centres on a map and encourage the establishment of jobs and major trip-generating commercial activities in these areas. This is the current plan approach."*

In addition to identifying centres on a map, Option B would set out Metro Vancouver development expectations.

**"B. Designate the Metro Core, regional town centres and other strategic economic growth centres in the regional growth strategy and identify general development objectives.**

*In this option, the centres would be designated on a map in the regional growth strategy and policies and guidelines would set out development expectations. This might include overall commercial and residential density objectives."*

In addition to identifying centres for major commercial development and establishing policies for development expectations, Option C would include criteria for major out-of-centre development and incentives for locating major commercial components within centres.

**"C. Establish policies to encourage commercial development in major centres and policies to discourage the establishment of major commercial development outside of centres.**

*In this option, in addition to facilitating the development of centres, the regional growth strategy would introduce policies and processes that discourage out-of-centre commercial development, through such mechanisms as establishing criteria for the evaluation of major out-of-centre developments. The incentives to attract development to centres could include measures such as reductions in parking and development cost charges."*

***Staff Discussion and Comments:***

The intent of this strategy is to prevent sprawl and traffic congestion, and to enhance the viability of transit. The existing LRSP includes a policy to develop "a network of high-quality, mixed activity urban centres supported by an appropriate level of public transit and a range of community services and cultural facilities for residents and employees to encourage complete communities." The existing LRSP identifies Metrotown as a regional town centre and Loughheed, Brentwood and Edmonds as municipal town centres, Burnaby has been successfully achieving this vision through its OCP and the development approvals process.

Staff support the concept of complete communities and continued development of Burnaby's vibrant urban town centres. We acknowledge the success of the LRSP's

current policy approach in supporting the City's town centre areas in Burnaby. That said, we have the following concerns with the Metro Vancouver strategy as proposed:

- The anticipated level of commercial business growth cannot be accommodated in Metrotown, Burnaby's regional town centre, alone. Major retail and office must be directed to Burnaby's other town centres to account for the amount of floor space which will be required to meet future needs in the city. It must also be directed to those other locations in order to continue the development of a network of high-intensity, mixed use and complete urban centres that support the level of transit and other infrastructure investment made in those areas.
- Town centres do not necessarily meet all market segments and business user needs for locations that can accommodate a mix of office head, research and development, and specialized high-tech manufacturing business activities. Business parks, which are adequately served by transit and provide convenience retail uses for the daily needs of workers, have a significant and important role in providing for employment lands in the region.
- No specific guidelines, processes or definitions are provided for regional regulation of "out of centre" development. As such, at this point, staff are not able to fairly evaluate the implications of the proposal, other than to note that it would appear to be contrary to established plans for our Town Centres and other areas which also seek to facilitate major employment opportunities.

Option A would be a policy similar to the existing LRSP. Changes to existing designations of regional/municipal town centres, or economic growth centres in the LRSP that would affect the location of major commercial activities would need to be worked out with respective municipalities. Further, clarification on what would be considered "major commercial activities" is needed.

Option B would require significant consultation with municipalities to identify development expectations. Requirements for commercial and residential density by Metro Vancouver may mean less flexibility for municipalities to respond to development proposals in key growth areas, and the potential for another level of decision-making by the Metro Vancouver Board.

Option C would require another level of decision-making by the Metro Vancouver Board, which may delay and impede the ability of municipalities to efficiently respond to investment opportunities. Further, Option C could inhibit continued development of Burnaby's identified employment lands, which provide alternative, viable and market supported locations for businesses that do not necessarily need to locate in the Metrotown Regional Town Centre to be appropriately located solely to support regional and Burnaby objectives.

**Suggested Approach:**

For Strategy 5, Option A - *designate the Metro Core, regional town centres and other strategic economic growth centres in the regional growth strategy and identify general development objectives* – is the position the City could support given the current level of detail about the options. Option B may also be acceptable, provided a) extensive consultation occurs with municipalities to clarify expectations, and b) assurances are provided that the system would be flexible and no additional levels of decision-making will be introduced. Option C is not generally supported given the potential impact of policy or regulatory controls on established City plans and objectives for our Town Centres, Business Centres and other urban lands.

