

**METRO VANCOUVER REGIONAL DISTRICT
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE**

REGULAR MEETING

February 5, 2021

9:00 AM

28th Floor Boardroom, 4730 Kingsway, Burnaby, British Columbia

A G E N D A¹

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1.1 February 5, 2021 Regular Meeting Agenda

That the Regional Planning adopt the agenda for its regular meeting scheduled for February 5, 2021, as circulated.

2. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

2.1 January 14, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes

That the Regional Planning Committee adopt the minutes of its regular meeting held January 14, 2021, as circulated.

3. DELEGATIONS

4. INVITED PRESENTATIONS

5. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEE OR STAFF

5.1 COVID-19 in Metro Vancouver – Regional Impacts

Verbal Update

Designated Speaker: Sean Galloway, Director, Regional Planning and Electoral Area Services

5.2 Metro 2040 Implementation Section Policy Review Recommendations

That the MVRD Board endorse the Metro 2040 Implementation Section Policy Review recommendations as presented in the report dated January 21, 2021, titled “Metro 2040 Implementation Section Policy Review Recommendations” as the basis for updating the implementation related policies in the regional growth strategy.

¹ Note: Recommendation is shown under each item, where applicable.

5.3 Hey Neighbour Collective Discussion Paper to Inform *Metro 2050*

That the Regional Planning Committee receive for information the report dated January 5, 2021, titled “Hey Neighbour Collective Discussion Paper to Inform Metro 2050.”

5.4 Manager's Report

That the Regional Planning Committee receive for information the report dated February 5, 2021, titled “Manager’s Report”.

6 INFORMATION ITEMS

7 OTHER BUSINESS

8 BUSINESS ARISING FROM DELEGATIONS

9 RESOLUTION TO CLOSE MEETING

Note: The Committee must state by resolution the basis under section 90 of the Community Charter on which the meeting is being closed. If a member wishes to add an item, the basis must be included below.

10 ADJOURNMENT/CONCLUSION

That the Regional Planning Committee adjourn/conclude its regular meeting of February 5, 2021.

Membership:

Coté, Jonathan (C) - New Westminster
Froese, Jack (VC) - Langley Township
Copeland, Dan - Delta
Dueck, Judy - Maple Ridge
Gamboli, Nora - West Vancouver

Guerra, Laurie - Surrey
Hurley, Mike - Burnaby
Kirby-Yung, Sarah - Vancouver
McEwen, John - Anmore
Muri, Lisa - North Vancouver District

Steves, Harold - Richmond
Vagramov, Rob - Port Moody
van den Broek, Val - Langley City
West, Brad - Port Coquitlam

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**METRO VANCOUVER REGIONAL DISTRICT
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Metro Vancouver Regional District (MVRD) Regional Planning Committee held at 9:01 a.m. on Thursday, January 14, 2021 in the 28th Floor Boardroom, 4730 Kingsway, Burnaby, British Columbia.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chair, Mayor Jonathan Coté*, New Westminster
 Vice Chair, Mayor Jack Froese*, Langley Township
 Councillor Judy Dueck*, Maple Ridge
 Councillor Nora Gambioli*, West Vancouver
 Councillor Laurie Guerra*, Surrey
 Mayor Mike Hurley*, Burnaby
 Councillor Sarah Kirby-Yung*, Vancouver (arrived at 9:04 a.m.)
 Mayor John McEwen*, Anmore
 Councillor Lisa Muri*, North Vancouver District
 Councillor Harold Steves*, Richmond
 Mayor Rob Vagramov*, Port Moody (arrived at 9:05 a.m.)
 Mayor Val van den Broek*, Langley City
 Mayor Brad West*, Port Coquitlam

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Councillor Dan Copeland, Delta

STAFF PRESENT:

Heather McNell, General Manager, Regional Planning and Housing Services
 Amelia White, Legislative Services Coordinator, Board and Information Services

OTHERS PRESENT:

Director Sav Dhaliwal, Board Chair and Ex Officio committee member

OPENING REMARKS

Director Sav Dhaliwal, Board Chair and Ex Officio committee member, acknowledged the contributions of the Metro Vancouver Standing Committee members in what has been a challenging time for the region due to COVID-19 pandemic and recognized the vital role this Committee will play in moving forward.

9:04 a.m. Councillor Sarah Kirby-Yung arrived at the meeting.

9:05 a.m. Mayor Rob Vagramov arrived at the meeting.

*denotes electronic meeting participation as authorized by Section 3.6.2 of the *Procedure Bylaw*

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1.1 January 14, 2021 Regular Meeting Agenda

It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the Regional Planning Committee adopt the agenda for its regular meeting scheduled for January 14, 2021, as circulated.

CARRIED

2. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

2.1 November 6, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes

It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the Regional Planning Committee adopt the minutes of its regular meeting held November 6, 2020, as circulated.

CARRIED

3. DELEGATIONS

No items presented.

4. INVITED PRESENTATIONS

No items presented.

5. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEE OR STAFF

5.1 2021 Regional Planning Committee Priorities and Work Plan

Report dated January 4, 2021, from Sean Galloway, Director, Regional Planning and Electoral Area Services, providing an overview of the 2021 priorities and work plan items for the Regional Planning Committee.

Members were provided a presentation about the 2021 priorities and work plan items for the Regional Planning Committee.

9:20 a.m. Chair Coté left the meeting and Vice-Chair Froese assumed the Chair.

9:22 a.m. Chair Coté returned to the meeting and assumed the Chair.

It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the Regional Planning Committee endorse the work plan as presented in the report dated January 4, 2021 titled "2021 Regional Planning Committee Priorities and Work Plan".

CARRIED

Presentation material titled "2021 Priorities and Work Plan" is retained with the January 14, 2021 Regional Planning Committee agenda.

5.2 Metro 2040 Climate Change and Natural Hazards Policy Review - Recommendations

Report dated January 6, 2021, from Edward Nichol, Regional Planner, Regional Planning and Housing Services, seeking the Regional Planning Committee and MVRD Board's endorsement of policy recommendations to strengthen the regional growth strategy's climate action and natural hazard policies.

Members were provided a presentation on the *Metro 2040* Policy Review, key policy issues and proposed recommendations.

It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the MVRD Board endorse the *Metro 2040* Climate Change and Natural Hazards Policy Review recommendations as presented in the report dated January 6, 2021 titled "*Metro 2040* Climate Change and Natural Hazards Policy Review - Recommendations" as the basis for updating the climate change and natural hazards-related policies in the regional growth strategy.

CARRIED

Presentation material titled "Climate Change and Natural Hazards: *Metro 2040* Policy Review – Recommendations" is retained with the January 14, 2021 Regional Planning Committee agenda.

5.3 Metro 2040 Implementation Section Policy Review – Ideas for Exploration

Report dated January 5, 2021, from Sean Galloway, Director, Regional Planning and Electoral Area Services and Eric Aderneck, Senior Planner, Regional Planning and Housing Services, providing the Regional Planning Committee with an overview of the *Metro 2040* Implementation Policy Review.

Members were provided a presentation on the implementation section of *Metro 2040*, the types of amendments, regional public hearings, improving the protection of industrial land, strengthening the minor amendment voting threshold, and increasing municipal flexibility for minor amendments.

Members provided feedback on the following four questions:

1. What are your thoughts regarding the importance, efficacy and need for a regional public hearing as a means for public engagement for Type 2 minor amendments?
2. What are your thoughts about changing the type of minor amendment from a Type 3 to a Type 2 for Industrial lands?
3. What are your thoughts about increasing the voting threshold for Type 2 and Type 3 minor amendments?
4. What are your thoughts about increasing municipal flexibility for minor amendments?

It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the Regional Planning Committee receive for information the report dated January 5, 2021, titled “Metro 2040 Implementation Section Policy Review – Ideas for Exploration.”

CARRIED

Presentation material titled “Metro 2040 Implementation Section Policy Review: Ideas for Exploration” is retained with the January 14, 2021 Regional Planning Committee agenda.

5.4 Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy – Endorsements

Report dated January 5, 2021, from Eric Aderneck, Senior Planner, Regional Planning and Housing Services, providing the Regional Planning Committee and MVRD Board with a status report on the endorsements from member jurisdictions and agencies on the Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy.

It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the MVRD Board receive for information the report dated January 5, 2021, titled “Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy - Endorsements”.

CARRIED

5.5 Manager’s Report

Report dated January 7, 2021, from Heather McNell, General Manager, Regional Planning and Housing Services, providing members an update on the following:

- virtual attendance at 2021 Standing Committee Events,
- Resilient Region Strategic Framework,
- policy review summaries and an update to *Metro 2040: The Regional Growth Strategy*, and
- COVID-19 trends implicating long range planning.

It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the Regional Planning Committee receive for information the report dated January 7, 2021, titled “Manager’s Report”.

CARRIED

6. INFORMATION ITEMS

No items presented.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

No items presented.

8. BUSINESS ARISING FROM DELEGATIONS

No items presented.

9. RESOLUTION TO CLOSE MEETING

No items presented.

10. CONCLUSION

It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the Regional Planning Committee conclude its regular meeting of January 14, 2021.

CARRIED

(Time: 10:46 a.m.)

Amelia White
Legislative Services Coordinator

Jonathan Coté, Chair

FINAL 43236836

To: Regional Planning Committee

From: Sean Galloway, Director, Regional Planning and Electoral Area Services and
Eric Aderneck, Senior Planner, Regional Planning and Housing Services

Date: January 21, 2021 Meeting Date: February 5, 2021

Subject: ***Metro 2040* Implementation Section Policy Review Recommendations**

RECOMMENDATION

That the MVRD Board endorse the *Metro 2040* Implementation Section Policy Review recommendations as presented in the report dated January 21, 2021, titled “*Metro 2040* Implementation Section Policy Review Recommendations” as the basis for updating the implementation related policies in the regional growth strategy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To inform the update to the regional growth strategy, Metro Vancouver is undertaking a series of Policy Reviews, including for the Implementation Section (*Metro 2040* Section F), which considers the procedural issues with implementing, administering, and amending the strategy. Taking into account the experience gained from administering *Metro 2040* since its adoption in 2011, input from member jurisdictions, and feedback from Regional Planning Committee members at the January 14, 2021 meeting, staff are recommending, in addition to 'housekeeping' refinements, the following directions to guide the drafting of new and amended policy language:

1. a) eliminate the requirement for a regional public hearing associated with Type 2 amendments;
b) ensure alternative means of meaningful regional public engagement, to replace the public hearing process noted in 1 a), including leveraging new technology; and
2. change minor amendment applications for lands with an Industrial regional land use designation from a Type 3 to a Type 2 amendment.

PURPOSE

To seek endorsement by the Regional Planning Committee and MVRD Board of the *Metro 2040* Implementation Policy Review recommendations.

BACKGROUND

The *Metro 2040* Implementation Policy Review is one of a series of reviews that will provide inputs into the regional growth strategy update, being referred to as *Metro 2050*, and anticipated to be complete by mid-2022. The Policy Review scope of work report was received by the Regional Planning Advisory Committee (RPAC) on March 20, 2020, and the Regional Planning Committee on May 1, 2020 (Reference 1).

The Policy Review's 'Policy Ideas' were discussed by the Regional Planning Advisory Committee (RPAC) at its meeting on November 20, 2020; the comments received were limited, but were incorporated into the review. The Policy Review 'Ideas for Exploration' were then discussed by the Regional Planning Committee at its meeting on January 14, 2021. In response to feedback from the Committee, staff are presenting policy recommendations for the Implementation section, which if endorsed, will form the basis of associated policy in *Metro 2050*.

METRO 2040 IMPLEMENTATION SECTION

The *Metro 2040*'s Implementation Section (Section F, 6.1 to 6.15) outlines the process to administer and amend the regional growth strategy, and is organized as follows:

- 6.1 - Implementation Framework
- 6.2 - Regional Context Statements (including provisions for municipal flexibility)
- 6.3 - Categories of Amendments (Types 1, 2, 3)
- 6.4 - Procedures for Amendments (including notifications)
- 6.5, 6.6, 6.7 - Coordination with First Nations, TransLink, Other Governments / Agencies
- 6.8 - Coordination with Greater Vancouver Boards
- 6.9 - Sewerage Area Extensions
- 6.10 - Special Study Areas
- 6.11 - Jurisdiction
- 6.12, 6.13 - Maps, Tables / Figures, Performance Measures
- 6.14, 6.15 - Interpretation, Guidelines

SCOPE OF THE POLICY REVIEW

The purpose of the Policy Review was to identify implementation challenges and opportunities to improve administration efficiency and effectiveness. The review considered such aspects as: administrative process, clarity about steps in the regional context statement and amendment processes and requirements, protection or flexibility for some types of regional land use designation amendments, and balance / clarity of regional and local roles.

Any changes to the minor amendment process of the regional growth strategy are considered a Type 1 Amendment by the *Local Government Act*, which requires the approval of all signatories. Should the MVRD Board support any changes to the amendment provisions, given that the current regional growth strategy update is itself a Type 1 amendment, there is an opportunity to simultaneously also amend those procedures without having to initiate a separate Type 1 amendment process. This review is also an opportunity for a number of administrative or 'housekeeping' refinements to the current strategies to support interpretation and implementation, that have been identified based on experience with implementing the regional growth strategy and other associated work associated with the policy reviews.

The shared knowledge and experience of member jurisdictions and Metro Vancouver staff gained from stewarding, implementing, and amending *Metro 2040* since its adoption in 2011 was considered, as well as research, best practices, and legislative requirements.

FINDINGS

Metro 2040 includes a three-tiered amendment process, for both policy changes and land use designation changes, to guide the administration of proposed amendments; generally, the more regionally-significant the amendment, the more rigorous the process.

Under the provisions of the *Local Government Act*, regional districts can include provisions for 'minor' amendments in their respective regional growth strategy, provided that they include: criteria for determining whether a proposed amendment is minor; the means for obtaining and considering the views of affected local governments; the means for providing notice to affected local governments; and procedures for adopting a minor amendment bylaw.

Since the adoption of *Metro 2040*, between 2011 and 2019 there have been 31 requested 'minor' amendment applications, with an average processing time of 26 weeks (excluding an outlier).

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

At the Regional Planning Committee meeting of January 14, 2021, Committee members provided comments in response to the following four areas:

1. the effectiveness of a regional public hearing as a means for public engagement for Type 2 amendments;
2. changing the type of amendment for the conversion of an Industrial to General Urban regional land use designation from a Type 3 to a Type 2;
3. increasing MVRD Board weighted voting thresholds for Types 3 and 2 amendments; and
4. reviewing the provision for municipal flexibility clause (Section 6.2.7 of *Metro 2040*).

Regional Planning Committee members provided the following comments on these items. It should be noted that there were differing opinions and no formal Committee endorsement or resolution on any of the areas.

1. *Regional Public Hearings for Type 2 amendments*: There were differing views on the effectiveness of regional public hearings as part of the Type 2 amendment process, with some expressing it can be a duplication of the local engagement process in terms of attendees, and even add to divisiveness in local communities because of the repetition, while others noted that it was working well and there was no need for change. A common theme was a reiteration of the need for broad, regionally based public engagement for significant amendments and that there are many opportunities emerging as a result of movement into online and digital formats. Some members expressed that the public hearing could be replaced, potentially serving broader audiences across the region and be more effective with online information meetings, webinars, and opportunities for written comments. For those who felt the regional public hearing could be replaced, there was a strong expression of the need to receive the results of the local public hearing and provide opportunities for written comments and other engagement tools.
2. *Making amendments to the Industrial land use designation a Type 2 amendment*: Overall, there was support for enhancing the type of amendment as a means for enhancing the protection of Industrial lands in the region, and for making conversions of Industrial land a Type 2 rather than Type 3 amendment. There was recognition that this was a priority recommendation stemming from the Board approved 2020 *Regional Industrial Lands*

Strategy. However, the feedback was not unanimous, with some members expressing concern about greater regional involvement in local land use decisions.

3. *Increasing voting thresholds for amendments*: There was no articulated interest in increasing the Board weighted voting threshold for Types 3 and 2 amendments; it was noted that the current voting thresholds of 50% plus one and two-thirds, respectively, have been working satisfactorily, with no concerns expressed, since the adoption of *Metro 2040*.
4. *Enhancing municipal flexibility provisions*: There was no articulated interest in increasing the municipal flexibility provisions of Section 6.2.7, again noting that the current provisions have been working satisfactorily.

IMPLEMENTATION POLICY REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS

To more effectively implement the regional growth strategy, the following objectives were used:

- an efficient and consistent implementation process;
- clear requirements and process for future amendments;
- clear and consistent definitions of terms throughout;
- a meaningful regional public engagement process when considering amendments;
- ease of reporting and tracking changes over time;
- voting thresholds for, and types of, amendments;
- municipal flexibility provisions;
- Sewerage Area extension provisions;
- effectiveness of Special Study Areas;
- enhanced coordination with First Nations and regional stakeholders; and
- administrative refinements.

Table 1 sets out the proposed changes, existing policies, and associated considerations / implications. These should be considered in the context of recommendations from other *Metro 2040* Policy Reviews.

Table 1 – Recommended Implementation Section Changes / Associated Considerations / Implications

Proposed Change	Existing Policy	Considerations / Implications
1) Eliminate the requirement for a regional public hearing for Type 2 amendments, and replace with other means of meaningful, and regionally based public engagement	Note: Type 2 amendments are considered more regionally significant than Type 3 amendments and include changes to the Urban Containment Boundary and conversion of Agricultural, Rural or Conservation and Recreation lands to other uses. Type 2 amendments require a bylaw passed by a two-thirds weighted vote at the MVRD Board and a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a replacement to a regional public hearing, other means of public engagement such as: enhancing notifications on the Metro Vancouver website, providing opportunities for written comments, ensuring the Board receives comments from the local public hearing, including online engagement opportunities, encouraging delegation presentations to the Regional Planning Committee, better coordinating regional and municipal engagement processes,

	<p>regional public hearing.</p> <p>In contrast, Type 3 amendments require an amendment bylaw passed by a 50% + 1 vote at the MVRD Board and no regional public hearing.</p>	<p>etc., will be explored. Options will be included in the draft of <i>Metro 2050</i> that is circulated for comment in the latter half of 2021.</p>
<p>2) Change the type of amendment for applications converting Industrial land from a Type 3 to a Type 2 amendment</p>	<p>Note: Through the development of <i>Metro 2040</i> (adopted in 2011), the regional federation determined that the conversion of Agricultural land, and the movement of the Urban Containment Boundary were significant regional issues that warranted a higher voting threshold at the regional level than other types of amendments, such as the conversion of Industrial lands.</p> <p>This recommendation would elevate the conversion of Industrial land to the same status as the conversion of Agricultural land in the strategy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A higher voting threshold for changes to Industrial land use designations would provide greater protection for the limited amount of industrial land in the region. • Strengthening the regional growth strategy to protect industrial land was a priority action in the Board adopted Regional Industrial Lands Strategy.

ENGAGEMENT AND NEXT STEPS

The primary stakeholders for this Policy Review are: member jurisdiction staff and elected officials, Metro Vancouver Regional Planning, Utilities and Legal Services staff, and TransLink staff. Informed by input from multiple sources regarding possible changes to the Implementation section of *Metro 2040*, staff are advancing this report to the Regional Planning Committee and MVRD Board, setting out recommended policy ideas for consideration.

If the Policy Review recommendations are endorsed by the Regional Planning Committee and MVRD Board, staff will use the recommended directions to draft specific new or amended policy language for Section F of *Metro 2050* in consultation with the Intergovernmental Advisory Committee. Staff in Metro Vancouver's Legal Services and Indigenous Relations Department will also provide support in the review and development of any new or amended policies for *Metro 2050*, in order to ensure compliance and consistency with the *Local Government Act*.

