Metro 2050

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINE
Regional Growth Strategy Amendments

October 2023
Preamble

The successful implementation of *Metro 2050*, the regional growth strategy, depends on ongoing cooperation and collaboration between Metro Vancouver and affected local governments. *Metro 2050* represents consensus among member jurisdictions to work collaboratively on meeting five long-term regional planning goals:

1. Create a compact urban area
2. Support a sustainable economy
3. Protect the environment, address climate change, and respond to natural hazards
4. Provide diverse and affordable housing choices
5. Support sustainable transportation choices

*Metro 2050* is the regional federation’s collective vision for how growth will be managed to support the creation of complete, connected, and resilient communities, while protecting important lands and supporting the efficient provision of urban infrastructure.

Member jurisdictions can request that the Metro Vancouver Regional District Board consider an amendment to *Metro 2050*. This *Metro 2050* Implementation Guideline provides guidance to member jurisdictions on regional growth strategy amendments. Specifically, this Guideline outlines the three types of *Metro 2050* amendments, along with their submission and review processes.

The Implementation Guideline will be updated periodically to ensure the most current information is available to member jurisdictions. This guideline should be read in conjunction with *Metro 2050* and the *Local Government Act*, and does not replace or supersede the requirements set out in those documents.

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1.0 REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY AMENDMENT TYPES

AMENDMENT TYPES

Metro 2050, the regional growth strategy, represents the collaborative vision of the regional federation, and is accepted by all affected local governments. Metro 2050 may be amended from time to time to maintain consistency between local and regional land use designations, plans, and targets. Metro 2050 has been designed so that the more regionally significant an issue, the higher the degree of regional federation involvement in decision-making. This is reflected in the three types of Metro 2050 amendments and the votes required to pass each respective amendment type. For the purposes of this Implementation Guideline, the terms “Regional Growth Strategy Amendment” and “Metro 2050” amendment share the same meaning and are used interchangeably.

Type 1 Amendments to the Regional Growth Strategy

Type 1 Amendments require an amendment bylaw to be passed by an affirmative \(50\% + 1\) weighted vote of the MVRD Board and acceptance by all affected local governments. The following types of amendments are classified as Type 1:

a) The addition or deletion of a regional growth strategy goal or strategy;

b) An amendment to the process for making minor amendments to the regional growth strategy for Type 2 and 3 amendments; and

c) The matters specified in section 437(4) of the Local Government Act.

Type 2 Amendments to the Regional Growth Strategy

Type 2 Amendments require an amendment bylaw to be passed by an affirmative two-thirds weighted vote of the MVRD Board. Enhanced public engagement is also expected for Type 2 amendments, with additional details provided in section 4.0 of this Implementation Guideline. The following types of amendments are classified as Type 2:

a) Amendment to the Urban Containment Boundary;

b) Amendment of Agricultural or Conservation and Recreation regional land use designations, except for the Type 3 amendments listed at section 6.3.4(e), (f), and (g) of Metro 2050 (also see Type 3 amendments below);

c) Amendment from a Rural to Industrial, Employment, or General Urban regional land use designations;

d) Amendment of sites located outside the Urban Containment Boundary from Employment to a General Urban regional land use designation;

e) The addition or deletion of an Urban Centre; or

f) The addition or deletion of, or amendment to, the descriptions of the regional land use designations or actions listed under each strategy of Metro 2050.

Type 3 Amendments to the Regional Growth Strategy

Type 3 Amendments require an amendment bylaw to be passed with an affirmative \(50\% + 1\) weighted vote of the MVRD Board. The following types of amendments are classified as Type 3:

a) The addition or deletion of a Frequent Transit Development Area;

b) For sites within the Urban Containment Boundary, amendments from Industrial, Employment or General Urban to any other such regional land use designation(s);

c) Amendment from Industrial, Employment, or General Urban to Rural, Agricultural, or Conservation and Recreation regional land use designations;
d) Amendment from Rural to Agricultural or Conservation and Recreation regional land use designation;

e) Amendment from a Conservation and Recreation to an Agricultural regional land use designation;

