



Drinking Water Management Plan

Final Engagement Report 2026

metrovancover

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About the Drinking Water Management Plan

High-quality drinking water is essential for human life and a healthy environment. By 2040, it is projected that close to four million residents will rely on Metro Vancouver's high-quality drinking water supply. Using water wisely now will help us ensure we have enough for future generations.

The *Drinking Water Management Plan* establishes the strategic direction for the region's drinking water utility over the next decade. The plan outlines goals, strategies, and actions for Metro Vancouver and member jurisdictions and reflects the shared responsibility across the region given the need for coordinated implementation. This model of regional collaboration keeps costs down, improves efficiency, and ensures our communities stay resilient in the face of climate change, population growth, and seismic risks.

Since the last update in 2011, Metro Vancouver has taken proactive steps to address population growth, seismic risks, and the impacts of climate change. These efforts are critical to maintaining a reliable drinking water supply and managing demand as conditions evolve. By updating this plan, Metro Vancouver and its members can align priorities and prepare to address current and upcoming challenges.

The updated *Drinking Water Management Plan*:

- Establishes goals, strategies, and actions to ensure Metro Vancouver can continue to supply high-quality drinking water in the face of climate change, population growth, seismic events, aging infrastructure, and high levels of water use
- Outlines how Metro Vancouver and its members plan to work together to align priorities and implement actions
- Incorporates First Nations' interests and priorities
- Provides a strong rationale to support decision-making



Coquitlam Canada Day engagement, July 1, 2025



PNE interactive water services booth, August 21, 2025

About the Engagement Program

Engagement for the development of the plan update unfolded across three distinct but connected phases. Together, these phases created a region-wide conversation that moved from establishing shared values and long-term priorities, to refining draft strategies and actions, to gathering final comments on the full draft plan.



Engagement with First Nations, member jurisdictions, interest holders, and the public was central to the plan update.

Throughout the first and second phases of engagement, Metro Vancouver delivered a mix of online and in-person opportunities to ensure accessible, inclusive ways for participants to learn about the plan and share their perspectives. During the third phase, Metro Vancouver held an online comment period to collect final feedback on the draft plan. Each phase paired clear, plain-language information with interactive formats designed to support meaningful participation across diverse audiences.

This approach helped translate complex, long-range water system challenges and planning considerations into accessible, relatable information that supported informed feedback. The insights gathered through this process directly shaped the plan’s development from goals and guiding principles to refined strategies and actions.

Phase 1 Engagement

This phase focused on sharing the vision and shaping the guiding principles and goals for the plan. Through two online webinars, an online survey, several public events, and technical and advisory group workshops, participants highlighted the importance of securing water for future generations, strengthening conservation and efficiency, protecting ecosystems, and ensuring system resilience.

Feedback emphasized valuing water as a precious resource that must be conserved and the importance of ensuring that the drinking water system is resilient to changing conditions.





Pleasant Day engagement, Vancouver, August 9, 2025

Phase 2 Engagement

This phase focused on reviewing and refining the plan's draft strategies and actions through a region-wide, story-driven engagement program: **Our Water. Our Future.** The program was built around the idea that every drop of water has a story, using participants' personal experiences with drinking water to connect them to the plan and make it accessible and relatable. Engagement opportunities included an online survey, an interactive booth at community events, a PNE activation, a public webinar, advisory group meetings, and interest holder meetings.

More than 33,000 people engaged with **Our Water. Our Future.** across multiple channels. Feedback showed strong support for all five priority areas and consistently highlighted the need to prepare for climate change, drought, and seismic risk; strengthen conservation and efficiency, including pay-by-use and leak detection through water metering; advancing use of non-potable water where appropriate; and continuing to ensure clear lawn watering rules and drought communication. Feedback also highlighted ongoing interest in operational readiness and protecting water quality and environmental health.

Additionally, Metro Vancouver held technical workshops that brought together staff from several First Nations, member jurisdictions, the Regional Engineers Advisory Committee – Water Subcommittee (REAC-WSC), neighbouring municipalities and regional districts, health authorities, BC Hydro, school districts, water sector associations, educators and other government agencies to hear from one another and to share their input and perspectives.

Phase 3 Engagement

This phase focused on inviting comments on the final draft plan through an online survey, supported by newspaper ads, social media, webpage updates, and direct outreach to project subscribers, interest holders, and previous workshop participants.

First Nations Engagement

Any long-range plan that affects the region, like the *Drinking Water Management Plan*, also affects First Nations and their communities.

Throughout each phase of the plan, Metro Vancouver held a separate, government-to-government process with First Nations, and engaged First Nations through online dialogues, correspondence, one-on-one meetings, and staff participation in technical workshops. The purpose of this engagement was to better understand First Nations' interests and values related to water and align on how those interests and values can be reflected in the plan.

In addition to feedback on specific aspects of the plan, First Nations input emphasized the importance of early and ongoing involvement, relationship-building, and collaboration in drinking water planning. Listening, sharing, and dialogue created space for reflection and greater understanding — insights

that will continue to inform Metro Vancouver's work beyond the scope of the plan. The plan reflects key themes heard during engagement with First Nations, including:

- Reconciliation – include cultural and traditional knowledge in planning
- Salmon Conservation – protect salmon habitats and address migration challenges caused by low water flows
- Water Conservation and Use – prioritize water conservation, explore reuse options, and promote metering with the goal of reducing high water use
- Environmental Stewardship and Accountability – work together on forest management to reduce wildfire risks
- Water Quality – ensure strong water testing and keep communities informed about drinking water quality

These and other themes discussed with First Nations have been embedded throughout the plan. Metro Vancouver recognizes that each First Nation is unique, and we look forward to working with First Nations individually and collectively to achieve the goals established in the plan.



Phase 1: A Region-Wide Vision

The first phase of engagement focused on establishing a shared foundation for the plan by inviting input on the draft guiding principles and goals.

Participants were introduced to the purpose and scope of the plan and invited to reflect on what matters most for the future of drinking water in the region through a mix of online and in-person engagement opportunities. Each activity paired clear background information with accessible formats that invited participants to learn about drinking water system planning, the challenges the system faces, and share their input.