ALTERNATIVES

1. That the MVRD Board endorse the *Metro 2040* Implementation Section Policy Review recommendations as presented in the report dated January 21, 2021, titled "*Metro 2040* Implementation Section Policy Review Recommendations".

2. That the Regional Planning Committee receive for information the report dated January 21, 2021, titled "*Metro 2040* Implantation Policy Review Recommendations" as the basis for updating the implementation related policies in the regional growth strategy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications to the *Metro 2040* Implementation Policy Review. The *Metro 2040* Policy Reviews are all being undertaken as part of the regular work plan in the Board approved Regional Planning budget.

CONCLUSION

Effective administration of the regional growth strategy is a key to its successful, efficient, and consistent implementation. The purpose of the *Metro 2040* Implementation Policy Review is to explore and identify the challenges and opportunities to improve administration, taking into account the knowledge and experience gained from stewarding, implementing, and amending *Metro 2040* since its adoption in 2011, as well as policy research, best practices, and input from member jurisdictions.

Direction received from the Regional Planning Committee and MVRD Board will be used to inform the drafting of new and amended language of Section F of the regional growth strategy. The Regional Planning Advisory Committee, *Metro 2050* Intergovernmental Advisory Committee, Regional Planning Committee and MVRD Board will also have opportunities to consider and provide comments to inform the content of the Implementation section. The identified enhancements will be brought forward for consideration in *Metro 2050* over 2021. Staff recommend Alternative 1.

References

1. [Regional Planning Committee Report Dated April 9, 2020, Titled "Metro 2040 Implementation Policy Review Scope of Work"](#)
2. [Resource Webpage – Implementation Guidelines](#)
3. [Regional Planning Committee Report Dated April 9, 2020, Titled "Metro 2040 - 2019 Procedural Report"](#)
4. [Regional Planning Committee Report Dated January 5, 2021, Titled "Metro 2040 Implementation Section Policy Review: Ideas for Exploration"](#)

43311218

To: Regional Planning Committee

From: Erin Rennie, Senior Planner, Regional Planning and Housing Services

Date: January 5, 2021 Meeting Date: February 19, 2021

Subject: **Hey Neighbour Collective Discussion Paper to Inform *Metro 2050***

RECOMMENDATION

That the Regional Planning Committee receive for information the report dated January 5, 2021, titled “Hey Neighbour Collective Discussion Paper to Inform *Metro 2050*.”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Metro Vancouver has partnered with the Hey Neighbour Collective in a research initiative to study best practices to increase social connectedness and resilience in multi-unit rental housing throughout BC’s urban communities. The Hey Neighbour Collective has completed a discussion paper which contains recommendations to better support social connectedness in multi-unit buildings including:

- tenant protections;
- protecting existing rental housing stock;
- expanding the supply of affordable rental housing stock, particularly in transit-oriented locations; and
- considering new social connectedness metrics and performance measures.

These recommendations have been considered, and where appropriate, will be incorporated in the drafting of *Metro 2050*, the update to the regional growth strategy. Socially connected communities are more resilient in times of crisis and are an important means of supporting Metro Vancouver’s efforts to build a more resilient region. This research is supportive of Metro Vancouver’s collective vision of focusing growth into compact, complete, walkable communities by identifying ways to support residents of multi-family buildings being more connected to their neighbours and neighbourhoods.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to convey the attached Discussion Paper titled “*Developing Truly Complete Communities: Social Equity, Social Connectedness, and Multi-Unit Housing in an Age of Public Health and Climate Crises*,” prepared by the Hey Neighbour Collective, to the Regional Planning Committee and summarize its findings (Attachment 1).

BACKGROUND

The 2020 Regional Planning Committee work plan included participation in the Hey Neighbour Collective Project (Reference 1). A report describing Metro Vancouver’s support and participation in the Hey Neighbour Collective Project was received by the Regional Planning Committee at its meeting on May 1, 2020 (Reference 2). The Hey Neighbour Collective Discussion Paper (Attachment) summarizes leading policies and practices for improving social connectedness and resilience in higher density communities,

and is intended to support the *Metro 2040* Complete Communities Policy Review and the development of *Metro 2050*.

HEY NEIGHBOUR COLLECTIVE

The Hey Neighbour Collective is a three-year collaborative initiative focused on researching ways to improve social connectedness and resilience in multi-unit rental housing throughout BC's urban communities. It brings together housing providers, researchers, local and regional governments, housing associations and health authorities to experiment with and learn about ways to build community and resilience in BC's fast-growing multi-unit communities. SFU Morris J Wosk Centre for Dialogue is the coordinating body responsible for the administration of the Hey Neighbour Collective project.

The Hey Neighbour Collective evolved from the City of Vancouver's 2018-2019 Hey Neighbour! Pilot project which experimented with increasing social connectedness, neighbourliness, and resilience in two multi-unit rental buildings, and explored the potential role of rental housing operators in alleviating loneliness and social isolation.

INTENT OF THE DISCUSISON PAPER

Metro Vancouver's participation in the Hey Neighbour Collective project has been focused on informing the policy directions of *Metro 2050*. The goal of this Discussion Paper was to propose policy ideas for consideration that could foster neighbourhood-based social connectedness among residents of multi-unit housing, especially for those who rent.

The Hey Neighbour Collective research team developed the Discussion Paper using the following approach:

- completing a scan of relevant regional, municipal, provincial, and federal policies to establish the current context for supporting social connectedness in multi-unit residential communities;
- interviews with professionals working in relevant fields, including Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation staff, to seek firsthand accounts about barriers and enabling factors; and
- engaging practitioners and stakeholders including the Hey Neighbour Community of Practice, and staff of Happy City, Vancouver Coastal Health, LandlordBC, and the BC Non-Profit Housing Association. This engagement included a workshop held on November 23, 2020, to ground-truth the Discussion Paper's recommendations among practitioners and experts.

SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS AND REGIONAL PLANNING

The Discussion Paper defines social connectedness as:

...a broad term that encompasses the multiple ways individuals connect emotionally, cognitively, behaviourally, and physically. Social connectedness can operate in multiple spheres, including families, social networks, workplaces, neighbourhoods, and broader society. Neighbourhood social connectedness considers the social relationships and dynamics within neighbourhoods and is closely related to the overlapping concepts of social cohesion, social capital, and social inclusion... The inverse, social disconnection, is often experienced as loneliness and social isolation. (Attachment, page 9)

Social Connectedness Research and Regional Planning

Research into social connectedness is relevant to regional planning because the degree of social connectedness can be directly influenced by changes in housing policy, growth management, and urban design. Improving social connectedness has also shown to benefit communities through better health outcomes, lower crime rates, improved levels of resiliency to a crisis, and higher levels of civic engagement.

Focusing growth into higher density forms of development such as urban centres and transit corridors is a long-standing and foundational policy direction of *Metro Vancouver 2040: Shaping our Future (Metro 2040)*, the regional growth strategy, helping to create compact, complete, and walkable communities. With a growing population and constrained geography, as time goes on more and more of the region's housing stock will be made up of multi-unit housing. For this reason, identifying better ways to promote social connectedness within multi-unit housing forms is an important objective for the development of *Metro 2050*, and the future livability of the region.

Benefits of Social Connectedness

1. **Improved health outcomes:** High levels of social connectedness has been found to be associated with a variety of health benefits including a reduced risk of early death, better sleep, less stress, fewer mental health and addiction issues, and lower incidence and severity of cardiovascular disease.
2. **Improved resiliency in a crisis:** High levels of social connectedness supports community resiliency in the event of a crisis such as a natural disaster and can also support resiliency to chronic stressors such as those associated with climate change impacts. Higher levels of trust between neighbours also supports emergency response efforts and lower mortality rates.
3. **Improved civic engagement:** High levels of social connectedness is associated with higher rates of participation in elections and other forms of civic engagement.

Barriers to Social Connectedness

1. **Income Insecurity:** Financial constraints limit the time and financial capacity for people living on a low income to participate in community life.
2. **Security of Tenure:** Rates of social connectedness are associated with housing tenure, with renters more likely than homeowners to experience lower rates of social connectedness.
3. **Housing Form:** Urban design and built form are also associated with social connectedness, with those living in high-rise buildings less likely to experience social connectedness.
4. **Systemic Discrimination:** Racism, ableism, heterosexism, and other forms of discrimination have a negative impact on the level of social connectedness.

DISCUSSION PAPER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Discussion Paper identifies one “overarching recommendation”, six “recommendations for social connectedness”, and under each recommendation a series of “opportunities to explore”.

Overarching Recommendation: Embrace the principle of social equity

Because social inequalities like income inequality and discrimination are barriers to social connectedness, the Discussion Paper recommends embracing the principle of social equity as a grounding principle of *Metro 2050*.

Recommendations for Social Connectedness:

- 1. Enable residents to stay in their communities:** Involuntary displacement as a result of redevelopment, sometimes called “gentrification”, is a barrier to social connectedness. When residents are forced to leave their homes and neighbourhoods they may lose social connections they’ve built and are less likely to build new ones. Involuntary displacement during redevelopment can be mitigated through tenant protection and relocation policies. Another strategy is to expand the supply of affordable rental housing options, including community housing, co-ops, and missing middle housing forms so that there are options for renters to stay in their neighbourhoods. One way to do that is by protecting publicly-owned land for affordable housing and protecting existing rental stock. This recommendation is consistent with recent regional planning research findings and the recommendations of the *Metro 2040* Housing Policy Review.
- 2. Encourage social connectedness co-benefits in housing upgrade programs:** While more affordable, older rental buildings were often built without design elements that foster social connectedness (event rooms, gardens, etc.). One way to address this may be to encourage social connectedness co-benefits in eco-retrofit government funding programs.
- 3. Foster design education and dialogue for social connectedness in multi-unit housing:** Metro Vancouver, in its role as a convener, may be well suited to disseminating best practices guidance on designing buildings for improving social connectedness throughout the region.
- 4. Advocate for funding and support of social connectedness programming:** This could include new funding streams to support events and activities that promote social interaction among residents within a building (e.g. BBQs, emergency preparedness trainings, holiday parties, etc.). Here, Metro Vancouver likely has a role in advocacy and disseminating best practices.
- 5. Prioritize underserved neighbourhoods for social infrastructure:** Social infrastructure refers to facilities and services that help residents meet their social needs, maximize their potential for development, and enhance community well-being. While these facilities and services are generally provided by municipalities or non-profit organizations, Metro Vancouver could play a role by evaluating whether this infrastructure is distributed equitably.
- 6. Track and report on social connectedness:** Metro Vancouver, through its role in performance monitoring and evaluation, could support a better understanding of social connectedness by including a measure of social connectedness as a performance indicator in *Metro 2050*.

NEXT STEPS

The recommendations of the Discussion Paper have been reviewed and considered as part of the *Metro 2040* Complete Communities and Housing Policy Review processes, which have been endorsed by Regional Planning Committee and the MVRD Board. These reviews have shaped the draft *Metro 2050* policy language. In particular, this includes:

- a greater emphasis on tenant protections;
- a variety of planning strategies to protect existing rental housing stock;
- a variety of planning strategies to expand the supply of affordable rental housing stock, particularly in transit-oriented locations;
- the consideration of social connectedness performance measures; and

- the consideration of social equity in all *Metro 2050* policies.

While some of the recommendations of the Discussion Paper fall outside its role and mandate, Regional Planning can play a supportive role by supporting further research, considering new metrics and performance measures, information dissemination, advocacy, and convening regional dialogues on these challenges.

Metro Vancouver staff will continue to collaborate with the Hey Neighbour Collective on its ongoing work on these challenges. The work is also directly related to the ongoing exploration of social and physical / mental health indicators and measures through the Where Matters study being led by UBC, and the My Health, My Community survey initiative being led by Vancouver Coastal Health and Fraser Health; Metro Vancouver staff continue to engage on these projects as well.

The Social Equity in Regional Growth Management Study is also underway and will be reported out to the Regional Planning Committee in March of 2021. That report will include some potential directions for furthering the integration of social equity as an overarching principle in *Metro 2050*.

ALTERNATIVES

This is an information report. No alternatives are presented.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Metro Vancouver contributed \$5,000 from the Board-approved 2020 Regional Planning budget to support the development of the Discussion Paper. External Relations also contributed \$5,000 towards the project's engagement workshop. An additional \$5,000 to continue the project has been approved by the Board in the 2021 Regional Planning budget.

CONCLUSION

The Hey Neighbour Collective completed a Discussion Paper that includes recommendations for *Metro 2050* on how to improve social connectedness in higher density communities. The recommendations have been considered and, where appropriate, incorporated into new policy directions for the update to the regional growth strategy. The findings from social connectedness research will support the region's collective vision of focusing housing and job growth into compact, complete, and walkable communities that are welcoming and supportive places to live, work, and play.

Attachment

Developing Truly Complete Communities: Social Equity, Social Connectedness, and Multi-Unit Housing in an Age of Public Health and Climate Crises, Hey Neighbour Collective Discussion Paper, December 14, 2020 (43233018)

References

1. [2020 Regional Planning Committee Priorities and Work Plan, Regional Planning Committee, January 16, 2020](#)
2. [Manager's Report, Regional Planning Committee, April 3, 2020](#)

DEVELOPING TRULY COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

SOCIAL EQUITY, SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS, AND MULTI-UNIT HOUSING
IN AN AGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND CLIMATE CRISES

A Hey Neighbour Collective discussion paper to inform *Metro 2050*

December 14, 2020



TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We respectfully acknowledge that the research and learning that went into the development of this discussion paper took place on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territories of the xwməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səl̓ílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Peoples. In addition to the Musqueam, Squamish and Tseil-Waututh Nations, there are eight First Nations with longstanding relationships to the land we refer to as Metro Vancouver. These include Hwlitsum, Katzie, Kwikwetlem, Sto:lo (Matsqui, Kwantlen), Qayqayt, Semiahmoo, and Tsawwassen.

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ABOUT HEY NEIGHBOUR COLLECTIVE

The Hey Neighbour Collective (HNC) is a multi-stakeholder collaborative project housed at the Simon Fraser University (SFU) Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue. It brings together housing operators and housing industry associations, non-profits, researchers, local and regional governments, experts in healthy built form, and health authorities to share lessons and experiments in growing community, social connectedness, and resilience in multi-unit housing communities, with a primary focus on rental housing.

It evolved from the 2018/19 Hey Neighbour! pilot, conceived of and coordinated by the City of Vancouver's Healthy City Strategy team. The pilot experimented with increasing social connectedness, neighbourliness, and resilience in two multi-unit rental buildings, and it explored the potential role of rental housing operators in alleviating loneliness, social isolation, and declining feelings of belonging and levels of civic engagement.

This multi-stakeholder collective pursues systems-oriented dialogue that improves the regulatory and funding environment for the sociable design of multi-unit housing (Figure 1). We also pursue resident-engaged programming that seeks to improve health and well-being outcomes.

The core of HNC is a group of rental housing providers and non-profit organizations that are experimenting with different ways of building community, social connectedness, and emergency preparedness in multi-unit housing contexts.

We connect partners with researchers at SFU and Happy City to investigate the impacts of the various programs on resident well-being and their own organizational health. We also explore the role and impact of built form and social, economic, and demographic factors affecting households.

While the evidence is clear that social connections are essential to health and well-being, there is much less evidence on interventions that work to increase social connectedness, and even less in multi-unit housing contexts. Through piloting various approaches in diverse rental housing contexts, HNC partners and researchers aim to build an evidence base around such emerging practices that could be scaled and replicated.

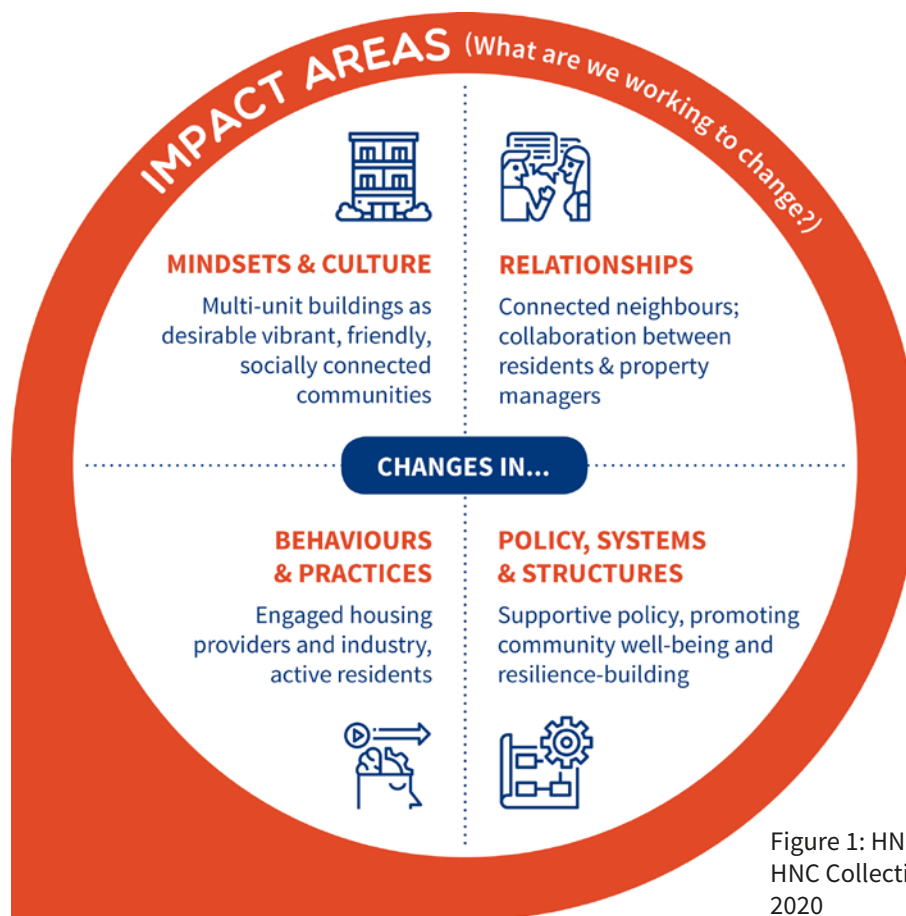


Figure 1: HNC Impact Areas, from HNC Collective Theory of Change, 2020

HNC PARTNERS

PRACTICE PARTNERS

Brightside Community Homes Foundation
Building Resilient Neighbourhoods (Connect & Prepare program in partnership with City of Victoria)
Catalyst Community Developments Society
Concert Properties
West End Seniors Network (Close to Home program)

RESEARCH PARTNERS

Happy City
SFU Gerontology
SFU Health Sciences
SFU Urban Studies

LEARNING NETWORK PARTNERS

BC Housing
BC Non-Profit Housing Association
City of New Westminster
City of Vancouver
City of Victoria
LandlordBC
Metro Vancouver
United Way of Lower Mainland
Vancouver Coastal Health

For more information about HNC partners and their work, visit: <https://www.sfu.ca/dialogue/about-us/partner-organizations/hey-neighbour-collective-.html>.

FUNDERS

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Brightside Community Homes Foundation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SEEKING SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

The deepening affordable housing crisis in Metro Vancouver is resulting in single-detached homes—and home ownership of any sort—being increasingly inaccessible to the majority of residents. We have seen the proportion of single-detached homes in the region decrease from 50% to 29% of dwellings over the last 25 years. About 42% of the population currently live in multi-unit housing.

