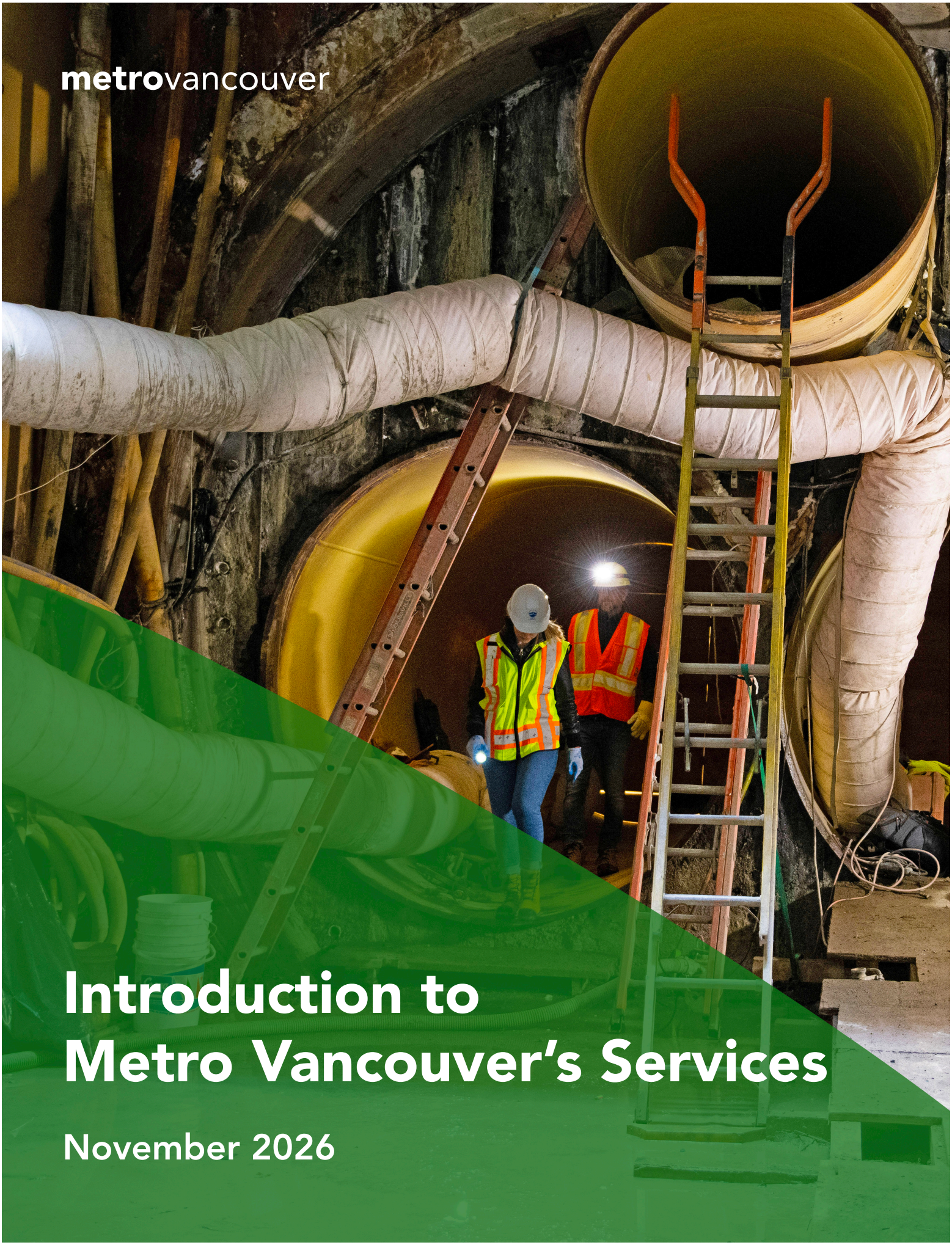
metrovancouver



Introduction to Metro Vancouver's Services

November 2026

Indigenous Territorial Acknowledgement

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: q̓i̓c̓əy̓ (Katzie), q̓ʷɑ:ƛ̓ən̓ (Kwantlen), kʷikʷəƛ̓əm (Kwikwetlem), máthxwi (Matsqui), xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), qiqéyt (Qayqayt), Semiahmoo, Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), scəẃaθən məsteyəxʷ (Tsawwassen), and səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh).

Metro Vancouver respects the diverse and distinct histories, languages, and cultures of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit.

4515 Central Boulevard, Burnaby, BC, V5H 0C6

metrovancouver.org

November 2026

Contents

About Metro Vancouver 5

Greater Vancouver Water District (GVWD) 6

Drinking Water 6

Greater Vancouver Sewerage & Drainage District (GVS&DD) 10

Liquid Waste 10

Solid Waste 14

Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation (MVHC) 18

Metro Vancouver Housing 18

Metro Vancouver Regional District (MVRD) 21

Regional Parks 21

Air Quality 24

Regional Planning 27

Invest Vancouver 29

Electoral Area A 32

Other Services 34



Minnekhada Regional Park

About Metro Vancouver

Metro Vancouver provides services at a regional level. Every day, over three million people — more than half of BC's population — rely on Metro Vancouver for clean water, clean air, and other services that contribute to a high quality of life in our region.

"Metro Vancouver" is the overarching name for four legal entities, each providing different services: the Metro Vancouver Regional District, the Greater Vancouver Water District, the Greater Vancouver Sewerage & Drainage District, and the Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation. Each operates under distinct legislation and its own board of directors.

The four legal entities of Metro Vancouver are governed by local elected officials appointed by member jurisdiction councils who work together to deliver services on a regional scale. By working together, member jurisdictions achieve economies of scale not possible on their own. They can also deliver and receive services they may not otherwise have access to, or the ability to deliver, on their own.

Drinking Water

What We Do: Deliver over one billion litres of high-quality drinking water every day

Board: Greater Vancouver Water District

Since: 1924

Legislation: *Greater Vancouver Water District Act*

Overview

Metro Vancouver delivers high-quality drinking water to homes and businesses across the region through its member jurisdictions, with water quality that ranks among the best in the world.

How Drinking Water Become a Regional Service

Collaboration on protecting the water supply in the region started as early as 1886 with the founding of the Vancouver and Coquitlam Waterworks. The mission was clear: to find and deliver a good, reliable source of water for a growing population. In 1924, the Greater Vancouver Water District was founded.

Since then, Metro Vancouver has worked to bring water from the North Shore mountains and Coquitlam to the region. This includes planning for the future to make sure the region's drinking water system remains reliable.

Regional Drinking Water System

Metro Vancouver's drinking water comes from rain and melting snow collected in three protected water supply areas: Capilano, Seymour, and Coquitlam. Together, these water supply areas cover about 60,000 hectares. They are closed to the public to help protect the exceptional quality of the water.

Water is stored in reservoirs and moves through dams, treatment plants, pump stations, and water mains. The regional system delivers treated drinking water to member jurisdictions, which then provide it to homes and businesses through their own systems.

Water Quality, Treatment, and Testing

Metro Vancouver tests the quality of drinking water every day and completes more than 169,000 tests across the water system each year. Water is tested in reservoirs, water mains, and in each member jurisdiction to make sure it meets all provincial and federal drinking water standards.

Water Distribution

Metro Vancouver supplies drinking water to member jurisdictions. It provides this service on a cost-recovery basis, meaning jurisdictions pay only the cost of delivering the service, with no profit added. Members pay for water at a cost per cubic metre (1,000 litres) and do not have to commit to minimum or maximum volumes.

Drinking water passes through a bulk meter to each member jurisdiction, which then takes over responsibility. Member jurisdictions deliver the water to residents and businesses through their pipes and facilities. They are also responsible for billing customers, installing meters, addressing leaks, and enforcing local water restrictions.

