



# CLOSED REPORT TO COUNCIL

To: **Mayor and Councillors**

Subject: Supportive Policies Agreement (SPA)

File #: [Required]

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From: Carl Johannsen RPP, MCIP  
Director of Development Services

Date: April 20, 2022

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## RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT Council endorses the Supportive Policies Agreement (SPA) between the City of Langley and TransLink as attached to the report of the Director of Development Services dated April 20, 2022;
2. THAT Council authorizes the Mayor and Corporate Officer to execute the Supportive Policies Agreement (SPA);
3. THAT Council directs staff to publicly release the Agreement and this staff report, coinciding with public endorsement of the Agreement by TransLink.

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## PURPOSE:

This report presents the 'Supportive Policies Agreement' ('SPA', attached) for Council's consideration of endorsement. The SPA is a non-binding agreement between the City and TransLink that outlines how the City will support the Surrey-Langley SkyTrain (SLS) through current and future Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), affordable housing, and transportation initiatives around the 196 Street and 203 Street station areas. TransLink policy requires that a SPA be completed in order for the SLS to be included in the 2022 TransLink Investment Plan. Once endorsed by the City and the Joint Mayors Council/TransLink Board, the SPA will be provided to the Province to be considered alongside the SLS business case submission.

At a future meeting an 'Overarching Supportive Policies Agreement' (O-SPA) will be presented to Council for consideration of endorsement. Like the SPA the O-SPA is also a non-binding agreement, but with a specific focus on how the Province intends to assist in coordinating and maximizing TOD development opportunities for the three

municipalities along the SLS corridor. Based on this, the O-SPA will include the City, the Township of Langley, the City of Surrey, TransLink and the Province as agreement signatories. Once endorsed by the City, the Province, the Township, Surrey and the Joint Mayors Council/TransLink Board, the O-SPA will be provided to the Province alongside the SLS business case submission.

The endorsement of the SPA and O-SPA is a critical step towards ensuring the SLS is included in the TransLink Investment Plan, and will reinforce municipal commitment when the SLS business case proceeds to Provincial Treasury Board. Once the SLS business case is approved, it can enter the procurement and construction phase.

### **POLICY:**

The City's Official Community Plan (OCP) is a City-scale TOD plan that seeks to focus almost 90 percent of the City's projected population and job growth within a 10 minute walk of the 196 Street and 203 Street SLS stations by the year 2050. This involves concentrating taller, denser developments within easy walking distance of SLS stations and with a range of housing types and affordability levels, ensuring new amenities accompany growth, and that new development is well integrated and tied together with pedestrian-friendly streetscapes that provide active transportation options and create 'great and safe' public places.

Over time, TOD development will improve access to SkyTrain/transit for residents and employees, create more affordable housing, support local economic development, generate ridership for the SkyTrain system and reduce climate change-causing emissions, among other key benefits. The OCP strongly supports the Metro Vancouver Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), by directing the majority of the City's future growth into the Langley Regional City Centre (which the RGS identifies as a rapid transit-served growth node) and directly aligns with TransLink's 'Transit Oriented Communities Design Guidelines', which have been used to guide the content framework of the SPA.

The OCP also includes implementation actions that support the SLS Project over time, including Zoning Bylaw, Master Transportation Plan, Parks, Recreation and Culture Plan and Affordable Housing Strategy updates, and the Innovation Boulevard Plan, among others. The OCP land use plan also identifies land use study areas along the Langley Bypass, as candidates for future TOD that will support the SLS well beyond the OCP's 2050 timeframe. In terms of specific OCP policies, Policy 2.31 'Align Land Use and Transportation' identifies collaboration between TransLink and the City, and the creation of a SPA between the City and TransLink.

As outlined above, the City's OCP identifies the policy basis and much of the content (i.e. 'commitments') in the City's SPA and O-SPA documents. However, it is also important to note that while the SPA and O-SPA are 'good faith' agreements between the City, TransLink and the Province, Council is not bound to undertaking anything in

the SPA and O-SPA. As provided through the authority of the *Local Government Act* (LGA), Council is unfettered in their current and future decision making regarding land use, zoning, future development, capital plans and other matters as applicable.

Council's independence is expressly described in SPA Section 1.7 'Status of Agreement', by stating that 'all City policies, bylaws, plans or other regulations suggested or required to be amended or adopted under this Agreement are subject to the approval of the then constituted City Council.' Staff also note that Council's consideration of approval of OCP and Zoning Bylaw updates that implement SPA commitments would only take place following public consultation and public hearing(s), as required by the LGA.

The attached SPA has been reviewed by the City's solicitor, and updated accordingly to ensure that Council's independence and unfettered decision making ability is clearly identified. The O-SPA is under review by the City's solicitor and will be presented to Council for consideration of endorsement at a future Council meeting.

## **COMMENTS/ANALYSIS:**

### SPA Components and Commitments

The first component of the SPA (Preamble and Sections 1-2) contains recitals, definitions, acknowledgements of how the SPA is to be read and interpreted (i.e. 1.7 Status of Agreement, as described above), and principles and objectives.

