



**POLICY REPORT
DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDING**

Report Date: August 18, 2010
Contact: Grant Miller /
Catherine Buckham
Contact No.: 604.873.7265
RTS No.: 06873
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: September 23, 2010

TO: Standing Committee on Planning and Environment
FROM: Director of Planning
SUBJECT: Adoption of the West Point Grey Community Vision

RECOMMENDATION

- A. That Council adopt the West Point Grey Community Vision, attached in Appendix A, as follows:
 - i. Directions categorized as "Approved" to be adopted as written;
 - ii. Directions categorized as "Not Approved (Uncertain)" not to be adopted but brought forward for additional community discussion in future planning; and
 - iii. Directions categorized as "Not Supported" not to be adopted but to remain in the text for information.
- B. That Council and Departments use the adopted West Point Grey Community Vision Directions to guide policy decisions, corporate work priorities, budgets, and capital plans in West Point Grey; and
- C. That City staff work with the West Point Grey community to advance the Community Vision together with other approved Council policies, studies and implementation actions such as the Greenest City Initiative and further transit related land use planning.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Community Services RECOMMENDS approval of A, B, and C.

COUNCIL POLICY

There are several City policies which set the framework for Vision development, dating from CityPlan in 1995.

CityPlan: Directions for Vancouver (1995)

In June 1995, Council adopted CityPlan as a broad plan for the city. CityPlan includes directions on a range of topics, from transportation to arts, housing to community services and provides a framework for directing City programs, priorities, and actions.

CityPlan Community Visions Terms of Reference (1996)

In July 1996 Council approved the Community Vision Terms of Reference together with funding and staffing to test the Vision program in two communities, Dunbar and Kensington-Cedar Cottage. Community Visions were designed to bring CityPlan directions to the local level.

Transportation Plan (1997)

In 1997 Council approved the Transportation Plan to accommodate demand for transportation in the city through an expansion of transit, walking and biking.

CityPlan Community Visions Program: Continuation (1999)

In July 1999, City Council approved the continuation of the Community Visions program through the predominantly single family areas of the city. Council also directed staff to revise the 1996 Terms of Reference with adjustments to program steps, components and schedule described in the report. Subsequent CityPlan Community Vision Terms of Reference (2002, 2003, 2005), contain the changes requested by Council in 1999.

In addition, there are several City policies which have been approved by Council during the WPG Vision process. These policies, along with new and emerging policies, will inform the implementation phase of the WPG Vision over the coming years:

EcoDensity Charter (2008) - commits the City to make environmental sustainability a primary goal in all city planning decisions - through the consideration of density, design and land use and in ways that also support housing affordability and liveability.

Vancouver 2020: A Bright Green Future (2009) - the Greenest City Action Team (GCAT) unveiled an action plan for “Becoming the World’s Greenest City by 2020” which includes promoting climate change leadership, making walking, cycling and transit preferred transportation options; creating zero waste; providing access to green spaces; and achieving a one planet eco footprint.

Rapid Transit Principles for the Broadway Corridor and UBC Line Rapid Transit Study (2010)

On April 22, 2010, Council approved this study to guide participation in TransLink’s UBC Line Rapid Transit Study.

Current Council Priorities that relate to Community Vision Directions include: building strong, safe and inclusive communities; environment and sustainability; and homelessness and affordable housing.

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE

The West Point Grey (WPG) Vision is the last of nine Visions and marks the completion of the Community Vision Program. The Vision process and product involved a broad cross section of the community in developing a Vision that incorporates a wide range of community interests and describes common ground for moving in CityPlan directions. Over the past ten years, the

program has been successful in engaging communities in planning and decision-making and creating lasting value and direction for years to come.

The WPG Vision process included extensive outreach and offered a variety of ways for people to get involved. Hundreds of residents participated in community meetings, the Ideas Fair, workshops and forums about the future of West Point Grey. An unprecedented 32% of respondents completed the area-wide WPG Choices Survey resulting in statistically valid survey results and solid Vision Directions. Appendix C provides detailed information on the public participation in the Vision.

