

TO: MAYOR & COUNCILLORS

FROM: GENERAL MANAGER ENGINEERING
GENERAL MANAGER PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT: BURNABY MOUNTAIN GONDOLA SUPPORTIVE POLICIES AGREEMENT

PURPOSE: To seek Council endorsement of the principles of the Supportive Policies Agreement (SPA) for the Burnaby Mountain Gondola (BMG) project, and approval to finalize and execute the SPA.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the principles of the Supportive Policies Agreement, as outlined in section 3.1 of the report titled “Burnaby Mountain Gondola Supportive Policies Agreement” dated February 25, 2025, be endorsed; and

THAT staff be directed to finalize and execute the Supportive Policies Agreement among the City of Burnaby, Simon Fraser University, and TransLink substantively in accordance with the terms set out in section 3.2 of the report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2022, Council endorsed the Burnaby Mountain Gondola (BMG) project between the Production Way-University SkyTrain station and Simon Fraser University (SFU) on Burnaby Mountain. The project is currently unfunded and for the BMG to be included in TransLink’s initial application list for senior government funding, a Supportive Policy Agreement (SPA) between the City, TransLink and SFU needs to be endorsed as directed through Mayors’ Council.

The BMG SPA is a tri-partite agreement that is intended to advance the principles of TransLink’s Transit-Oriented Communities Design Guidelines, the City’s Official Community Plan, and SFU’s Upper Terminal Innovation Precinct Business Plan. The SPA commitments are intended to demonstrate support for transportation and land use objectives focused on the two terminals. The key terms in the SPA are built around the principles of Destinations, Density, Diversity, Distance, Design, Demand Management, and Natural Environment. The SPA also contemplates the establishment of a monitoring committee to review and monitor the progress of the parties in meeting their respective SPA commitments.

The SPA does not create legally binding rights and obligations on the parties and the execution of the SPA will enable TransLink to advance the project to its next stages.

1.0 POLICY SECTION

The development of the Burnaby Mountain Gondola (BMG) Supportive Policies Agreement (SPA) is aligned with the following Council-adopted:

- Official Community Plan (1998)
- Corporate Strategic Plan (2022)
- Burnaby Transportation Plan (2021)
- Climate Action Framework (2020)
- Environmental Sustainability Strategy (2016)
- Transit Oriented Areas Bylaw (2024)

2.0 BACKGROUND

At the May 27, 2019 regular meeting of Council, Council supported in principle the gondola link between the Millenium SkyTrain Line and the top of Burnaby Mountain. Council’s support was conditional on TransLink’s adherence to the City’s core principles, which included minimizing impacts to areas with high ecological value and residents living near the gondola. As described in section 3.5 of the May 27, 2019 report, TransLink is responsible for guiding the planning and design concept and public/stakeholder engagement necessary to plan and build the BMG.

On January 24, 2022, Council endorsed the BMG project via Route 1 (between the Production Way-University SkyTrain station and SFU). Council also authorized sharing with the Mayors’ Council the decision to support the BMG as an element of TransLink’s 10-Year Priorities of the long-range strategic plan.

On November 28, 2024, the Mayors’ Council included the BMG in the scope of TransLink’s 2025 Investment Plan. The Mayors’ Council also stipulated that in order for TransLink to include the BMG in TransLink’s application for senior government funding, the project partners including the City, SFU and TransLink, would be required to execute the SPA to outline their intentions in support of the project. This requirement is consistent with the approach for other major TransLink projects, including the Surrey-to-Langley SkyTrain and the Broadway Subway.

Since 2023, the City has collaborated with TransLink and SFU in the development of the SPA as a part of the BMG planning process. The SPA is required to advance the BMG project to the next stages of funding application and business case development.

3.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

The purpose of the SPA is to outline each party’s intended policy commitments in support of achieving land use and transportation objectives connected to, but outside of the direct scope of, BMG implementation. Under the SPA, the parties recognize that the BMG will serve as a catalyst to meet multiple objectives in regional and local plans, including Transportation Demand Management (TDM), modal equity and increasing

affordable housing supply. The SPA does not create legally binding rights and obligations on the parties.

3.1 SPA Principles

The SPA is intended to advance the following principles of TransLink’s Transit-Oriented Communities Design Guidelines, the City’s Official Community Plan, and SFU’s Upper Terminal Innovation Precinct Business Plan:

- **Destinations:** the coordination of land use and transportation, focusing on high demand destinations around the two terminals;
- **Density:** the concentration of a mix of homes, jobs, and key activities within walking distance of the terminals at a level appropriate to maximize benefits and support for the transit investment;
- **Diversity:** the provision of diverse land uses and housing for a mix of types, residential tenures and household incomes;
- **Distance:** the continued development of a pedestrian and bicycle-friendly street network to support transit use;
- **Design:** the design of a public realm that is safe, vibrant and accessible to people of all ages and abilities, whether they are walking, cycling, using transit, pushing a stroller, or using a mobility device;
- **Demand Management:** the use of TDM measures that discourage driving and promote sustainable travel, which may include parking pricing to promote walking, cycling and transit around the two terminals; and
- **Natural Environment:** the maintenance and management of connections that provide access to nature.

A conceptual map of the BMG lower and upper terminal areas is included as Attachment 1 to this report.