Long-term or permanent renting is increasingly the only option for a substantial segment of this region's residents and workforce—and, in particular, for lower-income residents. Over a third of Metro Vancouver residents are renters; within Vancouver this is over 50%. Significantly more than half of renter householders in the greater Vancouver area spend more than 30% of their income on housing.

An increase in the proportion of people living in dense communities and multi-unit housing aligns with the *Metro 2040* goal to “create a compact urban area” that reduces greenhouse gas emissions and pollution, protects agricultural land, and makes transportation alternatives possible. However, the strategy of concentrating denser, more affordable housing typologies within urban centres and on arterials needs to be closely examined for its impacts on social equity and social

connectedness throughout our region and its communities. We can better understand these important dynamics by working in research and practice partnerships in housing communities feeling the impacts now.

The goal of this discussion paper is to propose ideas for *Metro 2050* that would foster neighbourhood-based social connectedness among residents of multi-unit housing, especially those who rent. The Hey Neighbour Collective has prepared this input for the review of *Metro 2040*'s goal area 4.2: Develop healthy and complete communities with access to a range of services and amenities.

THE FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLE OF SOCIAL EQUITY

Central to our recommendations for building social connectedness in multi-unit residential buildings is the belief that truly healthy and complete communities are socially equitable. The US-based think tank PolicyLink defines social equity as “just and fair inclusion into a society in which all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential” and we think this is a good start for a definition for our region, too.

Metro 2040 is underpinned by a Sustainability Framework that informs all goals and strategies, and this framework acknowledges the need to build community capacity and social cohesion as a core imperative. Since 2010, when the Sustainability

Framework was established, our understanding of the policy demands of advancing social equity, and our awareness of the negative consequences of long-term regional planning efforts that neglect social equity, have come a long way. We believe that the *Metro 2050* update should take advantage of the opportunity to update planning goals to align with the principle of social equity. Working towards greater neighbourhood-based social connectedness for our region without a grounding in social equity approaches would be fundamentally incomplete.

Meaningfully addressing social equity concerns and supporting greater social connectedness will be of utmost importance as we recover from the current pandemic, build resilience in advance of future potential public health crises, and prepare to adapt to climate change-related stressors and shocks.

The inter-related crises of growing inequality, unaffordable housing, increasing loneliness and social isolation, and decreasing civic engagement cannot be solely blamed on, or solved by, regional governments and their member municipalities. Far from it. But regional growth strategies and municipal plans can play important roles in creating conditions for positive change well beyond their formal mandate, especially when leveraged as advocacy tools and as a social licence in our ongoing efforts to collaborate and communicate with a widening sphere of willing partners.

Thus, we propose the overarching recommendation to embrace the principle of social equity across the whole of *Metro 2050*. We also propose six specific recommendations that would contribute to a more supportive policy environment for owners, operators, designers, and developers of multi-unit housing that want to foster social connectedness and resilience in their buildings and neighbourhoods. We believe that action on these recommendations would serve to strengthen social connectedness among those living in multi-unit rental housing—promoting connections within buildings as well as in surrounding neighbourhoods.

We welcome engagement around the ideas in this discussion paper as Metro Vancouver drafts and implements *Metro 2050*.

OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATION:

Embrace the principle of social equity

6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS:

1. **Enable residents to stay in their communities**
2. **Encourage social connectedness co-benefits in housing upgrade programs**
3. **Foster design education and dialogue for social connectedness in multi-unit housing**
4. **Advocate for funding and support of social connectedness programming**
5. **Prioritize underserved neighbourhoods for social infrastructure**
6. **Track and report on social connectedness**

WHY IS HEY NEIGHBOUR COLLECTIVE PROPOSING RECOMMENDATIONS TO METRO 2050?

The Hey Neighbour Collective (HNC) is a multi-stakeholder collaborative project, focused at the intersection of two key social determinants of health: housing and social connectedness.

Our practice partners are actively experimenting with different ways of building community, social connectedness, and emergency preparedness in multi-unit housing contexts, and our researchers are working with them to build an evidence base for their work.

As this work progresses, we are pursuing systems-oriented dialogue with our wider network of partners to explore change that builds social connectedness and resilience in multi-unit housing. This means that we are scanning for opportunities across the system of housing and social connections as we go. Policy framing at the regional level is one such opportunity.



Neighbour Lab / Connect & Prepare

THE CRITICAL IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

The importance of social connectedness in surviving, buffering the effect of, and responding to emergencies and disruptions has been front and centre in recent public health policy. Canada's chief public health officer's report, *From Risk to Resilience: An Equity Approach to COVID-19*, released in October 2020, points directly to "harnessing of social cohesion" as a key action area to prepare for, respond to, and recover from the pandemic in an equitable way. (1) We know that people who feel connected are more likely to develop a sense of belonging, participate in and take care of their community, live healthier lives, and trust each other. Leaders are recommending habits of social connectedness, and Canadians are responding to the call in a host of ways, from neighbourhood pods that cheer together and facilitate access to essential supplies, to Zoom dinner parties and more frequent phone calls with isolated friends and family.

COVID-19 has resulted in the restructuring of our daily lives, and serious public health concerns are emerging about the "double pandemic" of social isolation. (2–4) Public health officials have relied on notions of togetherness, kindness, and community to inspire actions to "flatten the curve." Mitigating the isolation arising from pandemic restrictions has become a major focus of public health action. (5,6)

Before COVID-19, declining social connectedness in Canada and abroad had triggered increased policy attention and a search for meaningful policy and practice interventions. (7–11) Concerned public health professionals have called for a robust policy agenda to advance social connectedness as a public health priority. (1, 12–14) Governments now see the value of taking a proactive approach to social connectedness across a broad range of policy domains.

Housing is one such critical domain, as social connectedness is impacted by where and how we live. Housing insecurity and material poverty—and the persistent discrimination and stigmatization that those of us living in these conditions also face—affect our sense of belonging and our social relationships.

Higher density living, in the form of multi-unit housing, has implications for social connectedness that we cannot ignore. For example, a 2017 Vancouver Foundation report showed that residents in high-rise buildings (one of a number of multi-unit housing forms) are less likely to know their neighbours or do small favours for them than residents of single-detached homes. (15) They also report a higher level of loneliness and have a harder time making new friends. These findings are echoed in international studies. (16)

The goal of this discussion paper is to present a case for addressing social connectedness as a matter of regional planning in *Metro 2050*, particularly important for residents of multi-unit housing, and especially those who rent. Further, it proposes that multi-unit buildings and surrounding neigh-

neighbourhoods can, in fact, become sites for addressing social inequity and building community resilience.

UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

Social connectedness—at both the individual and the community level—is an integral component of healthy and complete communities.

WHAT IS SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS?

Social connectedness is a broad term that encompasses the multiple ways individuals connect emotionally, cognitively, behaviourally, and physically. Social connectedness can operate in multiple spheres, including families, social networks, workplaces, neighbourhoods, and broader society.

Neighbourhood social connectedness considers the social relationships and dynamics within neighbourhoods and is closely related to the overlapping concepts of social cohesion, social capital, and social inclusion. These concepts tend to be used interchangeably in research and policy contexts, despite having distinct attributes. The inverse, social disconnection, is often experienced as loneliness and social isolation.

Social connectedness has received considerable and warranted attention when it comes to aging populations, as social isolation compounds other age-related vulnerabilities in significant ways. Much of the attention around social isolation has been focused on seniors, but more and more we see it can be a challenge for people across all age groups. For example, recent trends point to a rise in self-reported loneliness in millennial and generation Z adults. (17) A survey conducted by the Vancouver Foundation found that those aged 18 to 34 years reported higher rates of isolation and lower rates of community belonging. (18) Nationally, survey findings show that only 29% of those aged 25 to 34 are likely to know their neighbours and to offer and receive help and favours from them; this is lower than any other age group. (19)

SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS IS A KEY DETERMINANT OF HEALTH

Social connectedness plays an important role in our physical and mental health. Weak social connections have been found to increase the incidence and severity of cardiovascular disease and are strongly linked to increased likelihood of mortality from cancer. (21) A lack of social connection has

COVID-19

During the height of COVID-19 restrictions in March and April of 2020, when federal and provincial/territorial borders were first closed to non-essential travel, and businesses, libraries, and schools were temporarily closed, two-thirds (68%) of Canadians aged 18 to 34 reported feelings of isolation and loneliness, compared to 40% of people older than 55. (20)

been correlated with increased stress levels and poor quality and quantity of sleep, which in turn suppress protective hormones and immunity. (22, 23) People with high levels of social connection are associated with a 50% reduced risk of early death. (21)

Low social connectedness has been linked to higher rates of crime, alcohol abuse, and suicide. (24) Mental illness, including depression and anxiety, is one of the leading causes of disability in Canada and is strongly correlated with social isolation and a lack of social support. (25) Strong social supports appear to mitigate cognitive declines in people with Alzheimer's and dementia and to promote healthy and resilient behaviours, such as resource sharing and offering neighbourly support during stressful times. (26, 27)

SOCIALLY CONNECTED COMMUNITIES WHERE PEOPLE KNOW AND TRUST THEIR NEIGHBOURS MAY BE MORE RESILIENT IN A CRISIS

Social connectedness is an important factor in the adaptation to climate change and other emergencies. (28) An earthquake and tsunami in Japan in 2011 forced 470,000 people to evacuate their homes and resulted in 18,500 deaths. A study of

COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has sparked a nationwide dialogue on the importance of social connectedness for our health and well-being. In particular, it has highlighted significant inequalities when it comes to our ability to cope with large-scale economic disruptions and vulnerability to health threats. Social isolation combined with demographic factors such as race, income, and disability intersect, resulting in low-income, vulnerably housed, racialized, disabled, and Indigenous people experiencing the worst of the pandemic. (33–35)

over 130 cities, towns, and villages in the hardest hit regions of Japan found that those with higher levels of trust and cohesion had lower mortality rates, after controlling for other factors. (29) Similar findings were reached in a study of the aftermath of the Canterbury, New Zealand, earthquakes. (30)

Daniel Aldrich's popular study of post-Katrina New Orleans demonstrated a similar trend, (31) as did Eric Klinenberg's study of the 1995 Chicago heat wave. (32)

Emerging evidence for the importance of neighbourhood social connectedness and neighbourhood equity in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic suggests a reinforcement of these earlier findings while also raising new relationships and questions.

The Metro Vancouver region will not be spared from chronic stressors like climate change impacts, and, of course, earth-

quakes are an ever-present risk. Building neighbourhood social connectedness could be seen not just as a strategy to promote individual and community health, but as a component of climate resilience and emergency preparedness strategies.

SOCIALLY CONNECTED COMMUNITIES FOSTER A SENSE OF BELONGING AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Social connectedness is linked to community belonging and democratic participation. National data show that residents aged 18 and over who have a strong sense of belonging to their local neighbourhood are more likely to feel as though their voice matters to elected officials (39% compared to 14% who have a very weak sense of belonging) (36), and this sense of belonging is an important factor in attitudinal and behavioral factors in voting. (37)

If we believe that civic engagement is critical to the health of our democracy, ensuring that residents feel they belong will foster their participation. Though a person's subjective feelings of belonging are complex, neighbourhood social connectedness is indivisible from a sense of community belonging.

SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS IS HINDERED BY SOCIAL INEQUITY

Communities can't be truly healthy, complete, and socially connected in the face of deep-seated socio-economic inequities.

INCOME INEQUALITY CAN MAKE SOCIAL CONNECTION MORE DIFFICULT

Too many Metro Vancouver renter households are financially strained, leaving them with little time and financial capacity to build supportive relationships with neighbours. The typical measure of affordability is a household that spends less than 30% of its before-tax income on rent (or mortgage) plus utilities. (38) According to the BC Non-Profit Housing Association's *Rental Housing Index*, 43% of renter households in the region spend more than 30% of their income on housing, and for 22%, the cost of housing exceeds 50% of their income. (39) Low- and very low-income households represent 42% of Metro Vancouver renters. (40)

Material poverty can impact social connectedness. Findings from consultations on the Province of BC's 2019 poverty reduction strategy, *TogetherBC*, provide evidence of this. Those consulted spoke about "the harmful effects of social isolation, and how it had an impact on their mental health,"

and how they “feel cut off from their communities.” The strategy refers to belonging and social inclusion as key variables that influence the lived experience of poverty, which must be considered in the government’s response. (41)

Household food insecurity is a symptom of income insecurity. People who rent their homes in BC are 56% more likely to experience severe household food insecurity than those who own. (42) Aside from the obvious negative health impacts of food insecurity, the inability to gather over a meal robs people of one of the most powerful and joyful ways of building community and social connections and celebrating culture.

INSECURE TENURE WEAKENS SOCIAL CONNECTIONS AND BELONGING

Security of housing tenure is linked to social connectedness. For example, evidence from a survey of residents in Metro Vancouver suggests that a longer time living in a neighbourhood is related to a stronger sense of community belonging, for both renters and homeowners. (43) Renters, in particular, are less likely to know any neighbours well enough to call on them for help. (18) And renters in BC face greater insecurities than is the case elsewhere in Canada: Statistics Canada shows that BC has the highest rate of forced evictions in the country—almost 70% higher than the national rate. (44)

It’s not surprising that security of tenure is listed as a principle for boosting social well-being in multi-unit residential buildings in Happy City’s *Happy Homes* toolkit. (45) In addition to the evidence provided in this toolkit, we can intuit the relationship between security of housing tenure and social connectedness and belonging. Why bother getting to know your neighbours if you don’t feel like you’ll be able to stay put for long? It is a challenge for people to put down roots, feel a sense of community belonging, and get involved in civic affairs if they are scrambling to afford rent and the basic necessities of life, and if they are also worrying about having to relocate somewhere less expensive, which may also be further away from schools, jobs, friends, and cultural connections.

HOUSING FORM AFFECTS LEVELS OF SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

Though many factors influence a person’s degree of social connectedness, individuals living in high-rise buildings are more likely to experience diminished neighbourliness, lower levels of trust in their neighbours, increased isolation, and to report difficulty making new friends. (18)

The proportion of single-detached homes in Metro Vancouver’s housing stock has decreased from 50% to 29% in

the last 25 years, making other forms of housing, particularly multi-unit housing, an increasingly common housing experience. (49) High-, mid-, and low-rise multi-unit housing made up 42% of dwellings in Metro Vancouver region in 2016. (49) Given Metro Vancouver’s urban containment boundary and the *Metro 2040* emphasis on transit-oriented compact communities, the region’s growing population will increasingly live in multi-unit housing of some form. This trend should compel deeper research into the impact of various multi-unit housing forms on social connectedness.

SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS CAN BE A CHALLENGE FOR MARGINALIZED GROUPS

A survey of Canadian adults conducted in 2019 found that visible minorities[sic],¹ Indigenous people, those with mobility challenges, and LGBTQ2 people are all more likely to experience social isolation and loneliness than the general population. (46) Statistics Canada reports indicate that Canadians who experience discrimination are more likely to report a weaker sense of belonging to the local community, and less likely to have trust in civic institutions. (47, 48) Many of these marginalized groups are overrepresented in Canada’s renter population. (39)

Though all levels of government—and society more generally—bear responsibility for reducing inequity and systemic discrimination, the opportunity and responsibility exists now at the level of regional policy to incorporate a robust consideration of the unintended impacts of growth strategies on marginalized groups.

¹ Canada has been advised by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination since 2007 to rethink its use of the term “visible minorities” as a racist term. Nevertheless, the term remains in use in Canada. (64)



Happy City

HOW THE RECOMMENDATIONS WERE DEVELOPED

In February 2020, Metro Vancouver invited Hey Neighbour Collective to submit a discussion paper focused on strategy 4.2 of *Metro 2040* (“Develop healthy and complete communities with access to a range of services and amenities”; see Box 1), to be considered as one of a number of inputs into the review process for *Metro 2050*.

METHOD

Our recommendations flow from a number of different streams of analysis and input.

1. POLICY SCAN

We conducted a scan of policy initiatives at all levels of government. Within these plans and policy documents we looked at:

- whether social connectedness was mentioned
- specific terms used
- presence or absence of performance indicators and reporting requirements
- target populations and policy type
- whether the policy was accompanied by the allocation of resources
- equity-related considerations

The policy scan did not include initiatives related to parallel matters, such as affordable housing strategies, poverty reduction, infrastructure investments, and building codes and bylaws, unless these explicitly included social connectedness as a policy objective. For more information about the scan, see Appendix A through C.

2. INTERVIEWS WITH HNC-AFFILIATED PARTNERS

We conducted semi-structured interviews with numerous HNC-affiliated partners. These interviews sought to obtain:

- firsthand accounts from practitioners about motivations, practices, and outcomes for their work (in the domain of enhancing social connectedness in multi-unit housing)
- ideas for policy supports that might scale up the work of building social connectedness

For a list of interviewees and inputs, see Appendix D.

3. OTHER PARTNER INPUTS

The thinking behind this discussion paper was further informed by:

- emerging learnings and reflections from HNC Community of Practice sessions and yet-to-be-published stories about partners' specific approaches
- summer 2020 knowledge exchange events (Systems Change Circle conversation and HNC/BC Non-Profit Housing Association webinar)
- review of earlier drafts of this paper by select HNC partners, including Happy City, Vancouver Coastal Health, LandlordBC, and BC Non-Profit Housing Association

HNC RESPONSIBILITY

Though many people and organizations contributed to the ideas in this discussion paper, the authors and reviewers take responsibility for the recommendations in this draft. Our partners' involvement in the HNC does not indicate full endorsement.

WORKSHOPPING THE RECOMMENDATIONS

On November 23, 2020, HNC in partnership with SFU Urban Studies hosted an online workshop attended by 56 people. All HNC partners were represented, with the exception of the City of New Westminster. We also had representatives from Metro Vancouver Housing, CMHC, BC Centre for Disease Control, Fraser Health, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and the cities of Burnaby, North Vancouver, Maple Ridge, and Pitt Meadows. Many of the participants were of the Regional Planning Advisory Committee's Social Issues and Housing Subcommittees.

The purpose was to ground-truth the recommendations in the draft version of this paper and to start a discussion about them. In this, the final version, select notes are included from the workshop in cases where they add nuance or important context. Full workshop notes are available separately.

BOX 1: METRO 2040 REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY EXCERPT

Goal 4: Develop Complete Communities

Metro Vancouver is a region of communities with a diverse range of housing choices suitable for residents at any stage of their lives. The distribution of employment and access to services and amenities builds complete communities throughout the region. Complete communities are designed to support walking, cycling and transit, and to foster healthy lifestyles.