The Vision Directions attached as Appendix A, cover the full range of CityPlan topics and reflect how the community could balance city-wide and community aspirations in the context of CityPlan. Since the inception of CityPlan in the mid 1990's, the demands on municipalities have grown increasingly complex and the pace of change has increased. Challenges such as climate change, housing needs, land use planning and public transit needs are examples that have stimulated policy change, legislation and in some cases complex funding partnerships with other levels of government. Most of the Vision directions align with the various Federal, Provincial, Regional and City directions in these areas, but there is no clear relationship between the extent of commitment by the Vision and the targets which are or will be articulated in these areas, either through policy or legislation.

It is a usual part of our Vision creation process that a City Perspectives Panel be established and engaged throughout the process to comment on how well the Vision meets CityPlan directions and Regional plans. The Panel has provided comments (Appendix E), that the support for new housing types and locations, found in the WPG Choices Survey results, may not go far enough in realizing the goals of CityPlan. The Panel notes that: "While the support for the creation of neighbourhood centres, environmental initiatives and infill and duplex housing types was commendable, it is the view of the City Perspective Panel that the overall Vision for West Point Grey fell substantially short of outlining sufficient locations for new housing to develop."

Overall, the WPG Vision provides valuable guidance for future decisions around programs and policy work in conjunction with other City, Regional, Provincial and Federal goals. It is anticipated that local community groups, including a Vision Implementation Committee, with assistance from Planning staff, will work to develop a framework for Vision implementation and include a linkage to existing and emerging Council policy and priorities.

