

To: Intergovernment and Finance Committee

From: Elisa Campbell, Director of Regional Planning and Electoral Area Services,
Parks, Planning and Environment

Date: November 8, 2016 Meeting Date: November 18, 2016

Subject: **Consideration of the Township of Langley's Regional Context Statement**

RECOMMENDATION

That the GVRD Board accept the Township of Langley's Regional Context Statement as submitted to Metro Vancouver on November 8, 2016.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek GVRD Board acceptance of the Township of Langley's Regional Context Statement in accordance with Section 448 of the *Local Government Act*.

BACKGROUND

On July 29, 2011, the GVRD Board (Metro Vancouver) adopted *Metro Vancouver 2040: Shaping our Future (Metro 2040)*, the regional growth strategy. Pursuant to Section 446 of the *Local Government Act*, each local government must submit a Regional Context Statement within two years of the adoption of a new regional growth strategy.

The Township of Langley Council submitted its original Regional Context Statement to Metro Vancouver in July 2013; the GVRD Board declined to accept the RCS in November 2013 based on four objections. In February 2014, in accordance with Local Government Act section XXX, the Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development directed Metro Vancouver and the Township of Langley to enter into non-binding dispute resolution.

As a result of a successful, non-binding dispute resolution process, as formalized in a Settlement Agreement signed by the two parties on October 21, 2016, the Township's RCS has been updated. On November 7, 2016, the Township of Langley Council passed a resolution requesting the GVRD Board to consider acceptance of the Township of Langley Regional Context Statement (Attachment 1). The Township submitted its RCS to Metro Vancouver on November 8, 2016.

REGIONAL CONTEXT STATEMENT APPROVAL PROCESS

A Regional Context Statement (RCS) identifies the relationship between a municipality's Official Community Plan (OCP) and *Metro 2040*, the regional growth strategy, and, if applicable, how the Official Community Plan is to be made consistent with the regional growth strategy over time. *Metro 2040* identifies Metro Vancouver's role to accept (by a simple majority weighted Board vote) Regional Context Statements that support the goals and strategies of the regional growth strategy. The role of municipalities is to adopt RCSs that specify how the municipality's OCP addresses each of the applicable *Metro 2040* policy actions. In considering an RCS, the GVRD Board's expectation is that the

content of an acceptable RCS is generally consistent with the goals, strategies and actions as well as the parcel-based regional land use designations in *Metro 2040*.

The *Local Government Act*, section 448 states that Metro Vancouver must respond by Board resolution within 120 days of receipt of the proposed Regional Context Statement, through a simple majority vote indicating whether it accepts the RCS. If the GVRD Board refuses to accept a RCS, it will indicate the provisions to which it objects and the reasons for its objections.

In the case of the Township of Langley's Regional Context Statement submitted on November 8, 2016, Section 5 of the Settlement Agreement that formalizes solutions agreed to through the non-binding dispute resolution process states that:

As soon as practicable following execution of this Agreement, Metro Vancouver and the Township will concurrently undertake the following steps:

a. The Township will:

- i. submit to Metro Vancouver for acceptance pursuant to section 448 of the Act the Revised Context Statement, incorporating the amendments set out in this Agreement; and*
- ii. notify Metro Vancouver when the Municipality adopts an amendment to the Official Community Plan pursuant to the provisions of this Agreement.*

b. Metro Vancouver will:

- i. accept the Revised Context Statement;*
- ii. initiate a Type 3 Minor Amendment to Metro 2040 to incorporate modifications to Map 2: Regional Land Use Designations contained in Metro 2040 resulting from this Agreement; and*
- iii. convene a workshop with staff from both Metro Vancouver and the Township to create a mutually acceptable solution and process for confirming the long term planning and use for the portion of the 200th Street / Highway 1 site that is not used for manufactured home residential development.*

TOWNSHIP OF LANGLEY REGIONAL CONTEXT STATEMENT

The Township of Langley is one of the largest geographic, and rapidly growing, areas within Metro Vancouver. With a total land area of 31,130 hectares, the Township of Langley is Metro Vancouver's second largest municipality, comprising 11% of the region's land area.

As shown in Table 1, the Township includes lands with all six *Metro 2040* land use designations. The Township contains about 40% of the Agricultural lands in Metro Vancouver, and the majority of the municipality is within the Agricultural Land Reserve. 69% of the lands in the Township have a *Metro 2040* Agricultural land use designation. The Township of Langley, along with Maple Ridge, has a large share of lands with a *Metro 2040* Rural land use designation. Lands with a *Metro 2040* Conservation and Recreation designation within the Township are located within regional or municipal parks.

The Township also has a substantial supply of lands with a *Metro 2040* General Urban designation. About 75% of the Township's lands with a *Metro 2040* General Urban land use designation have been developed, and the Township has substantial growth potential in the remaining *Metro 2040* General

Urban lands that are planned for future urban growth. *Metro 2040* and the Township anticipate that over the next 30 years the Township will double its population from 108,000 in 2011 to 211,000 in 2041, primarily within the existing General Urban area.