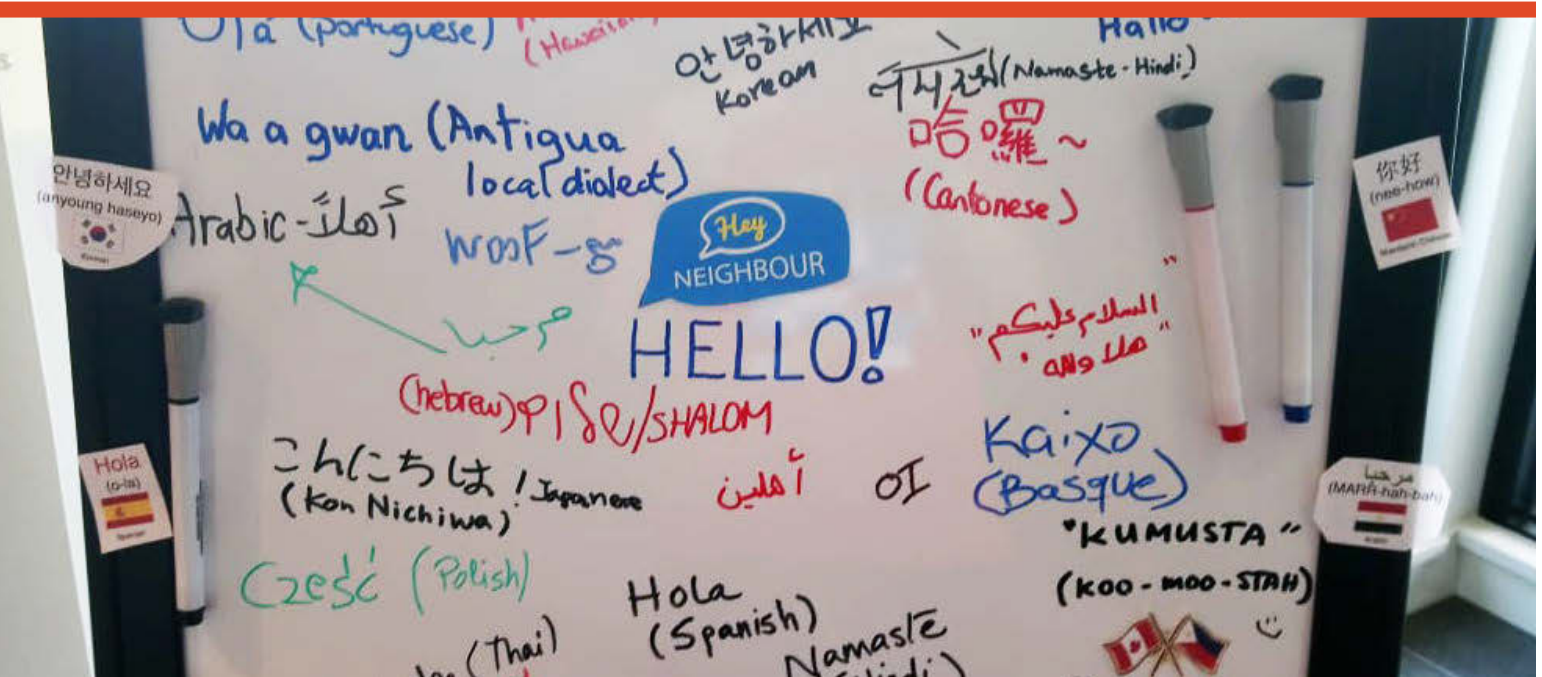
Strategy 4.2: Develop healthy and complete communities with access to a range of services and amenities.

Metro Vancouver's role is to:

4.2.1 Support municipalities in the development of healthy and complete communities through regional strategies on affordable housing, culture, food, and parks and recreation.

4.2.2 Provide technical advice and assistance on air quality aspects of land use and infrastructure decisions.

4.2.3 Collaborate with health authorities to advance measures to promote healthy living through land use policies.



Qualex Landmark / Luna Aixin (City of Vancouver)

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR METRO 2050

DEVELOPING COMPLETE, EQUITABLE, AND SOCIALLY CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

In an era of increasing inequalities, public health crises, and climate emergencies, our recommendations expand upon *Metro 2040*'s broad goal of "developing complete communities" and push towards a more explicit embrace of developing complete, equitable, and socially connected communities.

Inside a social equity approach to community development, social connections can be fostered with interventions focused on housing and neighbourhood. These are the sites of home and community, where we can do much to reduce social inequities.

HNC offers one overarching recommendation, applied to *Metro 2050* as a whole, and six recommendations specific to updating *Metro 2040*'s goal areas 4.1 and 4.2.

OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATION: EMBRACE THE PRINCIPLE OF SOCIAL EQUITY

Similar to how *Metro 2040* is underpinned by a Sustainability Framework that informs all goals and strategies and is at the "core of operating and planning philosophy," *Metro 2050*—in its entirety—should be grounded in the explicit principle of social equity.

Metro 2040 does not reference the terms *equity* or *social equity*. However, its vision statement does reference "cultural vitality, economic prosperity, social justice and compassion" and the aim to foster "a region of diverse communities where people in all their infinite variety live, work and play." (50) A number of municipalities' regional context statements falling under Goal 4 of *Metro 2040* reference notions of inclusion, social interaction, and measurable goals relating to decolonization (or work with local host First Nations), anti-racism, social equity, and local poverty reduction efforts. Some municipalities are already preparing equity, diversity and inclusion frameworks.

Having a shared definition of social equity across the region will help municipalities identify opportunities for action and move the region in a unified direction. The US-based think tank PolicyLink defines social equity as "just and fair inclusion into a society in which all can participate, prosper, and

reach their full potential,” (51) and we think this is a good start for a definition for our region, too.

Explicitly grounding *Metro 2050* in the principle of social equity would constitute a commitment to assess all land use policies, infrastructure decisions, and planning approaches through a social equity lens. This would strengthen and support municipalities to more fully align their own plans in a complementary direction.

We believe that the *Metro 2050* update should take advantage of this opportunity to update planning goals to align with the principle of social equity. Working towards greater neighbourhood-based social connectedness for our region without a grounding in social equity approaches would be fundamentally incomplete.

Further, a social equity lens would focus more attention on the priorities of renters, low-income residents, and Indigenous, racialized, and otherwise marginalized groups, including disabled and LGBTQ2I+ communities, and it would foster meaningful engagement with these groups, who are often dramatically under-represented in planning processes despite being key knowledge holders. Committing to collecting and disseminating disaggregated data to inform and support all areas of regional planning will be key to effectively moving towards racial and social equity in the region. This approach may also unveil new opportunities and issues related to understanding and enhancing social connectedness in our communities.

The pandemic has highlighted longstanding inequities that exist in our communities. In order to recover from the current pandemic, build resilience in advance of future potential public health crises, and prepare to adapt to climate change-related stressors and shocks, it is essential to address these inequities through multi-scale action involving all levels of government. By positioning social equity as a cornerstone of sustainable growth in the region, and considering the more explicit embrace of *complete, equitable, and socially connected communities*, Metro Vancouver can demonstrate leadership in addressing exclusion and marginalization while prioritizing the well-being of all its residents.

Working within a social equity approach for *Metro 2050*, HNC has specific recommendations that would serve to strengthen social connectedness in multi-unit rental housing. Our recommendations focus on social connections that occur because of where people live, using the opportunities found in multi-unit residential buildings and in neighbourhoods to foster equitable, connected communities.

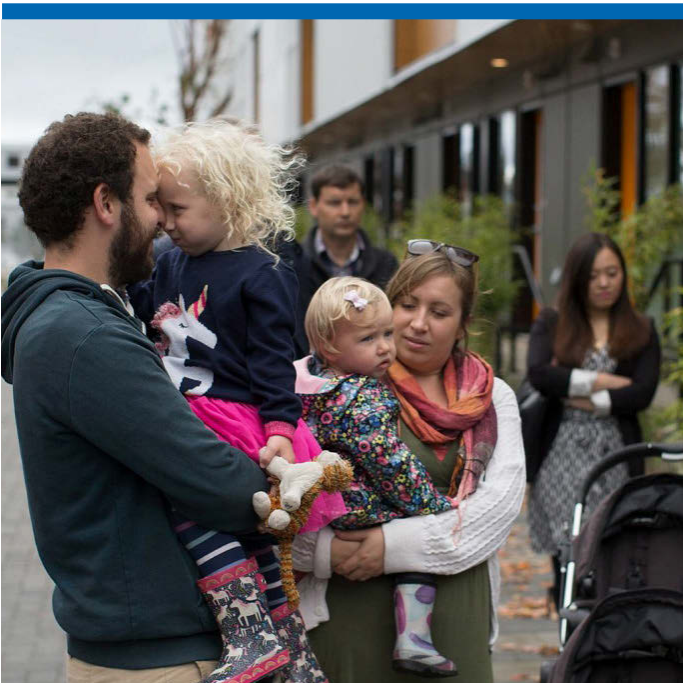
LOOK TO CLIMATE EQUITY FRAMEWORK

Metro Vancouver acknowledges that climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts must be undertaken with equity in mind. For example, *Climate 2050* states that “policies and programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the changing climate must not exacerbate existing economic, social, or geographic disparities. . . . Fairness, equity, and affordability will be central considerations in the development of goals, strategies and actions for the *Climate 2050* strategy.” (52)

Climate 2050 is a voluntary strategic framework, however, and Metro Vancouver municipalities are not required by the *Local Government Act* to adopt regional context statements that reflect its recommendations or equity considerations as they are with a member-approved regional growth strategy. Social equity needs to be seen as an integral aspect of overall sustainability—one that member municipalities are required to address in policies and plans.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

Our six recommendations for supporting social connectedness for residents of multi-unit housing span different spheres, from recommendations that pertain to factors within multi-unit housing (recommendations 1–4), to those surrounding neighbourhoods (recommendation 5), and also the question of evaluation of efforts via shared terminology and targets (recommendation 6).



Catalyst / Adrian Lam (Times Colonist)

1 ENABLE RESIDENTS TO STAY IN THEIR COMMUNITIES

Unlike homeowners, renters are very often forced—due to evictions, renovictions, demovictions, and a lack of other suitable rental housing—to leave communities where they may have put down roots, formed social connections, fostered a sense of belonging, and been engaged in local civic life. This makes renters not only more vulnerable than owners to involuntary displacement but to a loss of social connection as well, which may contribute to health inequities between owners and renters.

Addressing the inequities between renters and owners, and supporting a range of housing alternatives to meet the needs of low- and moderate-income Canadians, are key elements of Canada’s *National Housing Strategy*. Renter/homeowner inequities require us not only to ensure protections and supports for renters, but also to strengthen support for local non-profit and for-profit purpose-built rental housing operators, to make it easier for them to retain, maintain, redevelop, and build safe and sustainable rental housing accessible across a wide range of incomes and household needs.

To illustrate this recommendation, we introduce the idea of security of tenure *within a community* (rather than within a specific dwelling unit). This may be analogous to “aging in place” discussions, where diverse housing options exist within a neighbourhood that suit people as they move through life stages.

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INTERVIEWEE

I think when you feel secure in your housing it frees you up to make relationships with other people. If you’re not offering that security of tenure, then it’s really hard to build community without that.

In the rental housing context, this means we need to reframe our thinking from protecting a particular building that a renter lives in to instead working—urgently and aggressively—towards a robust and flexible rental housing ecosystem. While we continue to focus on renter protections and supports and close the loopholes that continue to allow for unlawful evictions, renovictions, and demovictions, this reframed approach will create a region where people of all incomes and different family configurations can stay and thrive in their neighbourhoods of choice, maintaining and strengthening important social connections and social capital.

A number of municipalities within Metro Vancouver in the last 10 years have introduced policies to increase security of rental tenure. City of Vancouver’s 2015 *Tenant Protection and Relocation Policy* cites the loss of one’s home and community networks as a non-quantifiable cost of relocation, with outsized impacts for vulnerable tenants, (53) and which is made especially challenging in a city with very low vacancy rates. In 2020, the City of Burnaby enacted its *Tenant Assistance Policy*, (54) under which tenants are entitled to comprehensive supports and compensation if displaced from their homes when an owner renovates or rebuilds under a rezoning application. This includes rent top-up payments to bridge the gap between the previous unit and the new unit, help with moving expenses, and the right to return to the new development in an equivalent unit at the same rent (plus any *Residential Tenancy Act*-allowed rent increases).

In interviews, HNC practice partners understood security of tenure to be one of the primary drivers of social connectedness in the communities in which they work. They mentioned to us that building community is very difficult when residents don’t feel securely connected to home or motivated to invest in relationships where they live.

Practitioners also reflected that security of tenure isn't just about policies that prevent unlawful renovations and demolitions, support renters through relocation, and control the rise of rents: it's also fundamentally about ongoing systemic efforts to maintain and expand diverse affordable rental stock.

OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLORE

a) Retain and improve affordable rental housing stock and expand the community housing sector

Renovating and maintaining older rental units is often more cost effective than building new ones. Smaller private landlords with purpose-built rental buildings are struggling to maintain them in the face of rising taxes, expenses, and rent controls.

Currently, we are losing approximately three older and more-affordable rental units for every new purpose-built rental. The community housing sector has called on the provincial and federal governments to address this imbalance. (55)

Senior governments could rise to this challenge, working collaboratively to create a rapid-response acquisition fund that allows the non-profit community housing sector—which generally prioritizes affordability and security of tenure over profit—to buy the buildings and expand the amount of non-market rental housing in the system.

b) Protect publicly owned land for affordable housing

Continued commitment is needed to protect and leverage publicly owned land for affordable housing and other key public amenities. As has been documented by Metro Vancouver through its *Transit-Oriented Affordable Housing* study, building new affordable rental housing is virtually impossible in this region without free or heavily subsidized land.

Combining the use of publicly owned land with programs that fast-track development applications for affordable rental housing (such as City of Vancouver's Social Housing or Rental Tenure Program (SHORT) pilot) is promising and should be scaled up throughout the region.

c) Increase and accelerate affordable housing funding commitments

Non-profit housing interviewees emphasized the importance of provincial and federal funding that helps to subsidize the

full cost of the housing they provide, so that households with low and middle incomes can manage rents. New affordable rental housing must incorporate units geared towards the full range of households that need it. In particular, there is a tendency to focus on studio and one-bedroom units, with two, three and more bedrooms being scarce. A wide variety of rental housing typologies will ensure neighbourhoods promote social diversity and inclusion.

COVID-19

COVID-19 is showing how quickly all levels of governments can act when they need to, and how much financial support they can provide if they have public opinion behind them. We need to treat our affordable housing and homelessness crises with the urgency they deserve and elevate housing as a fundamental pillar of a healthy, equitable, safe society.

d) Modernize exclusionary zoning to allow for more “missing middle” forms and purpose-built rental

Exclusionary zoning is a challenge for the purpose-built rental sector, for both non-profits and for-profits. Though some strides have been made allowing small amounts of low-density infill and secondary (less secure) market rental in the forms of suites and laneway houses, many land-use zones in the region do not allow the development of purpose-built rental. Municipal development planning priorities have relegated zones for purpose-built rental to the margins along busier, noisier arterials where residents are more likely to experience poor air quality. Acknowledging that vulnerable populations and minorities in Canada are commonly located within the low-income bracket and are renters, this zoning policy exacerbates existing inequities.

SECURITY OF TENURE THROUGH REDEVELOPMENT

Redevelopments risk inconveniencing or displacing existing residents from their communities if other adequate housing options can't be found. One of HNC's partners acknowledged these potential unintended consequences. To address these concerns, the organization developed a resident relocation policy that exceeds the local municipal policy, with the objective of mitigating the impact of relocation on the lives of residents, supporting health outcomes before, during, and after a move, and ensuring residents are provided with adequate support to find safe and secure homes in the interim.

The policy ensures that tenants can remain a part of the housing-provider community if they so choose (by moving to suites in other buildings, for example). Collaboration with other housing providers helps to transition tenants to units that meet their needs and incomes.

e) Support the creation of co-ops and affordable ownership innovations in low-density neighbourhoods

"Missing middle" or gentle-density typologies, such as rowhouses, townhouses, and other low-rise and mid-rise buildings with a diverse number of bedrooms, are much-needed alternatives to the polarities of medium- or high-rise buildings and single-detached housing. These alternatives can support neighbourhood equity through opportunities for sociability, well-being, and affordability across all households. With more inclusionary zoning, they can also offer many different types of stable tenure housing: purpose-built rental, co-op, co-housing, affordable ownership models, and market ownership.

Including a full spectrum of more affordable types and tenures of housing means that some renter households can move into other types of housing in their chosen communities instead of leaving for commuter suburbs or smaller communities. Making it possible to remain in neighbourhoods, during all life stages and circumstances, via full-spectrum housing options may convey benefits in addition to an increased sense of belonging. Such benefits may include keeping people close to jobs, schools and other local hubs, better employee retention, freeing up rental housing, and lowered greenhouse gas emissions from less commuting.

WORKSHOP INSIGHTS FOR RECOMMENDATION 1

- This recommendation was generally seen as having the biggest potential for positive impact on the well-being and social connectedness of multi-unit housing residents, lower-income renters in particular. But it was also seen as the most challenging to implement.
- A housing operator participant referenced an unintended consequence of legal housing agreements with cities. In some cases, these agreements (created because new housing is built on city land to lower costs and increase affordability) mandate that when a resident's income gets too high (beyond the income limits that made them eligible for a unit in the first place), they will be evicted. This does not contribute to a sense of safety, security and belonging, especially when there can be a huge price gap when that person has to find new housing. The housing operator stated that it can be hard to engage people who feel like they might not be able to stay for long if they are "successful" in life.
- A municipal housing planner noted that some smaller municipalities may find it difficult to create and/or strengthen tenant protection and relocation policies when so much of the onus for residential rental law (like the *Residential Tenancy Act* and Residential Tenancy Branch) sits at the provincial level. Another strategy might be to advocate to the Province for assistance in streamlining tenant protection and relocation supports, leaving municipalities to focus on other efforts.
- The notion of "time poverty" was brought up by a regional planner as a missing issue in these recommendations: "Can we find ways as a region to spend less time commuting and more time in our communities?" A researcher commented that lack of time is often mentioned as a barrier to getting to know neighbours in surveys. It was agreed in their breakout group that this issue was connected to recommendation 1, the problem of people living far from where they work due to housing unaffordability, and the social equity issues that this raises, especially for people whose work cannot be done remotely (which constitutes a lot of lower-paid work).



Michelle Hoar

2 ENCOURAGE SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS CO-BENEFITS IN HOUSING UPGRADE PROGRAMS

Older rental stock is often the most affordable rental option. Half of the rental buildings in Metro Vancouver were built before 2000, (40) and many were built without considering design elements that might foster social connectedness. Some of this older stock is approaching or at the end of its functional life and will be redeveloped to deliver a larger number of healthy and resilient (that is, energy efficient and seismically sound) units of rental housing. But some of this older stock can be upgraded for longer life.

We are not aware of any significant programs that fund upgrades to buildings or outdoor areas for the specific purpose of increasing potential for healthy recreation, safe social interaction, or community building between neighbours. Given the importance of social connectedness to personal and community well-being, there is an equity argument to be made for broadening our thinking around what retrofits to affordable rental housing could accomplish.

Most policy tools and funding programs for upgrading older rental stock focus on retrofits to conserve energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. For instance, the Social Housing Retrofit Support Program for Multi-Unit Residential Buildings is delivered in a partnership between BC Hydro and FortisBC.

(56) The program is intended to retrofit common areas. BC Housing and Reframed Initiative recently announced the launch of Reframed Lab, which will retrofit up to five multi-unit residential buildings to make homes safer, more energy efficient, and less polluting. (57) There are also periodic funding opportunities from the federal government, administered by CMHC.

While existing environmental sustainability retrofit programs are necessary, they tend not to tackle social sustainability. One of the interviewed HNC partners identified social sustainability as a necessary complement to their environmental sustainability strategy. In addition to committing to intentional programming led by a full-time social sustainability coordinator with involvement from resident “community connectors” in each building, they are interested in assessing opportunities for physical retrofits that could support social connectedness.

Some interviewees reported using grants slated for environmental sustainability to address both environmental and sociability concerns. This is a co-benefit approach, where one intervention can meet two or more goals at once. However, they flagged that sneaking social connectedness into retrofit programs focused on other outcomes may result in compromises being made in one area or the other.

COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has very clearly highlighted the spatial inequities in different types of housing when it comes to having safe indoor space for self-isolating and outdoor space for safely gathering, recreating, and connecting with nature. Residents of multi-unit housing, particularly those without balconies or access to shared indoor and outdoor amenity spaces, are particularly reliant on parks and other public spaces, unlike people with access to private yards.

OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLORE

a) Advocate for the explicit inclusion of social sustainability and social connectedness as important aspects of overall sustainability in existing climate-oriented retrofit programs.

Documenting creative ways of marrying climate change mitigation and adaptation with objectives around the creation or improvement of common spaces and shared amenities that improve individual and public health outcomes could help housing operators and funders see opportunities for co-benefits.

There may be opportunities for Metro Vancouver and other actors, such as BC Ministry of Health and local health authorities, to advocate for a co-benefits approach—sometimes called an integrated planning approach—with the leads of existing retrofit programs.

b) Advocate for new streams of funding for retrofits that support social sustainability and social connectedness in buildings and on their grounds.

New targeted funding would provide owners and operators of multi-unit rental housing with opportunities to optimize the social connectedness potential of their buildings and grounds. It would be ideal if such funding went beyond providing the initial capital required for retrofits to offer some amount of ongoing maintenance support. For example, underused lawns can be retrofitted to community gardens or spaces for casual social interactions, but such spaces must be maintained. Funding support for maintaining spaces would make it easier to find housing providers willing to undertake improvements; the financial and property management capacity of providers is often inadequate to fully cover ongoing costs, and funding is needed so that residents do not shoulder those costs through increased rents.

New programs could build upon highly successful initiatives like Vancouver Foundation’s Neighbourhood Small Grants. The program makes low-barrier \$500 grants available to residents of BC communities to undertake neighbourhood projects together; funded projects almost always have social connectedness benefits. New and larger grant programs could be targeted to rental housing operators, emphasizing the benefit of co-designing, co-creating, and co-managing improvements with residents.

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INTERVIEWEE

The municipal grants we have received go straight to affordability and security of tenure. It’s magnificent, really, the contribution that makes to people’s lives. It’s way bigger than the dollar value.

WORKSHOP INSIGHTS FOR RECOMMENDATION 2

- A former municipal social planner suggested that certain ideas like energy efficiency and seismic safety have more political traction and funding support than social connectedness. There are retrofit programs focused in these areas happening now that could benefit from better cross-department collaboration (e.g., housing, social planning, green building, climate, etc.).
- An emergency planner recognized that this recommendation is tied into a trend in climate-focused mitigation and adaptation work that centres the importance of social equity.
- One researcher connected the idea of social retrofits to recommendation 3, and the importance of clear evidence-based standards to guide decisions. For example, Passive House and other energy-efficient building standards are clear, but we don’t yet have clarity and agreement on what elements should be included to boost social connectedness.



Happy City

3 FOSTER DESIGN EDUCATION AND DIALOGUE FOR SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS IN MULTI-UNIT HOUSING

The field of sociable design for multi-unit housing is growing among specialized actors, but wider awareness and traction in policy and funding arenas has yet to follow suit. Metro Vancouver could strengthen opportunities to address social connectedness through multi-unit housing design by convening member municipalities and housing sector actors to engage in education and dialogue.

Best practices for designing multi-unit housing should balance environmental sustainability, affordability, and social sustainability outcomes. Achieving these outcomes at scale will not be easy; rather, it will require creativity, multi-stakeholder coordination, partnerships, and funding support. Relationships with BC Housing, BC Ministry of Health, health authorities, and others could be leveraged in these efforts.

There aren't many examples of municipal policies that touch on sociable housing design principles, but the City of Vancouver's guidelines for high-density housing for families takes an intersectional approach towards the needs of that particular type of household, and the City of North Vancouver's *Active Design Guidelines* serve as a guide for market and rental housing.

Despite the relative absence of best practices and design guidelines, some of our interviewees are already innovating in this space. For example, one housing provider interviewed was in the process of undertaking a redevelopment process that will combine the Passive House design standard (a voluntary standard for ultra-low energy buildings) with elements of design that encourage social interactions and connection. Another interviewee is building a set of tenant-informed design guidelines. By learning from the post-occupancy experiences of residents in new buildings, the practitioner is adapting designs for future affordable rental buildings. HNC partner Happy City is working on performance-oriented guidelines for the design of shared spaces in multi-unit housing that maximize social connectedness.

Some higher-end market rental and condominium developers may be savvy about design, common space, and shared amenity spaces that promote social connectedness, and they may be able to price it into rents and purchase costs. But rental housing geared towards low- and middle-income households may need more supports to ensure providers can incorporate best practices that foster social connectedness in affordable housing options. In order to work towards an equitable and flexible housing system that support social connectedness, best practices in design for multi-unit housing must be achievable across the spectrum of household incomes.

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WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT

This is the most achievable, lowest-cost, lowest-hanging-fruit recommendation. Metro Vancouver can make sure practitioners in the field have the information and opportunity to design for this purpose. It can have a big impact with new multi-unit housing because we will be building more—and making sure best practices are out there is important.

OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLORE

a) Support the creation of best practice case studies that can guide future policy at all levels of government.

Member municipalities' design policies and guidelines for multi-unit housing, healthy built environments, and active design can be studied to identify how such policies encourage social connectedness, whether implicitly or explicitly. Such study could include a further assessment of how such policies are implemented, in practice, and explore how differences in municipal approaches mitigate or exacerbate inequities between communities.

In addition to the work of municipalities, the work of public and private entities can also be studied. Entities like BC Housing, CMHC, universities, Happy City, and others are researching, designing, building, and operating sociable multi-unit housing.

Metro Vancouver can engage with all stakeholders to identify and create best practice case studies to guide future policy in the region and beyond.

b) Convene member municipalities to engage in dialogues.

Convening member municipalities—and other stakeholders such as multi-unit housing designers, developers, owners and operators as well as health authorities—in discussion about their experiences in this area and asking for their participation in identifying and supporting best practices is integral to achieving buy-in for new policies.

There are also groups, such as Urbanarium, that are interested in these issues and could play a complementary role in convening more public-facing conversation about best practices in multi-unit housing design. Groups like ours or other community-focused organizations could play a role in bringing the lived-experience perspectives of multi-unit housing residents into these conversations.

WORKSHOP INSIGHTS FOR RECOMMENDATION 3

- This recommendation was viewed as the second most impactful, and it was felt to be the most achievable by Metro Vancouver within a regional growth strategy.
- Housing operators, housing industry association representatives, and city planners saw this as a clear jurisdictional fit for Metro Vancouver in its role as convener, researcher, and educator. For both developers and planners, broadly understood best practices would be helpful. BC Non-Profit Housing Association, in particular, was eager to participate in this conversation and engage its members.
- A Fraser Health representative noted that in the past there was a team of community health specialists partnered with municipalities to work on healthy built environment projects. They suggested that perhaps these specialists might be able to contribute to education and help bring people together.



West End Seniors' Network

4 ADVOCATE FOR FUNDING AND SUPPORT OF SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS PROGRAMMING

While we work collectively towards an optimal policy and funding environment to support social connectedness, we should recognize and support sustained and intentional programming in multi-unit housing that drives towards the same outcomes.

Even in a building that is optimally designed for organic social interactions between neighbours, thoughtful and intentional programming can catalyze, deepen, and help to maintain relationships between neighbours, broadening opportunities for resident-engaged or even resident-led initiatives that build community and resilience. This kind of creative intentional programming is even more important in multi-unit housing contexts where there is a lack of shared space in which to gather, socialize, and organize (most older buildings will fit in this category). Intentional programming that identifies the priorities and needs of vulnerable populations inhabiting a building can lead to social activations that address existing equity issues.

We hear from both the rental housing sector and the non-profit sector that the appetite exists to pilot social connectedness programming. We imagine that rental housing operators with the commitment and capacity to lead this type of programming within their buildings will still need and want to partner with community non-profits to more fully capital-

ize on opportunities to foster social connectedness, health and well-being, and community connections. Partnerships between housing operators and specialized non-profits will need reliable funding support. Over time, promising programs could expand to other multi-unit housing tenure types: strata condominiums, co-ops, and co-housing. Co-ops and co-housing currently offer much for the rental housing sector to learn from in terms of social connectedness.

A number of established programs show an understanding of the need for this type of programming, such as two programs delivered by BC Housing that address social connectedness and community resilience—Tenant Activity Grants and People, Plants and Homes—and Metro Vancouver Housing's tenant engagement programs. The existence of grant streams like those provided by Plan H (58), which support social connectedness activities by local and regional governments (funded by BC Ministry of Health through BC Healthy Communities), also recognize the need to fund emerging work in this field. Vancouver Foundation's Neighbourhood Small Grants, mentioned in an earlier recommendation, is an example of a smaller, resident-targeted funding stream.

Larger dedicated funding streams for social connectedness programming in multi-unit housing contexts could offer a significant opportunity to bolster community climate resilience, emergency preparedness, and pandemic response. Involving climate adaptation and emergency preparedness professionals in these discussions would be beneficial.

EXPERIMENTING WITH SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS PROGRAMMING

The core of HNC is a community of practice made up of rental housing operators and non-profits doing just this: experimenting primarily with programming-based interventions. By the end of our project's third year, we estimate that our partners' activities will be taking place in about 40 buildings across Vancouver, Victoria, Penticton, and New Westminster. Each partner's program (some brand new, some a few years old) is responding to a different set of buildings and different resident populations with diverse incomes and needs; they take customized approaches. In collaboration with researchers at SFU and Happy City, HNC is building an evidence base around practice partners' emerging and promising practices with social programming, further exploring contexts in which these practices could be replicated and scaled.

Our partners reiterate that episodic funding is a challenge. Supports for multi-year/ongoing connectedness interventions would advance our partners' work.



WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT

[We rely] on our non-profit partners to reach vulnerable communities, to hold grants, implement programs and convene people. It is an important role that is done with very little funding and has filled gaps where social services have fallen short and government funding has been lost.

OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLORE

a) Support the gathering of evidence from existing and future programs.

Metro Vancouver could advocate to health authorities, senior levels of government, and philanthropic organizations for more robust and reliable streams of funding for social connectedness programming in multi-unit housing, whether led by housing operators or by non-profit organizations in partnership with housing operators. A more diverse suite of interventions would build a more impactful evidence base to support promising emerging practices and supportive changes to regional and/or municipal policies.

b) Communicate findings and lessons learned from social connectedness interventions.

Metro Vancouver could provide support to communicate the findings from social programming pilots in multi-unit housing. Support could come in the form of a convening role, helping ensure that lessons learned are being shared with planners at member municipalities and others involved in relevant regional planning advisories. Metro Vancouver could also advocate to funders for the importance of knowledge transfer activities.

c) Open dialogue between multi-unit housing providers and those in other areas of practice who see the benefits of social programming for increasing community resilience.

If there were funds in place for social connectedness programming pilots, municipalities and health authorities could connect housing providers with internal staff champions

or strong community organizations that could advance their work. For example, social planners at the City of New Westminster (an HNC partner) are looking for a rental housing operator that might join HNC's Community of Practice and are offering to support them in myriad ways, including direct staff support and connections with community organizations that could assist with programming.

WORKSHOP INSIGHTS FOR RECOMMENDATION 4

- Two participants in different groups (an emergency planner and a housing provider) suggested that it is important to ensure any new programs targeting programmatic interventions for boosting social connectedness take into account that not all communities or organizations have equal capacity to apply for program funding. An approach aiming to redress inequities would be to offer funding to marginalized and/or more socially isolated communities and take proactive measures to connect them with opportunities (acknowledging and managing the burden of applications and reporting).
- A planner noted that with respect to budgets: "We're willing to talk in huge numbers when it comes to physical infrastructure, but when it comes to social programming immediately the numbers go way down. There is very little willingness at multiple levels of government to do big spends on social connectedness programs and services. Evidence tells us social connectedness makes a huge difference, but we need stronger voices in advocating for funding."
- Representatives from both Vancouver Coastal Health and Fraser Health recognized how important the non-profit community is to reaching and supporting underserved, marginalized communities, and that different levels of government have divested responsibility to the non-profit sector without adequate resources to support it.
- It was noted that this recommendation is related to recommendation 5, in that funding for programmatic interventions in multi-unit housing should be prioritized for underserved, marginalized communities.



Happy City

5 PRIORITIZE UNDERSERVED NEIGHBOURHOODS FOR SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

In reality, not all multi-unit rental housing in Metro Vancouver will get physical upgrades that support social connectedness. Not all multi-unit rental housing operators will commit to intentional programming, engage thoughtfully with residents, or invite community partners to collaborate with them to do so. Many residents of multi-unit rental housing will continue to have an outsized reliance on the social infrastructure in the surrounding neighbourhood: the public realm and (free or low-cost) community services and facilities that provide safe and healthy space for recreation and social gathering.

Metro Vancouver, municipalities, non-profits, and the provincial government should take a social equity approach to map out geographic and socioeconomic access to the social infrastructure (parks, community gardens, public gathering spaces, libraries, community centres, neighbourhood houses, etc.) that can promote social connectedness, health, and well-being and also determine how well this infrastructure meets the needs of local residents. Further, Metro Vancouver could use this work to recommend the prioritization of investment in social infrastructure in underserved neighbourhoods, to guide member municipalities as they plan new communities and changes to existing ones, and to support municipalities in adopting a social equity approach to meet communities' needs for services and amenities.

Equity approaches are incomplete without consideration of cultural inequities that shape our access to resources and culturally safe spaces where we connect as neighbours and communities. This is particularly important as all levels of Canadian society commit to finding ways to recognize the colonial and white biases in the ways in which our plans, neighbourhoods, shared and private spaces have been designed and are managed, and to open these up to different cultural understandings of how to create shared spaces of home, community, and belonging. Governments need to consider cultural connections and cultural equity when planning for new or refurbished social infrastructure in underserved communities. Achieving cultural equity means identifying and addressing cultural norms and systemic discrimination in all aspects of community, arts, and culture planning.

WHAT IS SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE?

Social infrastructure refers to facilities and services that help individuals, families, groups, and communities meet their social needs, maximize their potential for development, and enhance community well-being.

We face a collective challenge to meet social infrastructure needs in our cities, including real estate costs, development pressures, risk of loss and displacement, an uneven distribution of social infrastructure across the city, social vulnerability, and affordability challenges. Growth challenges add to this, as the population of Vancouver alone is expected to increase by 150,000 people over the next 30 years.

Examples of social infrastructure include:

- neighbourhood houses
- family places
- youth centres
- seniors' centres
- immigrant-serving organizations
- social enterprises
- Indigenous healing and wellness centres
- informal gathering spaces
- food-related infrastructure

From: City of Vancouver Social Infrastructure Strategy
(59)



WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT

This recommendation is the most important to me and it needs more digging and investigating. Market developments encroach [on] racialized communities. [We're] losing pre-existing cultural infrastructure including the walk-ups. Inclusionary policy doesn't look at gentrification and loss of culturally specific retail establishments. Look at how race and space intersect.

OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLORE

a) Map access to social infrastructure that supports social connectedness in Metro Vancouver municipalities.

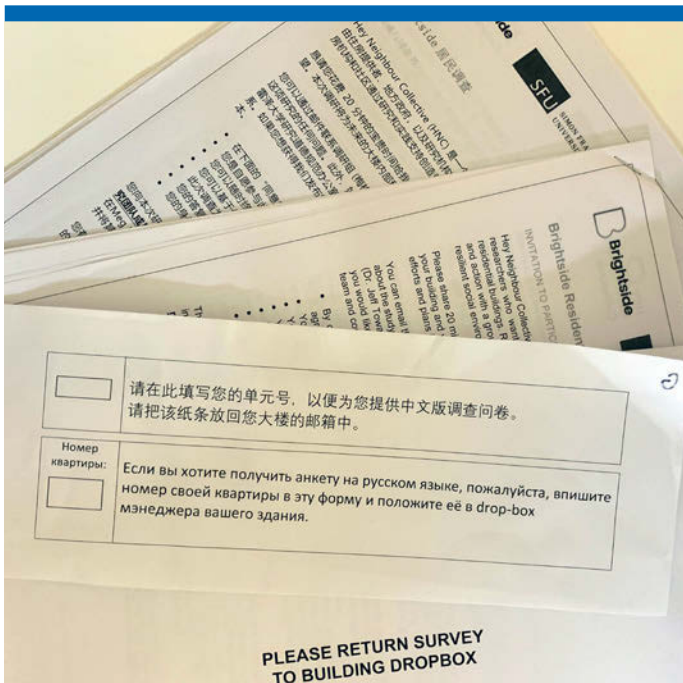
Metro Vancouver could play a research role in assessing equitable access to amenities that promote health and social connectedness, especially for residents of multi-unit housing with little or no access to private yards or gathering spaces. Identifying existing gaps and analyzing the populations that are most impacted by those gaps will bring light to what type of social infrastructure needs to be prioritized in the near future.

b) Emphasize cultural connectedness and cultural equity when planning for new or refurbished social infrastructure in underserved communities.

Explicitly valuing diverse cultures will require meaningful engagement and co-creation with residents who have lived experience of discrimination and exclusion. Metro Vancouver could help to promote strong examples of equitable engagement and co-creation between residents, cultural communities, and their municipality.

WORKSHOP INSIGHTS FOR RECOMMENDATION 5

- A planner commented that this recommendation was absolutely “do-able” and should be paired with the gathering of baseline data about social connectedness in general. Results could also inform targeted funding for social-connectedness retrofits (recommendation 2) and programming (recommendation 4).
- A health authority participant suggested that they might be able to help with data and advocacy for this recommendation.
- A BC Centre for Disease Control participant referenced their draft Social Environments Framework and their willingness to pull in community organizations and other players involved in advocating for or designing healthy social environments.
- It was discussed that this recommendation could help with future community-level planning to address inequities, but there was also caution about gentrification and the reality that discrimination, stereotypes, and stigmas can result in racialized people experiencing public spaces and housing with less safety and sense of belonging.



Ghazaleh Akbarnejad

6 TRACK AND REPORT ON SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

The interest in social connectedness is strong. Practice-based guides summarize the emerging evidence linking social connectedness and built form and provide suggestions for actions. For example, HNC partner Happy City has developed policy recommendations for sociable housing design, (45) and the Canadian Institute of Planners has developed a *Healthy Communities Practice Guide*. (60)

However, the mix of terms and definitions employed to describe social connectedness is frequently cited as a barrier to building an effective, evidence-based approach to addressing social isolation. (2,61–63) The lack of shared language, common understanding, and evidenced-based approaches to social connectedness pose challenges for data collection and comparison across jurisdictions, and it hinders the effectiveness of regional goals to foster healthy and connected complete communities.

To highlight this in the local context, in our policy scan we looked at the language used in *Metro 2040* regional context statements and municipal action plans falling under the domain of healthy city strategies. Of the 21 regional context statements referencing Goal 4: Develop Complete Communities, four used the term *social cohesion*, eight use the term *social connectedness*, and one uses *social capital* to describe goals around social connectedness. (Appendix C) Indicators for each of these would differ. Without shared ter-

“

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT

[This] is a great recommendation: auditing current policy goals and progress is extremely difficult quantitatively because the indicators are so limited . . . [We] need to beef up metrics so we can measure whether or not we did a good job in 10 years, and if not, why?

minology and definitions, evaluating the impacts of regional efforts to increase social connectedness is not possible.

Additionally, the performance indicators under Goal 4 of *Metro 2040* (Box 2)—housing affordability, housing diversity, and walkability—don’t currently reflect a measure related to social connectedness or related outcomes.

BOX 2: METRO 2040 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS EXCERPT

Housing Affordability

As measured by:

- percentage of median household income spent on average housing and transportation costs

Medium-term measure.