GOAL 3:	Support and strengthen a diverse regional economy
STRATEGY 6:	Maintain the agricultural land base through supportive land use and development policies.
<b><i>“Why is this strategy important?”</i></b>	
<i>The region’s agricultural sector contributes significantly to the economy and generates 28 per cent of the province’s total gross farm receipts even though it represents only 1.5 per cent of British Columbia’s total farmed areas. Protecting these highly productive agricultural lands in perpetuity is the goal of the provincial Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). In doing so, it has provided a thriving agricultural industry, supplied residents with fresh local farm products and constituted an important component of the region’s Green Zone.</i>	
<i>To date, the Agricultural Land Commission’s regulatory processes for protecting valuable farmland have largely been effective. But as the region’s population increases over the next 25 years, there will be continued pressure to convert agricultural land to other uses. In addition, land uses incompatible with agriculture may negatively affect the viability of this sector. Protecting agricultural lands and actively promoting farming will continue to be an important regional role.”</i>	

For Strategy 6, Metro Vancouver developed the following three options.

Option A would identify a goal statement to provide direction for municipalities to continue to protect agricultural land, similar to the existing LRSP.

***“A. State the general goal of protecting agricultural land.***  
*The strategy would include general goal statements to protect agricultural land.”*

Option B would identify the provincial ALR lands on a map as a *regional* land use designation, which implies a regional role in ALR decision-making.

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**"B. Provide a regional agricultural land designation in the regional growth strategy.**

*This would reinforce the provincial Agricultural Land Reserve designation and express a commitment to the protection of agricultural land."*

Option C would identify the provincial ALR lands on a map as a regional land use designation *and* require municipalities to define policies to address the interface of other uses with farm land.

**"C. Provide an agricultural land designation in the regional growth strategy and require municipalities to define policies to address the agricultural/urban interface.**

*In addition to the region designation, the challenges of farming adjacent to urban areas are also addressed by requiring municipalities to provide urban/agriculture interface policies in their Official Community Plans."*

**Staff Discussion and Comments:**

Agricultural land in BC is a scarce resource. Of the total land area in BC, less than 3% is capable of supporting a range of agricultural uses, with just over 1% considered prime agricultural land. Food security is likely to become an increasingly important issue. To be sustainable, a region should be able to provide for the majority of its food supply in proximity to the food demand – especially as trends in peak oil and climate change may cause volatility in long-distance food supply and food pricing.

Burnaby has about 240 ha in the Agricultural Land Reserve. Through the years, the City has implemented many measures to protect and improve its agricultural lands, and to establish compatible relationship with neighbouring uses. Agriculture is a small component of Burnaby's economic base, but the land area devoted to active agriculture (over 100 ha) is highly productive. In 2005, Burnaby had the highest average gross farm receipts in BC at \$293,000 per farm, over 250% more than the BC average of \$113,700 per farm.

In partnership with local governments, the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) effectively manages the ALR land use zone. The supply of prime agricultural land in BC is protected by the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*.

Option A would seem to be a set back from the current LRSP approach, particularly if ALR lands were not designated within the Green Zone. The existing LRSP includes agricultural land in the Green Zone for protection from development. Options B and C would involve a role for Metro Vancouver in decision-making for agricultural land in addition to the ALC and regional municipalities. Information on the nature of this relationship to the current protection afforded by both a municipal and ALR review of land exclusions and non-farm use approvals is not clearly provided in the consultation material. Further information would be needed on the Metro Vancouver proposals in order to determine whether the updated RGS could reinforce ALC policies and

procedures, without duplicating or adding to them. Regional efforts could focus on assisting member municipalities to develop plans to maintain and support agricultural lands with proper urban interface considerations.

**Suggested Approach:**

Of the available positions, Option A - *state the general goal of protecting agricultural land* – would be the most acceptable at this time. Burnaby does, however, strongly support protection of designated agricultural land, and would propose that, in addition to the general goal, Metro Vancouver:

- Distinguish the ALR lands separately on the map within the Green Zone;
- Reinforce the ALC’s policies, programs and procedures through complementary land use objectives that do not add an additional level of decision-making; and
- Consider requiring OCPs to specify how municipalities are addressing urban/agriculture interfaces, in accordance with ALC guidelines and best practices.