By asking participants to reflect on their priorities, values, and expectations for drinking water, the first phase of engagement created a strong foundation for technical and strategy development in the second. This approach ensured that early input shaped the plan's values and included a broad range of perspectives from across the region.

Online Survey

The online survey provided an accessible, region-wide opportunity for participants to review the vision and draft guiding principles and goals of the plan and share detailed input. The survey included:

- A clear overview of the draft goals and guiding principles
- A multiple-choice question inviting participants to share what they view as the three most critical challenges facing drinking water management
- Multiple-choice questions inviting participants to rate how each guiding principle reflects their values for drinking water management
- Multiple-choice questions inviting participants to rate their familiarity with, or the importance of, each draft goal
- Open-ended questions offering opportunities for participants to provide additional comments

Public Events

Metro Vancouver held a public event in North Vancouver celebrating the Water Services' 100 Year Anniversary on July 20, 2024. At the event, Metro Vancouver distributed information cards in the form of a bookmark directing people to the online survey.

Presentations and Webinars

Online interactive sessions included presentations by Metro Vancouver staff about the drinking water system, the challenges facing drinking water in our region, and the plan update. Participants were invited to share their priorities for the future of our drinking water and provide feedback about the draft goals and guiding principles. Metro Vancouver staff answered questions from those in attendance.

Metro Vancouver engaged its Youth and Education Advisory Panel — an advisory group made up of high school students, post-secondary students, and educators from across the region. The group was presented with an overview of the challenges facing drinking water in our region and the draft goals of the plan, and a roundtable discussion about what was most important to the participants when it comes to drinking water. This format created a structured, dialogue-based experience where youth could meaningfully engage with the plan update in a collaborative setting.

Technical Workshops

Metro Vancouver worked closely with the Regional Engineers Advisory Committee (REAC) and the Regional Engineers Advisory Committee – Water Subcommittee (REAC-WSC) to help shape the plan's early direction. Committee members provided insight and practical guidance on the draft goals and guiding principles, ensuring they reflected the realities of delivering high-quality drinking water across a complex, multi-jurisdictional system.

Phase 1 Engagement Reach and Participation

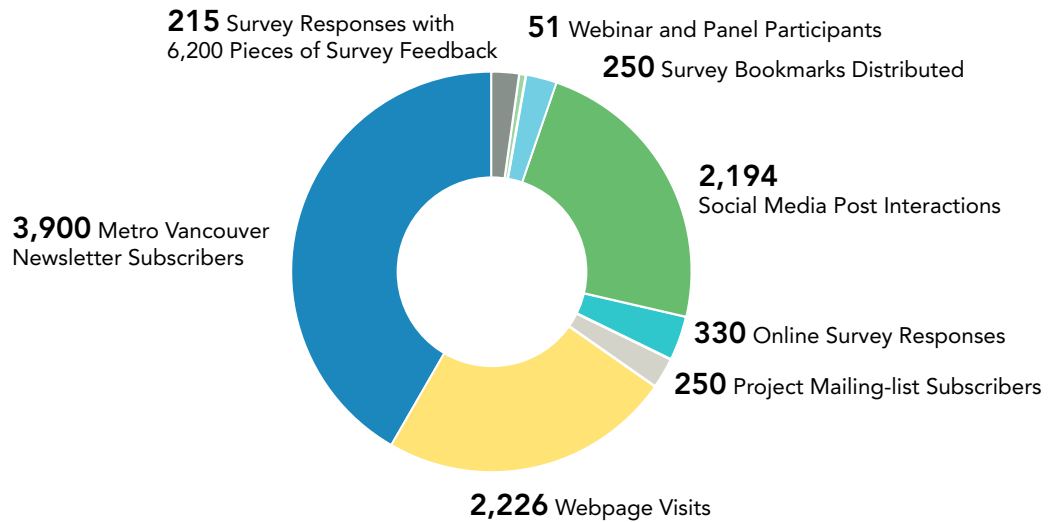
How We Engaged

2 Online Public Webinars
In-Person Youth and Education Advisory Panel Presentation
Drinking Water Management Plan Online Survey
Interactive Project Webpage
21 Social Media Posts
Survey Invitation Bookmarks
1 Article to Metro Vancouver Newsletter Subscribers
4 E-Newsletters to Drinking Water Plan Subscribers
Public Event

Participation



Nearly **10,000** interactions across Metro Vancouver



Phase 2: Discussion of Draft Strategies and Actions

The second phase of engagement focused on refining the draft priority areas, strategies, and actions of the plan through a region-wide engagement program designed to be accessible, interactive, and story-driven.

In this phase, Metro Vancouver provided both online and in-person opportunities for engagement. Each activity combined clear information with approachable, hands-on experiences that invited people to learn, connect, and share their perspectives.

The plan update addresses complex, long-range challenges including climate change, seismic risk, population growth, water system resilience, high water use, and more. For many people, these issues can feel abstract. **Our Water. Our Future.** bridged that gap with a simple, human-centered idea: Every drop of water has a story.

Stories helped residents see themselves in the plan and understand how planning decisions connect to everyday experiences like safe homes, thriving communities, and a resilient environment. Real-life anchor stories were shared across the website, booth displays, and social media to spark recognition and guide conversations about the draft plan.

By grounding this engagement program in storytelling, interactive experiences, and clear information, Metro Vancouver created a meaningful way for people to learn about the draft plan and share their thoughts. This approach helped make the plan more relatable and ensured that feedback gathered during this phase reflected lived experience, practical concerns, and the diverse perspectives of residents across the region.

Online Survey

The online survey provided an accessible, region-wide opportunity for participants to review the priority areas, draft strategies, and actions of the plan and share detailed feedback. The survey included:

- A clear overview of the five priority areas
- Multiple-choice questions inviting participants to rate the importance of each priority
- Open-ended questions offering opportunities for participants to provide additional comments
- A prompt for participants to share their own water story

Interactive Community Booth at Events Around the Region

The booth offered a suite of engaging, low-barrier activities, including:

- **The Water Story Wall**, where participants shared their own water stories on a large water-glass display, symbolically “filling” it over the course of each event
- **Trivia-based games**, where staff playfully tested participants knowledge of themes like leak detection, conservation, system resilience, and long-term planning
- **Educational Materials**, on-site information that encouraged participants to learn and ask questions about the plan and the draft strategies and actions
- **The full online survey**, where participants could submit their feedback on the draft strategies and actions digitally or on hard copy

The combination of stories, hands-on activities, and direct conversations helped people make real connections to the plan’s content before providing feedback.