Housing Diversity

As measured by:

- share of estimated regional rental housing demand achieved in new supply

Short-term measure.

Complete Communities and Health

As measured by:

- walkability

Short-term measure.

OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLORE

a) Leverage partnerships to collect and distribute disaggregated baseline data on social connectedness for the region.

Clear performance measures that adequately capture social connectedness outcomes, and regular reporting on progress in this area, would signal a regional commitment to prioritize social connectedness in complete communities planning. This work should leverage partnerships with groups like the BC Centre for Disease Control, which is releasing a Healthy Social Environments Framework in December 2020, as well as health authorities and organizations like the Vancouver Foundation or the United Way of Lower Mainland that have social connectedness as a priority.

It will be important to commit to the collection and dissemination of disaggregated data to capture information about people that our society and systems make vulnerable: BIPOC, LGBTQ2I+, single mothers, recent immigrants and refugees, low-income households, people with disabilities, and those with mobility, developmental, mental health and addiction challenges. Social and racial equity must be a core principle of all current and future regional and municipal planning. Having a clear understanding of where we are starting from is fundamental to these efforts, and to aligning energy and resources accordingly.

b) Include at least one measure of social connectedness as a performance indicator in progress reports and public-facing *Metro 2050* materials.

Metro Vancouver could employ common indicators and metrics to demonstrate the focus on social connectedness, and track progress in this area. For example, Statistics Canada's *General Social Survey* has numerous questions on components of social connectedness, such as sense of belonging, social contacts, and trust. Also, certain questions have been used consistently across local surveys (for example, within the Vancouver Foundation's 2017 *Connect and Engage* report, or Vancouver Coastal Health and Fraser Health's 2013 survey, *My Health My Community*).

c) Work towards a regional social connectedness strategy with a clear set of metrics that can be tracked over time.

Metro Vancouver could anchor the development of a social connectedness strategy. This work could begin with a multi-stakeholder regional working group that includes regional planning staff, municipal planners, health authorities, rental housing associations (like BC Non-Profit Housing Association, Aboriginal Housing Management Association, and LandlordBC), and service organizations focused on building community and social connectedness among residents.

WORKSHOP INSIGHTS FOR RECOMMENDATION 6

- Support for this recommendation, and for Metro Vancouver to play a role in mobilizing knowledge about the importance of social connectedness more generally, was particularly strong with regional planners, health authority representatives, and municipal planners, a number of whom stated that consistency around terminology and a decision on terms to track would be helpful.
- Vancouver Coastal Health expressed interest in being involved with this recommendation, both in terms of helping decide on metrics and providing regional and municipal data. Fraser Health noted support as well, mentioning *My Health My Community* as data to leverage.
- There were a number of comments about the importance of this recommendation to other recommendations. For example, disaggregated baseline data on social connectedness in different neighbourhoods and municipalities would support recommendation 5 (prioritizing underserved communities) and could additionally inform recommendation 4 (support funding for programming). Knowing where—and between whom—social connectedness is suffering could help to direct energy and resources to prioritizing vulnerable residents. This would be helpful to planners, funders, and practitioners.
- Finally, there were a number of assertions that tracking metrics and progress was important for all of our recommendations, not just recommendation 6.



Concert Properties / Julianna Santos (City of Vancouver)

CONCLUSION

All six of our specific recommendations about social connectedness in multi-unit housing found some degree of favour with participants in the November 23, 2020, online workshop, as did the overarching recommendation that a social equity principle inform all goal areas for *Metro 2050*.

This discussion paper is very much a living document. We hope that these ideas find their way into *Metro 2050* and into the municipal plans that flow from it over time. But we don't intend for this paper to sit on a shelf gathering dust. We will continue to dig into these ideas and work with forward-thinking housing practitioners, non-profits, municipalities, health authorities, funders, and senior levels of government to test and support promising practices in this area, and to work towards systemic and cultural changes that could further foster the work.

We thank all who contributed insights, ideas, and inspiration for this work.

APPENDIX A: KEYWORDS

KEYWORDS FOR SEARCH OF POLICY DOCUMENTS

- Accessibility/Aging in Place
- Affordability
- Belonging
- Climate/Sustainability
- Complete Communities
- Connectedness
- Emergency Preparedness
- Friendly
- Healthy Communities/Community Wellness
- Isolation/Loneliness
- Multi-Unit Residential Building (MURB)
- Resilience
- Safety
- Social Capital
- Social Cohesion
- Social Inclusion
- Social Interaction
- Social Sustainability
- Tenure

APPENDIX B: POLICIES REVIEWED

List of policies reviewed in policy scan.

Federal

- Budget 2019: Investing in the Middle Class, Government of Canada, 2019
- National Housing Strategy Act, S.C. 2019, c. 29, s. 313
- National Housing Strategy, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2017
 - Subsections:
 - o Rental Construction Financing Initiative, 2020
 - o Sector Transformation Fund - Local Projects
 - o Community Based Tenants Initiative
- Indigenous Homes Innovation Initiative Project Funding, Indigenous Services Canada

Provincial (BC)

- BC Building Code: Adaptable Housing Standards, 2009
- BC Healthy Families Communities Program
- BC Housing Construction Guide and Standards, BC Housing
- British Columbia Local Government Act, Part 15, Division 5 - Zoning Bylaws
- Plan H Community Connectedness Grants, Plan H in partnership with BC Healthy Communities
- Poverty Reduction Strategy Act, BC 2019
- Promote, Protect, Prevent: Our Health Begins Here, Guiding Framework for Public Health, 2013, BC Ministry of Health
- Social Housing Retrofit Support Program, BC Hydro in partnership with BC Housing
- TogetherBC: Poverty Reduction Strategy, Poverty Reduction Strategy Act, BC 2019

Regional

- Metro Vancouver Housing 10-Year Plan, 2019
- Regional Growth Strategy, Bylaw No.1136, 2010, Metro Vancouver 2040: Shaping our Future (Metro 2040)
- Tenant Association Constitution, Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation

Municipal

- A Healthy City for All, Healthy City Strategy – Four year action plan, 2015-2018, City of Vancouver
- Active Design Guidelines, City of North Vancouver
- Building Our Social Future: A Social Development Strategy for Richmond, 2013 - 2022, City of Richmond
- Burnaby Social Sustainability Strategy, City of Burnaby
- City of Vancouver Secured Market Rental Housing (SMRH) Policy
- City of Vancouver Secured Rental Policy Incentives
- City of Vancouver Social Housing or Rental Tenure (SHORT) Pilot program
- City of Vancouver Tenant Protection and Relocation Policy
- City of Victoria 2019-2022 Strategic Plan
- City of Victoria Inclusionary Housing and Community Amenity Policy
- City of Victoria Residential Rental Tenure Zoning
- Community Benefit Bonus Policy, City of Burnaby
- Community Wellness Strategy 2018-2023, City of Richmond
- Delta Social Action Plan
- Density Bonus Bylaw Zoning Bylaw, 2014, Amendment Bylaw No. 55, City of Abbotsford
- Density Bonus Phase 2 Policy, Bylaw No. 7697, 2014, City of New Westminster
- District of North Vancouver, 2015 - 2018 Corporate Plan

- District of West Vancouver Blueprint for Social Responsibility & Change
- DTES Community Plan
- Family Room: Housing Mix Policy for Rezoning Projects, City of Vancouver
- High Density Housing for Families with Children Guidelines, 1992, City of Vancouver
- Imagine White Rock, Official Community Plan, 2017, No. 2220
- Interim Bonus Density Policy, Policy O-54, City of Surrey
- Maple Ridge Social Sustainability Policy
- New Westminster Official Community Plan, Our City 2041
- North Vancouver Official Community Plan, Bylaw No. 8400
- Official Community Plan, City of Abbotsford
- Official Community Plan, OCP Bylaw No. 2955, City of Port Moody
- Vancouver Food Strategy, City of Vancouver
- Vancouver's Housing and Homelessness Strategy, City of Vancouver
- Vision 2020 Strategic Plan, City of Port Coquitlam

APPENDIX C: EXAMPLES OF TERMS RELATED TO SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS IN REGIONAL CONTEXT STATEMENTS

TERMS USED TO DESCRIBE SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS UNDER GOAL AREA 4.2: DEVELOP COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

	Social Interaction	Healthy Communities / Community Wellness / Well-being	Social Inclusion	Social Sustainability	Belonging	Friendly	Connect-edness	Social Cohesion
Anmore								
Belcarra								
Burnaby								
Coquitlam								
Delta								
City of Langley								
Maple Ridge								
New Westminster								
City of North Vancouver								
District of North Van.								
Port Coquitlam								
Port Moody								
Richmond								
Surrey								
Vancouver								
West Vancouver								

Regional context statements for White Rock, Township of Langley, Pitt Meadows, and Lion's Bay do not have language that refers to social connectedness.

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEWEES

Interviews were conducted with representatives from:

- Brightside Community Homes Foundation
- Catalyst Community Developments Society
- Concert Properties
- Connect & Prepare (Building Resilient Neighbourhoods and City of Victoria “Victoria Ready” emergency staff)
- Close to Home (West End Seniors’ Network)
- An ex-City of Vancouver Healthy City Strategy social planner and originator of the Hey Neighbour! Pilot
- Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation, Tenant Programs
- LandlordBC

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To: Regional Planning Committee

From: Heather, McNell, General Manager, Regional Planning and Housing Services

Date: January 29, 2021 Meeting Date: February 5, 2021

Subject: **Manager's Report**

RECOMMENDATION

That the Regional Planning Committee receive for information the report dated January 29, 2021, titled "Manager's Report".

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE 2020 WORK PLAN

The Regional Planning Committee's Work Plan for 2021 is attached to this report (Attachment 1). The status of work program elements is indicated as pending, in progress, ongoing or complete. The listing is updated as needed to include new issues that arise, items requested by the Committee, and changes to the schedule.

METRO VANCOUVER REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL LANDS STRATEGY – ADDITIONAL ENDORSEMENTS

At the Regional Planning Committee meeting of January 14, 2021, the Committee received a report titled 'Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy – Endorsement', dated January 5, 2021. The report provided a status summary on the endorsements by member jurisdictions and agencies of the Regional Industrial Lands Strategy since its approval by the Metro Vancouver Board in July 2020. Additional endorsements have now been received, from the City of Delta and the City of Maple Ridge (Attachment 2).

Attachments

1. Regional Planning Committee 2021 Work Plan
2. Correspondence Dated, January 14, 2021 re: Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy (43365039)

43376939

5.4 ATTACHMENT 1

Regional Planning Committee 2021 Work Plan

Report Date: February 5, 2021

Priorities

1 st Quarter	Status
Metro 2050 Implementation Policy Recommendations	Complete
Metro 2050 Climate Change Policy Review Recommendations	Complete
Hey Neighbour Discussion Paper	Complete
Social Equity in Regional Planning – Phase II	In Progress
Metro 2050 draft policies – Goal 1	In Progress
Metro 2050 draft policies – Goal 2	In Progress
Metro 2050 draft policies – Implementation Section	In Progress
Housing and Transportation Cost Burden Study – Scope	Pending
Regional Agricultural Land Use Inventory - Scope	Pending
2020 Regional Industrial Lands Inventory	In Progress
2 nd Quarter	
Projections for Population, Housing and Employment (Data Projections)	In Progress
Metro 2050 draft policies – Goal 3 (Includes Climate Research and SEI)	In Progress
Metro 2050 draft policies – Goal 4	In Progress
Metro 2050 draft policies – Goal 5	In Progress
Regional Industrial Lands 2020 Inventory	In Progress
Regional Industrial Land Implementation Tools - Scope	Pending
Ecosystem Services from Agricultural Land – Scope	Pending
Regional Land Use Assessment – Implementation Tools – Scope	Pending
3 rd Quarter	
Draft Metro 2050 Refer for Comment	Pending
Where Matters Phase II - Update	Pending
Land Use Model Preparation – Land Use Component – Report Out	Pending
Data/Projections Validation – Report Out	Pending
Land Use Model - Scope	Pending
Regional Agricultural Land Use Inventory – Update	Pending
4 th Quarter	
Ecosystem Services from Agricultural Land – Report Out	Pending
Housing and Transportation Cost Burden Study - Report Out	Pending
Regional Land Use Assessment –Update	Pending
Regional Agricultural Land Use Inventory – Report Out	Pending
Land Use Model – Report Out	Pending
Regional Industrial Land Implementation Tools – Update and Report Out	Pending
Metro 2050 – Update on Comment Period	Pending

43376939



January 12, 2021

Office of the Chair
Metro Vancouver Board
4330 Kingsway Avenue
Sent via email: chair@metrovancover.org

Dear Chair Sav Dhaliwal and the Metro Vancouver Board,

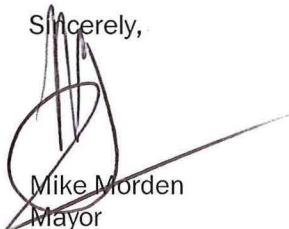
Re: Regional Industrial Land Strategy

At the December 8, 2020, Council Workshop meeting, Council passed the following resolution regarding the Regional Industrial Lands Strategy:

That the Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy recommendations be endorsed and the resolution be forwarded to Metro Vancouver.

A copy of the resolution is enclosed for your records.

Sincerely,



Mike Morden
Mayor

cc: Maple Ridge City Council
Al Horsman, Chief Administrative Officer
Christine Carter, General Manager Planning & Development Services

Document: 2653884

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

11995 Haney Place, Maple Ridge, BC V2X 6A9, Canada | Tel: 604-463-5221 | Fax: 604-467-7329 | mapleridge.ca
enquiries@mapleridge.ca

CITY OF
MAPLE RIDGE

Agenda Item:

4.2 Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial
Land Strategy

Council Workshop Meeting of:

December 8, 2020

That the Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy recommendations be endorsed and the resolution be forwarded to Metro Vancouver.

~~CARRIED~~ DEFEATED DEFERRED "Mike Morden" MAYOR

ACTION NOTICE

TO:

_____	Chief Administrative Officer	_____
_____	Executive Dir – Human Resources	_____
_____	Dir – Economic Dev	_____
_____	Fire Chief	_____
_____	RCMP	_____
_____	Gen Mgr – Corporate Services	_____
_____	Chief Financial Officer	_____
_____	Chief Information Officer	_____
_____	Corporate Controller	_____
_____	Purchasing	_____
_____	Senior Policy and Sustainability Analyst	_____
_____	Mgr – Communications	_____
_____	Gen Mgr – Planning & Development Services	_____
✓ _____	Dir - Planning	Copy to Krista G
_____	Mgr - Community Planning	_____
_____	Mgr. – Development and Environmental Services	_____
_____	Dir - Bylaw & Licensing Services	_____
_____	Chief Building Official	_____
_____	Gen Mgr – Engineering Services	_____
_____	Dir - Engineering	_____
_____	Dir - Engineering Operations	_____
_____	Gen Mgr - Parks, Rec & Culture Services	_____
_____	Dir - Parks & Facilities	_____
_____	Dir – Recreation & Com. Engagement	_____
_____	Clerk's Section	_____
_____	Exec Dir – Legal & Legislative Services	_____
_____	Corporate Officer	_____
_____	Deputy Corporate Officer	_____
_____	Mgr. Civic Properties/Risk & Insurance	_____
_____	Conveyancing Clerk	_____
_____	Legislative Clerk	_____
_____	Clerk 3	_____
_____	Committee Clerk	_____
_____	Legislative Coordinator	_____

The above decision was made at a meeting of the City Council held on the date noted above and is sent to you for notation and/or such action as may be required by your Department.

December 9, 2020
Date

Corporate Officer



mapleridge.ca

City of Maple Ridge

TO: His Worship Mayor Michael Morden
and Members of Council
FROM: Chief Administrative Officer
MEETING DATE: December 8, 2020
MEETING: Workshop
SUBJECT: Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Land Strategy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Metro Vancouver Board approved the Regional Industrial Lands Strategy on July 3, 2020 in response to the shortage of industrial lands across the region. The Strategy's Vision Statement is to

Ensure there is sufficient industrial lands within the region to meet the needs of a growing and evolving regional economy to the year 2050.

The shortage of industrial lands in the region is expected to worsen over the next 10 to 15 years, and in an effort to address this issue the Regional Industrial Lands Strategy provides 34 recommendations to guide a broad range of remedial actions. The Metro Vancouver Board is requesting that Councils in the region review and endorse the Regional Industrial Lands Strategy's 34 recommendations.

The 34 recommendations are action items that apply to various jurisdictions and authorities, including 13 recommendations that directly or indirectly apply to the City of Maple Ridge. There are six recommendations where Maple Ridge would lead and seven recommendations that would require collaboration. Nonetheless, Metro Vancouver has requested endorsement of all 34 recommendations.

The purpose of this report is to review and discuss the 34 recommendations, what the City of Maple Ridge's role would be for each recommendation, and the rationale for endorsement. This report also briefly summarizes the challenges, trends, and opportunities to achieve the vision of having sufficient industrial lands within the region to the year 2050.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy recommendations be endorsed and the resolution be forwarded to Metro Vancouver.

1.0 BACKGROUND:

The Metro Vancouver region is facing a critical shortage of industrial land. This is largely due to years of steady population and economic growth in the region, which has resulted in the ongoing conversion of industrial lands into non-industrial uses. Additionally, the constrained geography of the region has exacerbated the challenges facing Metro Vancouver's industrial land supply. Metro Vancouver had, as of 2015, approximately 11,300 hectares (28,000 acres) of industrial land, about 80% of which is already developed. Land values have increased significantly over the past few years and vacancy rates are at record lows. As a result of all these factors, the limited supply of vacant industrial land across the region is anticipated to face a worsening shortage over the next 10 to 15 years.

The region's industrial lands take up 4% of the region's land base, but are home to nearly 27% (364,000) of the region's 1.3 million jobs and an additional 163,000 jobs through indirect and induced

impacts. Jobs located in industrial areas tend to be high paying, offering an average wage of \$61,100 per worker, which is roughly 10% higher than the regional average wage of \$55,000 per worker.

With an expectation that the pressure to convert industrial lands into non-industrial uses will continue to grow, Metro Vancouver has prepared the Regional Industrial Lands Strategy. The Strategy identifies 34 recommendations with 10 priority actions organized around 4 Big Moves: 1) Protect Remaining Industrial Lands; 2) Intensify and Optimize Industrial Lands; 3) Bring the Existing Land Supply to Market & Address Site Issues; and 4) Ensure a Coordinated Approach.

a. Official Community Plan

The Official Community Plan (OCP) outlines the long-term vision for growth and development in Maple Ridge. Principle 12 in the OCP promotes collaboration with other authorities, including Metro Vancouver, as it is essential to ensuring that municipal objectives can be met. The OCP's Industrial objectives are to:

- Create a larger and more diverse industrial sector that offers greater employment opportunities for residents, generates additional investment, enhances local businesses and creates a larger tax base to pay for municipal services and amenities.
- To create a more "complete community" by providing a range of industrial opportunities throughout the municipality.
- To encourage industrial development that meets the community's aspirations for quality of environment, character and sense of place, and compatibility with other Maple Ridge land uses.
- To ensure that the policies, zoning regulations, and supply of industrial land are favourable and adequate to attract industry to Maple Ridge.

The policies in the OCP are aimed at guiding planning decisions on land use management within Maple Ridge. Policies also direct actions related to bylaws, regulations, and strategies, regarding industrial lands, such as:

6 - 47 Maple Ridge will review bylaws and regulations to align with market demand.