GOAL 4:	Protect and enhance the region's natural assets
STRATEGY 7:	Ensure the long-term protection of critical habitat areas, drinking watersheds, riparian areas, parks, recreation corridors, forests and agricultural lands.
<b>"Why is this strategy important?"</b>	
<i>The region's natural assets both attract and support population growth in this region. The "Green Zone" is the land use designation used in the current plan to identify lands not intended for urban purposes. It includes environmentally sensitive areas, major parks and in some cases golf courses, recreation corridors and riparian areas, and regional and provincial protected areas and parks.</i>	
<i>These natural assets are integral in supporting biodiversity, performing valuable ecological functions, providing recreation and tourism opportunities and contributing to economic development through protecting agricultural lands and forests. Population growth and economic development will increase pressure to develop these lands."</i>	

For Strategy 7, Metro Vancouver developed the following two options.

Option A designates a Green Zone on a map with general guidance on permitted uses; or

<b>"A. Designate a Green Zone in the Regional Growth Strategy</b>
<i>This is the current plan approach. The region provides general guidance to municipalities on what areas should be included in the Green Zone (such as watersheds and other ecologically important habitats, recreation areas, and agricultural lands). General guidance is also given on permitted uses within the Green Zone."</i>

Option B designates a Green Zone on a map and identifies permitted uses in a schedule.

**"B. Designate a Green Zone in the Regional Growth Strategy and provide a schedule of permitted uses for lands in the Green Zone.**

*Under this option, the Green Zone designation would also identify the types of permitted uses. This option identifies a more direct regional role to ensure higher consistency for the protection of natural assets."*

**Staff Discussion and Comments:**

The existing LRSP includes a Green Zone, but does not provide detailed guidance in terms of the types of land uses that are acceptable within the zone. Some land uses may be contrary to the intended use/function of the Green Zone, may cause degradation to the land or its ecological functions over time, and send the wrong message to the public about the importance of conservation areas.

Identifying land uses that are permitted (or not permitted) within specific types of Green Zone lands (e.g., drinking watershed versus riparian area) would likely be helpful in ensuring a higher degree of consistency in the treatment of the Green Zone across the region. However, Option B, as currently presented, does not indicate the restrictiveness of a future land use schedule, nor the extent of Metro Vancouver's involvement in regulating/enforcing this schedule.

Examples of potential land uses that are provided in Appendix 1 of Metro Vancouver's *Green Zone Issues and Policy Options* document (dated December 9, 2005) include natural area conservation and associated research activities, outdoor recreation and tourism, Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) areas, public utilities, and major new roads as identified in regional plans. It is not clear whether these are the uses that would be adopted as part of the RGS. Further, the degree of flexibility to accommodate all existing uses within Green Zone areas is not known (e.g., for Burnaby, concerts in Deer Lake Park may not be included in the definition of "outdoor recreation and tourism").

Biodiversity *outside* of the Green Zone for the environmental health of the region is not adequately addressed by the proposed options. Further, the provision of guidelines for land uses adjacent to the regional park and greenway system to protect critical habitats in Green Zone areas may be helpful in advancing biodiversity in the RGS beyond the current LRSP.

At this stage, information is also not available on how or if municipalities would be approached to re-commit and re-designate Green Zone Lands, or how existing issues that have arisen in some municipalities with regard to current designated lands would be addressed.

**Suggested Approach:**

Given the current level of information, staff support Option A for Strategy 7. In addition to general guidance, Metro Vancouver staff should consider providing guidelines and best practices for land use in designated Green Zone areas. A schedule of permitted uses in the Green Zone designation implies a direct Metro Vancouver role in land use decision-making. Further consultation would be required amongst Metro Vancouver, member municipalities to generate sufficient support for a regional regulatory role. In addition to guidelines and best practices, a reference map showing where biodiversity conservation is most needed across the region, outside of the Green Zone, along with guidelines to protect different types of sensitive habitats preserve biodiversity values would enhance protection of natural assets.

<b>GOAL 4:</b>	Protect and enhance the region's natural assets
<b>STRATEGY 8:</b>	Ensure the protection and enhancement of ecological and recreational connectivity across the region.
<b>"Why is this strategy important?"</b>	
<i>Natural assets are located throughout the region, not just in the Green Zone. Looking for ways to continue to build ecological objectives into the land development process would help advance the goals of protecting and enhancing natural assets. Ensuring adjacent land uses are compatible and minimizing environmental impacts from development will result in a more comprehensive approach to natural asset protection.</i>	
<i>Improving connectivity between protected natural areas through stream, river, and shoreline corridors is a critical component of an integrated approach to natural asset protection. Ecological corridors facilitate wildlife movement and with future changes in climatic conditions, allow for increasing the resiliency of ecosystems. Recreational greenways promote walking and cycling trips and provide neighbouring communities with access to natural areas and recreational opportunities."</i>	

For Strategy 8, Metro Vancouver developed the following two options.