An Activation at the PNE

Because of the PNE's scale and pace, this booth was intentionally designed as a fast-moving, high-volume engagement experience. It included:

- A compact, accessible "Plinko" trivia game tailored for rapid participation
- Two multiple-choice questions included in the Metro Vancouver PNE survey focused on core themes
- Visual displays highlighting the plan and the "Every drop of water has a story" concept
- Staff that were available to explain the purpose of the plan and direct visitors to the survey

This streamlined format allowed thousands of visitors to learn about the plan and share input in a way suited to the event environment.

Presentations and Webinars

An online interactive session included a presentation by Water Services representatives about the challenges facing the drinking water system and some of the draft strategies and actions to address the challenges. Attendees tested their water knowledge with a short trivia game and provided feedback through virtual polls.

A session with the Youth and Education Advisory Panel used an interactive engagement activity tailored for youth. The session included an overview of the five priority areas and facilitated small-group discussions on Conservation and Efficiency and Operational Workforce Development. This format created a structured, dialogue-based experience where youth could meaningfully engage with the plan in a collaborative setting.

Stakeholder Meetings

Metro Vancouver held five stakeholder meetings with representatives from:

- Building Owners & Managers Association of BC
- Condominium Home Owners Association of BC
- British Columbia Institute of Technology - Engineering and Geospatial Technologies, School of Construction and the Environment
- Kwantlen Polytechnic University - School of Brewery and Operations
- Simon Fraser University - School of Sustainable Energy Engineering

These sessions provided opportunities for detailed discussion of the plan's draft strategies and actions and gathered targeted feedback from industry, academic, and sector-based perspectives.

Additionally, a Regional Communications Advisory Group meeting was attended by over 20 participants, with communications representatives from each of Metro Vancouver's member jurisdictions.

Pleasant Day engagement, Vancouver, August 9, 2025



Technical Workshops

The most substantial technical engagement for the plan update took place during the second phase of engagement. Metro Vancouver convened a series of workshops with the Regional Engineering Advisory Committee - Water Sub-Committee members, staff from several First Nations, neighbouring municipalities and regional districts, health authorities, BC Hydro, school districts, water sector associations, educators, and other government agencies. Informed by a discussion paper, these sessions were designed to test and refine draft strategies and actions under each priority area.

World Café Workshops

Metro Vancouver used a World Café format to support targeted, iterative discussion. Each session included stations representing one or two strategies. Participants moved through stations in small groups, reviewing earlier comments before adding their own perspectives.

This format ensured ideas accumulated across rounds, allowing participants to build on each other's thinking and highlight areas of alignment, tension, or uncertainty.

Workshops were held on the following topics:

- **Resilient Water System:** A session focused on seismic preparedness, power resiliency, climate impacts, and safeguarding critical system assets
- **Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction & Environmental Protection and Water Supply Quantity and Quality:** A session exploring water quality risks, ecological health, fish habitat, and future drinking water demands. Included a guest presentation from the Portland Water Bureau on climate adaptation in drinking water systems
- **Conservation and Efficiency:** Participants explored actions related to residential metering, leak detection and reduction, active conservation measures, non-potable reuse, seasonal demand management, and pricing tools
- **Operational Workforce Development:** Discussions focused on strengthening training, recruitment, succession planning, and operational readiness across the regional water workforce

Across all workshops, participants emphasized clarity of roles, practical implementation pathways, sequencing, and the importance of balancing affordability, resilience, and long-term sustainability.

Water Conservation and Metering Workshops

In parallel with the priority area workshops, Metro Vancouver held four sessions dedicated to conservation and advancing residential metering. These workshops directly shaped the conservation strategies in the plan, including the development of a regional per capita reduction target and member-specific metering targets.

Workshops included:

- **Metro Vancouver Conference Day: Drinking Water Conservation:** Early framing discussion on how regional conservation goals can support long-term planning
- **Water Metering Workshop 1:** Focused on enabling metering for new residential construction and service line replacement
- **Water Metering Workshop 2:** Addressed the challenges of metering existing residential properties, including cost, equity, and technical barriers
- **Metro Vancouver Conference Day: Drinking Water Conservation:** Explored the concept of a regional conservation target and the role of metering in achieving long-term per capita demand reduction



Surrey Fest, July 19, 2025

Phase 2 Engagement Reach and Participation

How We Engaged

7 Community Events
15 Day PNE Activation
Interactive Project Webpage
2 Metro Vancouver PNE Survey Questions
Drinking Water Management Plan Online Survey
16 Social Media Posts
Chair E-Article
2 Advisory Meetings
7 Stakeholder and Advisory Meetings
Online Webinar

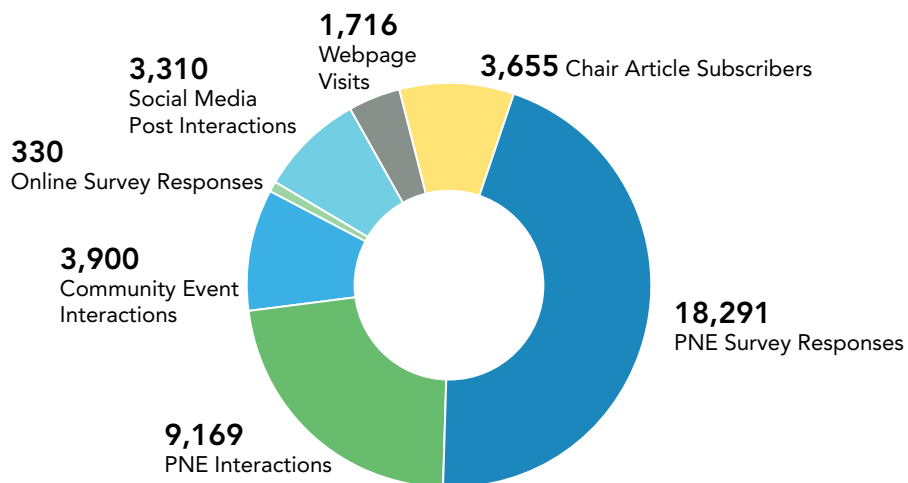
Participation



Age Range: 18-55+

+33,000
People Interacted with
**Our Water.
Our Future.**

Over **321**
Water Stories Shared



Phase 3: Opportunity for Final Comment

To gather final feedback on the final draft plan before it moves forward for Board approval, Metro Vancouver held a comment period, updated the project webpage, hosted an online public survey, and invited mailing-list subscribers, interest holders, and participants from earlier technical workshops to participate in the survey and share the survey with their networks.

