



METRO VANCOUVER
Head Office

Metro Vancouver Handbook for Board and Committee Members

November 2022

Prepared by Board and Information Services

Metro Vancouver is a federation of 21 municipalities, one electoral area, and one treaty First Nation that collaboratively plans for and delivers regional-scale services. It delivers regional scale water, wastewater, and solid waste utility services. Metro Vancouver also regulates air quality, plans for urban growth, manages a regional parks system, provides affordable housing, and serves as a regional federation. The regional district is governed by a Board of Directors of elected officials from each member jurisdiction.

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:  (Katzie),  (Kwantlen), k (Kwikwetlem), m (Matsqui), x (Musqueam), q (Qayqayt), se (Semiahmoo), Skwxw (Squamish), sc (Tsawwassen), and s (Tsleil-Waututh).

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

Front cover: Looking north from Delta

metrovancouver

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1.0 An Overview of Metro Vancouver

Metro Vancouver is a diverse organization that plans for and delivers regional utility services, including water, sewer and drainage, and solid waste management. It also regulates air quality, plans for urban growth, manages a regional parks system, provides affordable housing, and serves as a regional forum.

Vision

Metro Vancouver embraces collaboration and innovation in providing sustainable regional services that contribute to a livable and resilient region and a healthy natural environment for current and future generations.

Mission

Metro Vancouver's mission is guided by its three broad roles.

1. Deliver Core Services

Mission: Attain the highest possible levels of excellence in meeting our service delivery responsibilities.

What we do: Provide regional utility services (water, sewerage and drainage, and solid waste management) to members. Monitor air quality from Hope to Horseshoe Bay. Provide regional parks and affordable housing directly to residents and act as the local government for Electoral Area A.

2. Plan for the Future

Mission: Develop and use an integrated system of plans to manage all activities within Metro Vancouver's legislated scope of authority towards the achievement of a sustainable region.

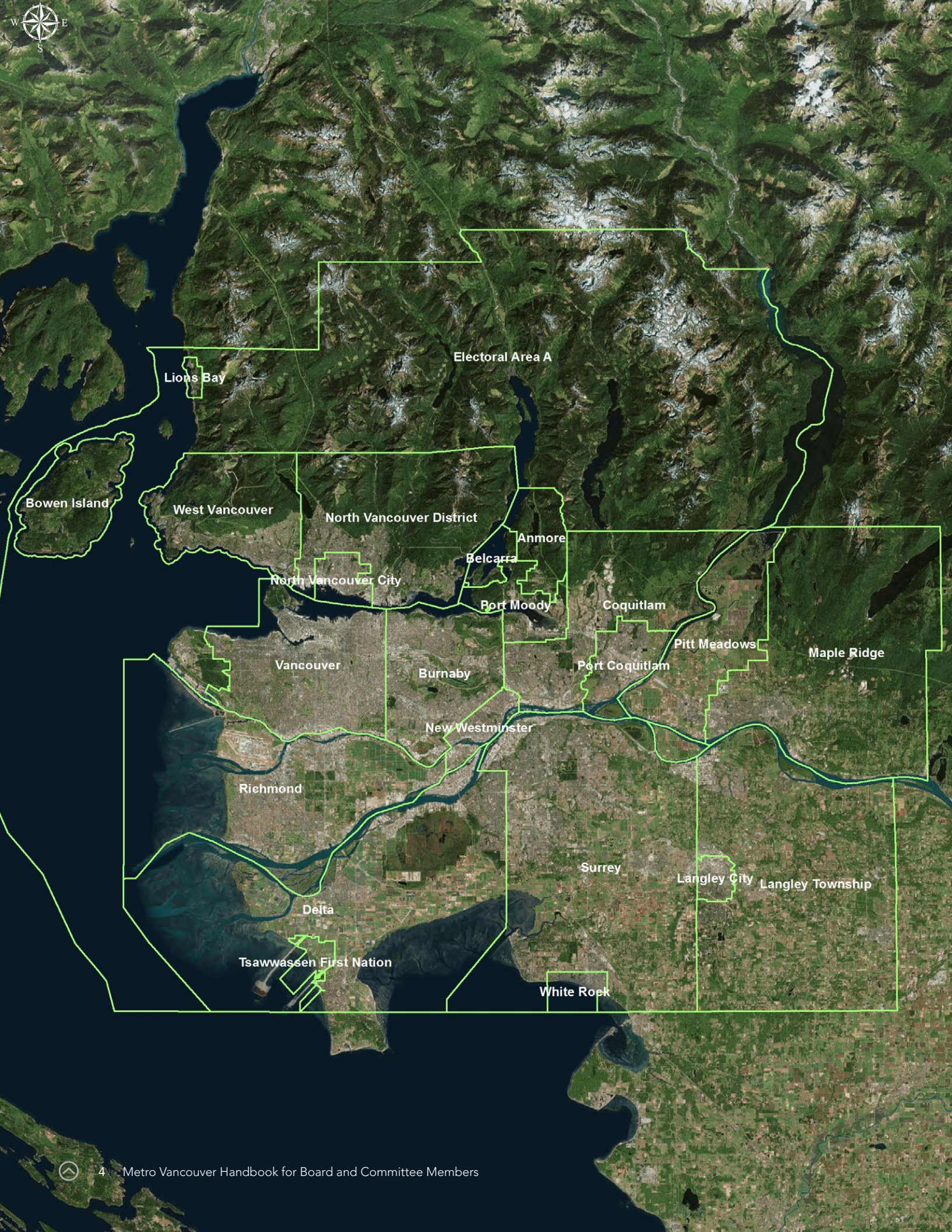
What we do: Carry out planning and regulatory responsibilities related to the three utilities as well as air quality, regional growth management, and regional parks. At the board level, develop and implement strategies related to issues of regional interests.