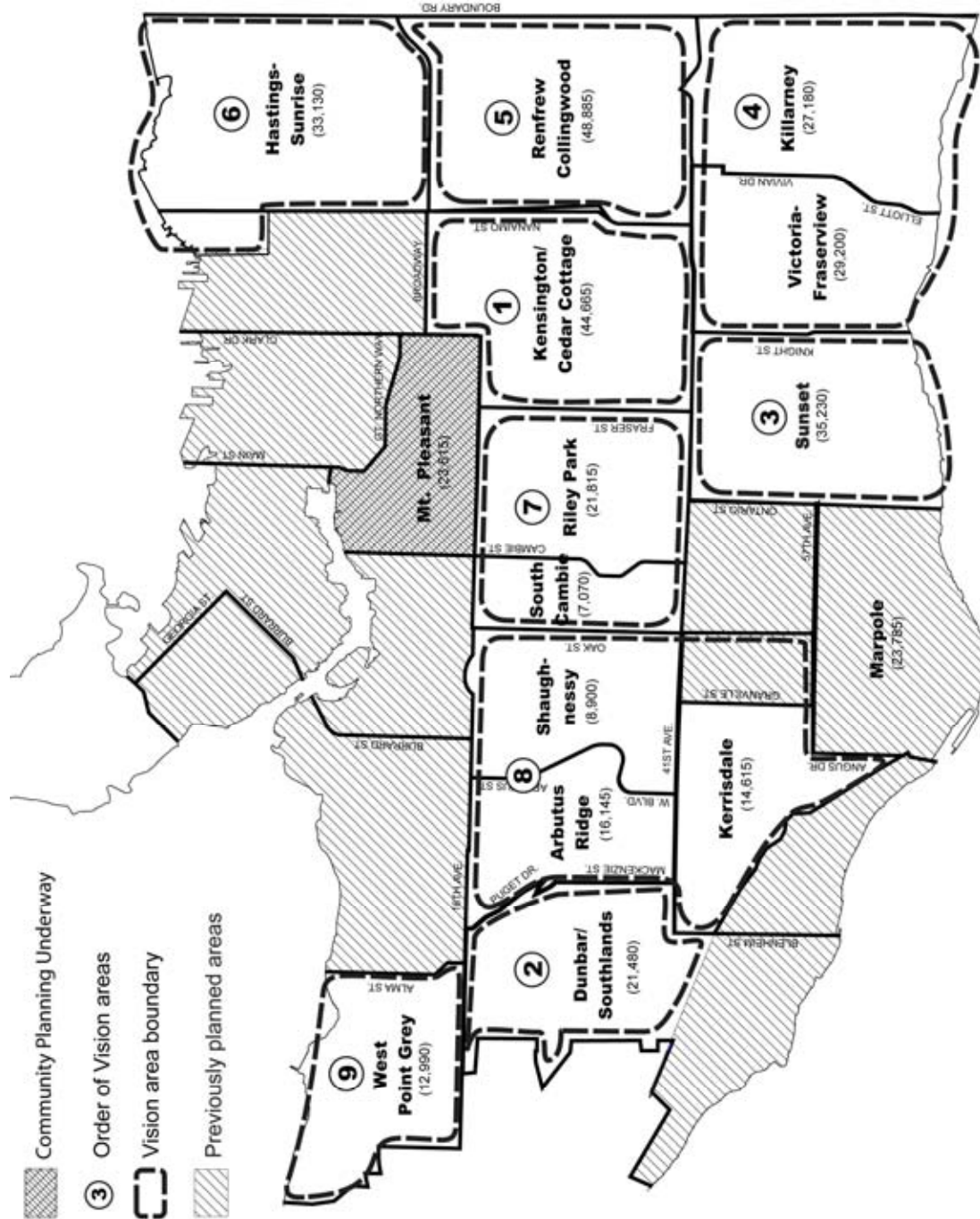
BACKGROUND

The foundation work for Visions began in 1996 when staff met with hundreds of residents in communities across the city to determine how CityPlan Directions should be carried out locally. Citizens determined, and Council agreed, that the mandate of the Community Visions Program was to have communities develop Visions that incorporate a wide range of community interests and describe common ground for moving in CityPlan directions. (Community Visions Terms of Reference, November 2005). Further, the Terms of Reference describe the Visions as setting directions, guiding decisions leading to actions and identifying priorities for further work.

Over the years there have been questions regarding the specific role of Visions, particularly relating to future development. In keeping with the Terms of Reference, City practice has

been to interpret the Visions not as rigid rules, but rather as valuable and important directions that guide and influence decisions.

The West Point Grey (WPG) Community Vision is the last of nine Visions and marks the completion of the Community Vision Program.



DISCUSSION

Vision Process

An important goal of the Vision program was to seek common ground and the opinion of the broad community. To achieve this, the WPG Vision process which spanned over 4 years included extensive outreach and offered a variety of ways for people to get involved. Appendix C provides detailed information on the public participation in the Vision. Below are some highlights.

- **General Outreach:** Many methods were used throughout the program to create public awareness, recruit participants, and encourage responses, including staff attending meetings and events of community groups, school parent committees, churches, etc.; delivering newsletters to update every household, businesses and absentee owners; holding a weekend Vision Fair; publicizing events with advertisements, banners, flyers and media releases.
- **Community Liaison Group:** A CLG made up of a wide range of community volunteers was formed to oversee the process; ensure that community input from each step was carried through to subsequent steps; give advice on outreach and review the draft survey. The Liaison Group's comments are included as Appendix D.
- **City Perspective Panel:** Council appointed an independent panel of citizens who lived outside the Vision area to provide commentary on how well the WPG Vision met CityPlan Directions and regional plans. The panel's comments are attached as Appendix E.
- **Workshops:** Draft Vision directions were created at widely advertised topic-specific workshops open to all interested individuals. WPG had 353 participants attend 10 workshops. The workshops were augmented by special youth workshops and business open houses bringing the total number of participants to 509.
- **Choices Survey (Draft Vision Directions)** The survey was delivered to every household, business, and absentee owner in WPG. A random sample was used to ensure Vision directions represent the broad community. There were 1,786 completed surveys representing 32.4% of all WPG households. Respondents were broadly distributed across the community, with a good representation of age groups, homeowners and renters.

Vision Content and Directions

Appendix A contains the WPG Community Vision Directions for endorsement by Council. The Vision contains over 130 directions on a full range of CityPlan topics that will guide decisions in the community over the coming years.