Online survey

The online survey provided an accessible, region-wide opportunity for participants to review the final draft Drinking Water Management Plan and share detailed feedback. The survey included:

- A clear overview of the purpose of the Drinking Water Management Plan update
- The full final draft plan
- Multiple-choice questions asking whether the information in the final draft was clear and whether it reflected participants’ priorities
- Open-ended questions inviting additional comments

Phase 3 Engagement Reach and Participation

How We Engaged


Interactive Project Webpage
Drinking Water Management Plan Online Survey
7 Newspaper ads
3 Social Media Posts
5 Stakeholder Mailouts

Participation

308 Online Survey Responses 

222 Social Media Post Interactions 

5,719 Webpage Visits 

+23,000 people engaged 

Youth and Education Advisory Panel session, September 22, 2025



Promoting Opportunities to Participate

To ensure broad awareness of the engagement opportunities and encourage participation in the plan update, Metro Vancouver carried out a coordinated promotional campaign across multiple channels. The goal was to reach residents through common channels and invite them to learn about the draft plan and share their feedback.

Drinking Water Management Plan Update Webpage

In Phase 1, a dedicated project webpage offered information on the vision and draft goals and guiding principles of the plan update and invited visitors to engage on the draft goals and guiding principles via the Phase 1 online survey.

In Phase 2, the webpage shared the draft plan priority areas, strategies, and actions, presented a series of water stories and invited people to contribute their water stories, promoted engagement opportunities and directed visitors to the Phase 2 online survey.

In Phase 3, the webpage shared the final draft of the plan and invited visitors to provide final comments via the Phase 3 online survey.

Signage

During Phases 1 and 2, Metro Vancouver installed over 80 posters and signs at water infrastructure sites, regional parks, and key community locations across the region. Each sign included a QR code directing people to the plan webpage and survey. These signs helped raise visibility for the engagement program and invited residents to get involved while visiting local parks, community centres, and high-traffic public spaces.

Social Media

In Phase 1, Metro Vancouver promoted the engagement opportunity through 21 posts on Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), and Facebook. The social media strategy was implemented through a series of organic and paid posts to build awareness of the project and generate interest.

In Phase 2, Metro Vancouver shared 16 story-based and event-focused posts across on Instagram, X, and Facebook. These posts:

- Introduced the community water stories featured in the engagement program
- Promoted opportunities to drop by the interactive booth
- Encouraged residents to complete the online survey
- Shared reminders as the engagement period neared its close

These posts helped ensure that residents across the region had clear and accessible opportunities to participate in shaping the plan.

In Phase 3, Metro Vancouver shared three posts on Instagram, X, and Facebook to raise awareness of the final draft plan comment period and encourage people to review the draft and complete the short survey.



Metro Vancouver LinkedIn post, Summer 2025



Information Card Distribution

During Phase 1, an information card in the form of a bookmark was distributed at public events across the region between April 26 and July 26, 2024. The bookmark was available at the City of Surrey's Party for the Planet, the 100th Anniversary Celebration of the Greater Vancouver Water District, Water Wagon events, watershed tours, and at various regional events.

Email Newsletters

To reach residents directly:

- Four e-newsletters were sent to Metro Vancouver Water Services database subscribers and partner associations such as the BC Water and Waste Association (BCWWA), highlighting Phase 1 engagement and inviting people to participate
- The BC Water and Waste Association Waterline newsletter included information featuring the Phase 1 engagement and inviting people to participate
- An article was included in the Metro Vancouver Update email newsletter, highlighting the launch of Phase 2 engagement and inviting people to participate

Print Ads

During Phase 1, three print ads ran in the Surrey Now Leader, North Delta Reporter, and North Shore News highlighting the engagement opportunity.

During Phase 3, ten print and digital ads ran in the Delta Optimist, Langley Advance, North Shore News, Richmond News, Surrey Now Leader, Tri-Cities Dispatch, and Vancouver Sun highlighting the engagement opportunity.



Coquitlam Canada Day, July 1 2025

What We Heard and How It Shaped the Plan

The following section summarizes feedback received over Phases 1 and 2, who participated, the key themes that emerged from each group, and presents tables showing how their feedback shaped the plan.

First Nations

Metro Vancouver heard from participating First Nations during Phases 1 and 2, via discussions and subsequent correspondence. Additional feedback from First Nations staff was received through their participation in the technical workshops, this feedback is reflected in the technical workshop feedback summary.

Emerging Themes

Across online and in-person discussions, participants emphasized the importance of early, meaningful, and ongoing collaboration with First Nations in drinking water planning. Participants emphasized that water is and always has been important to the history, culture, and well-being of First Nations.

Listening, sharing, and talking together have created opportunities for reflection and awareness that will continue to inform Metro Vancouver’s work beyond the plan update.