f) For sites that are contiguous with, or within, the Urban Containment Boundary, and are not within the Agricultural Land Reserve and are not subject to the Agricultural Land Commission Act, amendment from Agricultural or Rural to an Industrial regional land use designation, and associated Urban Containment Boundary adjustments;

g) For sites that are identified as Special Study Areas* on Map 12 of Metro 2050, an amendment to another regional land use designation and associated Urban Containment Boundary adjustments;

h) Removal of the Trade-Oriented Lands overlay from parcels with an Industrial regional land use designation;

i) Housekeeping amendments to figures, tables or maps, performance measures or other items related to document structure that do not alter the intent of the regional growth strategy;

j) Amendments to mapping to incorporate maps included in accepted Regional Context Statements;

k) The reclassification of a Frequent Transit Development Area to an Urban Centre, or reclassification of an Urban Centre type to another Urban Centre type;

l) An amendment to the Major Transit Growth Corridors; and

m) All other amendments not identified under a Type 1 or Type 2 Amendment.

*Special Study Areas identify locations where, prior to the adoption of the previous regional growth strategy, Metro 2040, a member jurisdiction had expressed an intention to alter the existing land use for some or part of an area after undertaking a planning process, and is anticipating requesting a future regional land use designation amendment as a result. Amending regional land use designations for areas with a Special Study Area overlay is a Type 3 amendment, and is intended to acknowledge some future land use change, lower the voting threshold for amendments for areas with an Agricultural, Rural, or Conservation and Recreation regional land use designation to an urban designation where a member jurisdiction has yet to undertake the planning process for the area, but anticipates land use change.

Member Jurisdiction Flexibility Provision

Section 6.2.7 of Metro 2050 provides member jurisdictions with the flexibility to adjust the boundaries of regional land use designations within the Urban Containment Boundary (UCB) under certain circumstances without triggering a Metro 2050 amendment. To utilize the discretionary provisions in this section, the member jurisdiction must include language within its Regional Context Statement permitting amendments to their Official Community Plan (OCP) for regional land use designation boundary adjustments, and must specify the circumstances outlined in section 6.2.7 where this can occur.

Section 6.2.8 of Metro 2050 provides member jurisdictions with the flexibility to amend the boundaries of Urban Centres and Frequent Transit Development Areas without triggering an amendment to the regional growth strategy. Member jurisdictions must include appropriate language within their Regional Context Statement in order to have this flexibility. If a member jurisdiction includes language in its Regional Context Statement that permits flexibility as described in sections 6.2.7 and 6.2.8 of Metro 2050, these adjustments do not require a Metro 2050 amendment and an accompanying Regional Context Statement amendment. All other adjustments to regional land use designation boundaries will
require an amendment, which must be submitted to the MVRD Board for acceptance in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act*.

Should a member jurisdiction wish to engage the flexibility provisions, the member jurisdiction must notify the MVRD Board in writing, of any and all adjustments within thirty days after the member jurisdiction has adopted its Official Community Plan amendment bylaw in accordance with section 6.2.9 of *Metro 2050*.

### 2.0 REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY AMENDMENT COMMON EXAMPLES

A *Metro 2050* amendment may be sought by either a member jurisdiction or Metro Vancouver under several circumstances, including:

- Seeking the addition or deletion of a *Metro 2050* goal or strategy;
- Requesting amendments to a site’s regional land use designation or movement of the Urban Containment Boundary;
- Seeking to add or amend an Urban Centre or Frequent Transit Development Area; or
- Seeking changes, additions or deletions to a particular policy, policy area, or performance measure.

The most common type of amendment request is to seek a regional land use designation amendment for a particular site. Three scenarios where a member jurisdiction may request a change to the regional land use designation for a site are outlined below. Member jurisdiction staff is encouraged to connect with Metro Vancouver staff if they are unsure which example applies, or if an amendment is required.