Water Conservation

Water use per person in the Metro Vancouver region is among the highest in Canada. Every day, residents and businesses in the region use at least one billion litres of drinking water, enough to fill BC Place. This increases in summer to around 1.5 billion litres, largely driven by outdoor use of drinking water. Reducing how much drinking water we use is critical for the future, especially as climate change increases the frequency of summer droughts and more people move to the region. Metro Vancouver and member jurisdictions work together to encourage conservation so that drinking water is available for its most important uses: drinking, cooking, cleaning, and emergency use. Using less water will ensure infrastructure goes further and is the most cost-efficient way to manage the system.

How the Service is Funded

Water is sold at wholesale rates to member jurisdictions on a volumetric basis — a cost per cubic metre. These are recovered by member jurisdictions primarily through utility fees. Capital projects are also funded by borrowing (debt) and through external funding.

Guiding Plans

Drinking Water Management Plan (2026)

Water Supply Outlook 2120 (2019)

Drinking Water Conservation Plan (2017, amended in 2021)

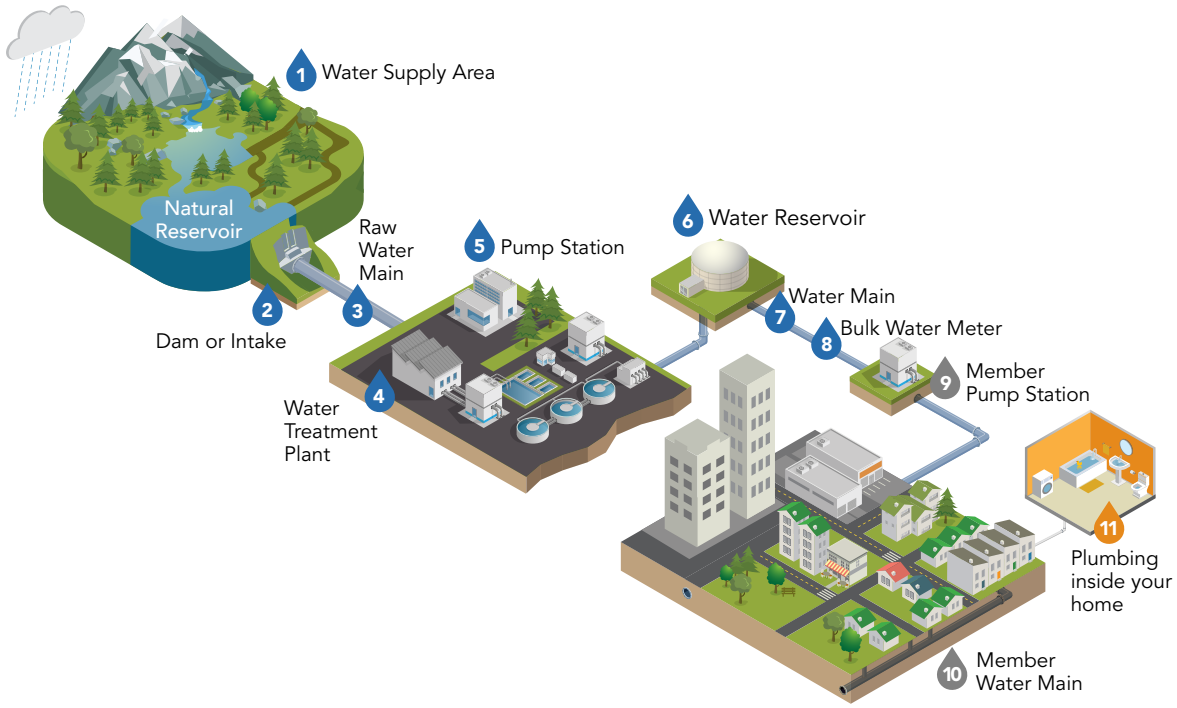
Scale at a Glance

- **1 billion+** litres of drinking water treated and delivered per day
- **3** major reservoirs and water supply areas (Capilano, Seymour, Coquitlam)
- **60,000** hectares of protected land in water supply areas
- **1** conservation reserve (Lower Seymour Conservation Reserve)
- **5** water supply dams
- **2** water treatment plants
- **28** storage reservoirs and tanks
- **19** pump stations
- **8** re-chlorination facilities
- **520+** kilometres of water mains



Drinking Water
metrovancouver.org/services/water

Regional Water System



Jurisdiction and Regulation

Metro Vancouver is responsible for:

- Delivering drinking water to member jurisdictions
- Managing and protecting the water supply areas
- Treating and testing drinking water throughout the system
- Following the BC *Source Drinking Water Quality Guidelines* and federal *Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality*
- Upgrading, maintaining, and expanding the system
- Planning for future supply
- Setting region-wide water restrictions through the *Drinking Water Conservation Plan*

Member jurisdictions are responsible for:

- Delivering drinking water to homes and businesses
- Monitoring and reporting on their local system's water quality
- Billing residents, businesses, industry, and agriculture
- Installing and reading water meters
- Land use planning, which influences water demand
- Housing density, which influences water demand
- Approving large water users (e.g., data centres, industry)
- Translating the *Drinking Water Conservation Plan* (water restrictions) into bylaws
- Enforcing water restriction bylaws
- Planning for and maintaining the local water distribution system and meeting fire flow requirements

British Columbia's health authorities oversee drinking water safety across the province. In Metro Vancouver, this oversight is shared by Vancouver Coastal Health and Fraser Health.



A tunnel boring machine is lowered into Second Narrows Water Supply Tunnel

Current Project Examples

Coquitlam Lake Water Supply Project

The Coquitlam Reservoir is the largest of Metro Vancouver's three drinking water sources. To increase water supply and improve system reliability, Metro Vancouver plans to build a new water intake, tunnel, and water treatment plant. As of late 2026, this project is in the planning and design stages, and construction is expected to begin in the early 2030s.

Water Supply Tunnels and System Resiliency

In the 1990s, Metro Vancouver studied the potential impacts of major earthquakes on the regional water system. The study identified several critical water supply crossings that needed upgrades to keep working after a major earthquake. Because these crossings could be difficult to repair, Metro Vancouver has been strengthening them to withstand a Maximum Credible Earthquake. The Port Mann Water Supply Tunnel is complete, and construction for the Second Narrows is underway. The Cambie-Richmond Water Supply Tunnel is in the detailed design phase, with construction anticipated to begin around 2029.

Stanley Park Water Supply Tunnel

Metro Vancouver is constructing the Stanley Park Water Supply Tunnel to replace an existing water main that was built in the 1930s and is at the end of its service life. Construction began in late 2024 and is expected to last through 2029. When complete, the new tunnel will ensure the continued delivery of high-quality drinking water to meet the needs of the growing region and also meet current seismic standards.

Liquid Waste

What We Do: Manage over one billion litres of wastewater every day

Board: Greater Vancouver Sewerage & Drainage District

Since: 1914

Legislation: *Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District Act*

Overview

Metro Vancouver provides wastewater treatment to protect public health and the environment. It also plans for the future to ensure the region's wastewater system remains strong and sustainable.

How Liquid Waste Became a Regional Service

In the early 1900s, Lower Mainland communities were growing quickly. Each community had built its own sewer system, but the systems were not connected and had different designs and limited capacity. Pollution at local beaches and recurring outbreaks of water-borne diseases like typhoid and cholera were becoming serious concerns. In 1913, communities started working together on a regional plan for sewer and drainage services and future infrastructure needs. The following year, the Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District was created to provide these services across the region, recognizing that sewer and drainage systems work best when they are planned and managed at a regional level.

Regional Wastewater System

Metro Vancouver receives wastewater from local systems run by member jurisdictions and carries it to one of five wastewater treatment plants. At these plants, the wastewater is treated and tested before being released into the Fraser River, Burrard Inlet, or Georgia Strait. Together, regional, municipal, and private wastewater infrastructure includes over 15,000 kilometres of sewers and handles over one billion litres of wastewater every day.