What We Heard	How It Shaped the Plan
<p>Reconciliation</p> <p>Ensure early and meaningful engagement with all regional First Nations</p> <p>Work closely with local First Nations to incorporate cultural and traditional knowledge into management planning</p> <p>Revise the guiding principles to recognize UNDRIP and Indigenous rights</p>	<p>The plan incorporates stronger commitments to early collaboration and recognizes the need for capacity-supportive engagement. Actions referencing partnership, co-creation, and shared stewardship were updated to reflect this direction.</p> <p>Strategies under the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Priority Area emphasize ongoing collaboration with First Nations as strategic partners to support ecological health and ensure access for cultural practices.</p> <p>Metro Vancouver continues to build and strengthen respectful and reciprocal relationships with First Nations, guided by the principles of UNDRIP as a standard of achievement to be pursued in a spirit of partnership and mutual respect.</p> <p>As part of our continued reconciliation efforts, Metro Vancouver is committed to meaningful engagement with First Nations on our plans, programs, and projects, as outlined in Metro Vancouver’s Board Strategic Plan, 2022–2026.</p>
<p>Salmon Conservation</p> <p>Maintain and protect fish habitats particularly for the salmon population</p> <p>Address concerns about the low downstream water flow due to dam infrastructure interrupting salmon migration patterns</p>	<p>Strategies under the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Priority Area commit to collaborate with First Nations to increase high-quality fish habitats and support migration and spawning for native fish species.</p>



What We Heard	How It Shaped the Plan
<p>Water Conservation and Use</p> <p>Prioritize water conservation (e.g., metering, reuse, rainwater harvesting) and reduce reliance on expanded infrastructure</p> <p>Explore opportunities for recycling water, such as rainwater harvesting and explore ways of replenishing and reusing water</p> <p>Address the region’s high per-capita drinking water use</p> <p>Promote metering and advocate to the Province to advance metering</p>	<p>Strategies under the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Priority Area include commitments to collaborate with First Nations to identify and pursue opportunities for non-potable water use in their communities and integrate non-potable water use into policies, bylaws, and operations.</p> <p>Strategies under the Conservation and Efficiency Priority Area commit to developing metering implementation guidance, expand Metro Vancouver’s bulk metering program, and encourage members to advance metering in ways that align with their local needs, including metering new builds, fully metering the industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) sector, expanding voluntary programs, and, where appropriate, exploring universal metering programs.</p> <p>A per capita reduction target is included in the plan reflecting the need for a shared benchmark to guide future planning and collaboratively developed a regional drinking water use reduction target.</p> <p>Actions are included for Metro Vancouver to collaborate and advocate with the Province, members and industry partners to advance adoption of non-potable water systems.</p>
<p>Environmental Stewardship and Accountability</p> <p>Collaborate on forest management practices to minimize the risk of wildfires</p>	<p>Strategies under the Water Supply Quantity and Quality Priority Area commit to strengthen resilience to climate change by researching and applying emerging technologies and fostering knowledge sharing to enhance forest-management practices.</p>
<p>Water Quality</p> <p>Ensure robust testing and provide ongoing communication about drinking water</p>	<p>Strategies under the Water Supply Quantity and Quality Priority Area commit to strengthen integrated, climate-responsive water quality monitoring.</p>

Member Jurisdictions

Metro Vancouver convened a series of technical workshops with the Regional Engineering Advisory Committee - Water Sub-Committee members, staff from several First Nations, neighbouring municipalities and regional districts, health authorities, BC Hydro, school districts, and other government agencies. Together, the Phase 1 and Phase 2 technical workshops:

- **Strengthened the foundations** of the plan by grounding the Goals and Guiding Principles in regional expertise
- **Refined priority areas, strategies, and actions** through iterative, staff-focused discussions
- **Identified barriers** and surfaced practical opportunities for coordinated action
- **Clarified responsibilities** between Metro Vancouver and member jurisdictions
- **Built shared understanding** of challenges such as climate change, affordability, population growth, and system resilience

Feedback from these sessions directly shaped revisions to the draft strategies and actions across all five priority areas and strengthened the overall basis of the updated plan.

Workshop 1: System Resilience

Across the resilience workshops, participants expressed strong support for the direction of the strategies and emphasized the need to move faster on regional preparedness. They highlighted the importance of identifying system vulnerabilities, improving transparency around seismic and climate risk assessments, and clarifying Metro Vancouver's anticipated level of service after a major event. Members consistently asked for stronger coordination across jurisdictions, including clearer communication on project sequencing, shared emergency scenarios, and opportunities to align infrastructure upgrades.

Participants also stressed the value of mutual aid arrangements, shared emergency resources, and regular tabletop exercises to strengthen regional response capacity. Many encouraged more specific timelines and outcomes in the plan while ensuring alignment with existing studies. First Nations emphasized the need for early involvement, capacity supports, and meaningful collaboration in resilience planning. Overall, the workshops reflected a shared

sense of urgency and a call for more cohesive, region-wide action.

Workshop 2: Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Environmental Protection

Participants supported the environmental protection strategies and agreed that ecological considerations need to be integrated early into project planning. They encouraged Metro Vancouver to strengthen the measurability of the actions, improve clarity around intended outcomes, and build in more structured collaboration with municipalities, First Nations, and regulatory bodies. Many noted that ecological restoration, invasive species management, and infrastructure planning are shared responsibilities that require coordinated effort across the region.

First Nations highlighted the need for meaningful participation, field-based studies, and financial support to enable their involvement. Participants emphasized valuing the ecological services provided by the watersheds, improving fish habitat protection, and preparing for climate-driven impacts such as hotter summers and more extreme storms. While the strategic direction was broadly supported, participants encouraged clearer commitments and a stronger link between the actions and on-the-ground implementation.



Surrey Fest, July 19, 2025



Workshop 3: Water Supply Quantity and Quality

Participants emphasized the importance of grounding long-term water supply planning in strong data and adaptable modelling that accounts for climate change, emergencies, and regional growth. They encouraged Metro Vancouver to refine the strategies with clearer priorities, stronger implementation detail, and enhanced methods for forecasting peak demand under future scenarios. Several participants underscored the need to integrate emergency planning, wildfire risk, and changing seasonal patterns directly into supply planning.

There was broad interest in revisiting alternative water sources, supporting an Adaptive Pathways approach, and ensuring population projections reflect on-the-ground trends. Participants agreed that supply and conservation strategies must work together, and that clearer sequencing of major infrastructure investments would help members prepare locally.

Workshop 4: Conservation and Efficiency

Participants expressed strong conceptual support for residential metering but noted that capital costs and capacity vary widely across municipalities. They encouraged Metro Vancouver to provide consistent data, shared messaging, and regional framing to help build elected member and public understanding. Members also expressed interest in mandating metering for new construction while taking a phased or voluntary approach to existing homes.

