

## My Upcoming Meetings

### Metro Vancouver Board

Friday, June 24, 2016

### Climate Action Committee

Wednesday, July 6, 2016

### Intergovernment and Finance - Electoral Area

#### Sub-Committee

Wednesday, July 6, 2016



[Metro Vancouver Board and Committee Agendas & Minutes](http://www.metrovancouver.org/boards/search/)

<http://www.metrovancouver.org/boards/search/>

## Grow Green: A Guide to Eco-Friendly Lawns and Gardens in Metro Vancouver

Metro Vancouver's new website helps residents grow an eco-friendly garden, regardless of gardening skill or space constraints.

Grow Green, created in partnership between Metro Vancouver and the UBC Botanical Garden, provides a user-friendly guide for starting and maintaining beautiful and sustainable gardens, specifically designed for the climate and ecology of this region.



Using basic information about a resident's gardening environment, Grow Green can provide customizable template designs suited for balconies, patios, yards or lawns. The website suggests native and non-invasive plant species, pollinator friendly choices and options for all soil moisture conditions. Its plant database, developed in collaboration with the UBC Botanical Garden, contains only regionally appropriate and locally available plants.

Grow Green supports several Metro Vancouver sustainability goals by providing information on water conservation, rainwater absorption, wildlife habitats, invasive species, soil health, and composting. It is the first and only gardening guide created specifically for this region.

Whether a beginner or an experienced green thumb, residents can use Grow Green to create a beautiful, sustainable outdoor space with a positive impact on our local environment.

<http://www.growgreenguide.ca>

<http://botanicalgarden.ubc.ca/>

## Caring for the Air in Metro Vancouver

Caring for the Air 2016 is Metro Vancouver's annual, easy-to-read report providing updates and information about air quality and climate change issues in our region. Caring for the Air introduces air quality and climate action initiatives underway to enhance the liveability of our region, including new projects supported by Metro Vancouver's Sustainability Innovation Fund.



This year's report features stories describing how energy used in our daily lives can impact climate and air quality, and the detrimental health effects of air quality degradation and climate change for both people and the environment. There are updates inside Caring for the Air 2016 about a range of activities undertaken by Metro Vancouver and our partners, from interpreting data from our air quality monitoring network, to sharing community-based initiatives to improve the energy efficiency of homes, to actions being taken to reduce emissions at the Port of Vancouver. The report also provides insights and advice about reducing the impacts of everyday activities responsible for emissions of greenhouse gases and air contaminants.

The 2016 report and reports from previous years can be found on the Caring for the Air page on [Metro Vancouver's website](#).

A recent posting on Metro Vancouver's [blog](#) gives a global perspective on our air, and also highlights local actions that are making a difference.

[http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/air-quality/information-public/caring-for-the-air/Pages/default.aspx?utm\\_source=newsletter45&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=chair\\_update](http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/air-quality/information-public/caring-for-the-air/Pages/default.aspx?utm_source=newsletter45&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=chair_update)  
<http://metrovancoverblog.org/2015/06/03/caring-for-the-air-thinking-globally-measuring-locally/>

## UEL's Community Safety and Emergency Planning Day - A Great Success



On May 7, 2016 the UEL held its first-ever Community Safety and Emergency Planning Day. Residents from the UEL and UBC stopped by Jim Everett Memorial Park to learn how to be prepared for an emergency. The event included booths with emergency preparedness information and kits, a Community Hub booth for UEL residents to engage with their neighbours, and a demonstration on how to use a fire extinguisher. In addition, residents could

recharge or purchase household fire extinguishers. Staff and vehicles from Metro Vancouver, the RCMP, the Vancouver Fire Department and St. John's Ambulance were popular, especially with young families.

I would like to thank the UEL Community Advisory Council volunteers, UEL and Metro Vancouver staff and all others who helped make this a successful event!

In case you missed it, the March 2016 issue of the UHill Connections newspaper contains a special spread devoted to emergency preparedness. I encourage you to share this important information with your residents.

[http://uelcommunity.com/UHill%20News%20MAR\\_2016.pdf](http://uelcommunity.com/UHill%20News%20MAR_2016.pdf)

## Metro Vancouver's Regional Parks Reach a New Record

On May 6, 2016, the Regional Parks Committee received for information the report titled "2015 Annual Visitor Use and Program Statistics – Regional Parks" that reported an impressive 11.3 million visits to regional parks last year. This number reflects over 5% growth from 2014's visitation total and is higher than the observed 4.0% long term trend.