A separate network of municipal stormwater sewers captures rain and melting snow and discharges it directly into the nearest body of water.

Keeping Pollutants Out of the Wastewater System

Metro Vancouver helps keep the wastewater system working well by regulating what homes, businesses, and industries can put into the system. It sets and enforces regulations, issues permits to industry, provides information and support, and educates the public through regional campaigns.

Recovering Resources from Wastewater

Metro Vancouver recovers valuable resources from wastewater, like energy as heat, electricity, and renewable natural gas. Water and nutrients are also reused to support healthy, productive soil.

How the Service is Funded

Liquid waste operational services are paid for primarily through a levy charged to member jurisdictions, which charge residents through utility bills. Capital projects are also funded by borrowing (debt) and through external funding.

Guiding Plan

Integrated Liquid Waste and Resource Management Plan (2010, update underway pending approval by BC Minister of Environment and Parks as of December 2025)

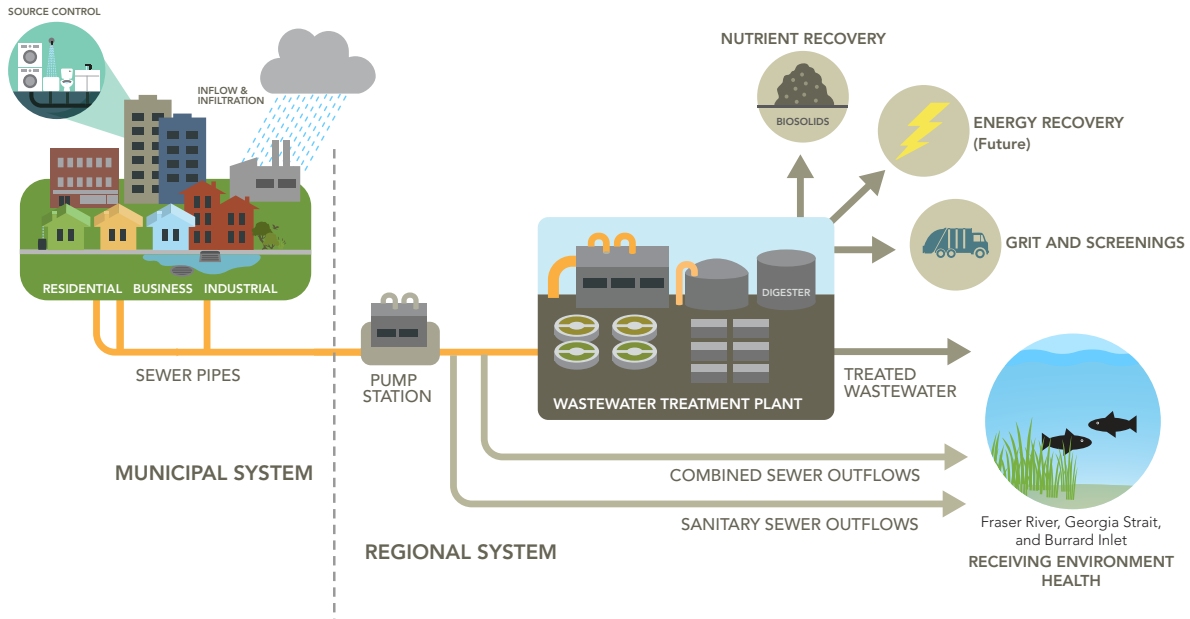
Scale at a Glance

- **1 billion+** litres of wastewater treated every day
- **5** wastewater treatment plants
- **530+** kilometres of trunk sewers
- **35** pump stations
- **3** sewage storage tanks
- **2** urban drainage areas
- Water quality tested at **41** swimming areas (**114** sampling sites) across the region
- **1** chemistry laboratory and **5** process labs
- **1** wastewater research centre



Liquid Waste
metrovancouver.org/services/liquid-waste

Regional Wastewater System



Jurisdiction and Regulation

Metro Vancouver is responsible for:

- Operating a region-wide system that collects and treats wastewater
- Testing and monitoring wastewater to protect public health and the environment
- Developing and enforcing regulations that protect the wastewater system and the environment
- Issuing permits to industry and collecting associated fees
- Recovering resources from wastewater, including heat, energy, and biosolids
- Planning for future needs and building regional infrastructure
- Reporting to provincial and federal agencies on Metro Vancouver's compliance with regulatory requirements, including authorized wastewater discharges to the environment and sewer overflows
- Supporting member jurisdictions in managing stormwater by sharing information, developing tools and resources, and acting as liaison with regulatory bodies
- Providing drainage services on certain sections of waterways within two urban drainage areas, in collaboration with member jurisdictions

Member jurisdictions are responsible for:

- Operating municipal sewer systems and pump stations that collect wastewater from homes, businesses, and institutions, and delivering it to the regional wastewater system
- Planning for and maintaining their wastewater systems
- Developing policies and infrastructure to manage stormwater and drainage
- Billing residents and businesses for wastewater services
- Enforcing local regulations
- Recovering resources from municipal wastewater system



Staff stand with the new pilot plant for the Iona Island Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrades

Current Project Examples

North Shore Wastewater Treatment Plant (New Facility)

The North Shore Wastewater Treatment Plant will provide secondary treatment and tertiary filtration to meet regulatory requirements and to ensure much cleaner treated wastewater is released into Burrard Inlet. The new facility will replace the aging Lions Gate plant, which is at the end of its service life and does not meet current treatment standards. Plant construction is underway and expected to be complete in 2030.

Iona Island Wastewater Treatment Plant (Upgrades)

The Iona Island Wastewater Treatment Plant is being upgraded to rehabilitate aging infrastructure and meet regulatory requirements by adding secondary treatment to the existing plant. Early work is underway to prepare for construction, including pilot testing of treatment technology, site preparation, and advancing preliminary design. Construction of the plant's secondary treatment components is expected to be complete in 2039.

Northwest Langley Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion Program

The Northwest Langley Wastewater Treatment Plant is being expanded to accommodate population growth in the Township of Langley, Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows, and areas of North Surrey. The expansion program includes several recently completed projects including a pump station, sewer overflow storage tank, and sewer pipes under the Fraser River to carry wastewater to the expanded plant. Plant construction and commissioning is expected to be complete in 2036.

Solid Waste

What We Do: Plan for waste reduction as a region, and provide solid waste facilities where customers drop off garbage and recycling

Board: Greater Vancouver Sewerage & Drainage District

Since: 1974

Legislation: *Environmental Management Act*
Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District Act

Overview

Metro Vancouver is responsible for waste reduction and recycling planning, the solid waste regulatory framework, and operating solid waste facilities throughout the region with the goals of minimizing waste and maximizing recycling.

How Solid Waste Management Became a Regional Service

In the early 1970s, municipal landfills in the region were closing. In 1971, members of the Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District agreed that managing waste at a regional level would benefit them all. A 1973 technical report, titled "Greater Vancouver Regional District Solid Waste Studies, Report of Engineering Board Review", signed by then-Commissioner F.R. Bunnell, reached the same conclusion and noted that changes in provincial legislation would be needed. In 1974, the *Greater Vancouver Sewerage & Drainage District Act* was amended, giving the authority to manage municipal solid waste. In 1985, Metro Vancouver adopted its first solid waste management plan. The plan focused on building a network of facilities to receive and manage garbage across the region. In 1992, the Province amended the *Waste Management Act* (now the *Environmental Management Act*) and required every regional district in BC to create a plan to reduce and manage waste. The goal was to cut the amount of waste sent to disposal sites by 50 per cent by 2000 and was met in 1998, two years ahead of schedule.