Option A would state a general goal.

<b>"A. State the general goal for integrating ecological values into land use development processes and for the provision of regional ecological and recreational corridors.</b>
<i>The regional growth strategy would propose high level guidance only. This is similar to the current plan."</i>

Option B would be more specific about the location of the corridors.

<b>"B. Provide regional guidelines for integrating ecological values into land use development processes and identify on a reference map the regional ecological and recreational greenways.</b>
<i>The regional growth strategy would be specific about the location of corridors and would provide guidelines for protecting natural assets."</i>

**Staff Discussion and Comments:**

Burnaby's existing OCP recognizes that connectivity by means of linking habitat and recreation areas with greenways is important for the environmental health of the region, where it states:

- “preserving and enhancing the ecological systems and diversity of the City, and in turn, the Region” (Section 10.2); and
- “..connect the major park and open space areas if the City with each other and other strategic components of the City and adjacent municipalities” (Section 7.2).

Option A would be consistent with the current LRSP approach. To advance the goal of protecting and enhancing Metro Vancouver's natural assets, at the regional level, it may be more appropriate to develop guidelines that identify best practices. Option A relies on inter-municipal collaboration to maintain a regional greenway system.

Option B would increase regional guidance on the issue. Regional guidelines for protecting natural assets would need to consider Provincial regulations for environmental stewardship in BC to ensure that they compliment existing legislation. Tracking, managing and monitoring smaller corridors is generally difficult at a regional scale. How municipalities would be expected to respond to identified areas and guidelines for the protection of natural assets in OCP Regional Context Statements, and the nature of the regional role in local land use decisions relating to greenway areas, would need to be clarified.

**Suggested Approach:**

For Strategy 8, Option A is preferred given the level of detail provided. However, more direction than is currently given in the adopted LRSP for stewardship of ecological corridors would be appropriate. Prior to supporting Option B, clarification would be required on the following:

- The particular greenways that would be selected for inclusion in the plan;
- The nature of guidelines for land use decision-making (i.e., are they best practices or more prescriptive?);
- The level and means of regional management for protecting identified areas, both in terms of decision-making and administration;
- Metro Vancouver's expectation for municipalities to demonstrate compliance, either in OCP regional context statements or otherwise;
- The level of detail and scale regarding greenways that is appropriate for inclusion in a regional plan; and
- Sources of regional support and funding to assisting local government in acquiring, enhancing or otherwise securing greenways of regional significance should be provided.



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Staff would note that previous efforts by the City to secure funding assistance from Metro Vancouver in acquisition of significant environmentally sensitive privately held lands, or for development of greenway / urban trail connections in line with the current adopted regional greenway strategy in the Big Bend area, have not garnered positive support at the regional level.

GOAL 5:	Create a sustainable regional transportation system
STRATEGY 9:	Increase transit supply throughout the region and promote walking and cycling.
<b><i>"Why is this strategy important?"</i></b>	
<i>Moving people and goods around the region will become increasingly complex as the region grows. The stresses can be relieved if individuals are provided with more transportation choices, especially practical transit choices. Stresses can also be relieved by focusing jobs and services closer to home. Land use decisions and transit provision need to work together. Better transit will provide residents with increased flexibility, reduce car dependency, and support healthier lifestyles. It will also reduce traffic congestion and improve the flow of commercial vehicles. It will reduce death and injury rates caused by collisions. Moving more people by transit will also save valuable urban space in roads and parking and help in the design of more attractive places.</i>	
<i>Many transit trips begin and end with a walk or cycling trip. More opportunities for increasing the number of walking and cycling trips will contribute to healthier lifestyles. Providing attractive walkable centres with day-to-day services nearby enables more trips to be done by walking or cycling.</i>	
<i>The transportation sector currently accounts for approximately 40 per cent of the region's greenhouse gas emissions. Increasing the number of trips by transit, walk and cycling will contribute to achieving climate change goals, improve air quality, and reduce toxic elements of urban run-off into streams and rivers."</i>	

For Strategy 9, Metro Vancouver developed the following three options.