6- 48 Maple Ridge will implement strategies to accommodate industrial growth that is compatible with other land uses in the District

b. Climate Change and the Region's Industrial Lands

An issue that will impact the long-term functionality of the industrial land supply is the risk posed by climate change. Detailed climate change projections have been completed for the Metro Vancouver region, and significant work is underway to understand the impacts, including increased flood risk. A significant portion of the region's industrial land supply, including most major port and airport facilities, are located within low-lying areas. Many of these areas would be vulnerable to major coastal flood events in the absence of considerable adaptation measures. Should sea level rise continue as projected, significant portions of the industrial land supply may no longer be considered viable for long-term development, further reducing opportunities for growth and economic resiliency.

c. The Challenges Identified in the Regional Industrial Lands Strategy

With several factors contributing to loss of industrial lands in the region, the region faces a number of challenges related to the protection, management and promotion of industrial and employment lands. These challenges have been categorized into four themes:

- **Constrained Land Supply.** Metro Vancouver is bounded both physically and politically between mountains, an ocean and an international border. This problem is further exacerbated by the fragmented nature of much of the region's remaining vacant land parcels.
- **Pressure on Industrial Lands.** The region's industrial lands are under threat of being further diminished due to the allowance of non-industrial uses and being out-priced due to high land values and property taxation.
- **Site and Adjacency Issues.** Various site-specific issues, such as non-serviced sites and access to trade and transportation routes are creating barriers to the effective development and redevelopment of the region's industrial lands.
- **Complex Jurisdictional Environment.** Decisions related to land use and industrial lands have the potential to affect neighbouring municipalities, the broader region, and even aspects of the economy at the provincial and national level, which result in a fractured regulatory landscape.

d. The Trends Identified in the Regional Industrial Lands Strategy

The Metro Vancouver regional industrial market stretches from the North Shore and Vancouver area to the boarder of the Fraser Valley Regional District. The Metro Vancouver region is experiencing an acute shortage of industrial land supply, which manifests as very low vacancy rates, increasing land prices, and higher lease rates. Below are three trends identified within the Regional Industrial Lands Strategy regarding the industrial market:

- **The Nature of Industrial Activities is Changing.** Business and industrial activities are evolving, as are desired space needs and location preferences, and associated employment and transportation implications.
- **New Users of Industrial Space are Small Scale.** Artisanal businesses, such as custom manufacturing, small batch production, and food processing require smaller spaces and benefit from close proximity to the consumer population.
- **Tech Firms are Growing in Urban Light Industrial Areas.** High tech, bio-tech, software, and digital are businesses that need a high ceiling, studios, labs, storage, and power, with various activities including, research and design, packaging, and distribution on site.

e. The Opportunities Identified in the Regional Industrial Lands Strategy

Industrial businesses cover a range of activities, locational preferences and site needs. For example, a manufacturer of specialized computer components may require a far different type of space than that of a distribution and logistics warehouse operation. Much like the competition between industrial and nonindustrial space users, industrial uses with different operational needs may also be able to support different values for land and space. Below are two opportunities identified within the Regional Industrial Lands Strategy regarding industrial lands:

Protect Trade-Oriented Lands

Trade-oriented lands are large sites associated with the transportation of goods to and through the region, such as by rail and the port, which serve a national function and are crucial to the region's economy, warranting additional attention and possible protection. However, smaller specialized industrial users can also compete for these types of sites, and may be a more financially viable form of development on high value lands. This can prove a challenge given the limited number of large sites in the region that have the characteristics needed by trade-oriented businesses. A clear, consistent and collaboratively developed definition and understanding of the extent and location of these important lands will support their protection.

Increasing Industrial Capacity through Intensification / Density

With limited options to increase the land base, many industrial projects are now considering building upwards, with modern warehouse distribution centres designed to be significantly more volumetrically intensive than traditional warehousing operations. Allowing for, and potentially incentivizing, the creation of multi-storey industrial space has the potential to modestly increase the supply of industrial space within the region, so long as the market conditions are sufficient to support it.

2.0 DISCUSSION:

The challenges facing Metro Vancouver's industrial lands are complex and interconnected, and no single action or stakeholder can resolve them. Market forces and types of industrial activity vary significantly by sub-region, such that for example, forms of densification that may be possible in certain urban locations may not be appropriate in other locations. There are a wide range of national, regional and local serving industrial activities in the region, which have different site and location needs and as a result require different policy responses. Accordingly, recommended actions need to balance regional objectives, while addressing local contexts – 'one size' does not fit all.

To respond to the challenges noted above, the Strategy identifies 34 recommendations with 10 priority actions organized around 4 Big Moves:

Table 1 Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Priority Action Items

Big Move	Priority Actions
Protect Remaining Industrial Lands	1. Define Trade-Oriented Lands 2. Undertake a Regional Land Use Assessment 3. Strengthen Regional Policy 4. Seek Greater Consistency in Local Government Zoning Definitions and Permitted Uses
Intensify and Optimize Industrial Lands	5. Facilitate the Intensification / Density of Industrial Forms Where Possible
Bring the Existing Land Supply to Market & Address Site Issues	6. Prepare Bring-to-Market Strategies for Vacant or Under-developed Industrial Lands 7. Ensure Transportation Connectivity
Ensure a Coordinated Approach	8. Coordinate Strategies for Economic Growth and Investment 9. Improve Data and Monitoring 10. Develop a Framework for Coordination

The priority actions are formed, in part, by packaging together related actions in the longer list of recommendations into combined shorter-term actions, to be implemented over the first few years of endorsement of the Regional Industrial Lands Strategy.

In considering the 4 'Big Moves' and the recommendations that follow, the Strategy affirms that conversion or use of agricultural lands is not a solution to the shortage of industrial lands in the region. This principle was endorsed by the Industrial Lands Strategy Task Force and Metro Vancouver Board on July 3, 2020.

2.1 Recommendations in Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy

The 34 recommendations are action items that apply to various jurisdictions and authorities, meaning only 13 recommendations are collaboration or direct action items for the City of Maple Ridge. There are six recommendations where the City of Maple Ridge would lead and seven recommendations where Maple Ridge would collaborate with another authority. Nonetheless, Metro Vancouver has requested endorsement of all 34 recommendations. In Appendix A, staff have organized all 34 recommendations by jurisdiction, starting with Maple Ridge, and have provided a rationale for endorsement.

2.1.1 Maple Ridge Action Items

The recommendations that require direct action from the City of Maple Ridge or require collaboration and engagement with Metro Vancouver are in Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5, below. The recommendations have been divided based on the Strategy's "Big Moves". Recommendations with an asterisk (*) and shaded in grey are direct action items for the City of Maple Ridge.

Table 2 - Big Move 1: Protect Remaining Industrial Lands

Recommendation	Description	Work Already Underway or Completed
1 That Metro Vancouver, in collaboration with member jurisdictions, First Nations, regional agencies, and other relevant stakeholders, conduct a comprehensive regional land use assessment.	Engage with Metro Vancouver to identify, based on a defined set of criteria and cross-jurisdictional considerations, opportunities for more optimized locations and uses of land in order to support regional and local policy objectives and to inform policy changes.	The City of Maple Ridge is already collaborating with Metro Vancouver to update the region's industrial land inventory. The undertaking of a region-wide assessment of land use could potentially identify areas where a swap of existing land uses may be reasonable, appropriate, and beneficial for the City of Maple Ridge.
3* That Metro Vancouver, in collaboration with member jurisdictions and other regional agencies, develop a consistent definition of 'industrial' and guidelines for which primary and secondary (or ancillary) land uses should be permitted in Industrial and Mixed Employment designated areas, respectively.	The City of Maple Ridge, as part of the regional context statement updates, would commit to review and update the Zoning Bylaw using the guidelines as a resource to amend the permitted uses in their local industrial and employment lands, as appropriate.	The City of Maple Ridge's industrial zones in the Zoning Bylaw already align with the proposed definition and identified uses within the Regional Industrial Lands Strategy. Additionally, the City has a number of policies that support reviewing bylaws and regulations to align with market demand on industrial lands. Staff would collaborate with Metro Vancouver to ensure that Maple Ridge's industrial zones are consistent with other member jurisdiction and regional agencies.

4 That Metro Vancouver conduct a collaborative process to develop a clear definition of Trade-Oriented Lands, and subsequently, as part of the Metro 2040 update, develop a Trade-Oriented land use overlay.	Assist Metro Vancouver in developing a definition of Trade-Oriented Lands, and develop a Trade-Oriented land use overlay.	The City of Maple Ridge is already collaborating with Metro Vancouver on the Metro 2040 update and will provide GIS layers for the region's industrial land inventory. A clear, consistent and collaboratively developed definition and understanding of the extent and location of the lands will support the protection of industrial lands.
5* That municipalities identify appropriate areas through Trade-Oriented zoning.	The City of Maple Ridge, through the Regional Context Statement process, would identify trade-oriented lands within their jurisdiction, and to consider zoning applicable lands.	The City of Maple Ridge already updates the Regional Context Statement when there is a change. Should the definition of Trade-Oriented Lands be applicable to lands in Maple Ridge, the zoning designation may be beneficial in appropriate areas.

Table 3 - Big Move 2: Intensify and Optimize Industrial Lands

Recommendation	Description	Work Already Underway or Completed
7* That municipalities facilitate the intensification / densification of industrial forms where possible.	The City of Maple Ridge would facilitate the intensification/ densification of industrial lands through various actions, where contextually appropriate, such as removing any unnecessary restrictions to density or height limits or creating incentives in target areas.	<p>The City of Maple Ridge, through the Area Planning process, already facilitates the intensification and densification of industrial forms where appropriate.</p> <p>For example, the City has been going through the Lougheed Transit Corridor, Albion Flats, and Yennadon Area Planning process and reviewing building forms, market demand, and current regulations as part of Concept Plan development.</p>

Table 4 - Big Move 3: Bring the Existing Supply to Market & Address Site Issues

Recommendation	Description	Work Already Underway or Completed
13 That Metro Vancouver, in consultation with member jurisdictions, develop guidelines for land use policies along the edge of planned or developing Industrial areas where no natural or other physical buffer already exists.	Engage with Metro Vancouver to develop guidelines for industrial lands that do not have a natural or physical buffer to neighbouring properties.	The City of Maple Ridge, through the Area Planning process, already considers policies and design guidelines when industrial lands do not have an appropriate buffer to neighbouring properties.

<p>15* That municipalities consider adopting the Railway Association of Canada and Federation of Canadian Municipalities Guidelines for New Development in Proximity to Railway Operations when considering development permissions and changes of use in proximity to active railway corridors and other major goods movement corridors.</p>	<p>The City of Maple Ridge will consider adopting the Railway Association of Canada and Federation of Canadian Municipalities Guidelines for New Development in Proximity to Railway Operations.</p>	<p>The City of Maple Ridge already directs applicants to the "Railway Association of Canada and Federation of Canadian Municipalities Guidelines for New Development in Proximity to Railway Operations" when an application has been made in proximity to an active railway corridor.</p> <p>Additionally, the City of Maple Ridge already considers the Guidelines during Area Planning process.</p>
<p>16* That municipalities with vacant or underdeveloped industrial lands prepare a 'bring-to market' strategy for their industrial land supply.</p>	<p>The City of Maple Ridge, as part of an Area Planning process, would address opportunities and challenges facing the development of vacant industrial land, including land assembly. The Area Plan process also identifies opportunities to encourage reinvestment.</p>	<p>The City of Maple Ridge, through the Area Planning process, already considers opportunities and challenges facing the area within the proposed Area Plan, as well as opportunities to encourage reinvestment.</p> <p>As part of Business Planning, the Economic Development Department has proposed undertaking an "Economic Development Strategic Plan" in 2021.</p> <p>The City of Maple Ridge's OCP has a number of policies that support reviewing bylaws and regulations in regards to industrial lands. As part of Business Planning 2021, the Planning Department has proposed undertaking a Thornhill Information Report, which would include reviewing the OCP policies for the Urban Reserve. However, the land use of Thornhill has yet to be determined.</p> <p>The city recently expanded industrial lands in the north east sector of the city and confirmed routing for the eventual extension of Abernethy Way to help improve transportation access to these industrial and employment lands, Increases to industrial land supply and improved transportation connections should help improve these undeveloped industrial areas.</p>

<p>17 That TransLink, Metro Vancouver, the Port of Vancouver, the Vancouver Airport Authority and municipalities continue to work together to proactively designate, manage, and regularly update the Regional Truck Route Network in line with the recommendations of the Regional Goods Movement Strategy to ensure the safety and reliability of the regional goods movement network, while also considering human health implications, such as air quality and noise.</p>	<p>Continue to confirm alignment for truck routing in Maple Ridge also in accordance with TransLink's Regional Goods Movement Strategy.</p>	<p>The City of Maple Ridge already manages and regularly updates the Regional Truck Route Network and works together with other jurisdictions and authorities to ensure Maple Ridge aligns with the Translink's Regional Goods Movement Strategy.</p> <p>The City of Maple Ridge is currently working with TransLink, BCTA, BCMoTI and neighbouring municipalities to identify and confirm goods movement routing in alignment with TransLink's Regional Goods Movement Strategy.</p>
<p>24* That regional organizations and stakeholders continue to investigate and implement options designed to reduce the environmental impacts related to the transportation of goods and people in the region, through their respective plans and policies.</p>	<p>Continue to investigate and implement options to reduce environmental impacts related to transportation of goods and people.</p>	<p>The City of Maple Ridge expanded access to charging station infrastructure for electric vehicles in 2018, when Council passed a bylaw to integrate 'rough-in' electric vehicle charging infrastructure, making it easier to retrofit a building to provide for EV charging in the future.</p> <p>As directed by Council at the October 20, 2020 Workshop meeting, staff will be bringing forward an OCP amending bylaw for public consultation to update the greenhouse gas emission targets to net zero by 2050 and bring back recommendations for reducing greenhouse gas emissions outlined in sections 3.2 and 3.3 of the October 20, 2020 report titled "Community Energy and Emissions Scoping Report". This will include implementing the BC Energy Step Code and strengthening electric vehicle charging infrastructure requirements in new developments.</p> <p>Additionally, Environmental Impact Assessments are completed when new development, including new roads, occurs in order to minimize negative impacts.</p>

Table 5 - Big Move 4: Ensure a Coordinated Approach

Recommendation	Description	Work Already Underway or Completed
26* That municipalities provide a summary report of local development activity on lands in the Metro Vancouver Industrial Lands Inventory as part of their regional Development Cost Charge reporting, once per year.	The City of Maple Ridge would provide Metro Vancouver with a summary report on development of Industrial Lands once a year.	The City of Maple Ridge already provides a Development Cost Charge report to Metro Vancouver once a year. Including a summary of development activity on industrial lands would not significantly increase staff workloads.
27 That Metro Vancouver, in collaboration with member jurisdictions, conduct a regional employment survey on a bi-annual basis.	Engage with Metro Vancouver to conduct a regional employment survey bi-annually.	The City of Maple Ridge already engages with Metro Vancouver to share information and data. Cooperation and data tracking between governments and other organizations assists with accurate monitoring and effective land management.
29 That Metro Vancouver, in consultation with member jurisdictions, First Nations and relevant stakeholder organizations, document and promote the region's value proposition from an industrial economy perspective.	Engage with Metro Vancouver to promote the regional value from an industrial economy perspective.	The Economic Development Department already promotes the City's industrial lands and four business parks through various communication channels and by working with regional partners, such as Metro Vancouver. Economic Development staff are also working with the Metro Vancouver Regional Economic Prosperity Advisory Committee and Deloitte to develop a regional investment attraction strategy. Additionally, as part of Business Planning for 2021, the Economic Development Department has proposed implementing a GIS Site Selector Tool to enhance promotion of the City's industrial and commercial lands.

3.0 NEXT STEPS:

Should Council endorse the 13 recommendations that are related to a collaboration or direct action item for the City of Maple Ridge, staff will:

- Continue to progress work on industrial lands currently going through an Area Planning Process (i.e Albion Flats and Yennadon).
- Continue to designate new industrial lands for future employment.
- Consider adopting the Railway Association of Canada and Federation of Canadian Municipalities Guidelines for New Development in Proximity to Railway Operations.

- Conduct the regional employment survey bi-annually when circulated for response.
- Continue to collaborate with Metro Vancouver and other jurisdictions to protect, optimize, and promote the industrial designated lands in Maple Ridge in order to ensure a regional coordinated approach.
- Participate in the Regional Context Statement review when changes are required. There is no requirement to amend the Regional Context Statement until the work to implement some of the recommendations has been completed.

4.0 STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:

Implementing strategic plans related to local infrastructure and the economy, such as the Commercial and Industrial Strategy, is a Council priority as established under its Growth pillar of the 2019-2022 City of Maple Ridge Strategic Plan.

5.0 INTERDEPARTMENTAL IMPLICATIONS:

The implementation of the action items within Metro Vancouver's Regional Industrial Land Strategy would be an interdepartmental undertaking. Planning staff would continue to collaborate on various ongoing projects with staff from other City departments, as well as staff from Metro Vancouver and other Regional and Provincial authorities. Implementation of the Regional Industrial Land Strategy through Area Planning and new development will involve ongoing collaboration with the Engineering, Building, Fire, and Parks, Recreation & Culture Departments.

6.0 ALTERNATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Metro Vancouver Board approved the Regional Industrial Lands Strategy on July 3, 2020 and has requested endorsement of the Strategy from member jurisdictions. Should Council choose not to endorse the Regional Industrial Land Strategy in its entirety, but agrees with the Strategy's Vision Statement, the following alternative recommendation is provided:

That the recommendations within the Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy not be endorsed; and

That the vision statement for the Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy be endorsed and the resolution be forwarded to Metro Vancouver.

Should Council choose to just receive the Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Land Strategy for information only, the following alternative recommendation is provided:

For information only.

CONCLUSION:

The 34 recommendations are action items that target various jurisdictions and authorities, meaning only 13 recommendations are directly or indirectly action items for the City of Maple Ridge. There are six recommendations where the City of Maple Ridge would lead and seven recommendations that would require collaboration with other authorities. Staff have reviewed the 13 recommendations that directly or indirectly impact Maple Ridge and concluded that the City is already implementing most of the recommendations through various plans and processes. Nonetheless, Metro Vancouver has requested endorsement of all 34 recommendations.

The purpose of this report is to review and discuss the 34 recommendations, what the City of Maple Ridge's role would be for each recommendation, and the rationale for endorsement. This report also briefly summarizes the challenges, trends, and opportunities to achieve the vision of having sufficient industrial lands within the region to the year 2050.