15% of lands in Township have a *Metro 2040* Industrial or Mixed Employment designation, which includes the important industrial areas of Port Kells and Gloucester, as well as 10% of the region's undeveloped industrial land inventory.

Table 1: Regional Land Use Designations in the Township of Langley

Regional Land Use Designation	Township Land Area (ha)	% of Township Total	Metro Vancouver Land Area	% of Metro Vancouver
Total	31,100	100%	280,107	11.1%
Urban Containment Boundary	5,943	19%	90,429	6.6%
General Urban	4,923	16%	70,095	7.0%
Industrial	815	2.5%	10,185	8%
Mixed Employment	256	0.8%	3,392	7%
Agricultural	21,322	69%	55,312	39%
Rural	2,497	8.0%	8,478	29%
Conservation and Recreation	1,316	4.0%	132,644	0.1%

Goal 1: Create a Compact Urban Area

Table A.1 in *Metro 2040* sets out population, dwelling unit and employment projections by municipality for the years 2021, 2031 and 2041 as guidelines for long-range planning for Metro Vancouver and member municipalities. The Township's Regional Context Statement contains population projections that are consistent with the regional growth strategy, anticipating growing to 144,000 residents by 2021, 186,000 residents by 2031 and a population of 211,000 by 2041. Similarly, the dwelling unit and employment projections are also consistent with *Metro 2040*.

Consistent with *Metro 2040*, the Township's RCS identifies boundaries for Willowbrook as part of the Langley Regional City Centre (which is largely located in the City of Langley with only the northern portion of the centre in the Township), and Willoughby and Aldergrove as Municipal Town Centres. The RCS notes that about 14.5% of growth is anticipated to go to these locations to 2041, generally consistent with *Metro 2040's* objective to direct 16% of dwelling unit growth Regional City Centres and 13% of dwelling unit growth to Municipal Town Centres. The Township has identified Carvolth as a Frequent Transit Development Area (FTDA), and directs approximately 8% of dwelling unit growth and about 13% of new jobs to this area.

A key challenge is for the pattern of future urban growth in the Township to support *Metro 2040* growth share targets to Urban Centres and FTDA's. *Metro 2040* sets regional level targets of 68% of dwelling units and 77% of employment growth occurring in Urban Centres and FTDA's. Structuring growth this way is intended to achieve a compact development pattern that supports effective transit services as well as walking and cycling, and the creation of vibrant, complete communities. The Township's RCS anticipates 22% of dwelling units and 16% of employment growth will occur in the Township's Urban Centres and FTDA combined. While each municipality will vary in relation to the

RGS targets, and the Township share is expected to be somewhat lower, these percentages indicate a more dispersed urban growth pattern.

The RCS is consistent with *Metro 2040* in identifying lands with a Rural regional land use designation and in identifying OCP policies that maintain the rural character of those areas, and limiting the provisions of regional sewerage services.

Goal 2: Support a Sustainable Economy

RCS Map A-1 identifies lands with an Industrial or Mixed Employment regional land use designation and generally supports *Metro 2040* Strategies 2.1 and 2.2 for office, economic-related development and major trip generators on lands with appropriate regional land use designations, protection and types of land uses for industrial and mixed employment lands, and intensification of industrial lands.

The RCS expresses the Township's commitment to supporting agriculture through OCP land use designations, its accompanying Rural Plan, and through supporting policies throughout the OCP. The Agriculture land use designation in the OCP is intended primarily for agricultural uses and supporting services where food production and other forms of agriculture are encouraged. Subdivision is limited in agricultural areas, as set out in the Rural Plan and subject to the approval of the provincial Agricultural Land Commission for land within the ALR. Agricultural viability is further supported by OCP policies to manage the urban-agricultural interface through development permit guidelines, provision of setbacks, landscaped buffers, informational signage, restrictive covenants and transitional land uses.

The RCS also contains criteria to facilitate appropriate municipal flexibility, in certain cases and under specific conditions, to allow amendments to the Township's OCP for sites with a regional Agricultural or Rural land use designation.

Goal 3: Protect the Environment and Respond to Climate Change

The Township's RCS is generally consistent with *Metro 2040* Strategies under Goal 3 and references OCP policies that designate and restrict the use of conservation and recreation lands for natural spaces, passive or active use, education and limited / appropriate commercial activities; protect and manage ecologically sensitive lands through buffering, development permit restrictions and integrated land use and drainage plans; provide a recreational greenways plan to complement the Regional Greenways Network; and address GHG reduction strategies, reduced energy consumption and improving air quality.

Goal 4: Develop Complete Communities

The Township's RCS is generally consistent with *Metro 2040* Strategies under Goal 4 and references OCP policies that encourage and work toward a diversity of housing type and tenure, and that create incentives to support development of affordable and non-market housing; provide OCP policy references to implementation of the Housing Action Plan; support compact mixed use communities oriented to facilitate transit, cycling and walking, and the location of major cultural and institutional facilities within Urban Centres; and support a range of services and amenities consistent with *Metro 2040* actions for developing healthy and complete communities.

