

6.0 Regional Context Statement

6.1 Introduction

The *Local Government Act* states that all *Official Community Plans* must have a section outlining how they fit into their region's growth strategy. Although the UEL is not a municipality, it is a member of the Greater Vancouver Regional District, which administers the *Living Region Strategic Plan (LRSP)*. The UEL is located within the Growth Concentration Area as defined in the *LRSP*.

The *LRSP* is based on the following four fundamental strategies:

- Protecting the Green Zone;
- Building Complete Communities;
- Achieving a Compact Metropolitan Region; and
- Increasing Transportation Choices.

This Regional Context Statement outlines what the UEL will be doing to align local policies with the regional priorities established in the *LRSP*.

6.2 Protecting the Green Zone

The intent of the Green Zone policy is to protect the Lower Mainland's natural assets and establish a boundary for urban growth. The undeveloped parts of the University Endowment Lands are themselves a green zone, acting as a development buffer in a high demand single-family area.

As indicated in Figure 2 - Land Use Map, the UEL supports this initiative by:

- a) Protecting Pacific Spirit Regional Park as over 700 hectares (1,800 acres) of undevelopable land between UBC and Greater Vancouver in a coordinated effort with GVRD Parks;
- b) Setting aside Block 98 as Jim Everett Memorial Park (*see Figure 2 – Legal Reference 1*);
- c) Placing restrictions on the use of Block D, Block 1, District Lot 6494 (Plan 11469) to preserve as publicly accessible parkland (*see Figure 2 – Legal Reference 2*);
- d) Preserving the greenbelt on Western Parkway between Agronomy Road and NW Marine Drive;
- e) Preserving the University Golf Course as publicly-accessible open space;
- f) Preserving the hedge on the west side of Westbrook Crescent south of Chancellor Boulevard and north of University Boulevard as a sound and visual barrier;
- g) Preserving public access to all existing servicing right-of-ways in *Area B*; and
- h) Ensuring that Lot 3483 (the UEL Workyard) be retained only for current administration uses and/or local community recreation purposes (*see Figure 2 – Legal Reference 3*).

6.3 Building Complete Communities

The *Livable Region Strategic Plan* has identified four main components of building complete communities, including a balance of jobs and housing, housing options, service provision and transportation options. A complete community offers a great diversity of choice and convenience, where people can live, work and play without having to travel great distances.

The UEL supports this initiative by:

- a) Identifying through further study, bylaw mechanisms that promote the provision of rental accommodation for all new or renovated residential developments;
- b) Requiring any development application seeking increases in the density allowable, to include a minimum of 20% of this additional area to be below-market price and/or special needs housing;
- c) Encouraging mixed-use residential/commercial redevelopment in the *Village* area. Parcel P of Block 97 (see *Figure 2 – Legal Reference 7*) in the *Village* was redeveloped to standards that promote the human scale and a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere through the use of open plazas, active streetscapes, narrow retail frontages, rain protection, generous tree planting and comfortable street furnishings, while offering affordable rental housing above;
- d) Allowing redevelopment in *Area D* to optimize density levels established in the *Current Bylaws* while maintaining a human-scaled environment at street levels;
- e) Reviewing the option of allowing secondary suites in established single-family areas to allow more residents to remain in their houses as well as providing affordable housing options, thus increasing density without affecting the built form and character of existing neighbourhoods;
- f) Supporting home-based business uses allowed in the *Current Bylaws* for all *Areas* of the UEL; and
- g) Allowing seniors housing (active or assisted) on *Institutional: Church/Seniors Housing* designated lands.

6.4 Achieving a Compact Metropolitan Region

The UEL's current resident population of 2,800 is supported by approximately 1,061 residences. Single-family type housing accounts for 441 units (42%) with the balance of 620 units being multi-family located only in *Area D*. Growth estimates based upon the potential for new development (anticipated only in *Area D* as new multi-family units) to occur by 2011 will create a total population in the range of 3,800 with a residential unit count of 1,500. The proportion of single-family dwellings is expected to decrease to 29% with multi-family units representing 71% of the total housing stock.

There are currently 10,220 square meters (110,000 square feet) of commercial/retail uses in the UEL with an estimated employment base of 360 people. Development plans anticipate that up to another 930 square meters (10,000 square feet) may be added in the future, which would bring the total employment base to 400.

The intent of the GVRD's regional plan is to promote growth within the urban boundary zones identified as Growth Concentration Areas. This includes infilling undeveloped areas and growing established commercial centres. Compact metro regions are the end result of strong green zones and managed growth at the local level.

The UEL supports this initiative by:

- a) Focussing and densifying commercial development within established commercial areas;
- b) Densifying existing multi-family residential zones through redevelopment initiatives;
and
- c) Supporting growth close to existing transit lines and promoting public transit use for all UEL residents (such as utilizing off-peak capacity for reduced fares) through discussions with Translink.

6.5 Increasing Transportation Choices

Increasing transportation choices by promoting the use of transit, cycling, walking and carpooling is intended to minimize the impact of single-occupancy vehicles and maximize the use of present infrastructure in the lower mainland. Single-occupancy vehicles are the largest single source of air pollution in the lower mainland.

The UEL supports this initiative by:

- a) Lobbying the MoT to maintain University Boulevard as an arterial road designed for alternative-transit use;
- b) Amending the *Current Bylaws* to require new multi-family developments to provide safe and convenient bicycle storage;
- c) Encouraging the MoT to install an on-road bike lane on Chancellor Boulevard between Acadia Rd. and the City of Vancouver's 8th Avenue 'Off-Broadway' cycling route; and
- d) The University Endowment Lands are located adjacent to a major transit line primarily serving the University of British Columbia. Morning inbound buses run at capacity to the campus with a corresponding outbound peak in the afternoon. Considering programs to make this excess capacity in the opposite direction attractive for use by UEL residents will encourage transit usage.