3. Act as a Regional Forum

Mission: Build and facilitate collaborative processes, including those that engage citizens, to achieve a robust partnership that works together for a sustainable region.

What we do: Serve as the main political forum for discussing significant community issues at the regional level.





The Regional District and the Federation

Regional districts were introduced in British Columbia by the Provincial Government in 1965, when the Province amended the *Municipal Act* — today known as the *Local Government Act*.

Regional districts are a federation composed of its members: the municipalities, electoral areas, and treaty First Nations that are located within the boundaries of the regional district, and that have representation on a regional district board.

Collaboration is fundamental to Metro Vancouver. Our regional model lets our members and ratepayers benefit from economies of scale and regional expertise.

Of the 27 regional districts in British Columbia, Metro Vancouver Regional District is the largest by population.

Metro Vancouver Membership

Metro Vancouver is comprised of 23 members: 21 municipalities, one treaty First Nation, and one electoral area.

Village of Anmore
Village of Belcarra
Bowen Island Municipality
City of Burnaby
City of Coquitlam
City of Delta
Electoral Area A
City of Langley
Township of Langley
Village of Lions Bay
City of Maple Ridge
City of New Westminster

City of North Vancouver
District of North Vancouver
City of Pitt Meadows
City of Port Coquitlam
City of Port Moody
City of Richmond
City of Surrey
Tsawwassen First Nation
City of Vancouver
District of West Vancouver
City of White Rock

First Nations Relationships

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: ǵíćǵ́ (Katzie), ǵʷa:ńłǵ́ (Kwantlen), kʷikʷǵ́łǵ́m (Kwikwetlem), máthxwi (Matsqui), xʷmǵ́θkʷǵ́ǵ́m (Musqueam), ǵiqǵ́yǵ́t (Qayqayt), se'mya'me (Semiahmoo), Skwxwú7mesh úxwumixw (Squamish), scǵ́wǵ́aθǵ́n mǵ́steyǵ́xʷ (Tsawwassen), and sǵ́lǵ́lwǵ́ta7ǵ́ (Tseil-Waututh).

