
To: Regional Planning Committee

From: Heather McNell, Director of Regional Planning and Electoral Area Services
Planning and Environment Department

Date: March 28, 2019 Meeting Date: April 5, 2019

Subject: **Towards Metro 2050: Updating Metro Vancouver 2040: Shaping our Future**

RECOMMENDATION

That the MVRD Board:

- a) initiate a comprehensive update to *Metro Vancouver 2040: Shaping our Future*;
- b) direct staff to prepare a Stakeholder Engagement Plan for the update to *Metro Vancouver 2040: Shaping our Future* for Board consideration; and
- c) authorize staff to partner with TransLink in its May to September 2019 ‘Vision and Values’ public engagement process for the future of the region.

PURPOSE

To seek MVRD Board endorsement to initiate a comprehensive update to *Metro Vancouver 2040: Shaping our Future*, and to participate in TransLink’s spring 2019 consultation on developing a vision and values for the future of the region as potential input into that update.

BACKGROUND

Metro Vancouver 2040: Shaping Our Future (Metro 2040), the regional growth strategy, was accepted by all member jurisdictions and adopted by the MVRD Board in July 2011. Since its adoption, *Metro 2040* has been a strong and effective tool representing the regional federation’s collective vision for how to sustainably manage anticipated growth in the region in a way that advances livability by containing and structuring growth to support the development of complete, connected and resilient communities, protecting important lands (i.e. agricultural, industrial and employment and conservation and recreation lands), and supporting the efficient provision of infrastructure such as transit and utilities.

Undertaking preparatory work for a comprehensive update to regional growth strategy has framed Regional Planning’s workplan since 2018. Through the last eight years of implementation, significant effort has gone into assessing progress towards *Metro 2040* goals and strategies and into assessing the policy actions themselves. The Committee and Board have received reports about the series of *Metro 2040* policy reviews underway to help shape the scope and extent of the proposed update. Staff is now in a position to formally seek Board support for updating *Metro 2040*.

WORKING FROM A PLACE OF STRENGTH

Metro 2040 provides a solid, long-term vision for how to sustainably manage growth in the region over the next 20 years. Most of the key policy directions and tools of the strategy are working well and have successfully supported the *Metro 2040* vision. For example, the tools that support containing and structuring growth including:

- Urban Containment Boundary (UCB);
- Urban Centres and Frequent Transit Development Areas;
- Regional Land Use Designations coupled with the minor amendment process; and
- Sewerage Extension Policies

have all contributed to the success of meeting the regional federation's objectives to ensure 98% of growth occurs within the region's urban footprint that 40% of dwelling unit growth and 50% of employment growth are directed to the region's network of Urban Centres, and that an additional 27% of dwelling unit and employment growth are directed to good, transit oriented locations along the Frequent Transit Network. *Metro 2040* has been recognized by other regional planning agencies as a model to work towards, particularly for its urban containment and limits to utility extension as a growth management tools.

In addition, *Metro 2040's* framing of goals, strategies and policy actions for both Metro Vancouver and member jurisdictions, updated performance monitoring program, and eight adopted implementation guidelines are all successful components of the regional growth strategy.

Finally, *Metro 2040's* implementation section was developed so that the strategy is adaptable and responsive. A minor amendment process was included in the plan to facilitate the ability to implement improvements as necessary. In support of continuous improvement, *Metro 2040* has been amended 11 times to accommodate municipal and regional aspirations by amending the regional land use designation of sites, to add Frequent Transit Development Areas and Special Study Areas, to improve policy language, and to incorporate changes made through Regional Context Statements (RCSs).

RECOGNIZING OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

In early 2017, the Regional Planning Committee and Board considered, as required in Part 13 of the *Local Government Act*, section 452 (2) [previously 869(2)], whether Metro 2040 needed to be reviewed for possible amendment. At that time, it was recognized that such a review could range from a minor amendment to a comprehensive review resulting in a new regional growth strategy. The Board resolved that a review of the regional growth strategy for amendment was not required and that amendments to the regional growth strategy would continue to be considered on an ongoing and as-needed basis.

In implementing this direction, staff have worked closely with other departments in Metro Vancouver, member jurisdictions, and other agencies to find innovative solutions to implementation challenges as they arise, which has resulted in improvements to policies, new implementation guidelines, and improved collaborative approaches to implementation.

Through the process of collecting and analyzing data, conducting applied policy research, and working closely with member jurisdictions on the implementation of *Metro 2040*, staff have identified a number of opportunities to improve and update its policies and implementation.

METRO 2040 POLICY REVIEWS

Through eight years of *Metro 2040's* implementation, significant effort has gone into assessing performance, progress made, and implementation successes and challenges with the strategy's policies. Over the next year, Regional Planning will be completing several policy reviews, each intended to take stock of *Metro 2040's* policy framework, develop an understanding of best practices, and help shape a significant update to the regional growth strategy.