Option A would include a regional transit goal statement and *TransLink* would plan, implement, and operate the transit network. The map of the transit network in the existing LRSP would be deleted from the RGS.

<b><i>"A. State the general goal of increasing transit use throughout the region.</i></b>
<i>Under this option, the regional growth strategy would provide a goal statement on the role of transit, in the regional transportation system."</i>

Option B would maintain the future transit network map and would introduce regional transit targets. Metro Vancouver would outline the plan for the conceptual transit network and *TransLink* would implement and operate the network.

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**"B. Identify a frequent transit network for the entire region on a reference map in the growth strategy and set targets for increasing the share of transit trips.**

*The implementation of the frequent transit network would be undertaken by TransLink, but the network and how it connects to land development would be identified within the regional growth strategy. Regional transit ridership targets would be included in the growth strategy."*

Option C would introduce sub-regional targets (transit, walking, cycling) and establish prescriptive minimum land use densities for transit corridors. Metro Vancouver would outline the plan for the conceptual transit network and TransLink would implement and operate the transit network.

**"C. Identify a frequent transit network on a regional map, and set targets for transit ridership increases in each subregion, density guidelines, and establish targets for cycling and walking.**

*Under this option, the regional growth strategy is more specific on the desired level of transit service in each subregion. Guidelines are included on minimum densities in transit corridors. Specific targets are also identified for increasing the share of walking and cycling trips."*

#### ***Staff Discussion and Comments:***

Transportation planning within the region involves the balancing of a number of often competing interests, including those of the province, Metro Vancouver, and local governments. One of the fundamental reasons for the creation of TransLink in 1998 was to increase the amount of regional control over the delivery of transportation infrastructure and transportation services within the region.

In the decade that followed the creation of TransLink, there was often tension between the two regional agencies responsible for transportation planning (TransLink and the GVRD, now Metro Vancouver). There was also tension between these two regional agencies and the Province with respect to which regional projects should be undertaken and when they should be undertaken (i.e., priorities). Between 1998 and 2007, the GVRD carried a conceptual transportation network within the adopted LRSP and TransLink was responsible for the planning, implementation, delivery and operation of the regional transportation network. During this same period, the Province continued to plan, implement and operate the Provincial highway network.

Responsibility for regional transportation planning has been further complicated with the introduction of the most recent TransLink legislation in 2007 - the *South Coast British Columbia Transportation Act*. Under this new legislation TransLink is required to develop a 30-year long term strategy (by 2008 August 1 under the terms of the Act<sup>1</sup>) that is to be consistent with a 30-year transportation vision developed for the region by the Province. TransLink is also responsible for developing a rolling 10-

<sup>1</sup> Submission has to be made to the Mayor's Council on Regional Transportation by this date.

year strategic plan (by 2008 August 1 under the terms of the Act<sup>1</sup>). This rolling 10-year strategic plan would be similar to municipal 5-year capital plans in that it would:

- identify revenues in balance with expenditures for each year;
- likely carry more detail in year one than in year 10; and
- be updated annually.

TransLink's 30-year long term strategy (to be updated every five years) and their rolling 10-year strategic plan (updated each year) will likely be far more fluid and easier to amend than Metro Vancouver's RGS. There is therefore more risk in entrenching significant amounts of detail and restriction in the RGS than there is in including it in the either of TransLink's plans (30-year or 10-year). Moreover, it would appear from the language of the *South Coast British Columbia Transportation Act*<sup>2</sup> that TransLink may only be somewhat bound by the RGS.

TransLink had originally proposed that the 30-year long term strategy would be developed and approved by February 2008 to allow for more time to develop and approve the first 10-year strategic plan for the region. However, it is our understanding that the pace of development for the Province's 30-year transportation vision for the region has delayed TransLink's 30-year long term strategy, as the latter has to be consistent with the former. Moreover, the delay in the development and approval of TransLink's 30-year long term strategy is beginning to compress the remaining time available to TransLink to develop their first 10-year strategic plan.

As these issues relate to transportation planning in general, they also apply to Strategy 10 (advance a regional network of roads and highways) and to a lesser extent Strategy 11 (manage transportation demand) as well.

Strategy 9 proposes to increase the supply of transit service (transit-based transportation supply) within the region. On the supply side, Burnaby is currently served by elements of the transit network which include 11 SkyTrain Stations on two SkyTrain lines and over 30 bus routes.