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



Service Areas

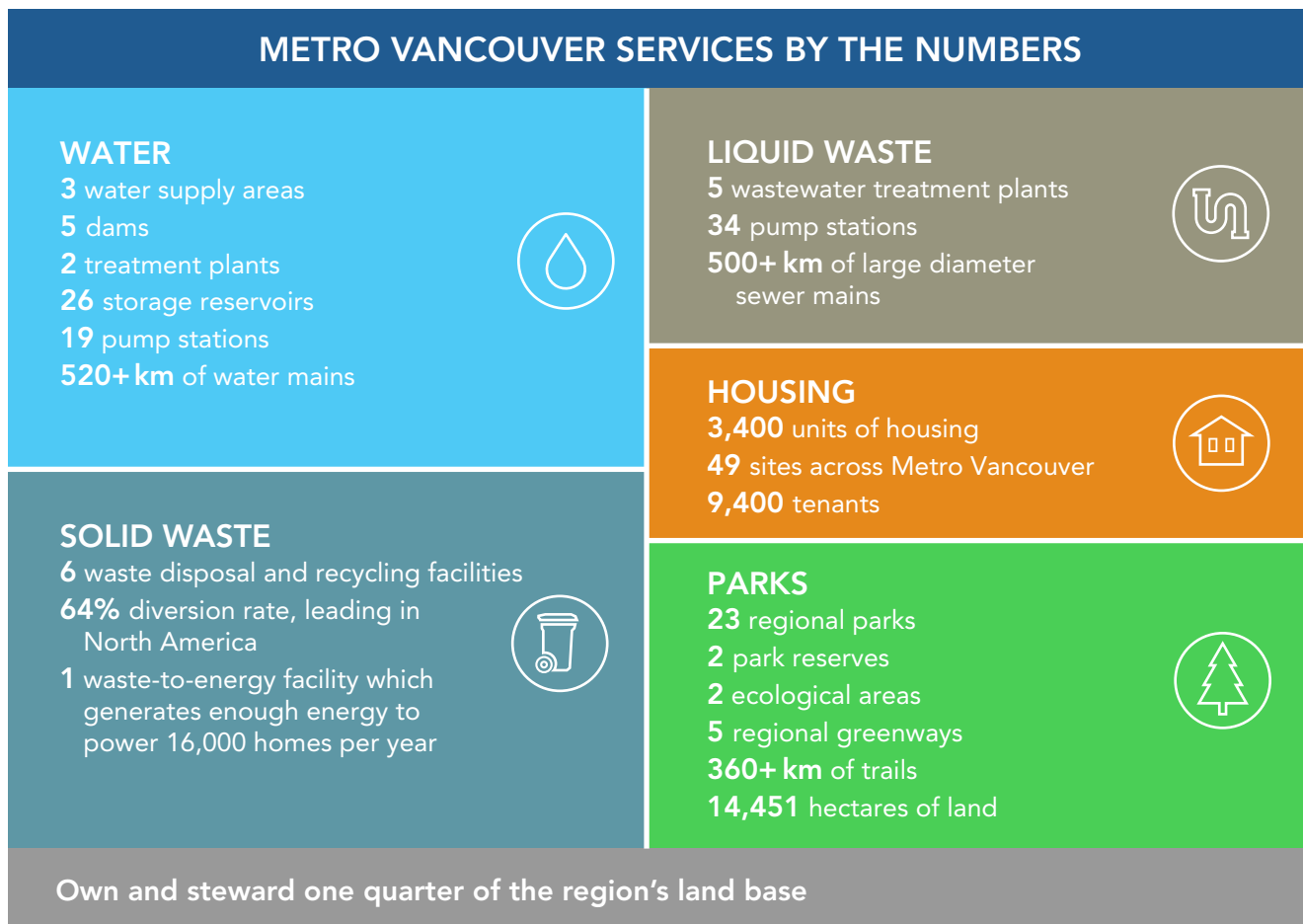
Metro Vancouver is a regional service body responsible for providing important services to member jurisdictions. It also undertakes key activities on behalf of its member jurisdictions.



