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To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"

CC: "City Manager's Correspondence Group - DL"

"Kelley, Gil" <Gil.Kelley@vancouver.ca>

Date: 1/29/2020 2:29:42 PM

Subject: Response to Council Questions - RTS 13395 – Employment Lands & Economy Review – Update on Phase 1 and Next Steps

Attachments: Memo to Council - Response to Emailed Council Questions - RTS 13395 – Em....pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

On Jan. 22, while considering the Employment Lands and Economy Review Project Update (RTS 13395), staff received a list of questions from Council for detailed response. The attached memo provides Council with the staff response to the questions.

Should you have any questions, please contact Gil Kelley at 604.873.7456 / Gil.Kelley@vancouver.ca.

Best,
Sadhu

Sadhu Afochs Johnston | City Manager
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Pronouns: he, him, his



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples.

MEMORANDUM

January 29, 2020

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Sadhu Johnston, City Manager
Paul Mochrie, Deputy City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Rena Kendall-Craden, Civic Engagement and Communications Director
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Neil Monckton, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Alvin Singh, Communications Director, Mayor's Office
Chris Robertson, Assistant Director, City-Wide & Regional Planning
Matthew Bourke, Senior Planner, City-Wide & Regional Planning

FROM: Gil Kelley, General Manager, Planning, Urban Design & Sustainability

SUBJECT: Response to Emailed Council Questions - RTS 13395 – Employment Lands & Economy Review – Update on Phase 1 and Next Steps

PURPOSE

On January 22, 2020, while considering the Employment Lands & Economy Review – Update on Phase 1 and Next Steps report, Councillor Carr emailed a list of questions to staff for detailed response.

RESPONSE TO EMAILED QUESTIONS

Question #1: What is the potential role of City Land? – e.g., property backing on Recycling Alternative where car wrecks are towed and STORED – next to Buster's Towing – vs. use of organics recycling – didn't see stowing car wrecks as an industrial use!

PDS Staff Response:

- Staff in Real Estate Services and Engineering are preparing a memo to Council with additional information about this issue.

Question #2: How much of the future economy is in the City of Vancouver's control – e.g., through ensuring available land is available and appropriately zoned through development policies and plans?

Staff Response:

- The City has several policy tools available that influence the environment for economic prosperity in Vancouver. In general, these tools can be categorized into 3 areas: regulation (e.g. allowable uses, built form, parking requirements); investment (e.g. infrastructure, grants to non-profit service providers); and advocacy (e.g. coordination with senior government).

Question #3: Explain the statement made in the presentation: there is a rising need for commercial space but our current policy is not adequate to deliver on this. What policies do we need to change? Will this be part of Q2 2020 report back?

Staff Response:

- The consultant models are showing that as the population of the City grows, demand for retail/ commercial floor space for population serving businesses is expected to grow as well.
- The models are also showing that, under current policy and market trends, there is very little capacity to increase retail/ commercial space. The Council report notes several reasons for this:
 - There are a relatively limited number of redevelopment sites in the city where existing policy requires a significant increase in retail/commercial space.
 - There are several older shopping plazas and large format retail stores in the city that are likely to be redeveloped between now and 2051. Given existing policy and market trends, these sites are likely to generate a net loss in commercial space.
 - Redevelopment of existing 2 storey commercial buildings into mixed-use residential buildings with commercial space on the ground floor can result in a net loss in commercial floor space.
- Phase 2 of the Review will examine options and implications for increasing retail/commercial capacity.

Question #4: Have you thought about the impact of extreme changes in the global economy due to the accelerating climate crisis – e.g., loss of global food generation; hundreds of millions of climate refugees?

Staff Response:

- A major component of the 1st phase of work was the creation of alternative floor space demand scenarios by the consultant team in consultation with industry experts and the External Advisory Group.
- The potential impacts of climate change were included in the range of scenarios considered by the consultant team.

Question #5: The next step has been stated as developing high level policy directions. How exactly does this fit into the city-wide Vancouver Plan, especially given the intended report back on high level policy directions in Q2 2020? Will there be an integrated consultation process on

employment lands and economy through the plan, or simply parallel: i.e., Will stakeholders and residents be consulted on employment lands/economy in 2 different ways? Describe the process? Will, for example, the different future scenarios be outlined/presented to wider public for feedback & ideas?

Staff Response:

- The intention is to integrate the Employment Lands and Economy Review into the Vancouver Plan process.
- This will be accomplished through joint consultation events that will be coordinated and planned by staff on each project team.

Question #6: Part of the city's response to the climate crisis and included in the city's response to Metro Vancouver's Climate 2050 strategy is congestion charging. Have you considered the pros and cons of a congestion charge, for example on cars entering the CBD, on jobs and the economy downtown?

Staff Response:

- Staff have considered congestion pricing impacts on jobs and the economy at a high-level, prompted by the Region's Mobility Pricing Independent Commission's work which included a downtown cordon scenario.
- The Greater Vancouver Board of Trade, and the BC Chamber of Commerce both support and advocate for mobility pricing.
- Findings from other cities generally show an improvement to the number of jobs and economic growth since the introduction of congestion charging:
 - Singapore, which has had road pricing for nearly 45 years, is currently considered the world's most competitive economy, and the third most innovative economy.
 - London's congestion charge facilitated an overall increase of 23% more people travelling into the CBD, while significantly reducing vehicle trips.
 - Research has found that road pricing impacts to the local economy are only negative in heavily car-oriented areas where there are limited mobility options. However, even Gothenburg, Sweden, a mid-sized city that is more car-oriented than other larger centres with congestion pricing, saw a net economic improvement and is considered one of Europe's best performing cities.
- Considerable further study and engagement would be required to determine the scale and scope of economic, environmental, and societal benefits of a downtown-oriented transport pricing strategy for Vancouver. It is expected that given the many mobility options in Vancouver's CBD, and continued improvements for walking, cycling and transit, a downtown-oriented transport pricing strategy would create similar economic outcomes to those in peer cities.
- Other social economic benefits, such as improved health, reduced GHGs, lower local air pollutants, and fewer collisions are expected to improve social well-being and achieve more equitable outcomes. These are often not directly monetized but contribute to job and economic growth.
- As per Councils request at the recent Transportation 2050 briefing, staff are scheduling another Council briefing on Transportation/Mobility Pricing.

CONCLUSION

This Memorandum provides Council with the staff response to emailed questions received as part of the Employment Lands & Economy Review – Update on Phase 1 and Next Steps report.

If you have any questions, please contact me or Chris Robertson, Assistant Director of Planning, at 604-873-7684 or chris.robertson@vancouver.ca.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'G' followed by a horizontal line that extends to the right and then loops back under the 'G'.

Gil Kelley, FAICP
General Manager, Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability

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