The options proposed for Strategy 9 range from doing less than the strategies contained within the LRSP to doing more (including setting sub-regional transit ridership targets and prescribing minimum land use densities within transit corridors). Specific comments on the option are as follows:

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<sup>2</sup> Section 3 – the Authority is to provide a regional transportation system that supports the RGS, Section 193 – in preparing the 30-year long term strategy the Authority must consider regional land use planning objectives and consult with Metro Vancouver.

- Option B and Option C include a frequent transit network that is proposed to:
  - extend proposed rapid transit improvements further to the east (beyond the limits of the growth concentration area as defined by the LRSP) to the Langleys (City and District) and Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows; and
  - increase the range of rapid transit technology options to include both rail and bus options for future rapid transit corridors (the LRSP prescribed either ICTS (SkyTrain) or regional bus for each future corridor).
- Although transit targets are proposed in Option B and Option C, the ability to meet transit targets will likely continue to be dependent on the timing of transit improvements which are funded by others (including TransLink, the Province and the Federal government). As a result, Metro Vancouver will have to strive to ensure a shared vision on transportation and land use components of the RGS are supported by member municipalities, TransLink, and the Province.
- Prescribing minimum land use densities within Option C would potentially remove land use planning control from the municipality and could prove problematic.
- In outlining a plan for the conceptual transit network, Option C could reach beyond Metro Vancouver's mandate and without TransLink's concurrence, could not be implemented.
- Walking and cycling are the two most sustainable forms of transportation. Setting specific goals under Option C for these two modes would likely encourage more walking and cycling oriented planning documents, policies, and capital resource allocations.
- Adding sub-regional transit, cycling, and walking targets (as suggested in Option C) to Option B could potentially further strengthen Option B.

***Suggested Approach:***

Doing something less than the LRSP (Option A) is not prudent given the implementation challenges experienced with the LRSP.

Option B and Option C propose a conceptual frequent transit network which may or may not be consistent with TransLink's pending 30-year long term strategy or its pending 10-year strategic plan. Clearly there is a need for a coordinated overall approach on a transportation plan that supports the regional land use plan as defined by the updated RGS.

Staff would suggest that the RGS should provide general transportation objectives, and then define a process for the region to represent regional municipal interests in coordinating an approach with the Province, TransLink, and other stakeholders on a revised transportation plan that supports the updated RGS land use concept. This will

be fundamental in ensuring that transportation helps to shape future land use rather than existing land use patterns shaping transportation.

**GOAL 5:** Create a sustainable regional transportation system

**STRATEGY 10:** Advance a regional network of roads and highways that prioritizes goods movement, transit operations and high-occupancy vehicles (HOVs).

***"Why is this strategy important?"***

*As a gateway, freight and goods movement will continue to play a vital role in the region's economy. Increasingly this movement occurs on roadways congested with general purpose traffic. This results in increased delays and costs. Transit operating on roadways congested with general purpose traffic is faced with similar delays and service reliability issues. There is a need to allocate road capacity in a way that prioritizes specific users and manages demand."*

For Strategy 10, Metro Vancouver developed the following three options.

Option A would do little more than define the general goal.

***"A. State the general goals for a regional roads and highways network.***

*The regional growth strategy would define general goals for achieving a regional roads and highways network that prioritizes goods movement and transit. TransLink would identify specific networks, services and programs to achieve regional goals."*

Option B would extend beyond a statement of goals to identifying regional roads and highways on a map and specifying general implementation principles.

***"B. Identify regional roads and highways on a regional map and state general principles for implementation.***

*This is the current plan approach. TransLink and the Province implement the regional roads and highways network. Implementation schedules on where and how network improvements are provided in TransLink's implementation plans."*

Option C would provide more specific information on management guidelines for lane/corridor.

***"C. Identify a regional roads and highways network on a regional map and identify specific road management principles.***

*Under this option, the regional growth strategy would be more specific on lane/corridor management guidelines to assist in the movement of goods and commercial vehicles and transit priority at critical locations."*

***Staff Discussion and Comments:***

All options identified for Strategy 10 suggest prioritizing transit and goods movement. It should be noted, however, that as TransLink has many of the transportation system implementation tools, Option C would require that organization's concurrence. Failing that, the option could not be put into effect and would risk being beyond Metro Vancouver's mandate.