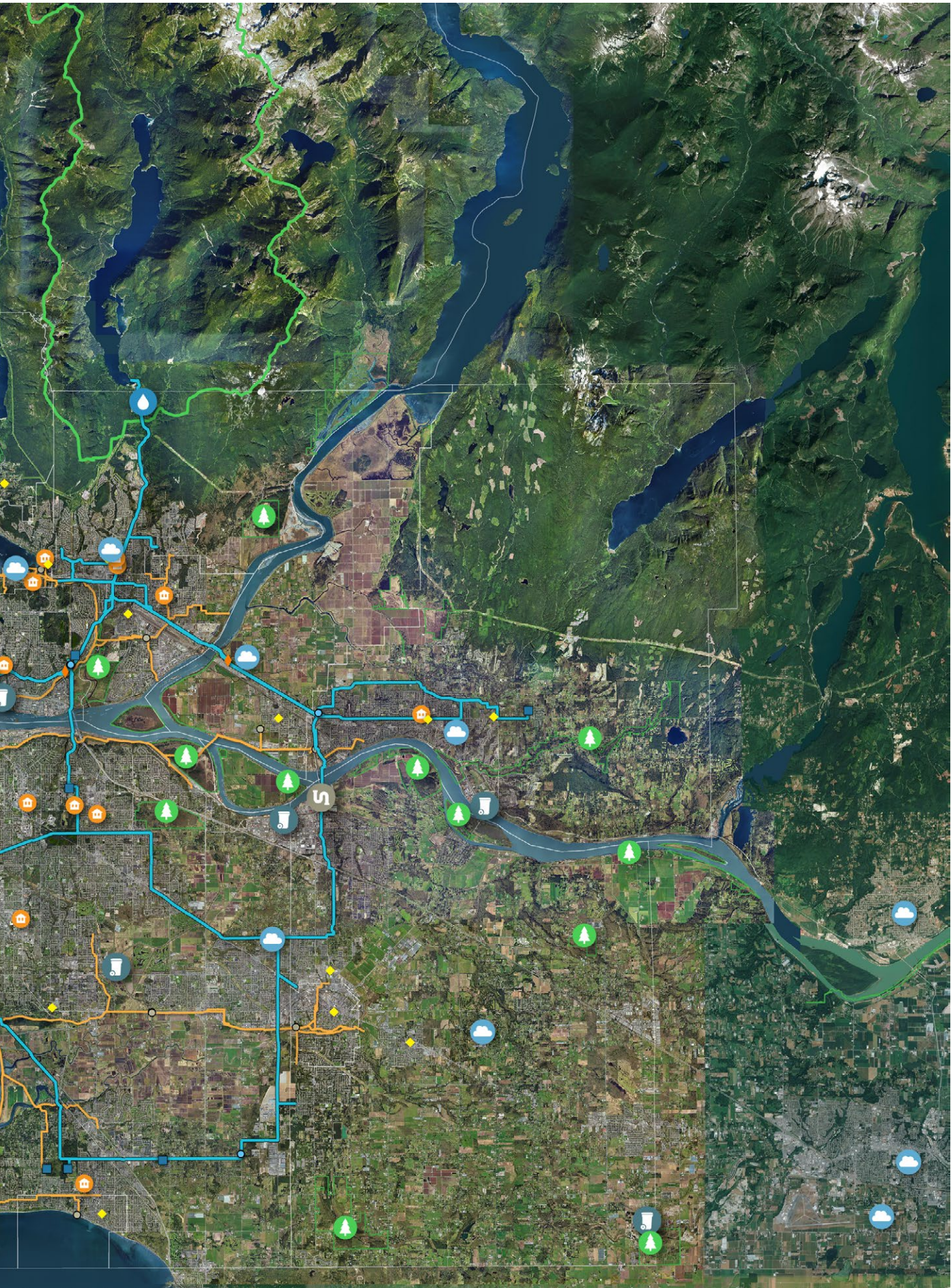
Scale of Operations

Metro Vancouver and its 23 member jurisdictions work collaboratively to plan for and provide vital utility and local government services to 2.7 million residents — more than half the population of BC — as well as the businesses and institutions of the region.

Metro Vancouver is unique in both the size and diversity of services provided. Perhaps the best way to conceptualize the scale of the stewardship responsibilities of Metro Vancouver is through the scale of Metro Vancouver’s assets.



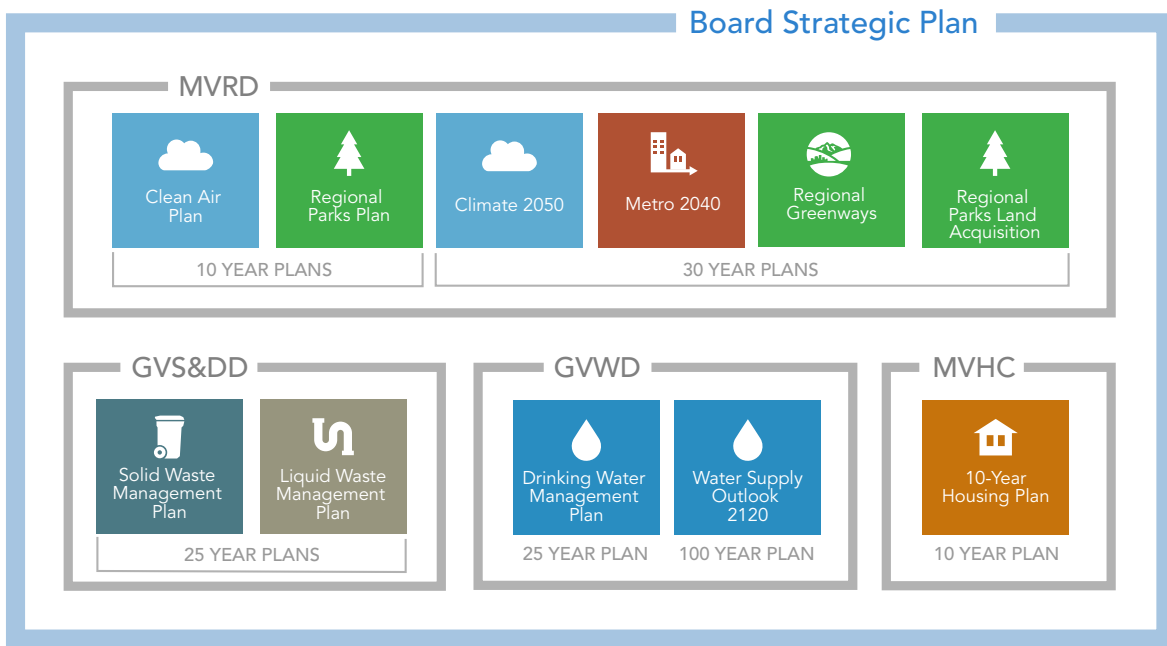




Strategies and Management Plans

The service areas under which Metro Vancouver has legislated responsibility are guided by management plans that provide an integrated and strategic approach to dealing with the most important issues related to the livability and sustainability of our dynamic metropolitan region.

Each plan contains a vision or commitment statement and long-term goals that provide direction for Metro Vancouver in its operations and services as well as actions relevant to members and stakeholders.