Beyond metering, participants supported enforcement tools, seasonal rates, and improved leak detection and management. For non-potable water reuse, participants saw long-term potential but flagged significant regulatory, financial, and operational barriers. Industrial and commercial applications were viewed as the most feasible starting point, with opportunities strongest when systems are integrated early in development planning.

Workshop 5: Operational Workforce Development

Participants agreed that the region is facing a serious workforce challenge requiring collective action. Municipalities consistently reported shortages of distribution operators, limited access to training that reflects real-world needs, and growing difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified staff. Members encouraged Metro Vancouver and partners to collaborate on a region-wide assessment of operator demand and explore new pathways for training, including hands-on programs, paid-to-learn models, and stronger links with post-secondary institutions.

There was strong interest in supporting internationally trained professionals, expanding co-op and career-awareness programs, and improving access to local continuing education opportunities. Participants also highlighted retention challenges driven by cost of living and out-of-region training models. Overall, members emphasized that workforce development needs to be positioned as a shared regional priority with coordinated solutions.



Surrey Fest, July 19, 2025

Emerging Themes Across all Technical Workshops

Across all technical workshops, participants conveyed a shared desire for clearer, more measurable actions, stronger regional coordination, and improved information-sharing between Metro Vancouver, First Nations, member jurisdictions, and key agencies. They emphasized the need to recognize capacity differences, align with complementary regional and provincial initiatives, and avoid duplicating existing work.

Most importantly, participants expressed a strong sense of urgency. Climate change, population growth, aging infrastructure, and workforce pressures are accelerating, and they encouraged Metro Vancouver to prioritize, sequence, and implement actions in a way that enables the region to move forward together.

What We Heard	How It Shaped the Plan
A strong desire for clearer, more measurable actions across all Priority Areas.	Actions were revised to improve clarity and intent, and language was strengthened where appropriate. An implementation plan will be developed which will further define timing, roles, and performance measures to maintain flexibility while improving accountability.
A need for greater transparency and regional coordination on resilience, emergency planning, and infrastructure sequencing.	Strategies under the Resilient Water System Priority Area were refined to emphasize shared planning, improved data and information-sharing, and more coordinated emergency preparedness activities with member jurisdictions and First Nations.
Interest in understanding system vulnerabilities, including single points of failure and seismic risks.	Actions in the plan reflect the importance of risk assessments, redundancy planning, and increasing automation. These elements will be further developed through the implementation phase and associated technical studies.
First Nations called for early, meaningful involvement, resourcing to support participation, and clearer commitments to collaboration.	The plan incorporates stronger commitments to early collaboration and recognizes the need for capacity-supportive engagement. Actions referencing partnership, co-creation, and shared stewardship were updated to reflect this direction.
Support for ecological protection paired with calls for more clarity on outcomes, integration with other MV departments, and alignment with municipal and regulatory requirements.	Environmental Protection actions were revised to better reflect early integration of ecological considerations, cross-departmental coordination, and opportunities for shared data, restoration initiatives, and cumulative effects awareness.
A need for adaptive, data-driven water supply planning that reflects climate change, growth, drought, and emergency scenarios.	Water Supply Quantity and Quality strategies now more clearly reference scenario and adaptive pathways planning, and enhancing modelling tools.
Broad conceptual support for conservation and residential metering, but concerns about cost, feasibility, and consistency across the region.	The Conservation and Efficiency Priority Area includes clearer roles for Metro Vancouver in developing shared data, supporting communications and education, and encouraging regional consistency. Actions related to metering encourage phased approaches.



What We Heard	How It Shaped the Plan
Interest in advancing non-potable water reuse, despite barriers related to regulation, cost, and system maintenance.	The plan acknowledges the long-term potential of non-potable water systems and focuses on foundational actions such as research, collaboration with regulators, and advocacy and promotion rather than prescribing widespread implementation.
A region-wide operator shortage and strong support for collective workforce development approaches.	Operational Workforce Development actions were strengthened to emphasize regional coordination, partnerships with training institutions, exploration of hands-on learning pathways, and improved access to training and continuing education.
A shared sense of urgency and a desire to see prioritization to help move from planning to action.	The plan was refined to better convey the rationale for action, identify sequencing considerations, and support a clear transition into implementation, recognizing differing capacities across the region.

PNE interactive water services booth, August 21, 2025



Interest Holders

The following section summarizes what we heard from interest holders during Phases 1 and 2. Interest holders included representatives from industry, academia, utilities, professional associations, and sector organizations.

Interest holder engagement took place through targeted stakeholder meetings, technical workshops, and advisory sessions. These sessions provided opportunities for detailed discussion of the plan’s draft strategies and actions and gathered targeted feedback grounded in operational experience, applied research, and sector-specific considerations.

Emerging Themes

Across discussions, participants emphasized the importance of advancing conservation and metering in a way that balances effectiveness with affordability. Participants expressed strong support for offering incentives and reducing administrative barriers to rainwater recovery and reuse, and identified the importance of consistent technical guidance, shared data, and regional coordination for successful metering implementation.

What We Heard	How It Shaped the Plan
<p>Conservation</p> <p>Start metering with new buildings, offer conservation incentives (e.g., provide stormwater credits), and reduce administrative barriers for rainwater recovery systems</p>	<p>Strategies under the Conservation and Efficiency Priority Area commit to developing metering implementation guidance, expand Metro Vancouver’s bulk metering program, and encourage members to advance metering in ways that align with their local needs, including metering new builds, fully metering the industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) sector, expanding voluntary programs, and, where appropriate, exploring universal metering programs.</p> <p>A per capita reduction target is included in the plan reflecting the need for a shared benchmark to guide future planning and collaboratively developed a regional drinking water use reduction target.</p> <p>Actions are included for Metro Vancouver to collaborate and advocate with the Province, members and industry partners to advance adoption of non-potable water systems.</p>
<p>Water System Education and Operational Workforce</p> <p>Share curriculum resources that connect students to current and future water system challenges.</p> <p>Provide water maps and a one page info sheet with basic statistics and visuals to support education</p> <p>Partner with post-secondary institutions on research advocacy for federal and provincial infrastructure funding and explore mobile training units for operators</p>	<p>Strategies under the Conservation and Efficiency Priority Area and the Operational Workforce Development Priority Area emphasize collaboration with regional school district partners to support public education, school-based engagement, and knowledge-sharing to foster interest in stewardship and water-system roles.</p>



Youth and Education Advisory Panel

The following section summarizes the feedback received from the Youth and Education Advisory Panel feedback during Phases 1 and 2. Approximately 20 youth joined each in-person panel.