**Member Jurisdiction amends OCP without a Regional Context Statement or *Metro 2050* Amendment**

The member jurisdiction proposes to make amendments to its OCP land use designations which will not impact the regional land use designation or Regional Context Statement, or the proposed change falls within the flexibility provision in section 6.2.7 of *Metro 2050*. In this case, no amendments to the Regional Context Statement or *Metro 2050* are required. The member jurisdiction notifies the Metro Vancouver *Corporate Officer* of the change made to the OCP by letter within 30 days of the amendment being made.

**Member Jurisdiction seeks to amend OCP that triggers a change to the Regional Context Statement, but does not require a *Metro 2050* Amendment**

The member jurisdiction proposes to make amendments to its OCP land use designations or policies that are not consistent with the accepted Regional Context Statement, and that are beyond the flexibility provided for in section 6.2.7 of *Metro 2050*, but are ‘generally consistent’ with *Metro 2050*. For example, an amendment might be proposed to align the OCP designation with the existing use, which requires a corresponding amendment to the regional growth strategy. However, the amendment is small enough or considered an up-designation not requiring a regional dialogue and formal amendment process. In this case, the applicant would request an amendment to the Regional Context Statement, and if passed, Metro Vancouver staff would propose a subsequent housekeeping amendment to *Metro 2050* to incorporate changes made as a result of accepted Regional Context Statements. Member jurisdiction staff are encouraged to engage early with Metro Vancouver staff to determine whether an amendment to *Metro 2050* is also required. For guidance on developing, submitting, and the acceptance process for
Regional Context Statements that are not part of an *Metro 2050* amendment application, see the [Regional Context Statement Implementation Guideline](#).

The MVRD Board may accept the revised Regional Context Statement, or may not agree with the member jurisdiction’s assessment of general consistency and decline to accept the revised Regional Context Statement, asking instead for the member jurisdiction to submit a proposed amendment to *Metro 2050* and a consequential amendment to their Regional Context Statement.

**Member Jurisdiction seeks to amend OCP that requires both a *Metro 2050* Amendment and a consequential amendment to the Regional Context Statement**

The member jurisdiction proposes amendments to its OCP land use designations or policies that are inconsistent with *Metro 2050* regional land use designation(s) and/or policies and are also beyond the flexibility provided in section 6.2.7 of *Metro 2050* and that require a consequential amendment to the Regional Context Statement.

Often, member jurisdiction requests for *Metro 2050* amendments (e.g. a land use designation change for a site that amends *Metro 2050* maps), will also warrant an update to their Regional Context Statement maps to ensure general consistency between *Metro 2050* and the member jurisdiction’s OCP. When preparing the OCP amending bylaw, member jurisdictions should ensure that the amending bylaw language includes both the local policy amendment (e.g. an OCP land use designation change) as well as the corresponding update to the Regional Context Statement that forms part of the OCP. Sample language for member jurisdictions amendment resolutions are provided as reference below.

**Sample bylaw resolution for a proposed *Metro 2050* amendment and consequential Regional Context Statement amendment**

**Metro 2050 Amendment Sample Resolution Language**

That subject to Council granting Third Reading to [OCP Bylaw Amendment], authorize staff to submit a [Amendment Type] amendment to the Metro Vancouver Regional District Board for approval to change the regional land use designation from [current regional land use designation] to [proposed regional land use designation].

**Regional Context Statement Amendment Sample Resolution Language**

That subject to Council granting Third Reading to [OCP Bylaw Amendment], authorize staff to submit a Regional Context Statement amendment reflecting the proposed regional land use designation change to the Metro Vancouver Regional District Board for approval.

