



Corporate Report

NO: R248

COUNCIL DATE: December 15, 2008

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council DATE: December 15, 2008
FROM: General Manager, Planning and Development FILE: 0450-01
SUBJECT: Status of the Metro Vancouver Regional Growth Strategy Review Process and
the Addition of Specific Parcels to the Green Zone

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council:

1. Receive this report as information;
2. Resolve to request that Metro Vancouver add to the "Green Zone", as "conservation/recreation area", the lands illustrated in Appendix I to this report, which are further described in the body of this report, having an area of approximately 189.3 hectares (468 acres);
3. Direct staff to bring forward, for the required readings and to set a date for the related Public Hearing, an amendment to the Surrey Official Community Plan, By-law, 1996, No. 12900, as amended (the "OCP By-law") to redesignate the lands referenced in recommendation 2 from their current designations to the "Conservation Area" designation; and
4. Authorize the City Clerk to forward a copy of this report and the related Council resolution to Metro Vancouver.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the status of the ongoing review of the Metro Vancouver Regional Growth Strategy and to obtain Council approval to forward a request to Metro Vancouver to include additional lands located in the City of Surrey in the Green Zone.

BACKGROUND

The current Regional Growth Strategy for Metro Vancouver is the Liveable Region Strategic Plan (the "LRSP"), which was adopted by the GVRD in 1996. A major review of this Regional Growth Strategy is now underway and it is anticipated that there will be a municipal and public consultation process in relation to this major review throughout 2009.

One of the four pillars, or fundamental strategies of the LRSP, is to "Protect the Green Zone". The Green Zone, shown in Appendix 1, currently acts not only as a boundary limiting urban expansion in the Region, but also contains watersheds and floodplains, ecologically important lands such as forests, wilderness areas, wildlife habitat and wetlands, outdoor recreation and scenic lands, such as major parks and recreation areas, as well as the lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve (the "ALR"). Within the City of Surrey, approximately 9,865 hectares (24,376 acres) of land is currently contained within the Green Zone. There have been no amendments to the Green Zone since the LRSP was adopted in 1996.

Proposed Additions to the Green Zone

At the Regular Council – Public Hearing meeting on November 3, 2008 Council requested that staff bring forward a report recommending a process for adding the following lands to the Green Zone (these lands are illustrated in Appendix I):

• Bothwell Park	41.5 ha	102 acres
• Crescent Park	52.2 ha	129 acres
• Kwomais Point Park	6.5 ha	16 acres
• Redwood Park	46.5 ha	115 acres
• Latimer Lake Park	19.6 ha	49 acres
• Campbell Heights	<u>23.0 ha</u>	<u>57 acres</u>
Total	189.3 ha	468 acres

These additions to the Green Zone are consistent with one of the objectives for the Green Zone, which is to protect natural spaces, without impacting land that is intended for commercial, residential or industrial use. These lands have been or are being acquired by Surrey for park or conservation purposes.

Status of the Review of the Regional Growth Strategy

Over the past several years, Metro Vancouver has been undertaking background studies, workshops and forums as part of a major review of the LRSP, the current Regional Growth Strategy. In November 2007, Metro Vancouver released a document on "Options for Metro Vancouver's Growth Management Strategy" and held a series of public meetings throughout the Region.

On February 25, 2008, Council received and considered Corporate Report No. R028, which contained comments on the "Options" document. Council requested that staff arrange a workshop session involving Council and senior staff from Surrey and Metro

Vancouver to discuss concerns and comments related to the Regional Growth Strategy. This workshop was held on March 31, 2008.

Since that time, Metro Vancouver staff has been working on further refinements to the draft Regional Growth Strategy, and have produced a document, dated September 30, 2008, titled "Preliminary Draft, Our Liveable Region: 2040 Metro Vancouver's Regional Growth Strategy. This document was presented to the Regional Land Use and Transportation Committee on October 10, 2008, and to the Metro Vancouver Board later in October. The MV Board referred the document to member municipalities for review and comment.

Staff is reviewing the "Preliminary Draft" document, including the comments that Council provided earlier this year, and will be reporting to Council with recommendations in late January or early February 2009. Metro Vancouver staff anticipate incorporating municipal comments into a further report to the Metro Vancouver Board in March 2009, prior to additional public consultation that will culminate in a final draft of the new Regional Plan for by-law readings and a public hearing later in 2009.

Green Zone Lands in the Surrey Official Community Plan

The six parcels of land that are the subject of this report (i.e., are being proposed for inclusion in the Green Zone) are designated in the Surrey OCP in a variety of designations. The map attached as Appendix II illustrates the subject sites and their respective designations. Their designations range from Rural, to Suburban, Urban, Industrial and Agricultural. Other similar parcels that are currently in the Green Zone in Surrey (i.e., major parks and conservation areas) are designated in the Surrey OCP as "Conservation Area". This designation:

"is intended for major parks, open spaces and environmentally sensitive areas in their natural state, including appropriate indoor and outdoor recreation activities and facilities".

While the current OCP designations and policies may be modified somewhat during the City's current OCP review, it would be appropriate to proceed with an amendment at this time to ensure that the six subject sites are accurately represented in the Regional and City planning documents.

DISCUSSION

The Green Zone is one of the fundamental pillars of the LRSP. Based on discussions to date with Regional staff regarding the update to the Regional Growth Strategy, it is expected that the Green Zone will continue to be a fundamental component of the updated Strategy. To better define the various components that make up the Green Zone, there has been dialogue with regard to further refining this designation into three components: conservation/recreation lands; agricultural lands; and rural lands. The 189.3 ha (468 acres) of land identified in this report for inclusion in the Green Zone would fit best within the "conservation/recreation" category.

Process to Include the Six Sites in the Green Zone

Based on discussions with Metro Vancouver staff, the most efficient way to ensure that the six sites identified in this report are incorporated into the Green Zone is for City Council to adopt a resolution requesting that the Metro Vancouver Region include the sites in the Green Zone designation in the Regional Growth Strategy and then to forward that resolution, together with any relevant background information, to Metro Vancouver.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion, it is recommended that Council:

- Resolve to request that Metro Vancouver add to the "Green Zone" as "conservation/recreation area", the lands illustrated in Appendix I to this report, which are further described in the body of this report, having an area of approximately 189.3 hectares (468 acres);
- Direct staff to bring forward, for the required readings and to set a date for the related Public Hearing, an amendment to the OCP By-law to redesignate the lands referenced in the immediately preceding bullet point from their current respective designations to the "Conservation Area" designation; and
- Authorize the City Clerk to forward a copy of this report and the related Council resolution to Metro Vancouver.

Jean Lamontagne
General Manager
Planning and Development

JM/kms/saw

Attachments:

Appendix I Map of the Green Zone and proposed additions

Appendix II Current OCP designations of lands to be added to the Green Zone