Strategy 10 proposes expanding the road and highway network in the region to increase road capacity (road-based transportation supply). On the supply side, Burnaby is currently served by: four interchanges on the Trans Canada Highway; and more kilometres of HOV lane than any other municipality in the region (44 km or 41% of the GVRD total in 2005).

Strategy 10 emphasizes the movement of goods while the adopted LRSP only gave goods movement a passing reference. The strategy recognizes that maintaining accessibility will likely require a functioning highway network that may have to give priority to goods, transit, and high occupancy vehicles. What the RGS does not appear to embrace the other (potentially greener) good movement alternatives such as short sea shipping or long haul rail transport. These would likely have an important role to play if we are to achieve the Province's greenhouse gas reduction targets.

***Suggested Approach:***

The RGS recognizes that there is a need to establish a common planning framework and planning principles amongst the Province and TransLink and Metro Vancouver for developing the highway system. This is especially true regarding the operational strategies for highways which are essential to the development of transportation demand management strategies.

However, considering the highway expansion currently proposed under the Trans-Canada Highway Port Mann Bridge project being promoted by the Province, it would likely be in Metro Vancouver's best interest to be more, rather than less prescriptive about the lane/corridor guidelines.

Similar to the recommendation for Strategy 9, there is a need for a coordinated overall approach on a transportation plan (including the road network) that supports the regional land use plan as defined by the updated RGS. We therefore believe that the RGS should provide general transportation objectives, and then define a process for the region to represent regional and municipal interests in coordinating an approach with the Province, TransLink, and other stakeholders on a revised transportation plan that supports the updated RGS land use concept. This will be fundamental in ensuring that transportation helps to shape future land use rather than existing land use patterns shaping transportation.

GOAL 5:

Create a sustainable regional transportation system

STRATEGY 11:

Manage transportation demand.

***"Why is this strategy important?"***

*Transportation demand results from land use decisions on where homes, businesses, entertainment, services and freight distribution terminals are located throughout the region. How transportation services and infrastructure are supplied in turn affects land use decisions and demand.*

*The price of transportation options is an important factor in choice. The current pricing system hides the true cost of car travel. Pricing mechanisms can include the level of transit fares, U-Passes, employer and community transit passes, incentives for car pooling, parking fees, pay-as-you-drive vehicle insurance, fuel taxes, and vehicle levy fees. There are also a number of possible road user pricing schemes used in other jurisdictions, ranging from area or facility tolls to comprehensive pricing strategies."*

For Strategy 11, Metro Vancouver developed the following two options.

Option A would state a general goal.

***"A. State the general goal of managing transportation demand.***

*General goals would state the desired outcomes for programs designed to reduce transportation demand in the region. TransLink would design specific transportation demand management programs to achieve regional goals and reduction targets."*

In addition to stating a general goal, Option B would introduce incentives ("carrots"), such as bus lanes and penalties ("sticks"), such as road pricing mechanisms.

***"B. Identify demand management strategies in the regional growth strategy.***

*The regional growth strategy would provide a framework for specific demand strategies at the local level which might include transit priority measures such as bus lanes and parking supply measures. At the regional level, it might include road pricing mechanisms."*

***Staff Discussion and Comments:***

Although Strategy 11 continues to support Transportation Demand Management (TDM) it no longer seeks an "automobile-restrained" transportation system (as did the LRSP).

Strategy 11 proposes to actively manage transportation demand. In terms of transportation demand management, Burnaby is the second largest carpooling destination in the region outside of the City of Vancouver; Simon Fraser University was a charter partner in TransLink's U-Pass; and UniverCity is the first neighbourhood in Canada to have a C-Pass.

Strategy 11 is potentially the most important strategy under Goal 5 – *a sustainable regional transportation system*. Without the “carrots” and “sticks” proposed in under Option B, there is likely little hope of achieving significant change in the region’s collective travel behaviour. This travel behaviour underlies our use of the transportation system and the transportation infrastructure which is built to accommodate that use. If we can shift our travel behaviour we can make better use of the existing transportation system and potentially reduce the need for future transportation infrastructure.

Strategy 11 poses the question as to whether the RGS should include a goal of managing transportation demand. In addition to reducing demand through the shape of land use and the mix of land use, reductions in net travel demand in a growing region should target “a reduction in SOV demand”. Additional objectives for transportation demand management should be considered to shift transportation demand: out of the peak period to off peak periods (when transportation supply is more available); and from single occupant vehicles to alternative modes that move people and goods with less road space required, less energy consumption and less pollution produced.