Regional Municipal Solid Waste Management System

Metro Vancouver operates six recycling and waste centres where residents and businesses can drop off garbage and recyclables. It also operates a waste-to-energy facility, which receives one quarter of the region's garbage. These solid waste facilities are operated by contractors selected through competitive procurement processes. Metro Vancouver works closely with the City of Vancouver, which owns and operates the Vancouver South Transfer Station and Vancouver Landfill.

Metro Vancouver regulates private waste facilities that process materials like construction waste and food scraps. These facilities are required to have and comply with a licence issued by Metro Vancouver. This helps ensure private facilities meet environmental and public health standards.

Metro Vancouver also supports other parts of the waste management system by working with local governments, residents, and businesses who produce waste, waste collection (hauling) companies, recycling companies, and non-profits.



United Boulevard Recycling and Waste Centre

Preventing and Reducing Waste

Metro Vancouver tracks and measures what's in the garbage and what's being recycled. This data is used to find opportunities to reduce waste and recycle more.

The Metro Vancouver region is a North American leader in waste reduction and recycling. In 2024, 65 per cent of waste generated was recycled, twice the national average. From 2010 to 2024, the amount of waste disposed per person decreased by 30 per cent, from about 600 to 420 kilograms per person.

Through its role in the public waste management system, Metro Vancouver finds new ways to prevent and reduce waste. Initiatives support reuse, recycling, and waste prevention, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from solid waste. Over 2.3 million tonnes of material are recycled every year in Metro Vancouver, creating jobs and supporting the local economy. Once all efforts to reduce and recycle waste are made, the remaining garbage is managed in a way that protects the environment. Whenever possible, energy and resources are recovered from waste.

Disposal Ban Program

Every year, over 200,000 loads of garbage are inspected as part of the disposal ban program. If the load contains recyclable material or hazardous or operational impact materials, an additional charge is added to the tipping fee. This encourages recycling of food scraps, cardboard, beverage containers, and more. It also discourages the unsafe disposal of hazardous materials such as rechargeable batteries, asbestos, biomedical waste, and gas cylinders. This helps keep workers and the public safe.

How the Service is Funded

The system is based on a user-pay model. Customers pay a tipping fee at Metro Vancouver facilities, so that those who create waste pay for its management. A fee called the "generator levy" applies to garbage generated within the region, regardless of where it is taken for disposal. This ensures all generators contribute to the cost of the system.

The generator levy encourages haulers to bring garbage to regional facilities operated by Metro Vancouver or the City of Vancouver, where disposal bans are in place. At these facilities, the generator levy is included in the tipping fee. If garbage is delivered to a facility that Metro Vancouver or the City of Vancouver does not operate, the waste hauler is required to collect the generator levy and pay it to Metro Vancouver.

Guiding Plan

Integrated Solid Waste and Resource Management Plan (2010, update underway)

Scale at a Glance

- **1 million+** visits to Metro Vancouver solid waste facilities per year
- **6** recycling and waste centres
- **1** waste-to-energy facility
- **65%** diversion rate (2024), leading in North America (diversion is recycling and recovery of energy and materials)
- Over **2.3 million** tonnes of material diverted every year
- **30%** reduction in waste disposed per person (2010–2024)
- **200,000+** loads of garbage inspected at Metro Vancouver facilities each year



Solid Waste
metrovancouver.org/services/solid-waste

Jurisdiction and Regulation

Metro Vancouver is responsible for:

- Operating solid waste facilities that focus on maximizing opportunities for recycling and reuse
- Disposing of all remaining waste either at the Waste-to-Energy Facility or a landfill
- Implementing bylaws and regulations to better manage waste within our system, improve recycling, and protect public health and the environment (include regulations such as disposal bans and solid waste facility licensing)
- Seeking technologies that recycle and recover materials and energy
- Investing in infrastructure that will be resilient, adaptable to change, and reduce our dependence on non-renewable energy sources
- Influencing individual and collective behaviours to avoid generating unnecessary waste

Member jurisdictions are responsible for:

- Communicating waste reduction and recycling information along with collection details
- Collecting garbage and organics from primarily single-family detached homes (apartment and condo buildings, as well as businesses and institutions, usually arrange their own collection)
- Collecting and managing abandoned garbage at municipal facilities, parks, and streets
- Implementing bylaws and regulations related to waste collection, street use, litter, and other similar activities

Current Project Examples

Recycling Depot Construction at Langley and North Surrey Recycling and Waste Centres

These two facilities are being upgraded to accept more materials and make recycling easier, more convenient, and more consistent across the region. The project will increase opportunities for free recycling, improve customer flow and convenience, enhance safety, and support regional waste diversion goals.

Waste-to-Energy Facility District Energy System

Metro Vancouver is developing a district energy system to supply heat and hot water to up to 50,000 homes in Vancouver and Burnaby. This project will triple the energy recovery of the Waste-to-Energy Facility by using some of the steam generated by the combustion of garbage to heat water and deliver it through an underground piping network to nearby neighbourhoods.

Metro Vancouver Housing

What We Do: Provide affordable rental homes for families, seniors, and people with disabilities who have low to moderate incomes

Board: Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation

Since: 1974

Legislation: *Business Corporations Act*

Overview

Metro Vancouver Housing is one of the largest non-profit housing providers in BC and ranked one of the top three housing providers in Canada. It manages more than 3,400 non-market rental homes at 50 sites and is home to over 10,000 residents.

How the Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation Was Created

In 1974, Metro Vancouver members saw a need for non-market rental housing that was not being filled by other orders of government. To address this need, a non-profit housing corporation was created through the regional district that gave municipalities leverage to create non-market housing for residents with low to moderate incomes throughout the region. The Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation is a non-profit and the Metro Vancouver Regional District is the sole shareholder.

Type of Housing

Metro Vancouver Housing's homes are designed primarily for families, seniors, and people with disabilities with low to moderate incomes. More than 80 per cent of the units have two or more bedrooms, helping meet the needs of families of different sizes.

Rents

All homes are offered at below-market rents. Approximately one-third of homes are rent-geared-to-income, meaning rents are set at a maximum of 30 per cent of a household's gross annual income with an income cap. The remaining units are rented at low-end-of-market rates, with rents that are 10 to 20 per cent below market rates.

Building Healthy, Inclusive, and Engaged Communities

Metro Vancouver Housing builds inclusive and engaged communities at all its sites, delivering programs such as community gardens, cooking classes, and social events to help residents build relationships and feel connected to their neighbourhoods.

Investing in Renewal and Growth

Metro Vancouver Housing is working to increase the supply of affordable rental homes. Through the *Metro Vancouver Housing 10-Year Plan*, Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation is committing $150 million to deliver over 2,000 new and redeveloped non-market rental homes. Metro Vancouver Housing is also actively seeking partnerships with municipalities and other orders of government to help create more affordable housing opportunities.

Metro Vancouver Housing develops non-market housing through:

- Reinvesting revenue from its existing portfolio
- Contributions from member jurisdictions, including land, waived development fees, and grants
- Provincial and federal funding, preferential financing, and grants from BC Housing and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
- An annual tax requisition of $5 per household to support expansion

How the Service is Funded

Metro Vancouver Housing operates at no cost to taxpayers, with tenant rents covering the day-to-day cost of running and maintaining the housing and delivering programs to tenants.

A regional property-tax contribution of $5 per household each year is invested in expanding affordable housing.

Metro Vancouver Housing also partners with tenants, governments, community organizations, and other non-profits to support inclusive and engaged communities. These partnerships can provide land, funding, and financing to build and renew housing, as well as programs and services that respond to tenants' needs and help them connect with their communities.