Staff expect that the majority of the policy reviews will be complete by the end of 2019 or early to mid-2020. The Committee and Board have received descriptions of some of these projects, status updates for those already underway, and information on how they will be integrated into the next iteration of the regional growth strategy, through Regional Planning's 5-year Financial Plan and Priorities reports.

Below is a table identifying the policy reviews already completed, underway or planned for the year. The table also identifies anticipated scope of review / change anticipated for *Metro 2040* policies in that area as well as anticipated timeline for completion.

SUBJECT	LEVEL OF EFFORT	TIMELINE
Sewerage Policy	Moderate	Complete
Performance Monitoring	Moderate	Complete
Housing Demand Estimates	Moderate	Complete
Long Range Growth Scenarios	Moderate	Complete
Urban Centres and FTDA's	Substantial	Q4 2019
Agriculture	Minor	Q4 2019
Rural	Minor	Q4 2019
Industrial and Mixed Employment	Moderate - Substantial	Q2 2020
Housing	Moderate	Q2 2020
Environment	Moderate - Substantial	Q2 2020
Transportation	Minor (align with RTS)	Q4 2020
Complete Communities	Moderate	Q2 2020
Climate Change	Moderate	Q2 2020
Implementation Section	Minor	Q3 2020
Update Projections to 2050	Moderate	Complete

AREAS OF FOCUS FOR THE UPDATE TO METRO 2040

Two major policy areas that have been identified as significant gaps in *Metro 2040* are climate action and equity. *Metro 2040* has policies reflecting broader corporate objectives for GHG reduction targets, but is silent on climate adaptation. In addition, since *Metro 2040's* adoption, significant efforts have been put toward climate change, most recently in the adoption of *Climate 2050*. Staff plan to explore using climate action as a lens through which to view all growth management policies.

Equity is an emergent issue in regional planning that lacks a clear definition in *Metro 2040*, and in Metro Vancouver's growth management policy framework in general. It is also becoming a more prevalent lens for growth management policy elsewhere, and as part of the 2019 Board-approved

Regional Planning budget, staff will be exploring how better to integrate equity into growth management.

In addition, as the Long Range Growth and Transportation Scenarios project draws to a close, there is a significant opportunity to use the results of that work to actively test the resilience of Metro 2040 policies to multiple futures that begin to address and integrate uncertainties that were not well considered in the development of the regional growth strategy – such as global economic shifts and the impacts of technology and automation on population growth, employment and other areas.

There are also a number of other areas that have been identified for substantive policy improvements including:

- Updated projections (to 2050) for population, housing, employment and land use;
- Updated Housing Demand Estimates (with updated data to 2021 and improved methodology);
- A clearer definition and hierarchy for Urban Centres and FTDA's, and to better incorporate corridors into the growth framework;
- Improved definition of the regional role in the development of "Complete Communities" to better address the areas of social equity, housing, walkability, transportation, health outcomes etc.;
- Clarification on definition and application of regional land use designations;
- Emphasis on affordable housing in transit-oriented locations;
- Enhanced environmental policies to better integrate Sensitive Ecosystems and Ecosystem Services; and
- Enhanced First Nations engagement and a clearer understanding of how to address ownership, development and land uses.

And finally, there are some minor implementation improvements identified including:

- Updated alignment of agricultural policies with ALC legislation and regulations; and
- A clearer and more nuanced definition for the Rural land use designation.

PROCESS AND TIMELINE

Staff have considered the timing and scope of the *Metro 2040* update, aided by legal review. The update would be a Type 1 amendment, as set out in *Metro 2040* Sections 6.3.1 and 6.4.3, which require the same acceptance procedures for regional growth strategies as set out in Section 436 of the *Local Government Act*, requiring all affected local governments to accept the amendment by resolution as well as the adoption of an amendment bylaw by the MVRD Board.

The Committee and Board will receive periodic updates on each of the policy reviews through regular agendas and reports. Regional Planning's 5-year Financial Plan and Priorities Board reports for 2018 and 2019 also both identified that upon completion of the policy reviews, staff anticipate providing a draft amended regional growth strategy during Q1 of 2021, with the aim of adopting an updated regional growth strategy before year end in 2022.

ENGAGEMENT

The Board Policy on Public Engagement seeks to ensure that engagement processes are clear, consistent, and carried out responsibly, provide opportunities for the public and stakeholders to provide input that is considered in decision making, builds strong relationships with the communities Metro Vancouver serves, and facilitates Board decisions that are informed by input from affected stakeholders and where appropriate, the public.

Staff are currently scoping and developing a Stakeholder Engagement Plan for the update to *Metro 2040*, and plan to provide the plan for Committee and Board consideration in Q3 of 2019. The Engagement Plan will align with the Board Policy on Public Engagement.