3.2 Key Terms of the SPA

The following is a general summary of the City’s key commitments and intentions under the SPA as they relate to each of the seven SPA principles described in section 3.1 above:

- **Destination – Coordinate land use and transportation:**
 - By opening day of the BMG for service to the public (Opening Day), designate the Lower Terminal Area as a Frequent Transit Development Area (FTDA) consistent with the designation provided by Metro Vancouver’s Regional Growth Strategy, and consider an FTDA designation for the upper terminal

- area. The FTDA designation will reinforce the priority to concentrate growth of higher density development around the Lower Terminal.
- Update the land use designations around the lower and upper terminal areas as part of the update to the City's OCP.
 - **Density – Concentrate and intensify activities around terminals**
 - In OCP 2050, designate rapid transit-supportive land uses, densities and forms of residential tenure around the lower and upper terminals; include statements demonstrating the City's commitment to developing the lower and upper terminals as higher density mixed use areas; and for the proposed FTDA at the lower terminal, incorporate land uses, density and forms of residential tenure that meet the guidelines provided in the Regional Growth Strategy for Urban Centres and Frequent Transit Development Areas.
 - **Diversity – Encourage a mix of uses including housing types and residential tenure**
 - Encourage housing type and tenure diversity, including affordable housing in the Lower Terminal area and purpose-built rental housing for both Terminal areas; encourage retail and office development including Lake City Business as a preferred location for major business centres and commercial facilities at Brighton Village; identify opportunities for retail, service, office, residential, research, educational, and other compatible uses near the Upper Terminal; encourage appropriate types of industrial and mixed employment consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy designated as 'industrial' and 'employment' within the Lower Terminal area; give consideration to community services by allocating contributions from the City's Community Benefit Bonus policy to increase community benefits such as childcare centres and community services centres, in the Terminal Areas.
 - **Distance – Create a well-connected street and bus network**
 - Within 5 years after Opening Day, identify and consider road safety treatments, consider transit and/or active transportation connections to the Terminal Areas a high priority when applying for regional and/or senior government funding while collaborating with the preparation of the Burrard Peninsula Area Transport Plan.
 - Support alternative transportation and transport demand management to deliver the cycling routes in the Terminal Areas identified in the 10-Year Cycle Network in the Burnaby Transportation Plan by 2030; advance Comfortable for Most bikeway connections on City pathways to the Terminal Areas; seek opportunities to implement cycling improvements prior to Opening Day; endeavour to complete sidewalks in the Terminal Areas identified in the Priority Sidewalk Areas map in the Burnaby Transportation Plan by 2030

through cost-share opportunities and redevelopment; and assess on-street and off-street parking usage and manage demand through curbside management strategies.

- **Design – Create places for people**
 - Prioritize urban design and streetscape through guidelines as part of the DPA guidelines and the Works and Services Bylaw by 2025 to advance placemaking and urban design to enhance the interface of the Lower Terminal area and the surrounding development; and review the Noise or Sound Abatement Bylaw to include sound mitigation related to BMG.
- **Demand Management – Encourage sustainable transportation modes**
 - Encourage sustainable transportation travel modes through the City’s Transportation Demand Management (TDM) policy and guidelines and identify opportunities to incorporate guidelines for non-residential development in the Terminal Areas in the City’s TDM policy by Opening Day and as identified in the regional ‘TDM Guidelines for development in Metro Vancouver’
- **Natural Environment – maintain and manage access to nature**
 - Consult with other agencies on the planning, monitoring, and managing of the Burnaby Mountain Conservation Area (BMCA) for preservation of biodiversity, forest health, tree canopy, and wildfire risks in alignment with the City’s Urban Forest Strategy and mitigation measures in anticipation of direct and indirect environmental impacts from convenient access to trails.
 - Identify opportunities for collaboration with other agencies on developing a trail management plan for the BMCA by 2025 to provide a safe, sustainable, and carefully managed recreational trail system for all residents to enjoy for generations to come and update the trail management plan as needed.

In addition to the commitments and intentions related to the seven SPA principles, the SPA also contemplates the establishment of a multi-stakeholder Monitoring Committee to review the progress of land use and transportation outcomes for the Lower and Upper Terminal areas. Composition of the Monitoring Committee, performance measures, and procedures for committee meetings are proposed in the SPA, with the initiation of the monitoring process to begin after funding and project approval are secured.

3.3 Alignment with OCP and Provincial Legislation

The OCP and Zoning Bylaw updates are ongoing work that will be completed in 2025 in alignment with the proposed SPA. The SPA acknowledges the timing of the OCP update and Zoning Bylaw efforts and has specifically referenced the on-going

work as key mechanisms to advance the land use and transportation objectives of transit-oriented communities in support of the BMG project.

4.0 COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Marketing and Communication has been notified of the SPA development process. After the endorsement of the SPA, the City will facilitate public access with direct linkage to TransLink’s webpage through the City’s project webpage that will inform on the BMG and SPA endorsement. Further consultation and planning on the BMG will be the responsibility of TransLink. As noted above, the BMG project is currently unfunded, and execution of the SPA will enable TransLink to include the BMG project in its application for senior government funding. The development of a more detailed business case and design by TransLink is required to advance the project to its next stages. Staff will continue to keep Council informed of the progress of the BMG project and will bring forward future reports to Council to request further approvals when required, prior to advancement of any further stages of the BMG project.

5.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no financial considerations related to this report.

Respectfully submitted,

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Map of Burnaby Mountain Gondola Terminal Areas

REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

This report was prepared by Kathy Ho, P.Eng., PTOE, Senior Manager, Transportation, and reviewed by Amy Choh, P.Eng., PMP, Director Engineering Transportation, Johannes Schumann, Director Community Planning, and Jennifer Wong, Assistant City Solicitor.