Strategy 11 only mentions the possibility of road pricing in a tentative manner. The need for road pricing was the most emphatic message that emerged from the Regional Dialogues and other forums over the past year or so. Some form of road pricing will likely be essential if we are to achieve the Province’s greenhouse gas reduction strategies. Moreover, road pricing may also be required to reduce TransLink’s reliance on property taxes in future.

Strategy 11 prompts an interesting discussion about transportation demand decisions and their implementation. However, TransLink has many of the tools for implementation. Without their concurrence, the RGS risks reaching beyond Metro Vancouver’s mandate if Option B is pursued. It should also be noted that sufficient municipal autonomy and flexibility should be provided to allow for the effective management of the regional transportation system to be balanced with local policies and programs.

***Suggested Approach:***

For Strategy 11, although Option A is acceptable, it will not likely be effective in managing transportation demand. Option A is therefore not prudent.

Option B - *Identify demand management strategies in the regional growth strategy* - would have the most merit. However, before of this option could be endorsed, several questions would have to be addressed. Regional municipalities should collaborate with Metro Vancouver to ensure the details of this option:

- recognise that the need for the effective management of the regional transportation system are balanced with local policies and programs;



- recognise that the objectives for transportation demand management include shifting transportation demand: out of the peak period to off peak periods (when transportation supply is more available); and from single occupant vehicles to alternative modes that move people and goods with less road space required, less energy consumption and less pollution produced;
- recognise that road pricing will likely be paramount to achieving significant change in transportation demand management and to reducing TransLink's reliance on property tax in future; and
- seek concurrence from the Province and TransLink on the key conceptual elements of Strategy 11 prior to the RGS being adopted.

## 6.0 CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

This report has provided an overview and assessment of the *Choosing a Sustainable Future for Metro Vancouver* document. This goals based document provides the first opportunity for public and municipal comment on major elements of a renewed RGS for Metro Vancouver. This City report offers a range of comments and preliminary responses, which are proposed to be forwarded to Metro Vancouver for consideration in preparation of a draft updated Regional Growth Strategy.

In a recent report to the Metro Vancouver Land Use and Transportation Committee, regional staff propose to finalize a draft of the RGS in 2008 March and, in turn, seek Committee and Board approval to release the draft for consultation. Notwithstanding the desire to proceed with the RGS update in a timely manner, staff believe the proposed time line for the update process may be overly ambitious. In particular, we are concerned that the details of several of the proposed strategy options are unclear and, without additional consultation, we would be unable to determine the implications of the options for Burnaby or the region.

Rather than being put in a position of responding to a draft RGS, we propose that regional municipalities and other key stakeholders (e.g., TransLink) be given an opportunity to work with our Metro Vancouver colleagues in refining the details of the options before a draft is developed. Specifically, we would see the process evolve as follows:

- Seek consensus on the broad goals and strategies of a draft RGS.
- Collaborate on detailed proposals to support the goals and strategies.
- Confirm which strategies can be adequately addressed through a goals-based approach (Option A for the strategy choices).
- Determine which strategies may require targets or guidelines and, in a collaborative manner, identify appropriate targets and guidelines for inclusion in the RGS (Option B for the strategy choices).

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- Identify strategies which would benefit from regional regulation and work collaboratively to determine if a mutually agreeable approach can be determined.

After the foregoing steps have occurred, Metro Vancouver staff would be in a position to prepare a draft RGS which would, in turn, be released to the public for comment.

In conclusion, the existing LRSP has provided a strong policy framework for growth management in Metro Vancouver since its adoption in 1996. Building on the legacy of the LRSP, Metro Vancouver has provided a useful tool for development of a renewed RGS through the Choosing a Sustainable Future public consultation document. The comments and suggestions presented herein are intended to assist with the RGS update process. While adding time to the RGS update efforts, we believe that the collaborative process outlined in the report will result in a stronger regional plan – one that will have broader understanding, support, and commitment from Metro Vancouver municipalities; and one that will help ensure that Metro Vancouver continues to be a sustainable, livable region as it grows in the future.



B. Luksun, Director  
PLANNING AND BUILDING

JF/DAC/KH/LP:jc

cc: City Manager  
Director Engineering  
City Solicitor

Director Finance  
Director Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services

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