What's more impressive is that of the 11.3 million visits, Pacific Spirit Regional Park welcomed over 20% of those visitors, coming out on top as the number one most visited park. Over 2.3 million visits occurred in Pacific Spirit, setting an annual record for the park.

Why so many visitors last year? A number of factors could have played into it: good weather; increasing localized population, the continued popularity of being outdoors in parks, and increasingly accurate counting techniques.

To find out more about park visitors and activities, please access the full report [here](#).

[http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/parks/ParksPublications/VisitsVolunteeringVisitorServices2015.pdf#search="visits%2C%20visitor%20services%20and%20volunteering](http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/parks/ParksPublications/VisitsVolunteeringVisitorServices2015.pdf#search=)



**11.3**  
MILLION  
PARK VISITS 2015

## Metro Vancouver's Water Supply Looking Good

I reported in the May Director's Update that as of late March, the snowpack levels were slightly below average but significantly above spring 2015 levels.

As of June 1 the snow pack was at 30% of the historical average but remains above levels from 2015. Further to this, as of the week ending on May 29, 2016 the water storage levels were at 95% of maximum. Capilano and Seymour reservoirs are full and Metro Vancouver continues to utilize a portion of Metro Vancouver's Coquitlam Lake allocation.

Metro Vancouver's water storage volumes are posted on its website weekly.

I encourage you to remind residents of the sprinkling regulations which took effect May 15 to continue to help manage our reservoir water consumption throughout the summer.

<http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/water/conservation-reservoir-levels/reservoir-levels/Pages/default.aspx>

<http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/water/conservation-reservoir-levels/lawn-sprinkling/Pages/default.aspx>

## Transportation and Public Transit

On May 26th, both the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation and the B.C. government made announcements regarding the funding of the Mayors' Council 10-Year Plan for improving transportation and transit in the Metro Vancouver region. Unfortunately, the parties have not yet reached an agreement that will enable implementation of the plan to begin.

Before describing these announcements, I will note again the promises in the March federal budget. The budget announced a two-phase plan for investing in public transit and other infrastructure and stated that the federal government will fund up to 50% of the eligible costs of projects.

Phase 1 provides funding for work that is ready to go and is intended to provide a short-term stimulus to the economy. Metro Vancouver's share of the Phase 1 federal money for transit is \$370 million. Phase 2, the details of which will be announced in 2017, will provide a substantially larger sum for transit projects through to 2026.

TransLink has identified suitable projects for Phase 1 in the 10-Year Plan. These projects include improving bus and SkyTrain service. They also include the initial design and engineering work for the Broadway subway and Surrey LRT.

The Mayors' Council announcement proposed a combination of funding sources for regional and provincial contributions towards the costs of the 10-Year Plan. The regional sources include a modest annual increase in property taxes (in addition to the increases that would otherwise occur), a one-time 2% transit fare increase in 2018 (in addition to the regular fare increases), and a new regional development cost charge for transit, the details of which remain to be worked out. In addition, the announcement proposed that mobility pricing be introduced by 2021. Much work is required to determine the form that mobility pricing would take: tolling all bridges, a charge per km travelled, or some other form.

The Mayors' Council called on the province to pay one-third of *all* capital costs of the plan and, in addition, to provide \$50 million annually—either by redistributing a portion of the carbon tax subsidy currently provided to households outside Metro Vancouver or by enabling a provincially controlled regional revenue source such as fuel tax or a vehicle levy.

This funding proposal was coupled with a stipulation that the province give control of TransLink to the Mayors' Council.

The provincial government announced, through Minister Fassbender, that it is willing to provide \$246 million over the next three years for transit improvements. That is one-third of the assumed total capital costs for Phase 1 of \$740 million. The media release stated:

Investments in this phase of funding are expected to support the purchase of more SkyTrain cars, improvements to bus exchanges and SkyTrain stations, enhanced SeaBus service, initial work towards new major rapid transit in Vancouver and Surrey, and the modernization of a variety of TransLink's transit infrastructure.

The province's announcement also stated that Minister Fassbender plans to discuss with the Mayors' Council possible revenue sources to fund the regional 17% share of the capital costs. In particular, the government wants to explore ways to ensure the public receives a benefit from land development near transit stations. The announcement did not acknowledge that improvements to the transit system will require the region to fund the full amount of the increased operating costs as well as a portion of the capital costs.

Notably missing from the province's announcement was any commitment to contribute towards Phase 2 or to enable any new regional funding sources for this second phase. Furthermore, the announcement was silent on the governance of TransLink.

