

We're Planning Our 2026 Budget

In 2025, all of Metro Vancouver's services cost on average \$875 per household per month.

Approximately 10% of the operating budget is used for capital projects.

SPIN & MATCH
Once a year we pay for services that make our lives better. What if we could match those services to their 2025 cost?

The board displays icons for services such as Water, Solid Waste, Solid Waste Transfer Station, Regional Parks, and Regional Library. A price tag for \$1.66 is visible.

Metro Vancouver's 2026 Budget and Five-Year Financial Plan

Engagement Summary

Engagement Summary

Acknowledgements

Thank you to everyone who provided input for Metro Vancouver's 2026 Budget and Five-Year Financial Plan over both phases of engagement. Metro Vancouver embraces collaboration and innovation to provide sustainable regional services, contributing to a livable and resilient region, and a healthy natural environment for current and future generations. The purpose of this engagement was to hear and consider comments and concerns from residents as Metro Vancouver developed its 2026 Budget and 2026-2030 Five-Year Financial Plan, which will be considered by Metro Vancouver's four Boards of Directors in October as part of the regular budgeting process.

About Metro Vancouver

Metro Vancouver is a diverse organization that plans for and delivers regional utility services, including water, sewers and wastewater treatment, and solid waste management. It also regulates air quality, plans for urban growth, manages a regional parks system, provides affordable housing, and serves as a regional federation. The organization is a federation of 21 municipalities, one electoral area, and one treaty First Nation located in the region of the same name. The organization is governed by four Boards, one for each legal entity. Board directors are elected officials from each member jurisdiction.

First Nations Engagement

Metro Vancouver acknowledges that the region's residents live, work, and learn on the shared territories of many Indigenous peoples, including 10 local First Nations: ǫiǫǫ (Katzie), ǫ"ɑ:ǫǫǫ (Kwantlen), k"ik"ǫǫǫ (Kwikwetlem), mǫthxwi (Matsqui), x"mǫθk"ǫǫǫ (Musqueam), ǫiǫǫyt (Qayqayt), Semiahmoo, Sǫwǫwǫmesh ǫxwumixw (Squamish), scǫwǫθǫ mǫsteyǫx" (Tsawwassen), and sǫilwǫtǫt (Tsleil-Waututh).

Metro Vancouver respects the diverse and distinct histories, languages, and cultures of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit, which collectively enrich our lives and the region.

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September 2025

Cover: Budget engagement activation at the PNE

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Executive Summary

Over two phases of engagement, Metro Vancouver invited and encouraged residents to learn more about Metro Vancouver's budget and how it integrates into their property taxes and utility bills, and to provide feedback on what they would like Metro Vancouver to consider as we work to manage the overall estimated cost related to our services for 2026.

The first phase of engagement, held February 14 to March 30, focused on providing information on anticipated rates for 2026 based on the 2025 – 2029 Five-Year Financial Plan. Metro Vancouver received over 1,100 responses to the online survey, 900 comments through the online survey, and 28 emails. Input was provided to the four Metro Vancouver Boards for consideration as part of the 2025 Services and Cost Efficiencies Review and as part of the annual Board Budget Workshop.

At the Board Budget Workshop held April 9, 2025, the Board received the final results of the 2025 Services and Cost Efficiencies Review, which provided options for applying \$364 million in operating savings and a reduction in capital expenditures of \$1.1 billion to its 2026 – 2030 Five-Year Financial Plan resulting in household impact (HHI) increase targets for 2026 at 2.5%, 2027 at 3.0%, 2028 to 2030 at 5.0% increase per year. The cost savings enabled a reduction from

previously projected HHI increase of 5% for both 2026 and 2027. The Board directed staff to complete the budget according to those findings.

The second phase of engagement was held from July 23 to September 7. During this engagement, residents were invited to comment on the updated projection for the 2026 Budget and Five-Year Financial Plan. An online survey received 110 submitted responses, while 9,552 residents engaged with Metro Vancouver at in-person engagement display at the PNE, and an additional 2,631 survey responses were submitted.