In this case, the member jurisdiction passes two Council resolutions, one seeking an amendment to *Metro 2050* and another seeking acceptance of a consequential amendment to the Regional Context Statement. The member jurisdiction submits only the *Metro 2050* amendment, not the Regional Context Statement amendment as a part of its initial request to the MVRD Board. The *Local Government Act* stipulates the MVRD Board has 120 days to either accept or refuse to accept a Regional Context Statement by resolution once it is received for consideration. Given that processing a proposed *Metro 2050* amendment may take more than 120 days, the member jurisdiction is requested to submit the Regional Context Statement amendment request once the MVRD Board has given initial readings to the *Metro 2050* amendment bylaw. The Regional Context Statement must be submitted in its entirety.
Metro Vancouver staff will then review the proposed *Metro 2050* amendment in relation to *Metro 2050* goals and policies, and draft a report for review by the Regional Planning Advisory Committee. The following month, the report is considered by the Regional Planning Committee, and the MVRD Board. The MVRD Board contemplates the Metro Vancouver staff assessment and considers initiating the amendment process. The MVRD Board will give initial readings to the amendment bylaw should it decide to consider the amendment.

Following the MVRD Board’s initial readings of the amendment bylaw, it will be referred to affected local governments in the region and First Nations for comment as outlined in section 6.5 of *Metro 2050*. The amendment bylaw will also be posted to the Metro Vancouver website for public comment. The comment period will be for a minimum of 45 days.

Following the comment period, Metro Vancouver staff will bring a report to the MVRD Board summarizing any comments received. The MVRD Board may at this time decide to accept or decline the *Metro 2050* amendment. The final reading of the *Metro 2050* amendment bylaw and acceptance of the Regional Context Statement can be considered by the MVRD Board at the same meeting.

### 3.0 REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY AMENDMENT SUBMISSION

**EARLY ENGAGEMENT WITH METRO VANCOUVER AND OTHER PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS**

Member jurisdictions should engage with Metro Vancouver staff early when considering proposing a *Metro 2050* amendment to ensure that amendment procedures and submission requirements are clearly understood. At this stage, Metro Vancouver staff can advise member jurisdictions on potential timelines and presentation requirements.

**TransLink**

Member jurisdictions should connect with TransLink to discuss components that may have an impact on regional transportation systems or priorities. Member jurisdictions can also request Metro Vancouver staff and TransLink staff provide early feedback on any proposed Frequent Transit Development Areas. Metro Vancouver staff will forward any proposed *Metro 2050* amendments to TransLink as part of the standard referral process to partner organizations as outlined in section 6.6 of *Metro 2050*.

**Agricultural Land Commission**

*Metro 2050* includes policies for working with the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) to protect the region’s agricultural land base. Section 2.3.4 of *Metro 2050* states that Metro Vancouver will not consider amending the Agricultural or Rural regional land use designations of a site if it is still within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).

Should the ALC provide conditional approval to exclude the site from the ALR, the MVRD Board may also provide conditional approval of a regional land use designation amendment, subject to the ALC exclusion conditions being met. The ALC process should be completed prior to initiating the Metro Vancouver process, and written confirmation of the ALC’s decision must be included with the proposed *Metro 2050* amendment.
Port of Vancouver, YVR, and Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
If the proposed amendment involves redesignating a site from Industrial or Employment to General Urban, the MVRD Board will also notify the Port of Vancouver, the Vancouver International Airport Authority (YVR), and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, as appropriate.

INITIATING A REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY AMENDMENT
Member jurisdictions are encouraged to submit a proposed *Metro 2050* amendment to Metro Vancouver after their local public engagement process has been completed, specifically after the member jurisdiction’s public hearing and subsequent bylaw reading of the OCP amendment bylaw. The MVRD Board has expressed preference that the proposal is supported by the local community via the results of the public hearing in advance of the region considering the proposal. In addition, submitting a proposed amendment to the MVRD Board before the member jurisdiction’s public hearing may introduce the possibility that the *Metro 2050* amendment will need to be re-submitted to accommodate any bylaw changes made after the public hearing. Member jurisdictions can submit their amendment applications by email to Metro Vancouver’s Corporate Officer.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS
*Metro 2050* amendments should include the items listed below, as appropriate.

All applications
- *Correspondence:* A letter stating a member jurisdiction’s intent to amend *Metro 2050* and their Regional Context Statement to ensure alignment with proposed OCP changes. The letter should reference the relevant council resolution, bylaw readings, and public hearing dates. A sample letter is provided in Appendix A for reference.