Foundational regional management plans include:

MVRD

- Regional Parks Plan (Updated 2022)
- Clean Air Plan (Updated 2021)
- Metro 2040: Shaping our Future (2011, Update underway)
- Climate 2050 (Updated 2019)

MVHC

- Metro Vancouver 10-Year Housing Plan (2019)

GVWD

- Water Supply Outlook 2021 (Updated 2019)
- Drinking Water Management Plan (2011, Update underway)
- Drinking Water Conservation Plan (Updated 2021)

GVS&DD

- Integrated Liquid Waste and Resource Management Plan (2010, Update underway)
- Integrated Solid Waste and Resource Management Plan (2010, Update underway)

Board Strategic Plan



The regional plans that guide our services are implemented within the context of direction from the Board’s Strategic Plan and the organization’s long-term financial planning principles. The Board does a strategic planning session at the outset of its four year term to develop the Board Strategic Plan and conducts a two-year check-in part way through its mandate.

Read the Previous Strategic Plan

[Board Strategic Plan 2019 – 2022](#) (updated May 2021)

Climate, Equity, Prosperity, and Resilience Plans

Metro Vancouver also has plans and programs underway and under development to drive action on the most pressing issues facing our region.

Regional Growth Strategy: The regional growth strategy (Metro 2040) is the regional federation’s overall vision for how to accommodate anticipated growth to the region in a way that reflects the federation’s values and responds to the challenges facing the region, including climate, affordable housing, transportation, and land use policies. This is the strategic plan that aligns long-term planning for Translink, adjoining regional districts, and municipal official community plans (OCPs), and is signed off by all members.

Invest Vancouver: Invest Vancouver is an economic development leadership service provided through the Metro Vancouver Regional District to position the region for success in a rapidly evolving global economy. Invest Vancouver’s purpose is to amplify opportunity and propel prosperity for all residents of the Metro Vancouver region. The mandate covers three areas of activity:

- Attracting strategic investment
- Conducting economic research and policy analysis
- Fostering collaboration

Resilience Framework: Following direction from the Board in July 2020, a Resilience Framework is under development to provide an approach for operationalizing resilience across the Metro Vancouver organization. Guided by the principles of equity, reconciliation, and prosperity, the framework will support a resilient and healthy region through:

- Advancing the resilience of built and natural infrastructure
- Improving institutional capacity to manage shocks and stresses
- Enhancing collective efforts to build resilience through collaborative partnerships
- Accelerating action to address climate change

Climate 2050: Climate 2050 is Metro Vancouver’s strategy to guide climate change policy and action for the next 30 years, and to help the region become carbon neutral by 2050.



2.0 Metro Vancouver Governance

One Organization, Four Legal Entities

METRO VANCOUVER REGIONAL DISTRICT:

Since: 1967
Legal Act: *Local Government Act*

Letters Patent incorporating the Regional District of Fraser-Burrard were issued on June 29, 1967. Shortly thereafter, the name was changed to the Greater Vancouver Regional District. Although the brand name “Metro Vancouver” has been used since before 2010, the legal name changed to Metro Vancouver Regional District on January 30, 2017. Metro Vancouver Regional District draws its authority from the *Local Government Act*.

GREATER VANCOUVER SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE DISTRICT:

Since: 1914
Legal Act: *Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District Act*

Its predecessor body, the Vancouver and Districts Joint Sewerage and Drainage Board, received legislative sanction in 1914. Legislative changes in 1971 to the Acts placed the administration of the GVS&DD under the Greater Vancouver Regional District, as it was then known.

GREATER VANCOUVER WATER DISTRICT:

Since: 1924
Legal Act: *Greater Vancouver Water District Act*

Collaboration on protecting water supply in the region started as early as 1886 with the Vancouver and Coquitlam Waterworks. In 1924, the Greater Vancouver Water District was founded. Legislative changes in 1971 to the Acts placed the administration of the GWWD under the Greater Vancouver Regional District, as it was then known.

METRO VANCOUVER HOUSING CORPORATION:

Since: 1974
Legal Act: *Corporations Act*

Metro Vancouver Regional District is the sole shareholder of the Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation. It was previously known as Greater Vancouver Housing Corporation.

Governance of the Four Legal Entities

The MVRD, MVHC, GVWD, and GVS&DD are each governed by a separate Board of Directors composed of elected representatives appointed or elected from their respective member jurisdictions. Membership on each of the four boards is slightly different.