Goal 5: Support Sustainable Transportation Choices

The Township's RCS is generally consistent with *Metro 2040* Strategies under Goal 5 and references OCP policies that support *Metro 2040* actions to coordinate land use and transportation, although projected population and employment growth shows a small share of growth in locations proximate to Urban Centres and other primary transit access locations. Policies are also referenced that support mixed use development, design measures and infrastructure to encourage transportation access by transit, walking and cycling; support reduced parking requirements as well as strategies and employer based programs for transportation demand management; reference OCP Map 8 showing designated truck routes in the Township; include road network and goods movement policies supporting safe and efficient traffic movement; and support protection of rail rights-of-way and access to navigable waterways.

RCS Map A-1

The Township of Langley Regional Context Statement land use designation map currently contains 22 inconsistencies with the *Metro 2040* Regional Land Use Designations map. This reflects a similar approach taken with other municipalities wherein inconsistencies that are considered to be minor mapping issues are rectified through the acceptance of the Regional Context Statement; subsequent to GVRD Board acceptance of the Township's Regional Context Statement, staff will propose a Type 3 amendment to *Metro 2040* to formally incorporate these amendments into the regional growth strategy.

In the case of the Township's RCS, Metro Vancouver staff concur that 18 of the mapping inconsistencies contained in the RCS Map A-1 are minor in nature, do not have a significant impact on regional growth strategy objectives or implementation, and can be considered 'generally consistent' with *Metro 2040*.

Other inconsistencies between the RCS Map A-1 and the *Metro 2040* Regional Land Use Designations map have been addressed through the non-binding dispute resolution process, as formalized in the Settlement Agreement on October 21, 2016.

ALTERNATIVES

1. That the GVRD Board accept the Township of Langley's Regional Context Statement as submitted to Metro Vancouver on November 8, 2016.
2. That the GVRD Board not accept the Township of Langley's Regional Context Statement as submitted to Metro Vancouver on November 8, 2016, indicating the provisions to which the GVRD Board objects and the reasons for the objection, and request that the Township of Langley amend its Regional Context Statement and re-submit the revised Regional Context Statement to the GVRD Board for consideration.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

If the Board approves alternative 1, the Township of Langley will be notified of the Board's decision to accept the Regional Context Statement as submitted. Metro Vancouver staff will return to the Board at a future meeting with a proposal for a Type 3 amendment to *Metro 2040* to formally incorporate related amendments into the regional growth strategy.

If the Board approves alternative 2, the Board would be making a decision that runs counter to the Settlement Agreement adopted by the GVRD Board on September 23, 2016. In addition, the Board would need to indicate the provisions to which the Board objects and the reasons for objection, and request that the Township of Langley amend its Regional Context Statement and re-submit the revised Regional Context Statement to the Board for consideration. This may lead to a dispute resolution process. If the Board chooses not to accept the Regional Context Statement a dispute resolution process may take place, as prescribed in the *Local Government Act*. The cost for this dispute resolution would depend on the process and is prescribed based on the proportion of assessed land values; Metro Vancouver would be responsible for most of the costs.

SUMMARY / CONCLUSION

Consistent with section 446 of the *Local Government Act*, the Township of Langley has submitted a Regional Context Statement to Metro Vancouver for consideration by the GVRD Board. While the Township of Langley Council originally submitted its Regional Context Statement to Metro Vancouver in July 2013, the GVRD Board declined to accept the RCS in November 2013. As a result of a successful, non-binding dispute resolution process, as formalized in a Settlement Agreement signed by the two parties on October 21, 2016, the Township's RCS has been updated. On November 7, 2016, the Township of Langley Council passed a resolution requesting the GVRD Board to consider acceptance of the Township of Langley Regional Context Statement (Attachment 1). The Township submitted its revised RCS to Metro Vancouver on November 8, 2016.

The RCS provides a response to *Metro 2040's* five goals and associated strategies and actions, and generally shows support for achievement of all five goals as described in this report. The Township's RCS Map A-1 currently contains 22 inconsistencies with the *Metro 2040* Regional Land Use Designations map. Metro Vancouver staff concur that 18 of the mapping inconsistencies are minor in nature, do not have a significant impact on regional growth strategy objectives or implementation, and can be considered 'generally consistent' with *Metro 2040*. This reflects a similar approach taken with other municipalities. Subsequent to GVRD Board acceptance of the Township's Regional Context Statement, staff will propose a Type 3 amendment to *Metro 2040* to formally incorporate these amendments into the regional growth strategy. Other inconsistencies between the RCS Map A-1 and the *Metro 2040* Regional Land Use Designations map have been addressed through the non-binding dispute resolution process, as formalized in the Settlement Agreement on October 21, 2016.

Township of Langley staff have worked closely with Metro Vancouver staff on preparing the revised Regional Context Statement which reflects the terms of the Settlement Agreement. Staff recommend that the Board approve alternative 1 as presented.

Attachments: (Doc #20010885)

Correspondence re Township of Langley Regional Context Statement dated November 8, 2016

20011708