Discussions focused on what participants valued most about drinking water, Conservation and Efficiency, and Operational Workforce Development, providing space for youth to reflect on drinking water challenges, long-term sustainability, and career pathways.

Emerging Themes

Across both sessions, participants emphasized the importance of continuous equitable access to drinking water, easy-to-understand information, hands-on learning, and more public education about careers in the water sector and responsible drinking water use.

Panel participants were concerned about the sustainability of our drinking water sources and supply, particularly in changing climate conditions. They advocated using technology and innovation to make conservation simple and intuitive for residents and businesses.

Participants also encouraged Metro Vancouver to develop creative engagement tools for youth, such as videos, games, and interactive demonstrations to make conservation relatable and careers in the water sector more appealing to young people. Other concerns raised included over-expansion of infrastructure, protecting ecosystems, and drinking water quality.

What We Heard	How It Shaped the Plan
<p>Water Use and Reuse</p> <p>Promote water collection and recycling for non-potable uses</p>	<p>Strategies under the Conservation and Efficiency Priority Area commit to collaborate with Province, member jurisdictions, academic institutions, and industry partners to demonstrate and promote the adoption of non-potable water systems through advocacy, education, and applied research.</p>
<p>Conservation and Efficiency</p> <p>Increase restrictions on using drinking water for purposes such as washing cars and watering lawns</p> <p>Create “youth boards” or youth-led initiatives</p> <p>Provide easy-to-understand explanations of the full water cycle, including impacts at the household and regional levels</p> <p>Develop a youth-focused education program, including information on metering, consumption, and leak detection</p>	<p>Strategies under the Conservation and Efficiency Priority Area commit to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with members to conserve drinking water by reducing seasonal demand through strengthening enforcement, updating water restrictions and local bylaws, and promoting outdoor water use efficiency • Advance region-wide drinking water conservation through targeted education, communication, and behaviour change campaigns • Collaborate with regional school district partners to support public education and school-based engagement on the importance of water conservation.

What We Heard	How It Shaped the Plan
<p>Operational Workforce Development</p> <p>Meet students “where they are” by visiting schools and youth spaces</p> <p>Make the application system smoother with more visible entry-level pathways</p> <p>Organize youth recruitment opportunities</p> <p>Provide labour market information, including the variety of available water operator roles and their required skills</p>	<p>Strategies under the Operational Workforce Development Priority Area commit to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with regional school district partners to identify recommended pathways to support water operations career awareness through existing youth programs and activities • Create youth recruitment opportunities • Develop a communications toolkit for youth audiences

PNE interactive water services booth, August 21, 2025



Public

The following section summarizes public feedback received during Phases 1 and 2 through webinars, community events, the PNE activation and survey, water stories submissions, and the online plan surveys. Together, these engagement channels provided a regional picture of public values, priorities, and concerns related to drinking water and the plan update.

Emerging Themes

Across all engagement channels, residents emphasized the importance of preparing for climate change, drought, and seismic risk; strengthening conservation and efficiency, including fair billing and leak detection through water metering; advancing use of non-potable water where appropriate; and ensuring clear lawn watering rules and drought communication. Feedback also highlighted ongoing interest in protecting water quality, environmental health, and operational readiness.

What We Heard	How It Shaped the Plan
<p>Conservation</p> <p>Implement water metering to improve leak detection and enable the introduction of pay-by-use billing for drinking water use</p> <p>Implement mandatory metering for all buildings to detect leaks, measure use, and support fair billing</p> <p>Design metering to allow residents to see how much water they use between billings</p> <p>Provide clarity on water billing in multi-unit residences (tenant vs. owner) and provide adjustments and discounts for larger households</p> <p>Introduce rebates for water-efficient appliances</p> <p>Promote water-friendly landscaping and ban the use of drinking water for lawn watering</p> <p>Make it easier to report watering violations and strengthen enforcement and fines for violations</p> <p>Extend summer watering restrictions</p>	<p>Strategies under the Conservation and Efficiency Priority Area commit to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with members to conserve drinking water by reducing seasonal demand through strengthening enforcement, updating water restrictions and local bylaws, and promoting outdoor water use efficiency • Advancing region-wide drinking water conservation through targeted education, communication, and behaviour change campaigns • Developing metering implementation guidance, expanding Metro Vancouver’s bulk metering program, and encouraging members to advance metering in ways that align with their local needs, including metering new builds, fully metering the industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) sector, expanding voluntary programs, and, where appropriate, exploring universal metering programs

What We Heard	How It Shaped the Plan
<p>Planning and future-proofing infrastructure</p> <p>Plan ahead for future growth and drought so the region does not run out of drinking water</p> <p>Be more transparent and cost-efficient when planning and implementing large infrastructure projects</p> <p>Increase infrastructure resilience</p> <p>Expand reservoirs and use water supplies from other areas that have excess</p> <p>Upgrade and repair aging infrastructure</p> <p>Strengthen the drinking water system’s earthquake preparedness and its ability to restore service after an earthquake</p>	<p>Strategies under the Conservation and Efficiency Priority Area commit to optimizing cost efficiency across operations and capital projects.</p> <p>Strategies under the Resilient Water System Priority Area commit to proactively manage existing infrastructure for longevity, and strengthen seismic assessment, system redundancy, and post-event recovery readiness.</p> <p>Strategies under the Water Supply Quantity and Quality Priority Area include preparing for future drinking water supply and demands by using adaptive planning, analyzing sector-specific demand trends, and developing a drought response plan.</p>
<p>Collaboration</p> <p>Bring municipalities and other agencies together to collaborate on drinking water management across the region</p>	<p>The Guiding Principles emphasize shared responsibility, regional coordination, and collaborative implementation across members and agencies.</p>
<p>Education</p> <p>Inspire water stewardship through public education and awareness</p> <p>Integrate water conservation education in school curriculums and provide simple and effective ways for people to conserve water, offering more education about water and where it comes from</p>	<p>Strategies under the Operational Workforce Development Priority Area commit to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with regional school district partners to identify recommended pathways to support water operations career awareness through existing youth programs and activities • Develop a communications toolkit for youth audiences
<p>Environmental considerations</p> <p>Preserve and improve the health and well-being of ecosystems and the natural environment</p> <p>Adopt long-term solutions to fish migration across dams (e.g., fish ladders)</p>	<p>Strategies under the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Priority Area commit to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase high-quality fish habitat and support migration and spawning for native fish species by collaborating with partners, such as First Nations and Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and sharing environmental monitoring efforts • Design and plan projects to minimize or avoid impacts to the surrounding environment