Guiding Plans

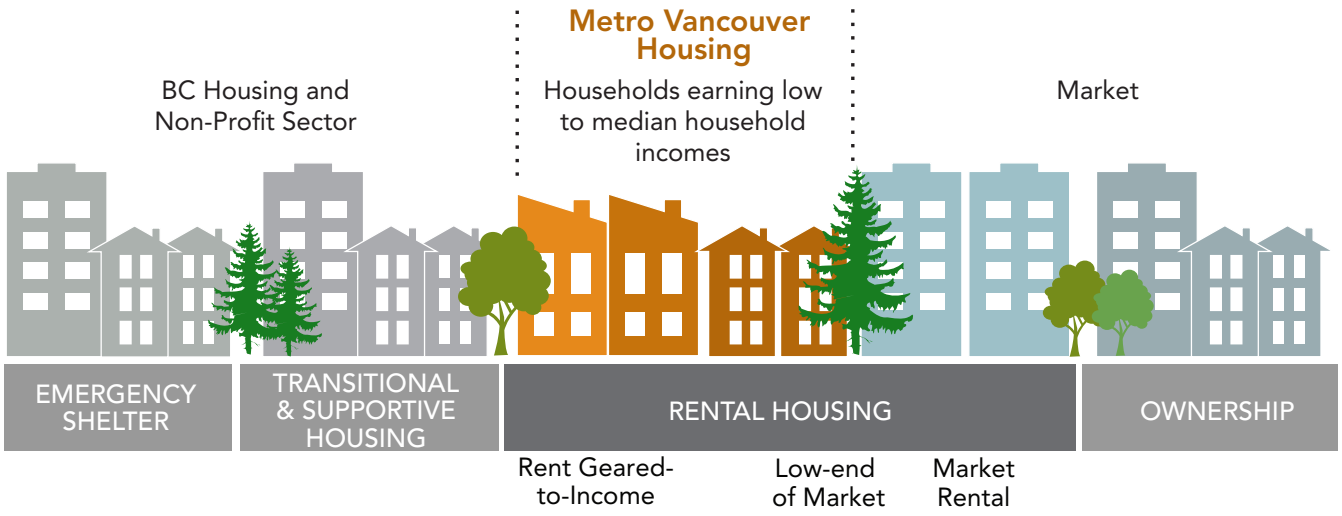
Metro Vancouver Housing 10-Year Plan (2026)

Metro Vancouver Housing Redevelopment Plan (2026)

Fit within the Spectrum of Housing Types

All Metro Vancouver Housing units are rented at below-market rates, with varying levels of affordability to meet the needs of households with low to moderate incomes. Metro Vancouver Housing has a portfolio target of 30% rent-geared-to-income housing, with the remaining units low-end-of-market.

METRO VANCOUVER HOUSING AND THE HOUSING CONTINUUM



Scale at a Glance

- **One of the largest** non-profit housing providers in BC
- Over **10,000** residents
- **3,400+** rental homes
- **50** sites
- **80%** of units have 2+ bedrooms
- Non-profit housing provider since **1974**
- Collaborating to deliver **2,000** new homes



Metro Vancouver Housing
metrovancouver.org/services/housing

Current Project Examples

The Steller, Burnaby

A new non-market, family-oriented rental housing project at 7388 Southwynde Avenue in Burnaby. This vacant city-owned site has been leased to Metro Vancouver Housing to develop 122 homes with a focus on families, seniors, and people with disabilities. It will also have 37 new non-profit childcare spaces. Homes will include a mix of sizes, with a focus on larger family units and accessible, age-friendly design to support people of all ages and abilities.

Manor House, North Vancouver

Metro Vancouver, in partnership with FortisBC, is undertaking a deep energy retrofit project to increase energy efficiency, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and improve tenant well-being at Manor House, a 50-home affordable rental building in the City of North Vancouver that was originally built in 1972.

Free Food Program

Metro Vancouver Housing's Free Food Program helps residents access free, nutritious food while reducing food waste. In partnership with Food Link Society, surplus produce and prepared foods are collected from local grocery stores before their best before dates and delivered to participating housing sites every two weeks. In total, the program redistributed about $2.5 million in food value to residents in 2025.

Regional Parks

What We Do: Protect nature and connect people with parks, with nearly 15 million visits per year

Board: Metro Vancouver Regional District

Since: 1967

Legislation: *Local Government Act*

Overview

Metro Vancouver manages regional parks, ecological conservancy areas, regional park reserves, and regional greenways.

How Parks Became a Regional Service

In the 1960s, people in Metro Vancouver recognized the need to protect green spaces as the region grew. With large tracts of undeveloped land available in the Lower Mainland, in 1966 the Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board developed a plan for a network of regional, provincial, and municipal parks linked by trails to meet the outdoor needs of its growing population. The Province created the regional parks system in 1967 through the *Regional Parks Act*, establishing the Vancouver-Fraser Park District. The priority was to acquire land while it was available and before prices rose too much. By 1970, the region had about 4,000 hectares of parkland serving one million residents. In 1972, responsibility for regional parks was transferred to the Greater Vancouver Regional District. The *Regional Parks Act* has since been repealed and incorporated into the *Local Government Act*.

Protecting Nature

The Metro Vancouver region is home to many unique plants, animals, and ecosystems. It is one of BC's most important areas for biodiversity. However, many of these natural areas are at risk. Over 2,500 hectares of sensitive ecosystem in the region were lost between 2009 and 2020. Metro Vancouver created the *Regional Parks Land Acquisition 2050 Strategy* to identify important natural areas that could be protected before they are lost. It also supports the creation of connected parks and greenways, making it easier for residents across the region to access nature.

Connecting People with Nature

In 2025, there were an estimated 14.7 million visits to regional parks. The number of visits has grown by an average of 3.2 per cent each year since 2004. In addition to providing access to green space, Metro Vancouver delivers year-round education programs, guided activities, and community events to help people learn about the environment and build stronger connections with nature, especially children and youth.

How the Service is Funded

Regional park operations and development are paid for primarily through the Metro Vancouver tax requisition, with some funding from development cost charges for parkland acquisition.

Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Foundation

The Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Foundation was created in 2000 to raise money for special projects, programs, and improvements in regional parks. It is governed by an independent board of directors and works with community partners to help protect, improve, and expand the regional parks system. Its goal is to ensure regional parks can be enjoyed by residents now and in the future. Metro Vancouver covers a portion of the foundation's operating and administrative costs.

Guiding Plans

Regional Parks Plan (2022)

Regional Parks Land Acquisition 2050 (2018)

Regional Greenways 2050 Plan (2020)

Scale at a Glance

- **14.7 million** visits in 2025
- **24** regional parks
- **5** regional greenways
- **2** ecological conservancy areas
- **2** regional park reserves
- **13,923** hectares of land (86% is sensitive and important ecosystems)
- **304** kilometres of trails, **614** bridges and boardwalks, and **86** kilometres of fencing
- **3.5** hectares of parkland added to the Regional Parks system in 2025
- **46,800** participants in programs and events in 2025
- **6,462** volunteers contributed **20,392** hours to stewardship, education, and interpretive programs



Regional Parks
metrovancouver.org/services/regional-parks



A family from Walnut Grove picnics in Derby Reach Regional Park on a night too hot to cook at home

Jurisdiction and Fit within Spectrum of Park Types

Metro Vancouver is authorized under the *Local Government Act* to provide a regional park service. Metro Vancouver works with member jurisdictions and other orders of government to advance land acquisition for regional parks across the region.



Current Project Examples

Burnaby Lake Regional Park Management Plan

A 20-year management plan for Burnaby Lake Regional Park is being developed to help protect important ecosystems and cultural heritage while improving park access, trails, and visitor amenities to support safe and enjoyable nature experiences.

Derby Reach Regional Park Campground Expansion

New campsites and visitor amenities are being added to Derby Reach Regional Park to increase camping opportunities while protecting natural areas and improving accessibility for visitors.

Delta Nature Reserve Boardwalk Replacement

The Delta Nature Reserve boardwalk is being renewed to improve visitor safety and accessibility, strengthen resilience to environmental impacts, and protect the unique peat bog ecosystem for future generations.