The Mayors' Council must now decide whether Phase 1 is to proceed without a commitment from the province to contribute towards Phase 2 and without any change to TransLink's governance. The decision needs to be made soon, so that our region can claim the \$370 million the federal government has allocated to us and so that we can get on with urgently needed improvements to transit.

A presentation given at the Mayors' Council public meeting on May 26 shows that the average annual funding required from the region for the 10-Year Plan has decreased substantially because of the increase in federal cost-sharing to 50%. At the time of the sales tax plebiscite last year, the regional funding requirement was estimated to be an average of \$250 million per year. It is now estimated to be \$150 million per year.

The Mayors' Council announcement and other documents regarding a proposed funding strategy for the 10-Year Plan, including a letter sent on April 29 to Premier Clark, are available from the [TransLink website](#). The province's announcement is available [here](#).

[www.translink.ca/en/About-Us/Governance-and-Board/Mayors-Council/Council-Minutes-and-Reports.aspx](http://www.translink.ca/en/About-Us/Governance-and-Board/Mayors-Council/Council-Minutes-and-Reports.aspx)  
[news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2016CSCD0026-000867](http://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2016CSCD0026-000867)  
<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2016CSCD0026-000867>

## Events & Media Updates

I would like to ask you to draw the following to the attention of residents, students, and others:

### Sustainability Community Breakfast – Thursday, June 23, 2016



Water Conservation in Metro Vancouver

7:30 – 9am

BCIT Downtown

555 Seymour Street, Vancouver

On average, approximately one billion litres of water is used daily in Metro Vancouver. This can increase to more than 1.5 billion litres daily during the summer.

Hear how Metro Vancouver and member municipalities are setting conservation targets and working with residents and businesses to help conserve and ensure an adequate supply of our high-quality treated drinking water.

Register at: <http://www.metrovancouver.org/events/community-breakfasts/>

### The Sustainable Region



Cycling in Cities: In a landmark Canadian study, researchers collaborated on the Cycling in Cities project, examining cycling injury rates and road design. Project lead Kay Teschke explains what they learned about creating cyclist specific infrastructure.

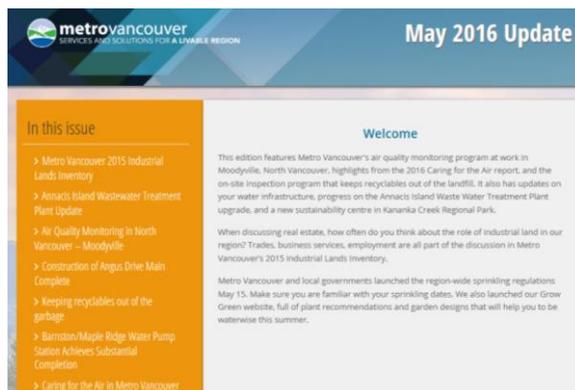
### Metro Vancouver Close Up



*Metro Vancouver Close Up* shows how municipalities and community groups are promoting sustainability and shared regional goals. New videos are posted each month. To see more sustainability stories about Metro Vancouver, residents can search “Metro Vancouver Close Up” at [metrovancouver.org](http://www.metrovancouver.org) or follow [metrovancoverblog.org](http://metrovancoverblog.org).

## For More Metro Vancouver News and Updates

<http://www.metrovancouver.org/metroudate/>



## Links & Connections

### [Metro Vancouver](#)

[www.metrovancouver.org](http://www.metrovancouver.org)

### [Maria Harris, Electoral Area A Director](#)

[www.mariaharris.ca](http://www.mariaharris.ca)

### [@EADirector Twitter](#)

[www.twitter.com/EADirector](http://www.twitter.com/EADirector)

### [Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation](#)

[www.translink.ca/en/About-Us/Governance-and-Board/Mayors-Council.aspx](http://www.translink.ca/en/About-Us/Governance-and-Board/Mayors-Council.aspx)

[www.mayorscouncil.ca](http://www.mayorscouncil.ca)

### [Union of BC Municipalities](#)

[www.ubcm.ca](http://www.ubcm.ca)

### [University Neighbourhoods Association](#)

[www.myuna.ca](http://www.myuna.ca)

### [University Endowment Lands](#)

[www.universityendowmentlands.gov.bc.ca](http://www.universityendowmentlands.gov.bc.ca)

### [UEL Community Advisory Council](#)

[www.uelcommunity.com](http://www.uelcommunity.com)

### [Metro Vancouver Media Releases](#)

[www.metrovancouver.org/media-room](http://www.metrovancouver.org/media-room)

### [Metro Vancouver Videos](#)

[www.metrovancouver.org/media-room/video-gallery](http://www.metrovancouver.org/media-room/video-gallery)

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