Overall, comments received across both phases of engagement were related to concerns of affordability, spending, and management/governance of large infrastructure projects. There were repeated comments of support for services provided by Metro Vancouver in addition to water / liquid waste / and solid waste such as climate action, air quality, water conservation, and housing, and also suggestions for improving services and support for continued and increased services. Many respondents expressed interest in continuing investment in greenspace and climate action, investing in the future, and prioritizing healthy people and a healthy environment.



About the Engagement Program

Engagement was done over two phases and provided both online and in-person opportunities to connect with Metro Vancouver and provide input.

The first phase of engagement, held February 14 to March 30, focused on providing information on anticipated rates for 2026 based on the 2025 – 2029 Five-Year Financial Plan. This engagement was done in tandem with the 2025 Services and Cost Efficiencies Review for consideration by the Board.

At the Board Budget Workshop held April 9, 2025, the Board received the final results of the Services and Cost Efficiencies Review, which provided options for applying \$364 million in operating savings and a reduction in capital expenditures of \$1.1 billion to its 2026-2030 Five-Year Financial Plan resulting in household impact (HHI) targets for 2026 at 2.5%, 2027 at 3.0%, 2028 to 2030 at 5.0% increase per year. The cost savings enabled a reduction from previously projected HHI of 5% for both 2026 and 2027. The Board directed staff to complete the budget according to those findings.

Services and Cost Efficiencies Review

From November 2024 to April 2025, Metro Vancouver undertook a Services and Cost Efficiencies Review to identify areas where operational cost savings could be made and assess the financial and service impacts of these potential revisions. As part of the review, all services provided by Metro Vancouver were evaluated for whether they were still best delivered as a regional service. Opportunities for cost savings were identified and evaluated.

The second phase of engagement was held from July 23 to September 7 and provided the updated projections for the 2026 budget including the anticipated household impact.

PHASE 1	BUDGET DEVELOPMENT	PHASE 2
FEBRUARY 14 TO MARCH 30	APRIL-JULY	JULY 23 TO SEPTEMBER 7
An online survey was promoted and invited people to learn more about Metro Vancouver's budget and how it integrates into their property taxes and utility bills and to provide feedback on the projected rates for 2026.	Metro Vancouver updated the budget based on results of the Services and Cost Efficiencies Review and feedback from the first phase of engagement.	Updated budget information was provided for comment through an online survey and in person over two weeks at the PNE.



Engagement Promotion

The budget engagement was promoted through the Metro Vancouver website, social media channels, and paid promotions on local websites using both digital and print advertisements. Member jurisdictions were engaged to distribute information about the engagement through their platforms.

Website

The Metro Vancouver front webpage and budget webpage highlighted the engagement opportunity. The webpage also provided information on Metro Vancouver's budgets and financial plans, the budgeting process and schedule, and a breakdown of where the money comes from and what services it goes toward.

Feedback Form

ZenCity, an online engagement platform, was used to host a feedback form for interested and affected parties to provide input and comments. Surveys were published as part of the first and second phases of engagement.

Video

A video explaining Metro Vancouver's budget, the household impact metric, and how the budget fits into utility bills and property taxes was available on the website, in the movie tent at the PNE, and boosted on YouTube resulting in 361,753 views over the course of the two engagement periods.

Social Media

The engagement opportunity was promoted through a social media campaign on Instagram, Threads, Twitter(X), Bluesky, LinkedIn, and Facebook. The social media strategy was to use a series of organic posts to build awareness of the project and encourage feedback and social sharing.

Digital and Print Ad Buys

For the first phase of engagement, advertising included digital banner ads, a YouTube video, and newsprint ads published in the Delta Optimist, North Shore News, Langley Advance, and Surrey Now-Leader. These were in-market from March 10 to 31.

For the second phase of engagement, advertising included digital banner ads, a YouTube video, and newsprint ads in the North Shore News, Delta Optimist, Langley Advance, Surrey Now Leader, and the Georgia Straight. These were in-market from August 18 to September 7.

News Release

A [news release](#) was sent to all local media on February 19, 2025, resulting in media coverage with CBC Vancouver, CTV, and CKNW.