Air Quality

What We Do: Manage air quality to protect the environment and human health

Board: Metro Vancouver Regional District

Since: 1972

Legislation: *Environmental Management Act*

Overview

Metro Vancouver manages and regulates air quality in the region to support public health, including developing and implementing plans, policies, and regulations to reduce air contaminants. This work has resulted in a 45% reduction in smog causing emissions since 2000.

How Air Quality Became a Regional Service

As population, industrial emissions, economic activity, and vehicle use grew during the 1950s and 1960s, air pollution in the region became a concern. By the late 1960s, air quality was so bad that the municipalities asked the Province for the authority to manage air quality and regulate air contaminants through the regional district. Recognizing that effective bylaws and emission regulations would need to span municipal boundaries, the Province granted what is now the Metro Vancouver Regional District the powers to control and manage air pollution. Since then, Metro Vancouver has worked closely with local health authorities, member jurisdictions, and the Province to monitor, manage, and regulate air quality, which has resulted in the clean air we experience today.

Monitoring Air Quality

Metro Vancouver uses a network of air quality monitoring stations, from Horseshoe Bay to Hope, to understand local air quality and track changes over time. These stations collect data that is shared with the public, and Metro Vancouver issues air quality warnings when air contaminant levels are unhealthy or expected to become unhealthy across the Lower Fraser Valley Airshed.

Real-time air quality data is published on www.airmap.ca.

Tracking Emissions

To help manage air quality, Metro Vancouver maintains and updates air contaminant and greenhouse gas emissions inventories that inform policy and regulation development. This information is also used by Metro Vancouver's member jurisdictions and partner agencies.

Air Quality Permitting, Regulation, and Enforcement

Metro Vancouver sets rules for types of emissions from a range of sources, such as automotive refinishing facilities, gas stations, and non-road diesel engines. Metro Vancouver also issues air quality permits for large or complex facilities, which can include requirements to reduce emissions. Metro Vancouver's Permitting and Enforcement Officers assess and enforce compliance with air quality permits and emission regulation bylaws.

Current Air Quality Issues

Even though the region's population has grown, air quality in Metro Vancouver has improved over the past decades. Hotter, drier summers and more extreme weather are affecting our region. Wildfire smoke has impacted air quality in the region in seven of the last 10 years. The highest monthly average concentrations of fine particulate matter (small air particles that can enter the lungs and harm health) were measured in 2017, 2018, 2020, and 2022. Extreme heat events are also contributing to higher levels of ground-level ozone (smog) in eastern parts of the region, similar to levels seen in the 1980s.

Each year, approximately 900 people in our region die prematurely from exposure to air contaminants. If residents were still exposed to the level of air contaminants in 2001, at least 500 more people would die prematurely every year.

How the Service is Funded

Air quality services are paid for through fees paid by permitted facilities and non-road diesel engines and through tax requisition. In 2027, over half of the annual budget will be covered by non-tax requisition revenues, including emission fees, partnerships, and external funding.

Guiding Plan

Clean Air Plan (2021)

Scale at a Glance

- **24** air quality monitoring stations in Metro Vancouver
- **6** air quality monitoring stations in the Fraser Valley, operated in partnership with the Fraser Valley Regional District
- About **150** permitted facilities, **1,000** regulated sites, and **8,000** registered non-road diesel engines
- **7** of the last **10** summers impacted by wildfire smoke (2016–2025)
- **21%** reduction in greenhouse gases (GHGs) emitted per person since 2010
- Smog-causing emissions down **45%** since 2000
- Up to **4,000** complaints about odours, smoke, and dust managed each year



Air Quality
metrovancouver.org/services/air-quality

Jurisdiction and Regulation

Metro Vancouver is responsible for:

- Managing and regulating regional air quality under authority requested by municipalities and delegated by the Province through the *Environmental Management Act*
- Developing and implementing long-term air quality and emission reduction management plans
- Monitoring, testing, and reporting on air quality across the region
- Issuing air quality warnings when there is a high health risk due to poor air quality
- Issuing and enforcing air quality permits
- Creating and enforcing emission regulation bylaws to manage emissions from industry, businesses, and homes
- Setting targets and actions for reducing regional greenhouse gas emissions through the regional growth strategy, as required by the *Local Government Act*

Member jurisdictions are responsible for:

- Addressing nuisance issues (such as some local odours and dust) through their bylaws, but do not have authority related to air quality management or regulation

The Province is responsible for:

- Setting emission standards for fuels and other emission sources, and managing air quality in BC for areas outside of Metro Vancouver, including adjacent regional districts

Current Project Examples

Enhanced Air Quality Monitoring

Metro Vancouver is adding a new air quality monitoring station at Tsawwassen First Nation. In addition, new small air quality sensors are being deployed to fill gaps in the network and address specific concerns raised by the public or member jurisdictions.

Health-Harming Air Contaminant Emissions Inventory

This inventory describes the source of nearly 10,000 tonnes of health-harming air contaminant emissions in this region each year. Sources include industry, passenger vehicles, non-road engines, rail, marine, chemicals, and more. It helps with tracking progress towards *Clean Air Plan* targets, and developing policy recommendations for the MVRD Board's consideration.

Annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory

The inventory includes annual greenhouse gas emissions for the highest-emitting sectors, such as transportation, buildings, industry, and other emissions sources. Metro Vancouver and its member jurisdictions use this information to track progress towards greenhouse gas reduction targets.

Regional Planning

What We Do: Provide the data, policy, research, and shared vision to meet the region's shared objectives

Board: Metro Vancouver Regional District

Since: 1967

Legislation: *Local Government Act*

Overview

Metro Vancouver's regional planning work supports local and regional planning and decision making by providing data, policy, and insights that reflect the aspirations of members, the public, and the region.

How Regional Planning Became a Regional Service

In the mid-20th century, people began to recognize the effects of rapid urbanization. In 1949, the Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board of BC was created to help guide growth and development from Vancouver to Hope. The board's vision was for "cities in a sea of green." It encouraged protecting land for industry, agriculture, and recreation while supporting the development of a network of communities across the region. In 1969, its responsibilities were transferred to four regional governments, one of which was the Greater Vancouver Regional District. The first regional plan, *The Livable Region 1976/1986: Proposals to Manage the Growth of Greater Vancouver*, helped shape the region as we know it.

The Regional Growth Strategy

Metro Vancouver coordinates the development of the regional growth strategy, the region's long-term plan for managing population, housing, and job growth. The current regional growth strategy is called *Metro 2050*, and was developed collaboratively with member jurisdictions, First Nations, and TransLink. Before it is adopted, the Metro Vancouver Regional District Board, every member jurisdiction, TransLink, and the board of adjacent regional districts must approve the plan.

The strategy helps:

- Ensure infrastructure like water, energy, and transportation can be delivered efficiently
- Focus new development in urban centres near public transit
- Increase affordable and sustainable choices for housing and transportation
- Protect environmentally sensitive areas, agricultural lands, and industrial/employment areas
- Support a strong economy



Richmond

Regional Research and Data

Regional planning allows member jurisdictions to share the cost of research, data, and forecasting. By working together, they save money, reduce duplication, and more effectively make progress towards shared land use and transportation objectives.

Planning Across Boundaries

For issues that cross municipal borders, Metro Vancouver researches overarching policy issues, monitors key trends, shares best practices, bridges gaps between different orders of government, and advocates for shared priorities. This helps communities work together on and plan for issues that affect the entire region.

How the Service is Funded

Regional planning services are paid for through the Metro Vancouver Regional District tax requisition.