As is typical in all Visions, each WPG Vision Direction is classified as Approved, Not Approved (Uncertain), or Not Supported, based on community responses in the Choices Survey and defined as follows:

- **Approved** Directions are those supported by 50% or more of the general survey respondents and also by at least 54% of the random survey respondents (a level that takes into account 4% +/- margin of error of the random survey). When approved by Council these Directions guide policy decisions, set priorities and direct resources to programs and policy work in conjunction with other Council policy and priorities.
- **Not Approved (Uncertain)** Directions did not receive enough support to be classified as 'Approved' but the agree votes outweighed disagree votes in both the general and random surveys. These Directions will remain on the table for further additional community discussion in future planning. For these Directions comments on their future role is provided for in the Vision.
- **Not Supported** Directions received more disagree than agree votes in either the general or the random survey. These Directions will remain in the text for information.

The proposed Vision is structured with eight thematic areas, consistent with all previous Visions, and based on CityPlan. These include the following:

Traffic and Transportation

There are numerous directions ranging from broad goals such as “Generally Improving the Transit Experience (5.5)”, “Improve Greenway and Bikeway Routes (6.1)”, to details such as “Control Parking on Local Streets (4.3)”. The Vision articulates community aspirations, although it is recognized that other jurisdictions and agencies (e.g. Translink), either lead or are significantly involved in both decision-making and implementation for many of these directions.

Community Safety and Services

The community supported directions ranging from, at a high level, “Improving Programs and Services for the Homeless (9.1)”, to “Providing More Childcare Services (8.6)”, to detailed directions such as “Encouraging Public Art (11.1)”, all of which are closely aligned with Council’s agenda.

Existing Residential Areas

These directions reflect residents’ general desire to retain the character of the area through directions such as “Retain buildings on the Vancouver Heritage Register (14.1)”, to “Allow Full Basements in All Single Family Homes to Encourage Suites (12.2)”. (This last direction has, in fact, been addressed through Council’s 2009 decision allowing alternative approaches to full basements). The direction to “Maintain Most Single Family Areas (12.1)”, reflects the community’s attachment to the longstanding character of the neighbourhood. All of these directions need to be balanced with the significant pressure over the coming decades from the region and Council to create more strategic and sustainable density, particularly along major transportation corridors, to assure viability of public transit, lower greenhouse gas (ghg) emissions, and to allow for more diverse forms of affordable housing.

New Housing

These directions range from support for “Seniors Housing (17.1)”, to support for two specific housing types: Infill (15.1) and Duplexes (15.2). The latter directions will be key to meeting the needs of the community. However, all other housing types surveyed, were either ‘Not Approved (Uncertain)’ (i.e. Traditional Rowhouses, Courtyard Rowhouses), or ‘Not Supported’

(i.e. Fourplexes, Lowrise Apartments). Implications of this are referenced in the above section.

Neighbourhood Centres

The Vision supports two new Neighbourhood Centres, Point Grey Village and Jericho Village. These areas would be the subject of further planning study. The Vision also supports detailed directions ranging from “Improving Pedestrian Safety (19.5)”, to “Providing Weather Protection (19.9)”.

Parks, Streets, Lanes and Public Places

The Vision supports directions ranging from “Protecting Natural Areas in Parks, Including Beaches (23.1)” to “Better Protect and Preserve Trees on Private Property (23.11)”. Implementation of these directions would involve the Parks Board and many City departments. In general the directions speak to greening and beautification of the public realm.

Environment

The Vision contains many directions that strongly support environmental protection and enhancement, generally supportive of the Greenest City Initiative goals of reducing our ecological footprint and showing leadership in climate change. Several directions align with specific goals of the Greenest City Initiative (i.e. “Encourage the Conservation of Water and Energy (25.3)”, “Encourage Waste Reduction and Increase Recycling and Composting (25.1)” and “Grow More Food Locally (25.5)”. Other environmental issues such as greener mobility are included in other sections of the Vision.