The second component (Sections 3-9) outlines SPA commitments, including the implementation of existing City plans, such as the OCP, and the completion of initiatives currently underway, such as the Zoning Bylaw, Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan and Master Transportation Plan updates. This component also includes commitments to undertake future City plan updates and initiatives, including (estimated completion time of plans, studies and updates in brackets):

1. Glover Road Innovation Boulevard Plan (by end of 2023);
2. Joint TOD Study for the 196 Street Station (end 2023), to create a coordinated land use planning, urban design and active transportation vision for this area, in collaboration with the Township of Langley, City of Surrey, the Province and TransLink;
3. Langley Bypass TOD Study (end 2024), to identify future TOD opportunities, with a phasing plan to guide future OCP updates for new TOD development;
4. OCP updates (by end of 2024 and 2026) that incorporate dwelling unit, population, affordable housing and employment targets for areas within 800 metres of the SLS, review and update development densities (if necessary) and re-designate properties for TOD development when/where appropriate;
5. Housing Needs Report and Affordable Housing Strategy Update (end 2026);

6. OCP updates approximately every 5 years (following the 2026 OCP update noted above) to consider new opportunities for TOD development;
7. 15 percent 'affordable housing' target for new development within 800 metres of the SLS. The 'affordable housing' definition is aligned with the Metro Vancouver RGS; existing housing development in the City already meets the RGS definition for affordable housing and this target;
8. Collaborating with TransLink, the Province, BC Housing, Metro Vancouver, the federal government and/or non-market housing partners in considering new housing developments (including a range of housing types, tenures and affordability levels) as well as mixed-use and employment-generating developments and new community amenities and facilities around the SLS;
9. Supporting TransLink and the Province in implementing active transportation projects and new bus transit facilities and services;
10. Undertaking public realm improvement projects that support the SLS;
11. Updating the Zoning Bylaw to implement the OCP, support TOD development and 'right-size' parking requirements near SLS; and
12. Supporting Transportation Demand Management (TDM) initiatives over time.

#### *SPA Monitoring Committee*

The third component of the SPA (Sections 10-12) includes establishing a monitoring committee consisting of City and TransLink staff (and possibly Provincial, Metro Vancouver staff), to track land use and transportation outcomes for the SLS corridor.

This committee is to use performance measures to track population and employment growth, new net affordable housing supply, transit performance, and mode split, among other items. The committee will also produce Annual Reports and a 5 Year Performance Report, to present to Council and the Mayors Council/TransLink Board, to ensure the City and TransLink are aware of TOD development activity within the SLS corridor and to track progress on the implementation of commitments in the SPA.

Staff have agreed to participating in this monitoring committee to support the fulfillment of the City's OCP objectives, and to show good faith in working towards completing the City's commitments in the SPA and collaborating with TransLink and the Province in ensuring the best possible land use, affordable housing and transportation outcomes around the SLS - with the caveat of Council being unfettered in their decision making, and not being legally bound to SPA commitments. The SPA also includes a dispute resolution mechanism, should the need ever arise.

#### O-SPA Components and Commitments

Although the O-SPA is under legal review, the content is expected to remain intact and thus can be described in this report in advance of being presented to Council.

The first component of the O-SPA (Preamble and Sections 1-2) contains recitals, definitions, acknowledgements of how the O-SPA is to be read and interpreted (such as 'Status of Agreement', as described above), and principles and objectives. The second component (Sections 3-9) outlines O-SPA commitments and references the commitments that SLS municipalities have made in their SPAs, but differs from the SPAs by way of specifically highlighting how the Province intends to:

1. Collaborate with the City of Langley, the Township of Langley, City of Surrey, TransLink, Metro Vancouver, the federal government and/or non-market housing partners in considering/undertaking new housing developments (with a range of housing types, tenures and affordability levels) on Provincial government or Crown-corporation owned properties in the SLS corridor;
2. Support new TOD developments with housing and institutional and office space in the City of Langley, Township of Langley and City of Surrey, on Province or TransLink owned lands along the SLS and according to municipal OCPs;
3. Explore the acquisition of property and development opportunities to support the SLS Project objectives (i.e. leveraging and maximizing TOD development along the SLS corridor to support this investment over the long term); and
4. Contribute to/participate in the Joint TOD Study for the 196 Street Station.

#### *O-SPA Monitoring*

The O-SPA does not include any additional monitoring or dispute resolution requirements or clauses, with the intent of relying on the SPA to address these items.

#### Next Steps for the SPA and O-SPA

Following endorsement of the SPA by Council, it will be considered at a closed meeting of the Mayors Council Finance Committee (May 18, 2022), and then at an open public meeting of the Joint Mayors Council/TransLink Board (May 26, 2022). Staff recommend that the SPA and this staff cover report be publicly released at the appropriate time, coinciding with public endorsement of the Agreement by TransLink.

The O-SPA will be presented for consideration of endorsement at a future Closed Council meeting; once endorsed by Council the O-SPA will follow the same endorsement process as noted above.

#### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:**

The SPA and O-SPA are non-binding agreements that generally do not have budget implications. However, future projects identified in the SPA and O-SPA may require new capital funding to complete. Funding proposals for these projects will be identified by staff in future Financial Plan processes, for Council's consideration. Staff also note that monitoring committee work may require some additional staff resources, which may in turn require additional operational funding in future Financial Plans.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Refer the SPA back to staff with specific changes, and bring an updated SPA to Council for consideration of endorsement at the next Council meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Carl Johannsen, RPP, MCIP  
Director of Development Services

Attachment(s):

1. Draft Supportive Policies Agreement (SPA)

**CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S COMMENTS:**

I support the recommendation.



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Francis Cheung, P. Eng.  
Chief Administrative Officer