Guiding Plan

Metro 2050: Regional Growth Strategy (2023)

Jurisdiction and Regulation

Metro Vancouver is responsible for:

- Coordinating the development of and supporting the implementation of the regional growth strategy
- Producing long-range population, housing, and employment projections to support planning throughout the region
- Collecting, analyzing, and sharing data
- Conducting policy research to advance regional growth strategy objective and support decision making
- Coordinating advocacy to other orders of government
- Providing planning resources for member jurisdictions and others

Member jurisdictions are responsible for:

- Community, neighbourhood, and area planning
- Official Community Plans and local growth management
- Local land use, zoning, and development approvals
- Planning for complete communities including:
  - Local housing needs
  - Local transportation, roads, cycling, and pedestrian networks
  - Employment and economic development
  - Urban design and placemaking
  - Parks, public spaces, and community amenities
  - Environmental protection and climate action
- Undertaking public engagement and community visioning
- Aligning Official Community Plans with the regional growth strategy and demonstrating alignment through a Regional Context Statement

Current Projects

Hazard, Risk, and Vulnerability Assessment

Metro Vancouver is undertaking a regional assessment to support member jurisdictions in responding to new provincial emergency management requirements by coordinating technical analysis, data collection, First Nations engagement, and collaboration. This work helps members meet provincial requirements more efficiently while developing a shared understanding of region-wide risks and strengthening regional preparedness.

Housing Data Dashboard

This interactive online dashboard provides up-to-date housing data and trends to support planning, policy development, and informed decision making across the region.

Regional Planning
metrovancouver.org/services/regional-planning

Invest Vancouver

What We Do: Leverage one unified voice to attract investment and jobs to the third largest city-region in Canada

Board: Metro Vancouver Regional District

Since: Regional economic development since 1988, branded Invest Vancouver in 2021

Legislation: *Local Government Act*

Overview

Invest Vancouver is Metro Vancouver's regional economic development service. It attracts foreign companies to Metro Vancouver, Canada's third largest economy. By leveraging a single voice, the region can better compete with other large urban regions across North America for investment and jobs.

How Invest Vancouver Became a Regional Service

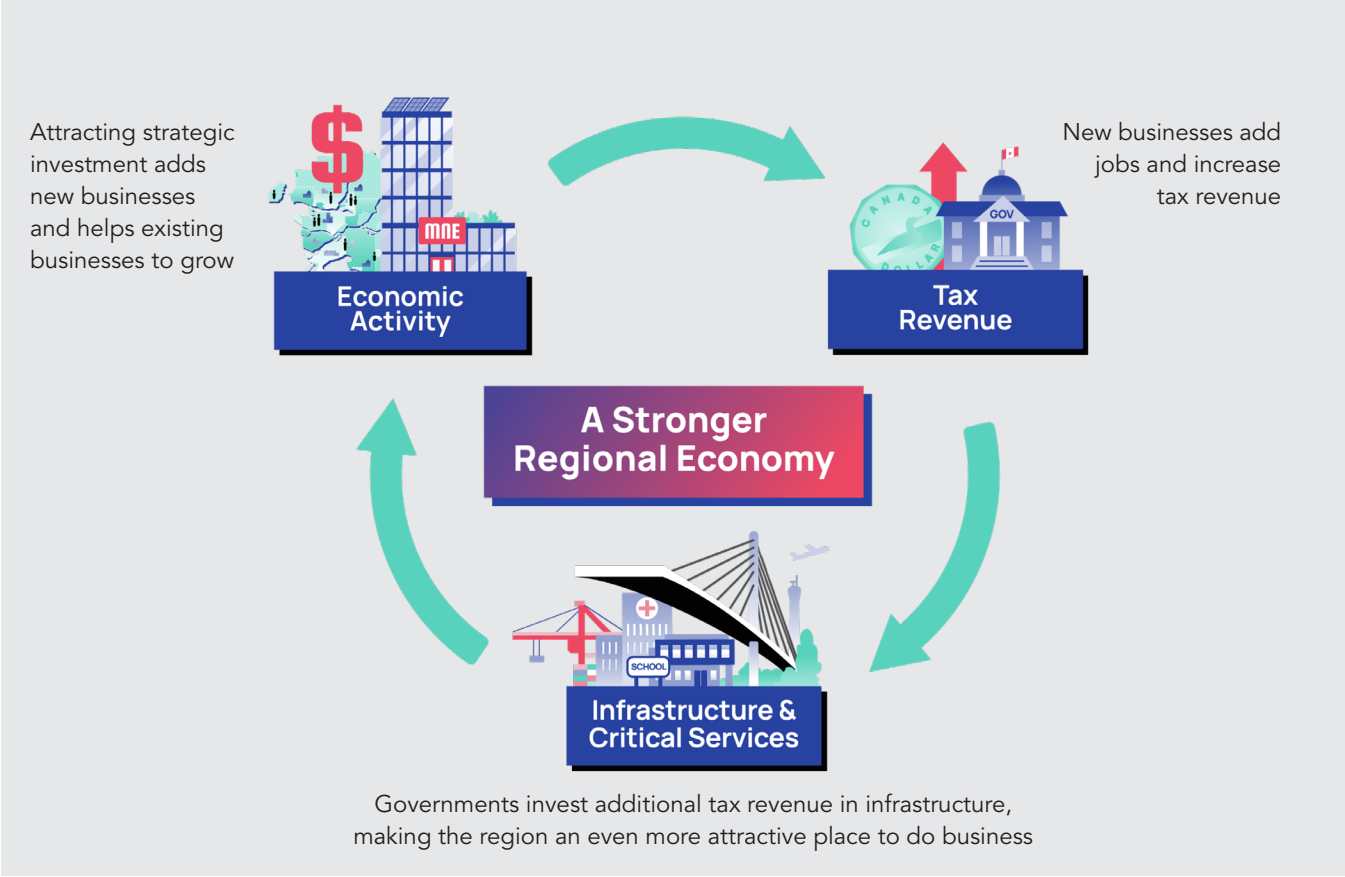
In the mid-1980s, a regional approach to economic development was identified, including a specific role for the Greater Vancouver Regional District in developing and implementing an economic development strategy. The Province granted the regional district the power to undertake development services, including economic development services, in 1988. Early economic strategies were developed and implemented from the 1990s and continued past 2000, until the development of the most recent "Business Plan for a Regional Economic Prosperity Service" was endorsed by the Metro Vancouver Regional District Board in 2019. This plan identified economic development challenges facing the region, including a lack of a single point of contact for investors, a business environment that could be difficult for investors to navigate, and lack of a regional brand with global resonance. The "Regional Economic Prosperity Service" was rebranded "Invest Vancouver" in 2021, with the purpose of strengthening marketing to international audiences to draw foreign direct investment.

Attracting Foreign Direct Investment

Invest Vancouver promotes the region to companies and investors around the world. By representing the whole region, Metro Vancouver can better compete with other major economic hubs like Toronto and Montreal for foreign direct investment. Invest Vancouver builds awareness of the region among global investors. It develops relationships with companies and helps convert interest in the region into new investment, business growth, and jobs.

Invest Vancouver provides tailored support services to help international investors. This includes technical support, information about the local market, immigration referral services, and connections to local partners, resources, and opportunities. This support helps companies make informed decisions about investing and growing in the region. Invest Vancouver also works with member jurisdictions to provide support once a company has landed so that these companies continue to grow and flourish locally.

Foreign direct investment plays a key role in the region's economy. It creates jobs, increases economic activity, and stimulates development of the local supply chain. When foreign firms invest in a region, they buy goods and services from local suppliers. Their employees and suppliers spend their earnings throughout the region, generating more economic activity.



Key Industries

Invest Vancouver focuses on key export-oriented industries that can help strengthen the regional economy and create good jobs.