Engagement for the policy reviews will be limited to member jurisdictions through the Regional Planning Advisory Committee (RPAC), the RPAC subcommittees, the Regional Administrator's Advisory Committee (RAAC) and relevant standing committees of the Board, as well as additional consultation with affected stakeholders in the region (e.g. TransLink, the Agricultural Land Commission, the health authorities, the Province, the Port and others).

ALIGNMENT WITH THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY

With the completion of the Regional Long-Range Growth and Transportation Scenarios, TransLink is ready to begin broad regional public engagement to inform the development of the new Regional Transportation Strategy. TransLink staff have invited Metro Vancouver to partner in a spring and summer 2019 broad, high level public engagement process seeking to engage residents of the region in building a vision based on broadly held values for the future of the region. Participation at this juncture would provide the opportunity for that engagement to support the scope development of the update to *Metro 2040*.

The details of the public engagement process are still being finalized, however, staff anticipate the process to include an online survey as the primary means of gathering input. Contingent on MVRD Board approval, Metro Vancouver would be referenced in the survey and marketing materials, with potential for the Metro Vancouver logo to be included. This provides an opportunity to build on an existing public engagement process, receive early input, and reduce the potential for duplicating public engagement efforts in the future.

ALTERNATIVES

1. That the MVRD Board:
 - a) initiate a comprehensive update to *Metro Vancouver 2040: Shaping our Future*;
 - b) direct staff to prepare a Stakeholder Engagement Plan for the update to *Metro Vancouver 2040: Shaping our Future* for Board consideration; and
 - c) authorize staff to partner with TransLink in its May to September 2019 'Vision and Values' public engagement process for the future of the region.
2. That the MVRD Board receive for information the report dated March 28, 2019 titled "*Metro 2050: Updating Metro Vancouver 2040: Shaping our Future*" and provide alternative direction to staff.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

If the Board chooses alternative 1, staff will continue to identify financial implications through the regular budget process. There would be no additional financial implications for 2019. Staff would also prepare a Stakeholder Engagement Plan for consideration by the Committee and Board in Q3 of 2019. With regards to participating in TransLink's Spring / Summer 2019 public engagement process on exploring the Vision and Values for the future of the region, Metro Vancouver are proposing to provide in-kind support to TransLink only.

If the Board chooses Alternative 2, there are no financial implications.

SUMMARY / CONCLUSION

Since its adoption in 2011, *Metro 2040* has been a strong and effective tool representing the regional federation's collective vision for how to sustainably manage anticipated growth in the region. Through the last eight years of implementation, significant effort has gone into assessing progress towards *Metro 2040* goals and strategies and into assessing the policy actions themselves. Most of the key policy directions and tools of the strategy are working well and have successfully supported the *Metro 2040* vision including the Urban Containment Boundary, Urban Centres and FTDA's, regional land use designations and sewerage extension policies.

In implementing the plan, staff have worked closely with other departments in Metro Vancouver, member municipalities, and other agencies to find innovative solutions to implementation challenges as they arise, which has resulted in improvements to policies, new implementation guidelines, and improved collaborative approaches to implementation. In addition, over the next year, Regional Planning will be completing several policy reviews, each intended to take stock of *Metro 2040*'s policy framework, develop an understanding of best practices, and help shape a significant update to the regional growth strategy.

The proposed update to *Metro 2040* will be largely framed around the results of the policy reviews, recognizing that the reviews themselves were undertaken to address already identified gaps and opportunities for improvements. The proposed update will extend the strategy to the year 2050 and leverage its strengths, supplemented with a greater focus on climate adaptation, the addition of an equity lens, and strengthening the resilience of policies to future uncertainties. In addition, the policy actions for Metro Vancouver and municipalities will be updated to reflect plans that have been completed since *Metro 2040*'s adoption - with a greater focus on affordable housing in transit locations and enhanced integration of land use and transportation planning.

The update would be a Type 1 amendment, as set out in *Metro 2040* and the *Local Government Act*, requiring all affected local governments to accept the amendment by resolution as well as the adoption of an amendment bylaw by the MVRD Board. If the Board supports undertaking the comprehensive update to *Metro 2040*, staff anticipate providing a draft amended regional growth strategy during Q1 of 2021, with the aim of adopting an updated regional growth strategy before year end in 2022.

Staff are currently scoping and developing a Stakeholder Engagement Plan for the Update to Metro 2040, and plan to provide the plan for Committee and Board consideration in Q3 of 2019. The Engagement Plan will align with the Board Policy on Public Engagement.

TransLink is undertaking broad regional public engagement to inform the development of the new Regional Transportation Strategy, and has invited Metro Vancouver to partner in a spring and summer 2019 public engagement process to engage residents in building a vision based on broadly held values for the future of the region. Participation by Metro Vancouver at this juncture would provide the opportunity for that engagement to support the scope development of the update to *Metro 2040*.

As a result, staff recommend Alternative 1.

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