Community Involvement in Decision Making

There is strong support for “Community Involvement in Decision Making (26.1)”, specifically, WPG residents should have greater and more timely input into decision-making about changes in their community. This is a key theme in CityPlan and a strong commitment of Council.

Consistent with the complex policy environment the City operates in, many of the 130 WPG Vision Directions have elements that support Provincial directions (i.e. new climate change requirements of municipalities), Regional directions (i.e. growth, climate and transportation goals), and City directions (i.e. Greenest City Initiative). This will be helpful over the coming years as we move to implement elements of both the Vision and policy goals which cut across neighbourhood boundaries, many of which are connected to other levels of government.

Generally, WPG Vision Directions that call for improvements to services would need to be paid for by redirecting funds now spent on other items or in other areas, or through user pay funding sources such as Development Cost Levies (DCLs) and Community Amenity Contributions (CACs). Decisions as to the redirection of funds and the allocation of DCLs and CACs are made by Council, over time. There are usually more requests for improvements to services and facilities than can be funded in any one period, so there is often a waiting period of years before improvements are realized.

Appendix B describes in detail how the WPG Vision Directions address CityPlan Directions as set out in the CityPlan Community Vision Terms of Reference.

Vision Implementation

Vision directions are implemented in a variety of ways, including through existing City programs, new programs and partnerships, redevelopment and community-led initiatives.

Most of the WPG Vision directions can be implemented through existing City programs managed by departments across the City. For example, Vision directions addressing bikeways, greenways, and local traffic calming are managed through Engineering Services and implemented through programs with established funding sources and assigned staff (e.g. Bike Vancouver). Other Vision directions require new programs, approaches and partnerships (e.g. UBC impacts on WPG).

Vision directions are also implemented through the redevelopment of specific sites (e.g. Jericho Village Shopping Area). In these cases the WPG Vision will inform the development review process and outline community involvement. The Vision also provides the community with a framework for leadership opportunities for community-led initiatives (e.g. Block Watch).

The next step after Council approval of the WPG Vision is for staff to meet with the WPG community to discuss the best approach for implementation.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Adopting the West Point Grey Vision does not imply changes to the City's budget. Visions are used to guide decisions that direct spending to community priorities or that respond to private development proposals over time.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Implementation of the WPG Vision provides an opportunity to address priorities for building strong, safe and inclusive communities through collaboration and partnerships in an effort to realize livability and sustainability.

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

After the Vision is adopted by Council, communication material will be prepared which announces the adopted Vision, summarizes Vision highlights, and invites people to attend an implementation workshop. The Vision is posted on the City website and copies are provided in the local library and community centre.

CONCLUSION

Since 1996, staff has worked with thousands of residents to develop locally-based Community Visions that move towards a more sustainable city through CityPlan directions. The completion of the West Point Grey Vision marks a significant milestone in Vancouver's planning history as every neighbourhood will have had an opportunity to engage in a comprehensive discussion of community planning issues, the result of which has been a collective statement of local priorities and directions for future change.

Overall the WPG Vision Directions address the CityPlan Community Vision Terms of Reference criteria of furthering CityPlan and reflecting informed community opinion, although may fall short of outlining sufficient locations for new housing to develop, as noted by the City Perspective Panel in Appendix E.

In conclusion, the Vision program succeeded in bringing CityPlan directions to West Point Grey and did so with broad community awareness and support. The Vision will provide guidance for City actions affecting capital plan priorities, local service needs and future development in conjunction with other Council policy and priorities. Implementation of the Vision Directions will occur for the most part, through existing City programs managed by departments across the city. The Vision also provides the community with a framework for leadership opportunities for community-led initiatives. Discussions with the WPG community on how to best implement the Vision will begin following Council approval of the Vision.

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DEPARTMENTAL APPROVAL AND REPORT CONCURRENCES

General Mgr./Dept. Head:	Report Date:	July 15, 2010
	Author:	Grant Miller/Catherine Buckham
Date:	Phone No.:	604.873.7265

This report has been prepared in consultation with the departments listed to the right, and they concur with its contents.

Concurring Departments: