

**TO:** MAYOR & COUNCILLORS  
**FROM:** GENERAL MANAGER PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
**SUBJECT:** **COMMENTS ON PROPOSED METRO 2050 AMENDMENT OPTIONS IN RESPONSE TO REQUEST BY THE MAYORS OF SURREY, LANGLEY TOWNSHIP AND DELTA**  
**PURPOSE:** To seek Council approval to forward the attached comment letter to the Metro Vancouver Board conveying concerns about the four proposed Metro 2050 amendment options.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT** the letter provided as Attachment 2 to the report titled “Comments on Proposed Metro 2050 Amendment Options in Response to Request by Mayors of Surrey, Langley Township and Delta”, dated March 10, 2026, be forwarded to the Metro Vancouver Board.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Metro Vancouver is seeking comments on four proposed amendment options to Metro 2050, the regional growth strategy (RGS) (Attachment 1). The four options have been proposed in response to a request from the Mayors of Surrey, Langley Township, and Delta. The options each have different impacts, but all facilitate the expansion of the Urban Containment Boundary (UCB), enable the loss of regionally designated important lands (e.g. Rural lands), and lower the level of regional consensus required for land use changes in Metro 2050. The proposed options are not consistent with the Values and Goals in Burnaby 2050. Potential planning concerns for Burnaby include cost implications for regional service provision that could lead to the increase of Development Cost Charges; increased cost pressure on TransLink; and negative impacts on the ability of the region to meet Metro 2050 targets (including compact urban area, growth structuring, greenhouse gas emission reduction, tree canopy cover, and the protection of nature targets). In addition, the accelerated timeline and short engagement window limit the ability for deliberation and analysis which could lead to unintended consequences for all members. Concerns with the proposed options have been described in the attached letter (Attachment 2), presented here for Council to consider forwarding to the Metro Vancouver Board. Comments are due March 20, 2026.

### **1.0 POLICY SECTION**

Metro 2050, the regional growth strategy was accepted by all affected local governments, including Burnaby, and adopted by the MVRD Board in 2023. Official Community Plans must be generally consistent with the RGS. Amendments to OCPs that trigger Metro 2050 amendments must be considered through the Board in

accordance with the Metro 2050 Amendment Framework. RGS amendments are described in the *Local Government Act* Sections 436 and 437. Burnaby 2050, the Official Community Plan was adopted by Burnaby Council and accepted by the Metro Vancouver Board in 2025.

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

**2.1 Metro 2050 Amendment Framework**

Metro 2050, the regional growth strategy (RGS) for the Metro Vancouver Regional District (MVRD) is the regional federation’s plan for how to manage growth collaboratively in a way that reflects local governments’ value and goals. The RGS was adopted by all municipalities in the region, the TransLink Board, Boards of adjacent regional districts and the MVRD Board in February 2023.

Although intended to be a stable long-term vision – Metro 2050 has an amendment process that allows for change. Amendments are categorized as Type 1, Type 2, and Type 3 depending on regional significance, and have different approval thresholds accordingly.

Type 1 Amendment	Type 2 Amendment	Type 3 Amendment
Changes of higher regional significance	Changes of moderate regional significance	Changes of lower regional significance
Higher level of regional agreement	Moderate regional agreement	Lower level of regional agreement
Adoption by all Member Jurisdictions	2/3 weighted vote of MVRD Board	50%+1 weighted vote of MVRD Board

**2.2 Metro 2050 Tools for Managing Growth**

Metro 2050 uses several policy tools for achieving a compact urban area that supports the efficient provision of urban infrastructure like sewer, water, and transit. The Urban Containment Boundary (UCB) is a long-term stable boundary where urban development is concentrated. It protects regionally-designated Agricultural, Rural, and Conservation and Recreation lands from development pressure; minimizes sprawl; keeps servicing costs low, and protects the natural environment. The region has committed to a target of focusing 98% of residential growth within the UCB. Regional Land Use Designations protect the supply of important lands such as Agricultural, Rural, Employment, and Industrial lands. Metro 2050 Special Study Areas (SSAs) are a legacy from previous regional growth strategies, identified as locations where additional study was required before a long-term land use designation could be determined. A Special Study Area overlay allows what would normally be a Type 2 amendment to be a Type 3 amendment. New or expanded Special Study Areas are not permitted in Metro 2050.

## **2.3 Metro 2050 and Burnaby 2050**

Metro 2050 was accepted by all Member Jurisdictions, including Burnaby, and adopted by the MVRD Board in February 2023. In accordance with the Local Government Act, Burnaby 2050 was developed to be consistent with, and to advance the goals of Metro 2050. Burnaby 2050 was adopted in December 2025.

## **3.0 GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **3.1 Request by Mayors of Surrey, Langley Township, and Delta**

On June 19, 2025 the Board Chair received a joint letter from the mayors of Surrey, Langley Township, and Delta arguing that Metro 2050 is "...obstructing our collective ability to plan for and deliver the housing, employment land and critical services our rapidly growing South-of-the-Fraser communities require." The letter advocated for changes to Metro 2050 that would: redefine and modernize the Urban Containment Boundary (UCB) to allow contiguous extensions, re-classify qualifying UCB expansions as Type 3 amendments, and introduce a streamlined "minor realignment" allowance process.

### **3.2 Options for Amending Metro 2050 Amendment Framework**

At the direction of the MVRD Board, Metro Vancouver staff developed four options for how Metro 2050 could be amended to respond to the request of the three Mayors. These options are non-exclusive and can be combined. There is also an option to make no changes to Metro 2050. The four options are as follows:

1. Add new Special Study Areas in the requesting municipalities.
2. Re-Classify amendments to lands with a Rural regional land use designation from Type 2 to Type 3 Amendments.
3. Expand Amendment Opportunities for properties adjacent to the Urban Containment Boundary.
4. Expand Use of the Flexibility Clause for properties adjacent to the Urban Containment Boundary.

All four of the above options would have the effect of facilitating:

- The expansion of the Urban Containment Boundary
- The loss of important lands to re-designation (e.g. lands designated Rural in Metro 2050)
- Lowering regional consensus required to make land use changes to Metro 2050

### **3.3 Metro Vancouver Process for Considering Proposed Options**

On February 10, 2026 Burnaby Council received the attached letter titled, "Consultation on Proposed Metro 2050 Amendment Options in Response to South of the Fraser

Mayors' Request" (Attachment 1) requesting comments on the proposed options with a deadline of March 20, 2026. The timeline for considering the options is as follows:

1. January 20-March 20: Pre-consultation with members. Letters sent to affected local governments outlining the options and requesting comments by March 20, 2026.
2. April 24, 2026: Summary of comments and initial Board bylaw readings. MVRD Board will receive comments from affected local governments and consider initiating amendment process for one or more of the options.
3. May-June 2026: If an amendment bylaw is read at the April Board meeting, it would trigger a 60-day notification and formal comment period of all affected local governments.
4. July 24, 2026: Board receives comments from affected local governments and considers final reading and adoption of the amendment bylaw.

### **3.4 Analysis of Proposed Metro 2050 Amendment Options**

The four options have been considered from their potential impact to Burnaby and to the region as a whole and the following concerns have been identified. They are described in more detail in the attached letter to the MVRD Board Chair (Attachment 2):

1. Inconsistent with Burnaby 2050 Values and Goals
2. Financial Impact on Regional Utilities, Development Cost Charges
3. Financial and Operational Impacts on TransLink
4. Rushed Consultation Process Risks Unintended Consequences
5. Intensification is Preferable to Sprawl
6. Negative Impacts on Growth Structuring Objectives and Targets
7. Negative Impacts on Environmental Objectives and Targets
8. Loss of Regional Coordination and Consensus on Significant Changes

While each Option has unique impacts, they all enable the expansion of the UCB and the conversion of land outside the UCB to other land uses with a lower requirement for regional consensus. This has the effect of expanding the urban area and dispersing growth across a larger area, sometimes called a "sprawling development pattern." A larger, lower-density, less-connected urban area makes it more expensive and less efficient to service with regional utilities and transit which may in turn drive up costs (e.g. Development Cost Charges) and/or reduce service for all homebuyers and residents.

The attached letter (Attachment 2) emphasizes that long-term growth can be better accommodated through intensification in established Urban Centres (such as Town Centres) and along transit corridors. This approach allows for more efficient servicing and helps to avoid the social, environmental, and health impacts of sprawl.

In addition, the rushed consultation process is a key concern. These options have been put forward to respond to requests by three municipalities, but they would change the

amendment framework for the whole region. This could have significant long-term unintended consequences for the region. For this reason, a slower, more-deliberative process that allows for a more fulsome analysis and robust engagement would be preferable.

**3.5 Burnaby Comment Letter**

Given the concerns outlined above, it is recommended that the attached letter dated March 10, 2026 and titled, “City of Burnaby Comments on Proposed Metro 2050 Amendment Options in Response to Request by Mayors of Surrey, Langley Township, and Delta.” be forwarded to the Metro Vancouver Board.

**4.0 COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

If the MVRD Board chooses to move forward with an amendment to Metro 2050 at its April meeting, notification would be posted on the MVRD website and letters would be sent to all affected local governments, First Nations, and applicable regional agencies notifying them of the opportunity to provide comment in 60 days.

**5.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

No immediate costs are incurred through the consideration of this report, however long-term financial implications for regional utilities and transit are a possibility.

Respectfully submitted,  
E.W. Kozak, General Manager Planning and Development

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 – Letter to Mayor Mike Hurley and Council, dated January 20, 2026, titled “Consultation on Proposed Metro 2050 Amendment Options in Response to South of the Fraser Mayors’ Request”

Attachment 2 – Letter to MVRD Board Chair, dated March 10, 2026, titled, “City of Burnaby Comments on Proposed Metro 2050 Amendment Options in Response to Request by Mayors of Surrey, Langley Township and Delta.”

**REPORT CONTRIBUTORS**

This report was prepared by Erin Rennie, Planner 3 and reviewed by Lee-Ann Garnett, Deputy General Manager Planning and Development.