- *Member Jurisdiction Staff Report:* The staff report to Council outlining the OCP amendment, including the Regional Context Statement update. This report typically includes a Council resolution requesting that *Metro 2050* be amended, and that the member jurisdiction intends to submit an updated Regional Context Statement following third reading of the proposed *Metro 2050* amendment bylaw by the MVRD Board.

After the MVRD Board has given first, second, and third reading to the *Metro 2050* amendment bylaw:
- *Updated Regional Context Statement:* Correspondence conveying the relevant Council resolution and the proposed updates to the Regional Context Statement, along with a certified copy of the updated Regional Context Statement in its entirety.

If applicable
- *Agricultural Land Commission Confirmation:* Written confirmation of the ALC’s decision to exclude the affected site(s) from the ALR must be included with the *Metro 2050* amendment request.
- *Public Hearing Summary:* The member jurisdiction’s agenda and minutes for the public hearing on the OCP amendment, including the Regional Context Statement.
4.0 REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY AMENDMENT PROCESS

The submission and Committee/Board consideration process for Metro 2050 amendments are provided below.

Figure 1: Regional Growth Strategy Amendment Process

MEMBER JURISDICTION PRESENTATIONS

As the applicant, member jurisdictions are expected to provide presentations / briefings on the proposed Metro 2050 amendment to both the Regional Planning Advisory Committee and Regional Planning Committee. Member jurisdictions should also be present when an amendment is considered by the MVRD Board, and be available to answer questions. Member jurisdictions must apply to be a delegation to the Regional Planning Committee. The property owners or their representatives can apply as a separate delegation should they wish to speak to the application as can any member of the public. The presentation and delegation guidelines for Metro 2050 amendments are provided as followed.
Table 2: Member Jurisdiction Presentations

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<tr>
<th>Regional Planning Advisory Committee (RPAC)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The purpose of the Regional Planning Advisory Committee is to provide a forum for senior representatives of municipal planning departments, Tsawwassen First Nation, Electoral Area A and agencies with an interest in regional planning to discuss and advise on planning issues of regional or inter-municipal significance; provide advice and comments on Metro Vancouver research and projects; and provide an opportunity for capacity building and shared learning for members.</td>
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<td><strong>Attendance</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Presentation</strong></td>
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<th>Regional Planning Committee (RPL)</th>
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<td>The Regional Planning Committee is the standing committee of the MVRD Board that provides advice and recommendations on plans, policies, programs, budgets and issues related to Metro Vancouver’s Regional Planning service.</td>
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<td><strong>Attendance</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Presentation</strong></td>
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<th>Metro Vancouver Regional District Board (MVRD)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Consideration of initial bylaw readings and referral for comments</td>
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<tr>
<td>The MVRD Board is comprised of elected officials from member jurisdictions. The MVRD Board approves or declines any proposed amendment to Metro 2050 and accepts or refuses to accept Regional Context Statements.</td>
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<td><strong>Attendance</strong></td>
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NOTIFICATION PROCESS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES
Should the MVRD Board resolve to proceed with the amendment process, it will provide written notice to all affected local governments with a minimum comment period of 45 days from date of notice, in accordance with section 6.4.2 of Metro 2050.

If the proposed amendment involves redesignating a site from Industrial or Employment to General Urban, the MVRD Board will also notify the Port of Vancouver, the Vancouver International Airport Authority, and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, as appropriate.

Additionally, the MVRD Board will notify the public of any proposed Metro 2050 amendment by posting it on the Metro Vancouver website, with a minimum comment period of 45 days from the date of notice. Members of the public can comment on proposed amendments either in writing, or by requesting to speak as a delegation to the Regional Planning Committee or the MVRD Board.

Enhanced public engagement opportunities are required for Type 2 amendments. Examples of these public engagement opportunities are outlined in section 6.4.4 (c) of Metro 2050, and include:

- Notification of the proposed amendments on the Metro Vancouver website;
- Requesting written comments by way of a comment form on the Metro Vancouver website;
- Opportunities for the public to appear as a delegation to the Regional Planning Committee or the MVRD Board when the amendment is being considered;
- Conveyance of comments submitted from the respective local public hearing to the MVRD Board; and
- Hosting a public information meeting (digitally or in person).