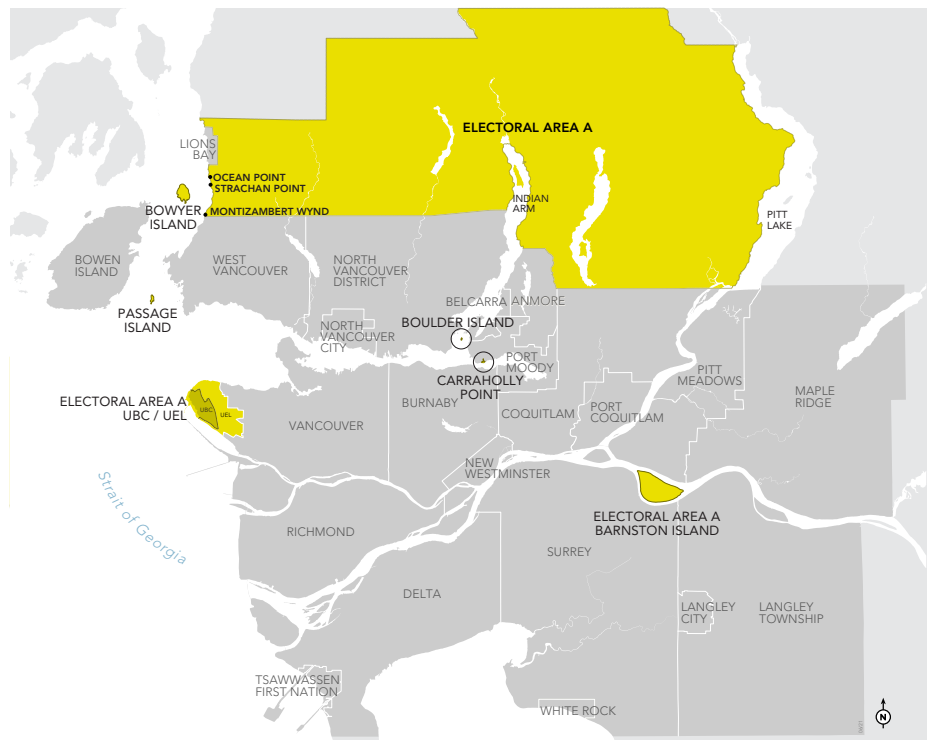
Metro Vancouver represents the region through four separate legal entities:	
METRO VANCOUVER REGIONAL DISTRICT 23 Member Jurisdictions 41 Board Directors Includes all members	GREATER VANCOUVER WATER DISTRICT 19 Member Jurisdictions 38 Board Directors* Does not include Bowen Island, Lions Bay, or White Rock
GREATER VANCOUVER SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE DISTRICT 19 Member Jurisdictions 37 Board Directors Does not include Belcarra, Bowen Island, Lions Bay, or Tsawwassen First Nation	METRO VANCOUVER HOUSING CORPORATION 23 Member Jurisdictions 41 Board Directors Includes all members

**Electoral Area A is not a member jurisdiction but pursuant to the GVWD Act, the Director for Electoral Area A is a voting member of the Board.*