E-newsletters

The engagement opportunity was promoted in e-newsletters to Metro Vancouver subscribers, including the Metro Update which reaches 4,000 subscribers.

Feedback Form Responses

We invited the public to provide feedback by completing a feedback form that was available online. The online feedback was centered on providing an open opportunity for residents to comment on Metro Vancouver's 2026 budget and on the importance of Metro Vancouver meeting its core objectives.

Metro Vancouver uses ZenCity for online engagement, which provides opportunities for quantitative and qualitative input through a range of preference ranking, open ended, and direct questions. While online engagement is an important component of a comprehensive engagement strategy, it does not provide statistically relevant data. ZenCity participation does not require registration or a password and does not protect against multiple submissions.

The online feedback form submissions included 1,100 non-duplicated IP addresses in the first phase of engagement and around 110 submissions for the second phase of engagement.

There were no trends in the data that showed if residents clustered by age, area, or dwelling type provided responses that showed a pattern. Similarly, there was no trend indicating residents who reside on the North Shore were more likely to comment on the North Shore Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The survey ended with an open-ended question asking: What else would you like Metro Vancouver to consider as we work to manage overall estimated costs related to our services for 2026? Over 900 responses were provided to this question.

In-Person Engagement at the PNE

The Metro Vancouver showcase at the PNE featured displays on Metro Vancouver's service areas and highly engaging, interactive displays that connect residents with the work that Metro Vancouver does.

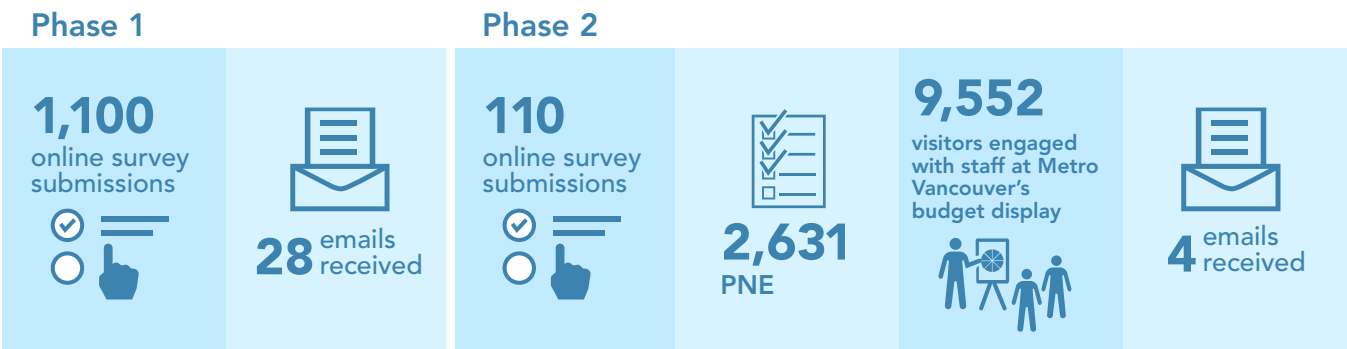
One area of the showcase was designed to engage residents on Metro Vancouver's budget with the objective of teaching residents about how they contribute to Metro Vancouver's services and how it appears in their property taxes and utility bills and offering an opportunity for visitors to discuss costs with staff.

There was also a game in the budget display area that featured a spinning wheel with wedges that put the regional average household impact for each service, broken down as if it were a monthly cost. After spinning and landing on a number, the participant then tried to match the number with the service. It provided a fun way to discuss what Metro Vancouver's services are, and why all residents contribute more to big ticket items like water and liquid waste infrastructure.

Throughout the Metro Vancouver showcase, there were prompts for visitors to complete a survey by QR code, which included two questions specific to Metro Vancouver's budget, aligned with the online engagement survey.

Over the course of the 2025 PNE, 9,552 visitors engaged with staff at Metro Vancouver's budget display. 2,631 surveys were completed. The display was staffed by professional outreach staff from 11 am-10 pm, with Metro Vancouver subject matter experts at the display for 3 hours on 10 of the 14 PNE days, for a total of 30 hours of staff engagement time.