Public continued...

What We Heard	How It Shaped the Plan
<p>Water quality and security</p> <p>Guarantee the quality and security of our drinking water supply, even in the event of a natural disaster or extreme weather</p>	<p>Strategies under the Water Supply Quantity and Quality Priority Area commit to prepare for water quality changes due to climate change and natural hazards and protect and manage water quality.</p> <p>Strategies under the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Priority Area emphasize reducing the impacts of natural hazards and protect water supply area ecosystems through continued risk assessments.</p>
<p>Water use and reuse</p> <p>Make it easier to collect and reuse water (e.g., rainwater harvesting and greywater)</p> <p>Introduce incentives for water reuse including rainwater capture, wastewater recycling, stormwater harnessing, and greywater systems</p>	<p>Strategies under the Conservation and Efficiency Priority Area commit to collaborate with Province, member jurisdictions, academic institutions, and industry partners to demonstrate and promote the adoption of non-potable water systems through advocacy, education, and applied research.</p>
<p>Industrial and commercial use</p> <p>Charge higher fees for excessive industrial use and regulate sectors that rely heavily on watering (e.g., landscaping, golf courses)</p> <p>Require high-demand industries to use non-potable alternatives (e.g., seawater)</p>	<p>Strategies under the Conservation and Efficiency Priority Area commit to progress a region-wide drinking water conservation program for the industrial, commercial, institutional, and agriculture sectors.</p>
<p>Fiscal accountability and transparency</p> <p>Improve municipal accountability for leakage and project cost overruns</p> <p>Ensure cost-effective planning and learn from past infrastructure challenges</p>	<p>Strategies under the Conservation and Efficiency Priority Area commit to optimizing cost efficiency across operations and capital projects.</p>
<p>Operational workforce</p> <p>Promote drinking water-related careers through education, youth outreach, and public watershed tours</p>	<p>Strategies under the Operational Workforce Development Priority Area emphasize public outreach, workforce promotion, youth engagement and education, and training partnerships.</p>

Additional Feedback

When asked if there was anything else Metro Vancouver should consider as it finalizes the plan, some respondents requested the addition of fluoride. While this request was noted, it is outside the scope of the plan update.

Phase 3 Feedback

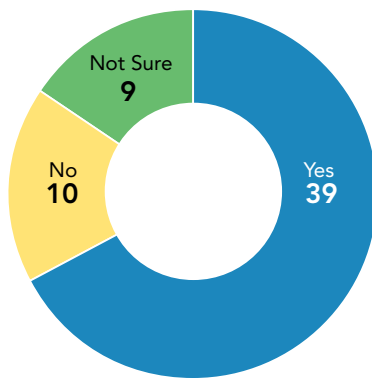
The following section summarizes the feedback received through the Phase 3 online survey. The survey focused on three key areas: the clarity of the draft plan, its alignment with public priorities, and final considerations before Board approval.

Together, these responses provided a regional picture of how participants viewed the final draft Drinking Water Management Plan and whether it reflected their values related to drinking water, environmental protection, and long-term system reliability.

Clarity of the final draft plan

The survey's first multiple-choice question asked respondents about the clarity of information:

Is the information in the final draft Drinking Water Management Plan clear?

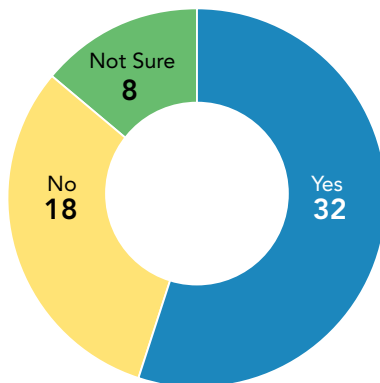


Most respondents agreed that the information in the draft plan was clear. A few respondents offered suggestions regarding the layout and design of the plan, which were incorporated into the final document.

Alignment with public priorities for drinking water management

The survey's second multiple-choice question asked respondents to indicate whether the final draft reflected their top priorities for drinking water management:

Does the final draft reflect the priorities that matter most to you (e.g., conservation, drinking water quality, environmental protection, a reliable system)?



Over half of the respondents indicated that the final draft reflected the priorities that mattered most to them. Some respondents requested greater transparency around project costs. Others encouraged Metro Vancouver to continue public education and engagement on drinking water as the plan moves into implementation.

Final considerations

When asked if there was anything else Metro Vancouver should consider before finalizing the Drinking Water Management Plan, respondents offered suggestions around the following themes:

- Protecting watersheds and ecosystems: respondents called for stronger protection of forests, rivers, streams, and fish habitats, and cautioned that development or infrastructure should not compromise source water quality.
- Reducing water use: respondents called for stronger conservation measures and expressed concerns about the impacts of population growth and climate change on the region's future water supplies.
- Explaining how the plan will be carried out: several respondents wanted clearer explanations of how specific actions in the plan would be implemented, monitored, and enforced over time.
- Clarity about costs: some respondents requested more detailed information on project costs, timelines, and how spending decisions are made.



Pleasant Day engagement, Vancouver, August 9, 2025



Contact Us

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(Please include, "Drinking Water Management Plan Update" in the subject line)

Website: metrovancover.org and search "Drinking Water Management Plan Update"



