



June 19, 2025

Via E-mail

Mayor Mike Hurley
Chair, Metro Vancouver Board of Directors
Metrotower III, 4515 Central Boulevard
Burnaby BC V5H 0C6

Dear Chair Hurley and Members of the Board:

Re: Urban Containment Boundary – Urgent Need for Policy Reform

The Mayors of Surrey, the Township of Langley, and Delta jointly write to advise the Metro Vancouver Regional District to express a unified concern over the Metro 2050 framework, as currently written and administered, 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.

Our communities are facing increased challenges due to the current policies and administrative process governing the Urban Containment Boundary (UCB) as outlined in the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS).

Accordingly, we expect the Board to direct staff to draft amendments that will:

1. **Redefine and modernize the UCB.** Policy language must allow contiguous UCB extensions that:
 - are outside the Agricultural Land Reserve and ecologically sensitive areas;
 - can be serviced with existing or committed infrastructure; and
 - support compact, transit-oriented, complete communities.
2. **Re-classify qualifying UCB expansions as Type 3 amendments.** The process for expending or adjusting the UCB through a Type 2 or Type 3 amendment under the RGS is burdensome, time-consuming, and often lacks transparency or consistency in interpretation. The ambiguity surrounding what qualifies as a Type 2 versus Type 3 amendment has led to unnecessary delays and uncertainty for both the municipalities and the development community. Therefore, we propose extensions meeting the above criteria—or located within Special Study Areas—should proceed as Type 3 amendments, subject to a simple majority (50% + 1) weighted vote, rather than the current two-thirds super-majority required for Type 2 amendments.
3. **Introduce a streamlined “minor realignment” allowance.** The municipalities should be granted more authority to make UCB changes that are consistent with their Official Community Plans and that align with regional objectives. Including, Site-specific UCB adjustments that do not compromise regional objectives, with notification to Metro Vancouver in lieu of a full amendment process.

South-of-the-Fraser municipalities will accommodate the largest share of the region's future population and job growth—yet only a fraction of developable lands lie within the existing UCB. The status quo is untenable; persisting with it will deepen the region's housing shortage, constrain industrial expansion, and undermine transportation investments.

We recognize the importance of a coordinated regional approach and remain committed to working with Metro Vancouver and our regional partners. However, this commitment must be balanced with a system that is adaptive, equitable, and supports the practical realities of a fast-growing communities.

We call on Metro Vancouver to initiate a formal review of the UCB amendment process and the Regional Growth Strategy to address the concerns of the South of the Fraser municipalities. We are prepared to contribute staff expertise, data, and policy insights to assist in this necessary review.

We therefore request the following immediate actions:

Staff direction: That Metro Vancouver staff report back with draft text amendments and a revised amendment classification table by September 30 2025.

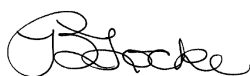
Committee delegation: That representatives of our four municipalities be invited to present the technical basis for these changes at the next meeting of the Regional Planning Committee.

Voting fairness: That the Board commit, in advance, to treating any qualifying UCB expansion as a Type 3 amendment, effective immediately.

Failure to address these issues promptly will compel our municipalities to explore every legislative and intergovernmental avenue available to secure the flexibility our residents and businesses deserve.

We look forward to your prompt confirmation that Metro Vancouver will proceed as outlined above.


Sincerely,



Mayor Brenda Locke,
City of Surrey



Mayor Eric Woodward,
Township of Langley



Mayor George V. Harvie,
City of Delta

cc: Mayor John McEwen, Vice-Chair, Metro Vancouver Board
Chief Administrative Officers – South of the Fraser Municipalities
Regional Planning Advisory Committee