

# Staff Report to Council

Planning and Development

FILE: 6480-20-2022

**REPORT DATE:** June 03, 2022

**MEETING DATE:**

June 21, 2021

**TO:** Mayor and Council

**FROM:** Colin O'Byrne, Acting Director of Planning and Development

**SUBJECT:** Metro Vancouver Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1339, 2022

**CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REVIEW/APPROVAL:**



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## RECOMMENDATION(S):

THAT Council:

- A. Accept Metro Vancouver Regional District Regional Growth Strategy, *Metro 2050 Bylaw No. 1339, 2022*, dated February 2022; OR
- B. Other.

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## PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek a Council resolution to accept Metro Vancouver's Regional Growth Strategy, *Metro 2050*.

☐ Information Report

☒ Decision Report

☐ Direction Report

## DISCUSSION

### Background:

On April 20, 2022, the Metro Vancouver Regional District Board held a public hearing for the new regional growth strategy (RGS), *Metro 2050*, and have referred the bylaw to member municipalities for final review and acceptance pursuant to the *Local Government Act*. Metro Vancouver anticipates that the Board will adopt the new RGS in July 2022.

*Metro Vancouver 2040: Shaping our Future (Metro 2040)* is the current regional growth strategy for the Metro Vancouver region. It provides a collective vision for how growth will be managed

to support the creation of complete, connected, and resilient communities while protecting important lands and providing urban infrastructure. *Metro 2040* was unanimously adopted in 2011 by 21 municipalities, TransLink, and adjacent regional districts.

In 2019, Metro Vancouver began the process of updating *Metro 2040*. The purpose of the update is to extend the regional growth strategy to the year 2050, consider significant drivers of change, improve policies, and integrate with TransLink's forthcoming regional transportation strategy, *Transport 2050*. Metro Vancouver engaged with member jurisdictions between April 2019 and June 2021, including the City of Pitt Meadows, TransLink, provincial ministries, First Nations, other regional organizations and agencies, adjacent regional districts, subject matter experts, and the general public.

This process identified issues, gaps, and opportunities that informed the development of proposed updates to the regional growth strategy. Proposed updates were subsequently reviewed by the Intergovernmental Advisory Committee (IAC), a committee established by Metro Vancouver per the *Local Government Act*. The role of the IAC was to include affected local governments in the development and implementation of *Metro 2050* and facilitate the coordination of Provincial and local government actions, policies, and programs.

Between January and May 2021, the IAC reviewed draft policy changes proposed for *Metro 2050* and provided comments for consideration. City staff contributed to this process through participation in Metro Vancouver sub-committees and staff-to-staff workshops. Comments received through the IAC were used to inform the development of the draft *Metro 2050*, and City staff's comments were generally addressed. The draft was released and referred by the Metro Vancouver Regional District Board of Directors to member jurisdictions in June 2021 and remained open for comment until November 26, 2021. The City of Pitt Meadows staff reviewed the draft regional growth strategy, sending a report to the November 9, 2021 Council meeting that requested that Council consider authorizing staff to forward comments to Metro Vancouver. The submitted comments and Metro Vancouver's responses are summarized in Attachment B.

### **Relevant Policy, Bylaw or Legislation:**

The following sections of the *Local Government Act* regulate the adoption procedures of regional growth strategies, including the acceptance of the RGS by local governments:

**436** (1) Before it is adopted, a regional growth strategy must be accepted by the affected local governments or, failing acceptance, become binding on the affected local governments under section 440 (6) [*settlement of regional growth strategy in acceptance not otherwise reached*].

(2) Acceptance of a regional growth strategy by an affected local government must be done by resolution of the local government.

(3) For the purposes of this section, before third reading of the bylaw to adopt a regional growth strategy, the board must submit the regional growth strategy to the following:

- (a) the council of each municipality all or part of which is covered by the regional growth strategy;
- (b) the board of directors of the South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority if the regional growth strategy is for the Metro Vancouver Regional District;
- (c) the board of each regional district that is adjoining an area to which the regional growth strategy is to apply;
- (d) the facilitator or, if no facilitator for the regional growth strategy has been designated, the minister.

(4) After receiving a proposed regional growth strategy under subsection (3), each affected local government must

- (a) review the regional growth strategy in the context of any official community plans and regional growth strategies for its jurisdiction, both those that are current and those that are in preparation, and in the context of any other matters that affect its jurisdiction, and
- (b) subject to an extension by the facilitator under section 438 (3), within 60 days of receipt either
  - (i) accept the regional growth strategy, or
  - (ii) respond, by resolution, to the proposing board indicating that the local government refuses to accept the regional growth strategy.

(7) In the resolution under subsection (4) (b) (ii), the affected local government must indicate

- (a) each provision to which it objects,
- (b) the reasons for its objection, and
- (c) whether it is willing that a provision to which it objects be included in the regional growth strategy on the basis that the provision will not apply to its jurisdiction, as referred to in section 432 (2).

### **Analysis:**

Much of the content in *Metro 2050* is unchanged or aligns with the policies and designations within *Metro 2040*. *Metro 2050* does not propose any significant changes to the definitions of the Urban Containment Boundary, Urban Centres overlay, or Frequent Transit Development. Much of the mapping also remains the same. Differences and updates include:

- Introduction of 'Major Transit Growth Corridors' as areas along with TransLink's Major Transit Network where member jurisdictions may identify new Frequent Transit Development Areas to accommodate concentrated growth (*Metro 2050*, Page 17 and Map 5);
- New housing policies to encourage transit-oriented affordable housing, increase housing stock, and protect existing non-market rental units (*Metro 2050*, Goal 4: Provide Diverse and Affordable Housing Choices) ;

- Collective actions toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions and preparing for climate change impacts (*Metro 2050*, Goal 3: Protect the Environment, Address Climate Change and Respond to Natural Hazards);
- Greater emphasis on improving relationships with First Nations (*Metro 2050*, Policies 1.1.6, 3.2.4, 6.5), including maps and new policies supporting better coordination, collaboration, data, and information sharing, as well as supportive planning research with in-region First Nations;
- Integration of social equity as an objective of the strategy (*Metro 2050*, Vision, p.11; and,
- New regional targets, intended to be aspirational, include protecting 50% of land for nature (*Metro 2050* Policy 3.2.1 a), increasing tree canopy cover to 40% within urban areas (*Metro 2050* Policy 3.2.1 b), and encouraging 15% of new housing in Urban Centres and Frequent Transit Development Areas to be affordable rental housing (*Metro 2050* Policy 4.2.7 a).

As part of the IAC review process, City staff requested that the draft regional growth strategy be revised to allow the Metro Vancouver Board to consider changes to regional land use designation for lands that have been conditionally removed from the Agricultural Land Reserve. This request came about because of the issues that the City had with Metro Vancouver and their reluctance to reconsider the land use designations for the North Lougheed Area Plan given the following policy in *Metro 2040*:

2.3.4 Work with the Agricultural Land Commission to protect the region's agricultural land base and not amend the Agricultural or Rural land use designation of a site if it is still part of the Agricultural Land Reserve, except to change it to an Agricultural land use designation (*Metro 2040*).

Metro Vancouver has revised the draft Regional Context Statement to permit the Metro Vancouver Board's consideration of lands that have been conditionally removed from the Agricultural Land Reserve for changes to their regional land use designations. The policy was revised as follows:

2.3.4 Work with the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) to protect the region's agricultural land base and not consider amending the Agricultural or Rural regional land use designation of a site if it is still part of the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). Upon conditional approval by the ALC to exclude land from the ALR, the MVRD Board may also provide conditional approval of a regional land use designation amendment for the exclusion site, subject to all the ALC exclusion conditions being met (*Metro 2050*).

A summary of further comments from Council and from staff, along with Metro Vancouver responses is available in Attachment B.

In response to comments from other municipalities and agencies in the region, Metro 2050 was updated and improved as follows:

- Provide greater clarity about the role of Major Transit Growth Corridors (MTGC) by specifying that not all location with MTGCs are suitable for growth, to help curb speculation; and, that municipalities will determine if and where appropriate new Frequent Transit Development Areas will be designated, to support their growth objectives;
- Adjust the title of goal 3 to reflect the need to “address” climate change, not simply “respond” to it, and provide additional clarity in the Goal 3 preamble;
- Adjust the titles of Strategies 3.3 and 3.4 to reflect stronger language to advance land use, infrastructure, and settlement patterns that reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions and improve resilience, not merely encourage it.
- Provide greater clarity on the intent of the 15% regional affordable housing target for Urban Centre and FTDAs to reflect that it is a regional goal that members contribute towards, and noting that other transit-oriented locations can also be good locations for affordable housing; and
- Provide similar clarity for the Urban Tree Canopy cover target.

Additionally, the Metro Vancouver Board passed a resolution in March that would set the stage for additional work through 2022 to explore the potential for stronger policy actions for *Metro 2050* through an early amendment to the plan, post adoption.

### **Options for City Council**

The *Local Government Act* requires that the regional board refer a proposed regional growth strategy to councils of member municipalities so that they can provide a response (via resolution) of either acceptance or refusal to accept back to regional board within 60 days of receipt of the referral. If a council resolution is not returned within the 60 day referral period, the municipality is deemed to have accepted the regional growth strategy. If the local government chooses to not accept the RGS, it must indicate each provision to which it objects, the reasons for the objection and whether it is willing to accept a provision to which it objects provided that the provision will not apply to its jurisdiction.

### **COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT**

- ☒ Principled Governance      ☐ Balanced Economic Prosperity      ☐ Corporate Excellence  
☐ Community Spirit & Wellbeing      ☐ Transportation & Infrastructure Initiatives  
☐ Not Applicable

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### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- ☒ None      ☐ Budget Previously Approved      ☐ Referral to Business Planning  
☐ Other

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

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## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

☒ Inform    ☐ Consult    ☐ Involve    ☐ Collaborate    ☐ Empower

Comment(s): Metro Vancouver has conducted its own public participation process for *Metro 2050*, which included a public hearing held on April 20, 2022. Pitt Meadows residents and businesses will be informed of *Metro 2050* by way of this report, which will be available on the City's website.

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## **KATZIE FIRST NATION CONSIDERATIONS**

Referral    ☐ Yes    ☒ No

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## **SIGN-OFFS**

### **Written by:**

Dana Parr,  
Planner II

### **Reviewed by:**

Colin O'Byrne,  
Acting Director of Planning and Development

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## **ATTACHMENT(S):**

- A. Metro 2050 Regional Growth Strategy
- B. Metro Vancouver RGS Response Table