Public engagement opportunities for Type 3 amendments may also be required by the MVRD Board. These opportunities may include those listed above for Type 2 amendments, and will be determined during the application process.

All comments received on the proposed Metro 2050 amendment will be provided to the MVRD Board prior to final reading of the amendment bylaw. For all Type 1 amendments, notification will also be sent to the Regional Growth Strategy Intergovernmental Advisory Committee, which will be established in accordance with section 450 of the Local Government Act.

AVOIDING TWO-STEP AMENDMENTS
The MVRD Board discourages the use of multiple Type 3 amendments to achieve what is intended to be a Type 2 amendment to avoid the higher voting threshold and other requirements under a Type 2 amendment.

Example: Changing the regional land use designation of a site from Conservation and Recreation to Agricultural would be classified as a Type 3 amendment. A subsequent change of the regional land use designation for the site from Agricultural to Industrial would be another Type 3 amendment in circumstances where the site is contiguous with, or within, the UCB. A direct change of the regional land use designation from Conservation and Recreation to Industrial would be a Type 2 amendment, with more stringent amendment procedures.

To prevent such two-step amendments from occurring, Metro Vancouver staff will investigate the evolution of the subject property’s land use designation and include the history of the regional land use designations as part of the staff report to the Regional Planning Committee and the MVRD Board. If
there is evidence indicating a two-step amendment is being utilized to achieve a specific regional land use designation and procedurally avoid a Type 2 amendment, Metro Vancouver staff will generally recommend the MVRD board decline the proposed amendment.
APPENDIX A: SAMPLE COVER LETTER FOR A REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY LAND USE DESIGNATION AMENDMENT AND CORRESPONDING REGIONAL CONTEXT STATEMENT AMENDMENT

This Sample Cover Letter is provided for general reference only.

Corporate Officer
Metro Vancouver
Metrotower III, 4515 Central Boulevard
Burnaby, BC V5H 0C6

Dear Corporate Officer,

RE: [Member Jurisdiction] Metro 2050 Regional Growth Strategy Amendment Request for [Site]

Introduction (Heading not required)
[Member Jurisdiction] is processing an application for [site address] to permit [proposed land use and development information]. The proposal includes an amendment to Metro 2050, to amend the regional land use designation for the subject site from [current regional land use designation] to [proposed regional land use designation]. The proposed regional growth strategy amendment also requires an amendment to the [Member Jurisdiction’s] Regional Context Statement. The [Member Jurisdiction] Council is requesting the Metro Vancouver Regional District (MVRD) Board consider an amendment to Metro 2050, and an amendment to the [Member Jurisdiction’s] Regional Context Statement.

Summary of the Council Resolutions (Heading not required)
On [Date], at the Regular Council Meeting, [Member Jurisdiction] Council passed [Resolution or Bylaw name or number] to refer the [development application] to the MVRD Board for consideration and approval of a [Amendment Type] regional growth strategy amendment, to re-designate the site from [current regional land use designation] to [proposed regional land use designation]. Council is also requesting the MVRD Board consider acceptance of an amendment to the [Member Jurisdiction] Regional Context Statement at the same time as third and final reading of the Metro 2050 amendment bylaw reading, should the MVRD Board give initial readings to the amendment. The [development application] received Third Reading on [date] and a Public Hearing was held on [date].

Summary (Heading not required)
[Member Jurisdiction] requests that the MVRD Board amend the regional growth strategy for the affected property from [current regional land use designation] to [proposed regional land use designation] and receive an amendment to the [Member Jurisdiction] Regional Context Statement for consideration at the time as final reading of the MVRD regional growth strategy amendment bylaw.

Should Metro Vancouver staff require any additional information regarding this matter, please contact [Member Jurisdiction Contact Name, Title], at [Phone Number] or at [Email Address].

Yours,
Signature
[Name]
[Title] [Department]

Attachments
[Title of Attachment, Date]