"Original signed by Krista Gowan"

Prepared by: **Krista Gowan, HBA, MA**
Planner 1

"Original signed by Chuck Goddard"

Reviewed by: **Charles R. Goddard, BA, MA**
Director of Planning

"Original signed by Christine Carter"

Approved by: **Christine Carter, M.PL, MCIP, RPP**
GM Planning & Development Services

"Original signed by Al Horsman"

Concurrence: **Al Horsman**
Chief Administrative Officer

The following appendices are attached hereto:

- Appendix A – Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Land Strategy Recommendations by Jurisdiction
- Appendix B – Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Land Strategy

APPENDIX A

METRO VANCOUVER'S REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL LANDS STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS BY JURISDICTION AND ACTION

*Items with a * and shaded grey are direct action items for the City of Maple Ridge*

#	RECOMMENDATIONS	MAPLE RIDGE WORK ALREADY UNDERWAY OR COMPLETED
MAPLE RIDGE ACTION ITEMS		
1	That Metro Vancouver, in collaboration with member jurisdictions, First Nations, regional agencies, and other relevant stakeholders, conduct a comprehensive regional land use assessment.	The City of Maple Ridge is already collaborating with Metro Vancouver to update the region's industrial land inventory. The undertaking of a region-wide assessment of land use could potentially identify areas where a swap of existing land uses may be reasonable, appropriate, and beneficial for the City of Maple Ridge.
3*	That Metro Vancouver, in collaboration with member jurisdictions and other regional agencies, develop a consistent definition of 'industrial' and guidelines for which primary and secondary (or ancillary) land uses should be permitted in Industrial and Mixed Employment designated areas, respectively.	<p>The City of Maple Ridge's industrial zones in the Zoning Bylaw already align with the proposed definition and identified uses within the Regional Industrial Lands Strategy. Additionally, the City has a number of policies that support reviewing bylaws and regulations to align with market demand on industrial lands.</p> <p>Staff would collaborate with Metro Vancouver to ensure that Maple Ridge's industrial zones are consistent with other member jurisdiction and regional agencies.</p>
4	That Metro Vancouver conduct a collaborative process to develop a clear definition of Trade-Oriented Lands, and subsequently, as part of the Metro 2040 update, develop a Trade-Oriented land use overlay.	The City of Maple Ridge is already collaborating with Metro Vancouver on the Metro 2040 update and will provide GIS layers for the region's industrial land inventory. A clear, consistent and collaboratively developed definition and understanding of the extent and location of the lands will support the protection of industrial lands.
5*	That municipalities identify appropriate areas through Trade-Oriented zoning.	The City of Maple Ridge already updates the Regional Context Statement when there is a change. Should the definition of Trade-Oriented Lands be applicable to lands in Maple Ridge, the zoning designation may be beneficial in appropriate areas.
7*	That municipalities facilitate the intensification / densification of industrial forms where possible.	<p>The City of Maple Ridge, through the Area Planning process, already facilitates the intensification and densification of industrial forms where appropriate.</p> <p>For example, the City has been going through the Lougheed Transit Corridor, Albion Flats, and Yennadon Area Planning process and reviewing building forms, market demand, and current regulations as part of Concept Plan development.</p>
13	That Metro Vancouver, in consultation with member jurisdictions, develop guidelines for land use policies along the edge of planned or developing Industrial areas where no natural or other physical buffer already exists.	The City of Maple Ridge, through the Area Planning process, already considers policies and design guidelines when industrial lands do not have an appropriate buffer to neighbouring properties.

15*	That municipalities consider adopting the Railway Association of Canada and Federation of Canadian Municipalities Guidelines for New Development in Proximity to Railway Operations when considering development permissions and changes of use in proximity to active railway corridors and other major goods movement corridors.	<p>The City of Maple Ridge already directs applicants to the “Railway Association of Canada and Federation of Canadian Municipalities Guidelines for New Development in Proximity to Railway Operations” when an application has been made in proximity to an active railway corridor.</p> <p>Additionally, the City of Maple Ridge already considers the Guidelines during Area Planning process.</p>
16*	That municipalities with vacant or underdeveloped industrial lands prepare a bring-to market strategy for their industrial land supply.	<p>The City of Maple Ridge, through the Area Planning process, already considers opportunities and challenges facing the area within the proposed Area Plan, as well as opportunities to encourage reinvestment.</p> <p>As part of Business Planning, the Economic Development Department has proposed undertaking an “Economic Development Strategic Plan” in 2021.</p> <p>The City of Maple Ridge’s OCP has a number of policies that support reviewing bylaws and regulations in regards to industrial lands. As part of Business Planning 2021, the Planning Department has proposed undertaking a Thornhill Information Report, which would include reviewing the OCP policies for the Urban Reserve. However, the land use of Thornhill has yet to be determined.</p> <p>The city recently expanded industrial lands in the north east sector of the city and confirmed routing for the eventual extension of Abernethy Way to help improve transportation access to these industrial and employment lands, Increases to industrial land supply and improved transportation connections should help improve these undeveloped industrial areas.</p>
17	That TransLink, Metro Vancouver, the Port of Vancouver, the Vancouver Airport Authority and municipalities continue to work together to proactively designate, manage, and regularly update the Regional Truck Route Network in line with the recommendations of the Regional Goods Movement Strategy to ensure the safety and reliability of the regional goods movement network, while also considering human health implications, such as air quality and noise.	<p>The City of Maple Ridge already manages and regularly updates the Regional Truck Route Network and works together with other jurisdictions and authorities to ensure Maple Ridge aligns with the Translink’s Regional Goods Movement Strategy.</p> <p>The City of Maple Ridge is currently working with TransLink, BCTA, BCMoTI and neighbouring municipalities to identify and confirm goods movement routing in alignment with TransLink’s Regional Goods Movement Strategy.</p>
24	That regional organizations and stakeholders continue to investigate and implement options designed to reduce the environmental impacts related to the transportation of goods and people in the region, through their respective plans and policies.	<p>The City of Maple Ridge expanded access to charging station infrastructure for electric vehicles in 2018, when Council passed a bylaw to integrate ‘rough-in’ electric vehicle charging infrastructure, making it easier to retrofit a building to provide for EV charging in the future.</p>

		<p>As directed by Council at the October 20, 2020 Workshop meeting, staff will be bringing forward an OCP amending bylaw for public consultation to update the greenhouse gas emission targets to net zero by 2050 and bring back recommendations for reducing greenhouse gas emissions outlined in sections 3.2 and 3.3 of the October 20, 2020 report titled "Community Energy and Emissions Scoping Report". This will include implementing the BC Energy Step Code and strengthening electric vehicle charging infrastructure requirements in new developments.</p> <p>Additionally, Environmental Impact Assessments are completed when new development, including new roads, occurs in order to minimize negative impacts.</p>
26*	That municipalities provide a summary report of local development activity on lands in the Metro Vancouver Industrial Lands Inventory as part of their regional Development Cost Charge reporting, once per year.	The City of Maple Ridge already provides a Development Cost Charge report to Metro Vancouver once a year. Including a summary of development activity on industrial lands would not significantly increase staff workloads.
27	That Metro Vancouver, in collaboration with member jurisdictions, conduct a regional employment survey on a bi-annual basis.	The City of Maple Ridge already engages with Metro Vancouver to share information and data. Cooperation and data tracking between governments and other organizations assists with accurate monitoring and effective land management.
29	That Metro Vancouver, in consultation with member jurisdictions, First Nations and relevant stakeholder organizations, document and promote the region's value proposition from an industrial economy perspective.	<p>The Economic Development Department already promotes the City's industrial lands and four business parks through various communication channels and by working with regional partners, such as Metro Vancouver. Economic Development staff are also working with the Metro Vancouver Regional Economic Prosperity Advisory Committee and Deloitte to develop a regional investment attraction strategy.</p> <p>Additionally, as part of Business Planning for 2021, the Economic Development Department has proposed implementing a GIS Site Selector Tool to enhance promotion of the City's industrial and commercial lands.</p>

#	RECOMMENDATIONS – Other Jurisdictions	GOAL OF RECOMMENDATION
METRO VANCOUVER ACTION ITEMS		
2	That Metro Vancouver endeavour to strengthen regional policy to protect industrial lands as part of the update to the regional growth strategy, Metro 2040.	To protect remaining industrial lands.
8	That Metro Vancouver conduct a study of the financial factors and other issues that prevent the development of multi-storey industrial spaces in various regional market areas.	To intensify and optimize industrial lands.
25	That Metro Vancouver produce an annual report that summarizes changes to the Industrial Lands Inventory, while continuing to publish a comprehensive Regional Industrial Land Inventory every five years.	To ensure a coordinated approach
30	That Metro Vancouver seek to enhance collaboration across the region to encourage economic growth and diversity, including on industrial lands.	To ensure a coordinated approach
31	That Metro Vancouver assist member jurisdictions seeking to develop and update their own local bring-to-market strategies by providing data and research support in line with its mandate.	To ensure a coordinated approach
OTHER JURISDICTION'S ACTION ITEMS		
6	That the Province grant municipalities the legislative powers to define permitted forms of tenure (i.e. leasehold versus stratified freehold) on industrial land through local zoning bylaws.	To protect remaining industrial lands.
9	That the Province review the current approach to property tax assessment and tax rates based on the highest and best use of a property with regard to its impact on industrial businesses.	To intensify and optimize industrial lands.
10	That the Ministry of Agriculture, in consultation with the Agricultural Land Commission, amend legislation to define under what conditions, if any, large-scale organic waste processing facilities are permitted in the Agricultural Land Reserve.	To intensify and optimize industrial lands.
11	That the Ministry of Agriculture produce guidelines or amend legislation to: define the metrics used to measure the 50/50 rule (i.e. volume, weight, value, etc.) to facilitate consistent application; and clarify the permitted value-added infrastructure of an approved use on an agricultural parcel and define a cap on building infrastructure footprint.	To intensify and optimize industrial lands.
12	That in developing a Regional Flood Management Strategy, the Fraser Basin Council recognize industrial lands and their economic contributions to the broader region when identifying and prioritizing measures to adapt to rising sea levels and flood events.	To intensify and optimize industrial lands.
14	That the Province enable municipalities the discretion to place a warning of anticipated nuisance effects on the title of the lands with sensitive uses that are being developed within a defined proximity of an established or planned industrial use or goods movement corridor.	To bring the existing supply of industrial lands to market & address site issues.
18	That TransLink, as part of the update to the Regional Transportation Strategy and implementation through Investment Plans, continue to identify viable new opportunities to create and improve transit linkages between the region's industrial areas and local workers, where such transit can operate efficiently and effectively as part of the region's transit network.	To bring the existing supply of industrial lands to market & address site issues.

19	That the Port of Vancouver, Metro Vancouver, TransLink, the Vancouver Airport Authority, and rail line operators, work together to identify policies and actions that support the optimization and safety of goods movement to and from industrial lands via roads, highways, railways, air, and access points to navigable waterways including short sea shipping.	To bring the existing supply of industrial lands to market & address site issues.
20	That the Province work with municipalities and industry partners to understand, forecast, plan for, and mitigate the impacts of the land demands for truck traffic and truck parking related to goods movement and drayage.	To bring the existing supply of industrial lands to market & address site issues.
21	That the Port of Vancouver continue to work with Metro Vancouver and TransLink to optimize port related land uses and container drayage.	To bring the existing supply of industrial lands to market & address site issues.
22	That the Greater Vancouver Gateway Council continue its efforts to attract grants and other funding, and leverage their success towards improved infrastructure linkages and capital investments that support regional and local policy goals.	To bring the existing supply of industrial lands to market & address site issues.
23	That the Greater Vancouver Urban Freight Council continue its efforts to coordinate the implementation of the Regional Goods Movement Strategy between its member organizations	To bring the existing supply of industrial lands to market & address site issues.
24	That regional organizations and stakeholders continue to investigate and implement options designed to reduce the environmental impacts related to the transportation of goods and people in the region, through their respective plans and policies.	To bring the existing supply of industrial lands to market & address site issues.
28	That major regional industrial land users and organizations, such as the Port of Vancouver, Vancouver Airport Authority, NAIOP Commercial Real Estate Development Association and other relevant stakeholders, consider expanding data sharing partnerships for the purpose of improving economic development and infrastructure investment, guiding land use and goods movement planning, and informing the development of associated policies.	To ensure a coordinated approach.
32	That the Province develop a framework for economic and land use planning coordination between neighbouring regions in the broader southwestern BC economic region to support industrial land use and protection.	To ensure a coordinated approach.
33	That the Metro Vancouver Regional District and the Fraser Valley Regional District develop and sign a memorandum of understanding that outlines their shared priorities regarding and commitment to the effective and efficient management, protection, and development of industrial lands within the Lower Mainland.	To ensure a coordinated approach.
34	That the federal government, in implementing the Port's Modernization Review, take a broader provincial perspective for ports in British Columbia, in part to alleviate land pressure in the Lower Mainland.	To ensure a coordinated approach.



January 14, 2021

Sav Dhaliwal, Chair
Metro Vancouver Board of Directors
4730 Kingsway
Burnaby, BC V5H 0C6

Dear Chair Dhaliwal,

Re: Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy

Delta Council is supportive of Metro Vancouver's efforts to respond to the pressures facing the region's industrial land supply. The City of Delta has one of the largest industrial bases in the region and is well located close to major transportation networks. Delta remains committed to protecting this land base and encouraging re-development and intensification of under-utilized industrial lands. Delta has also sought to expand the industrial land base where agricultural and environmental benefits are achieved.

At the January 11, 2021 Regular Meeting, Delta Council received the enclosed staff report dated December 15, 2020, and passed a resolution to endorse the Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy, as presented in the report dated June 2020 titled "Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy". In addition, Delta Council requests Metro Vancouver include Delta in any consultation on a potential Industrial Land Reserve.

Should you require any further information, please contact Ms. Marcy Sangret, Director of Community Planning and Development/Deputy City Manager, by phone at 604.946.3219 or email at msangret@delta.ca.

Yours truly,

George V. Harvie
Mayor

Enclosure

...2

January 14, 2021
Page 2

cc: Jerry Dobrovolny, Chief Administrative Officer
Heather McNell, General Manager of Regional Planning & Housing Services
Sean McGill, City Manager
Marcy Sangret, Director of Community Planning & Development



City of Delta
COUNCIL REPORT
Regular Meeting

F.08

To: **Mayor and Council** File No.: **P10-15**
From: **Community Planning & Development Department**
Date: **December 15, 2020**

Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy

The following report has been reviewed and endorsed by the City Manager.

▪ **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- A. THAT the Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy, as presented in the report dated June 2020 titled "Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy", be endorsed.
- B. THAT Metro Vancouver be requested to include Delta in any consultation on a potential Industrial Land Reserve.
- C. THAT a letter from Mayor George V. Harvie noting Delta Council's endorsement of the Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy, request for consultation on a potential Industrial Land Reserve and a copy of this report be forwarded to the Chair of Metro Vancouver Board, Mr. Sav Dhaliwal.

▪ **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to present for Council's consideration of endorsement the Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy dated June 2020 (Attachment A) for support.

▪ **BACKGROUND:**

In early 2019, Metro Vancouver hired Hemson Consulting to coordinate the development of the Regional Industrial Lands Strategy. After completing consultation with the Industrial Lands Strategy Task Force chaired by Mayor George V. Harvie, and stakeholders, Metro Vancouver has identified and refined a set of policy options and recommendations.

The draft Industrial Lands Strategy was circulated in early 2020 to corresponding municipalities. At the March 9, 2020 Regular Meeting, Council adopted a recommendation to send a letter to Metro Vancouver highlighting Delta's support of the draft Regional Industrial Lands Strategy and noting concerns with Recommendation 4 to establish an Industrial Land Reserve for strategically located trade-enabling industrial uses in the Lower Mainland.

The draft Industrial Lands Strategy was presented to the Industrial Lands Strategy Task Force on May 1, 2020. The Task Force referred the report back to staff to update the references related to the protection of regional agricultural lands and a potential industrial land reserve.

▪ **DISCUSSION:**

Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy

At the July 3, 2020 Regular Meeting, the Board of Directors of the Metro Vancouver Regional District adopted a resolution to approve the revised Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy (June 2020) and to forward the Strategy to member jurisdictions requesting endorsement and implementation of actions attributed to each specific organization.

The draft Strategy identifies four main challenges facing Metro Vancouver's industrial lands as:

- A constrained land supply;
- Pressure on industrial lands;
- Site and adjacency issues; and
- A complex jurisdictional environment.

The Strategy builds the framework to accomplish this critical work through the use of four "Big Moves" which consist of 34 recommendations and 10 priority actions. The Big Moves are:

- Protect remaining industrial lands;
- Intensify and optimize industrial lands;
- Bring the existing land supply to market & address site issues; and
- Ensure a coordinated approach.

The 10 priority action items are:

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Define trade-orientated lands | • Strengthen regional policy |
| • Seek greater consistency in local government zoning definitions and permitted uses | • Prepare bring-to-market strategies for vacant or under-developed industrial lands |
| • Ensure transportation connectivity | • Improve data and monitoring |
| • Develop a framework for coordination | • Coordinate strategies for economic growth and investment |
| • Undertake a regional land use assessment | • Facilitate the intensification/densification of industrial forms where possible |

Implementation Items

Of the 34 recommendations outlined in the report, Delta would be able to directly participate in 11 of them, and would be responsible for implementation of five of them.

Key implementation items for Delta are as follows:

- Consider appropriate areas for Trade-Orientated Zoning, which would apply to large sites associated with the transportation of goods to and through the region. Trade-Orientated Zoning would be defined as part of the 10 priority items. Once a regional definition is adopted Delta would look for opportunities to protect lands designated as “trade-orientated”.
- Facilitate the intensification/densification of industrial forms where possible. Actions to support industrial intensification include: removing any unnecessary restrictions to density or height limits where appropriate, allowing mixing of industrial with other employment land uses so long as the industrial component is secured as condition of redevelopment and exploring opportunities to encourage intensification in target areas (where appropriate). Currently, Delta’s “Zoning Bylaw No. 7600, 2017” does not have density or height limits in the industrial categories. As a result, Delta is already well-positioned to accommodate intensification/densification of industrial forms subject to market conditions.
- Prepare a bring-to-market strategy for any vacant or under-developed industrial lands. This item involves proactively addressing issues preventing the development of vacant or under-utilized industrial lands, which may have unique site challenges, such as servicing limitations, soil qualities, and ownership assembly. Delta has several strategies that target challenging or under-utilized industrial sites such as “Saving Our Industrial Lands”, the Demolition and Land Clearing (DLC) Landfill Site Economic Investment Zone and Revitalization Tax Exemption Program Bylaw, and the Delta Industrial & Tourism Revitalization Tax Exemption Program Bylaw.
- Consider adopting the “Railway Association of Canada and Federation of Canadian Municipalities Guidelines for New Development in Proximity to Railway Operations” when considering development permissions and changes of use in proximity to active railway corridors and other major goods movement corridors.
- Provide a summary report of local development activity on land in the Metro Vancouver Industrial Land Inventory as part of the regional Development Cost Charge reporting, once per year.

Staff will follow up on the implementation of the five above-noted items in Delta as Metro Vancouver's work progresses in these areas.

Industrial Land Reserve

As a separate motion, at its July 3, 2020 Regular Meeting, the Metro Vancouver Board of Directors also adopted the following resolution:

"That staff be directed to continue to explore the feasibility of an Industrial Land Reserve, and other potential policy measures and initiatives, and report back the findings to the future Board meeting."

Further work by Metro Vancouver staff on the above resolution is forthcoming. Council previously advised Metro Vancouver of concerns with the recommendation to establish an industrial land reserve without considerably more information to fully assess the implications for Delta. Staff recommends that Metro Vancouver be requested to include Delta in any consultation pertaining to an Industrial Land Reserve.

Implications:


Foundation for the Future Implications – The Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy supports the Community Economic Sustainability pillar by seeking investment and development of industrial lands that supports local and regional economic goals.

Financial Implications – There are no financial implications to Delta.

- **CONCLUSION:**

Metro Vancouver Board of Directors have approved the revised Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy, dated June 2020; Metro Vancouver is now seeking endorsement for the plan from the City of Delta.

It is recommended that Council endorse the Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy, dated June 2020. It is further recommended that Council request that Metro Vancouver include Delta in consultation regarding any Industrial Lands Reserve. Additionally, it is recommended that a letter be sent from Mayor George V. Harvie to the Chair of the Metro Vancouver Board noting Delta Council's endorsement of the Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy and request for consultation on a potential Industrial Land Reserve.


Marcy Sangret

Marcy Sangret
Director of Community Planning & Development/Deputy City Manager

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LF/rj

• ATTACHMENT:

A. Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Strategy Draft dated June, 2020