Participation in Engagement



What We Heard

In the first phase of engagement, residents responded to multiple choice questions in the survey, with these results:

- About 60 per cent of respondents described themselves as familiar or somewhat familiar with Metro Vancouver's services and the costs to deliver those services (where "familiar" meant they felt they could describe it in general to a friend).
- When asked how they would suggest Metro Vancouver look to reduce costs, over 60 per cent of respondents preferred that Metro Vancouver offer the same services but look for cost savings. The next most selected suggestions were to move towards more user-fees (14 per cent), cut programs (10 per cent), and move programs to another organization (10 per cent).
- When asked about the projected 5 per cent / \$43 increase in average fees paid by households for Metro Vancouver services in 2026, about 21 per cent of respondents were comfortable (seems a reasonable increase to meet these goals), 11 per cent of respondents were neutral (not concerned, haven't really thought about it), and 21 per cent were uncomfortable (not sure if it's necessary), and 38 per cent were not comfortable (don't agree it's necessary).

Overall, key themes and feedback from Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the engagement period were similar in nature to feedback received in the 2024 public engagement period.

- **Affordability and livability:** Many comments express concern about the impact of rate increases on residents, particularly those who are already struggling financially. Within this category of comments, there are requests for Metro Vancouver to find ways to reduce costs without raising rates.
- **Concerns about wasteful spending and governance:** This selection of comments identified perceived wasteful spending by Metro Vancouver, and cite travel, salaries, and events. There are calls for greater transparency and accountability in spending.

- **Suggestions for ways to reduce costs or generate other income:** Numerous comments suggest ways to reduce costs, such as reducing administration, reducing salaries, eliminating programs, and improving efficiency in project management.
- **North Shore Wastewater Treatment Plant Program and other large projects:** Several comments identified the North Shore Wastewater Treatment Plant as an example of significant infrastructure they are familiar with. This category of comments included interest in seeing better oversight and accountability in project management and expressed concern about the cost increase of the project.
- **Suggestions for improved services:** Some comments offer suggestions for improving services, such as water metering or re-use policies, and increased investment in climate action, green spaces, and environmental protection. Several comments were received calling for improved public transportation, although that service is not provided by Metro Vancouver.
- **Support for existing services:** A variety of comments focused on what was important to them on top of water, liquid waste, or solid waste, including protection of parks and climate programs, and in-park safety, as well as support for education, campaigns, and providing residents with solutions. 13 of 28 emails received in the first phase of engagement were part of a letter writing campaign regarding support for Metro Vancouver's climate action activities. Two emails came from non-profits ZEIC and Zero Waste BC with suggestions, questions, and support for Metro Vancouver's work.
- **Suggestions on transparency:** There was support for increased advisement, engagement, and promotion around what the organization does. For example, some residents expressed a desire to better understand the efforts being made to deliver core services.

Samples from 1,000+ comments:

- “Supporting the people who deliver core services is key to maintaining quality and long-term sustainability.”
- “I would like to see more investment in housing directly offered by Metro (with assist from province?). I would like to see greater work on air quality monitoring, reporting, and regulation particularly in relation to port traffic and support for active transportation infrastructure.”
- “Though it is a small fraction of the budget, air quality, and regional parks upkeep is essential to maintain.”
- “Everything is so expensive. It [would] be nice if Metro Van said we’ll keep the rates the same or better yet, lower them by a bit per household.”
- “Please keep the increase to the cost of inflation or lower.”
- “Adding MV carbon footprint and dedicating budget to reduce viable sustainability projects. Working with all levels of government to add social housing to deliverable.”
- “Housing, housing, housing. Sufficient public housing will pull rent prices down, which will pull speculation down. I want this to be Vancouver’s priority.”
- “Seems to be big spike in emergency vehicle and 311 service calls, waste water treatment needs. More investment in proactive planning, public health and social services. more in planning and resilience.”
- “Is it possible to have more budget for advertising what you do? For example, if we all understand the efforts being made to improve air quality and how we can lower our bills by contributing, maybe more people would opt for transit. Maybe there would be more thoughtful consumption. (Maybe I’m a big dreamer)”
- “The risk/impact of the deferral of upgrades/ expansion to critical infrastructure to save a mere \$20/household.”
- “Don’t waste”
- “With the high inflation in Canada it’s so difficult nowadays to survive. This added increase will put more of majority of the population barely survive or may just leave this Municipality. Other municipality survive without any increase.”
- “People are hurting financially”
- “I’m not sure, I think you’re doing quite well. Thank you for everything you do to help make Metro Vancouver a better place for everyone!”



How Feedback Will Be Used

Thank you for sharing your input on what you would like Metro Vancouver to consider as we work to manage overall estimated costs related to our services for 2026. Input will be shared with the Metro Vancouver Board as members deliberate on the 2026 Budget and Five-Year Financial Plan.



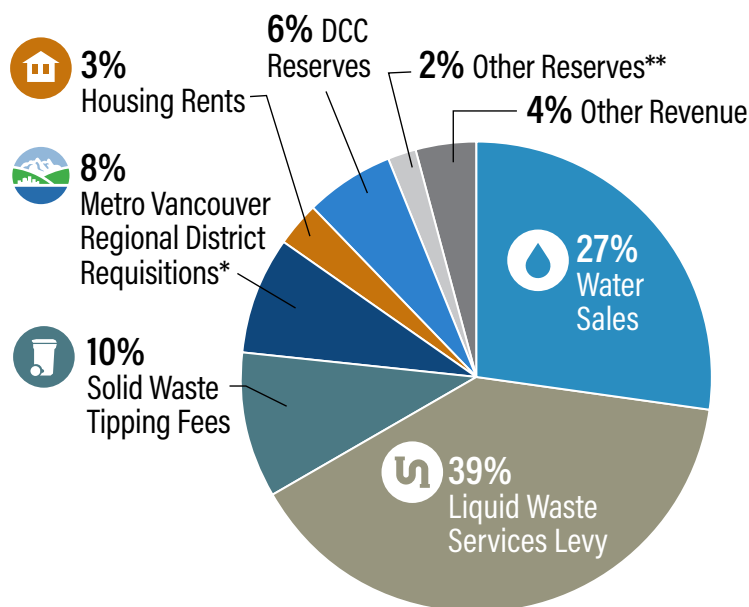
Appendix A: Content for First Phase of Engagement

How Metro Vancouver's Services are Funded

Metro Vancouver's primary funding sources come from household, commercial, and industrial ratepayers around the region. Metro Vancouver also receives third-party funding like government grants, development contributions, energy sales, and other fees. When setting the budgets, these other funding sources are incorporated prior to calculating the annual rates to assist in reaching a sustainable annual increase.

Metro Vancouver Service	Primary Funding Source	Billing / Collections of Fees and Charges
Water	Water sales	City water utility bills
Liquid waste / sewers	Sewer levy	City sewer utility bills
Solid waste	Tipping fees	User pay-as-you-go fees
Regional parks	Property taxes	City property tax bills
Air quality management	Property taxes	City property tax bills
Regional planning	Property taxes	City property tax bills
Affordable rental housing	Rental fees	Tenant lease /rental agreements

Where the money comes from



Household Rates in 2025

In 2025, all of Metro Vancouver’s services cost on average \$875 per year, per household — that’s about \$73 per month. This amount is an input for the municipality, treaty First Nation, or electoral area when setting the annual water utility, sewer utility, and property tax rates.

How that breaks down annually:

- \$4 for regional planning
- \$7 for air quality management
- \$63 for regional parks
- \$71 for solid waste management
- \$200 for drinking water
- \$510 for wastewater treatment and other liquid waste services
- And \$20 for other regional services

About Costs for Liquid Waste Management

Various projects and initiatives are underway to meet the wastewater treatment needs of our growing region and ensure water rinsed down the drain and flushed down the toilet is clean before it re-enters the Salish Sea or Fraser River.

In addition to building a new North Shore Treatment Plant, the existing wastewater treatment plants are being upgraded to improve treatment processes, adapt to climate change, mitigate earthquake impacts, and other needs.