- Cleantech
- Digital media and entertainment
- High-tech
- Life sciences
- Agritech and foodtech
- Apparel
- Transportation and logistics

Coordinating with Other Economic Development Agencies

Though there is variation across the region, Invest Vancouver complements the work done by economic development offices in member jurisdictions. Invest Vancouver focuses on attracting investment from foreign companies, while local economic development offices tend to focus on helping local businesses and commercial districts grow. Invest Vancouver is the only economic development entity with the mandate to promote and attract investment to the Metro Vancouver region.

Invest Vancouver works closely with local governments, First Nations, industry organizations, and provincial and federal agencies to help investors navigate the region efficiently and with greater certainty.

How the Service is Funded

Invest Vancouver is funded from the Metro Vancouver Regional District tax requisition. Invest Vancouver also applies for external grant funding from other orders of government. In 2026, it secured $1.2 million in federal funding.

Guiding Plans

Metro Vancouver Regional Economic Prosperity Service Business Plan (2019)

Invest Vancouver 2026 Annual Plan

Key Performance Indicators			
Indicator	**2024**	**2025**	**Q2 2026**
Landed/expanded companies	**9**	**11**	**11**
Total value from landed/expanded companies	**$53M**	**$190.1M**	**$225M**
Total jobs from landed/expanded companies	**135**	**514**	**853**
Percentage of revenue from external sources	**7%**	**19%**	**28%**
Total value of investment pipeline	**$3B**	**$3.7B**	**$1B**
Total jobs in investment pipeline	**1,827**	**2,650**	**1,625**

Program Highlights

Invest Talent (Regional Talent Accelerator)

Through Invest Talent, Invest Vancouver helps ensure workforce development training programs match the skills needed by industry. Invest Talent contributed $14.4 million in economic impact in the first year of operations and has received reinvested grant funding by the federal government through the Future Skills Centre.

Web Summit Vancouver 2027

Partnering with the Naturally Innovative Alliance, Invest Vancouver will showcase the region's high-tech sector at Web Summit Vancouver 2027, a major global conference that attracts over 20,000 participants from more than 100 countries.

Invest Vancouver
investvancouver.ca

A Electoral Area A

What We Do: Local government for approximately 20,000 residents who live in unincorporated areas

Board: Metro Vancouver Regional District

Legislation: *Local Government Act*

Overview

Metro Vancouver acts as the local government for Electoral Area A. Electoral Area A includes all the areas of the region that do not fall within a municipality (also known as unincorporated areas), from remote islands to a university town. The services provided vary by community, and include planning, building permits, emergency response, and general administration.

History

When the Greater Vancouver Regional District was established in 1967, it included unincorporated lands outside municipal boundaries. In 1970, the Province authorized regional districts to exercise municipal powers over such areas. Metro Vancouver assumed responsibility for general administration in 1986, and Electoral Area A was formally established as a member of the regional district in 1999.

Population

In the 2021 Census, Electoral Area A's population was 18,612. Most residents lived at the University of British Columbia (UBC) or in the University Endowment Lands (UEL). The population of the remaining areas was approximately 320.

Local Government Services Provided by Metro Vancouver

	Land Use Planning	Building Permits/ Inspection	Emergency Planning and Response	Liquor Licence Review	General Admin
Howe Sound	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bowyer Island	Islands Trust	✓	✓	✓	✓
Passage Island	Islands Trust	✓	✓	✓	✓
Indian Arm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pitt Lake	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Barnston Island	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
UBC	Admin by UBC	Admin by UBC	✓	✓	Admin by UBC
UEL	Admin by UEL	Admin by UEL	✓	✓	Admin by UEL

Local Services Provided by Other Agencies

- Policing by the RCMP
- Public schooling through the local school districts
- Health services through the health authorities
- Roads through the Ministry of Transportation and Transit (except some roads in UBC and UEL)
- Transit by TransLink
- Structural fire protection through the provincial government (UEL and UBC only)

Metro Vancouver does not provide local recreation or community services/facilities to the electoral area. Some services, such as drinking water, septic systems, garbage collection, and snow clearing, may be organized and contracted directly by individual communities.

How the Service is Funded

Services for Electoral Area A are paid for only by residents of Electoral Area A.

Electoral Area A
metrovancouver.org/services/electoral-area-a



Other Services

Regional Services

9-1-1 Emergency Call Answer Service

Metro Vancouver is responsible for administration of Emergency 9-1-1 call answer services across the region through its partnership with E-Comm.

The need for a coordinated regional emergency communications system emerged following several major incidents that showed challenges in emergency response. A defining moment was the 1994 Stanley Cup Riot, when the Vancouver Police Department's radio network became overwhelmed and communication between police, fire, and ambulance services failed. These challenges highlighted the importance of an integrated emergency communications network capable of supporting multiple agencies and jurisdictions during high-demand events.

Metro Vancouver was a leader in bringing forward Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) service contracts across the region. The organization collaborated with TELUS, E-Comm, local governments, and provincial partners to modernize emergency communications networks. Together, they put in place the network and technologies needed for the future such as improved location services, real-time data sharing, and better accessibility for residents.

Today, E-Comm answers around one million 9-1-1 calls annually. Specially trained call takers collect information and quickly transfer the call to the appropriate municipal or provincial dispatch agency, getting emergency responders out to the situation quickly.



9-1-1 Service

metrovancouver.org/services/emergency-management/9-1-1-service

Regional Emergency Management (IPREM)

The Integrated Partnership for Regional Emergency Management (IPREM) is a collaborative initiative started in 2009 between the Province of British Columbia and Metro Vancouver to improve public safety by coordinating emergency management between jurisdictions and sectors.

Because emergencies cross municipal boundaries, IPREM brings together local governments, Indigenous communities, provincial agencies, emergency response organizations, and infrastructure partners to manage complex emergencies more consistently through regional planning, collaborative governance, and emergency exercises.

IPREM helps governments and emergency management partners align plans, share expertise and resources, set common operating procedures, and improve decision making during incidents.



Emergency Planning

metrovancouver.org/services/emergency-management/emergency-planning



Regional Collaboration Through IPREM

www.iprem.ca

Regional GPS

The Regional GPS Program provides location information for engineering and surveying work in one consistent platform. It uses tools such as Global Navigation Satellite Systems, public and private survey crews can map topography, roads, elevations, waterways, infrastructure, and other assets, such as water and sewer pipes. The data is accurate to within a few centimeters.

Global Navigation Satellite System
metrovancouver.org/quick-links/global-navigation-satellite-system

Sub-Regional Services

Regional Employers Services (RES)

Regional Employers Services is the continuation of the Joint Liaison Committee on Labour Relations, established in 1964 and transferred to Metro Vancouver in 1979. Through the service, member jurisdictions can access workforce data, research, advice, advocacy, and support tailored to their organization's needs at a lower cost and higher efficiency than handling everything on their own.

Collective bargaining support services and compensation (job evaluation) services are provided to members on a subscription basis. Related employers within the region, such as municipal police, libraries, and museums, also access these services on a subscription basis. Use of these services have steadily increased since adopting a subscription model in 2013.

The service also provides a forum for member jurisdictions to connect, share information, and collaborate on matters of common interest to support more informed and consistent decisions across the region.

Regional Employers Services
res360.ca

Sasamat Fire Protection

The Sasamat Volunteer Fire Department provides fire protection services to the villages of Belcarra and Anmore. It is funded exclusively by the villages of Belcarra and Anmore. Metro Vancouver facilitates funding and provides support services.

Anmore and Belcarra are small communities that share one fire department. Rather than each community running and paying for a separate department, Metro Vancouver administers one service on their behalf. This allows them to share costs, make decisions together, and maintain the facilities, equipment and support needed to provide a consistent level of fire protection. That protection is also important for nearby communities, regional parks, power infrastructure, and emergency responders.

Sasamat Volunteer Fire Department
belcarra.ca/community/sasamat-volunteer-fire-department


metrovancouver
SERVICES AND SOLUTIONS FOR A LIVABLE REGION