About Metro Vancouver Housing

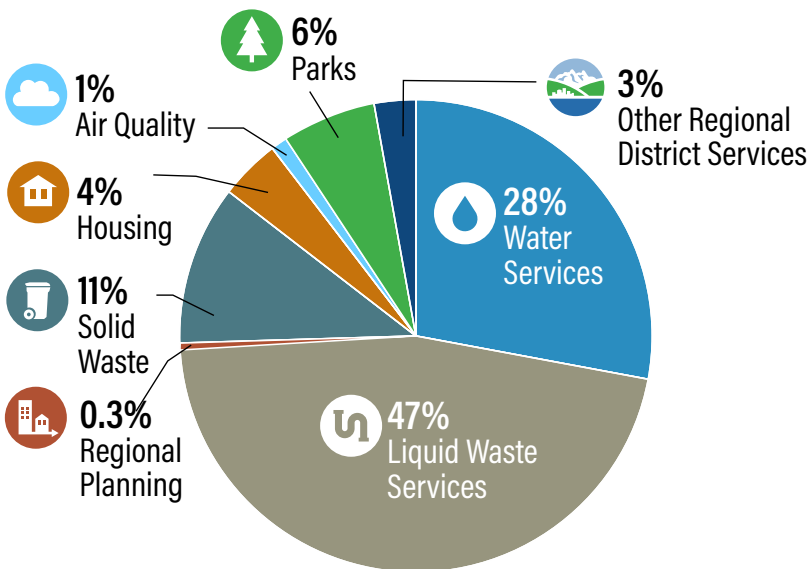
Another important and cost effective service Metro Vancouver provides the region is affordable rental housing through the non-profit Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation. The initial capital funding to support with developing new housing units comes from a combination of debt financing, BC Housing, CMHC, and other senior levels of government

Looking Ahead - Projected Rates for 2026

Metro Vancouver is developing its budget for 2026. Preliminary numbers are based on a projected need to increase the rates by 5 per cent over 2025.

This would be a **\$43 increase** in average fees paid per household next year. In total, the average household would contribute **\$918** toward Metro Vancouver services in 2026.

Where the money goes



Appendix B: New or Updated Content for Second Phase of Engagement

In spring of 2025, Metro Vancouver undertook a Services and Cost Efficiencies Review. Metro Vancouver considered input from the engagement process alongside the review. As a result, the organization is applying \$364 million in operating budget savings to its 2026 Budget and 2026-2030 Five-Year Financial Plan.

This means that the anticipated rates for 2026 will be lower than originally anticipated.

The average household impact is now anticipated to be \$897 on average per household. Down from the previously projected \$918 on average per household.

In 2025 (this year), all of Metro Vancouver's services cost on average \$875 per household — that's about \$73 per month. Preliminary numbers for 2026 are based on a 2.5 per cent increase over 2025's rates.

This will mean **the average household impact will be \$897 in 2026.** *Note: Rates will vary by type of home, use of services, and where you live.*

The proposed 2026 average household impact by service area are:

- \$4 for regional planning
- \$7 for air quality management

- \$49 for regional parks
- \$74 for solid waste management
- \$206 for drinking water
- \$534 for wastewater treatment and other liquid waste services
- \$23 for other regional services, including the 9-1-1 call centre

In 2026, Metro Vancouver is projecting an operating budget of \$1.61 billion and planned capital expenditures of \$1.95 billion. Approximately 90 per cent of the total operating budget is used to maintain the water, sewer, solid waste systems. The remaining 10 per cent supports housing, air quality, and other services that contribute to a livable region.

Why are the costs for wastewater treatment so high?

Currently, we are upgrading several of the region's wastewater treatment plants to ensure we're protecting human and environmental health. Learn more [on our website](#).

Contact Us

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Email: budgetengagement@metrovancover.org
(Please include "Budget" in the subject line)

Website: [Budgets and Financial Plans | Metro Vancouver](#) or visit [metrovancover.org](https://www.metrovancover.org) and search "Budget"