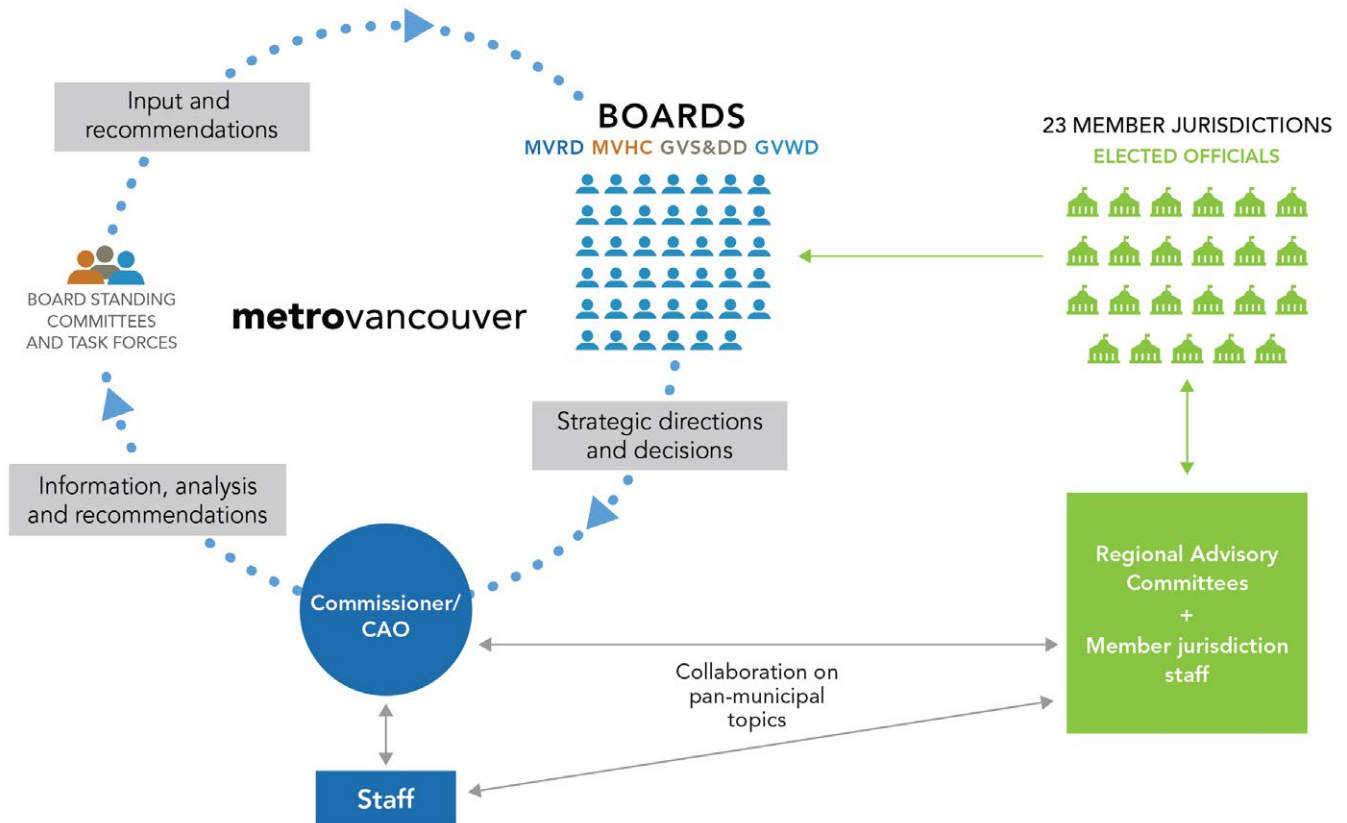
Governance of Electoral Area A

The Metro Vancouver Regional District is the local government for Electoral Area A. The Electoral Area A Director is elected as part of the general local election process serving a four-year term.

**Electoral Area A is not a member jurisdiction but pursuant to the GVWD Act, the Director for Electoral Area A is a voting member of the Board.*



COLLABORATION AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



Board of Directors (“Board”)

The number of directors appointed to each of the Boards is determined by the populations of the member jurisdiction. The directors are appointed to Metro Vancouver at the pleasure of their council and serve until their council decides to change the appointment.

Standing Committees of the Board (“Committees”)

Under the *Local Government Act*, the Board Chair establishes Committees and appoints members to them, including a member to preside as Chair for each committee. The purpose of MV Committees is to advise the Board on policy and other matters. The Board will consider the advice, together with any background information, in order to arrive at a decision.

The Role of Chair, Vice-Chair, and Directors

Role of the Chair

All four legal entities are headed by a single Chair, who also acts as the organization's Chief Executive Officer. The Chair is elected by Board Members each November.

The Board Chair has a number of duties, including:

- See that the law is carried out for the improvement and good governance of Metro Vancouver
- Communicate information to the Board
- Act as the organization's chief spokesperson
- Preside at Board meetings
- Direct the management of regional district business and affairs
- Establish Standing Committees and appoint persons to those committees

Role of the Vice-Chair

All four legal entities also elect a single Vice-Chair each November. In the absence of the Board Chair, the Vice-Chair assumes the role of the Chair.

Role of a Committee Chair

Similar to the Board Chair, Committee Chairs preside at committee meetings and act as spokesperson on matters within the purview of the committee.

Role of Directors

Directors play a key role in decision making and policy formulation in the best interest of the region.

The director representing Electoral Area A is directly elected to the Board for a four-year term during a [general local election](#) held at the same time as municipal elections. The election is managed by Metro Vancouver.



Voting Structure

The number of votes on each board is based on participation in the function and on the population of the member jurisdiction.

The voting allocation is determined as follows:

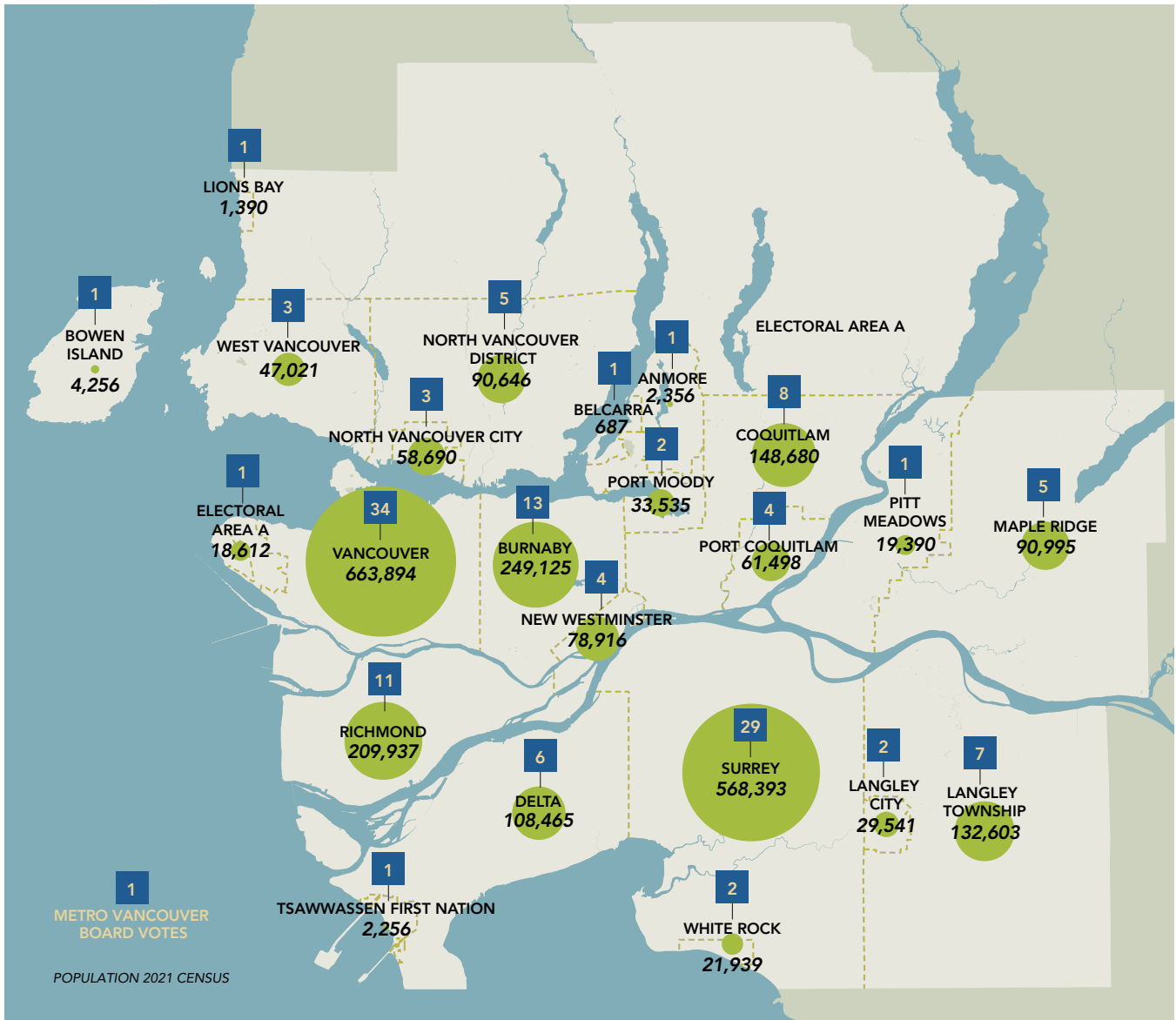
- 1 vote for every 20,000 population
- 1 director for every 100,000 population

The *Local Government Act* specifies that population is determined by census, which the federal government conducts every five years. Shown here, the population figures are those certified by the Province from the 2021 federal census.

Member Jurisdiction	Population	Directors	MVRD	MVHC	GVSDD	GVWD
Anmore	2,356	1	1	1	1	1
Belcarra	687	1	1	1	n/a	1
Bowen Island	4,256	1	1	1	n/a	n/a
Burnaby	249,125	3	13	13	13	13
Coquitlam	148,680	2	8	8	8	8
Delta	108,465	2	6	6	6	6
Electoral Area A	18,612	1	1	1	1	1
Langley City	29,541	1	2	2	2	2
Langley Township	132,603	2	7	7	7	7
Lions Bay	1,390	1	1	1	n/a	n/a
Maple Ridge	90,995	1	5	5	5	5
New Westminister	78,916	1	4	4	4	4
North Vancouver City	58,690	1	3	3	3	3
North Vancouver District	90,646	1	5	5	5	5
Pitt Meadows	19,390	1	1	1	1	1
Port Coquitlam	61,498	1	4	4	4	4
Port Moody	33,535	1	2	2	2	2
Richmond	209,937	3	11	11	11	11
Surrey	568,393	6	29	29	29	29
Tsawwassen First Nation	2,256	1	1	1	n/a	1
Vancouver	663,894	7	34	34	34	34
West Vancouver	47,021	1	3	3	3	3
White Rock	21,939	1	2	2	2	n/a
Total	2,642,825	*41	145	145	141	141

*Total Board members for MVRD and MVHC. GVWD has 38 directors. GVS&DD has 37 directors.

With few exceptions, voting on regional district issues is done by way of “weighted voting”. In other words, all motions must be decided by a majority of the votes of those directors present in the meeting.



3.0 Metro Vancouver Staff

Role of the Commissioner and CAO

Chief Administrative Officer of MVRD and MVHC

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) is the statutory officer appointed under the *Local Government Act* and as such is assigned chief administrative responsibility for the MVRD and the MVHC. The CAO is the sole 'employee' of the Metro Vancouver Regional District Board. They are the only employee with a direct reporting relationship to the Board. All other employees report up through an organizational structure to the CAO.

Commissioner of the GVWD and GVS&DD

The CAO also has two additional statutory roles — one as commissioner of the GVWD and one as commissioner of the GVS&DD. The commissioner is a non-voting member of the GVWD and GVS&DD Boards.

Role of Staff

Metro Vancouver staff facilitate and complete the work required to deliver services to Metro Vancouver and achieve the goals and objectives set out by the Board of Directors.

They also support the CAO in ensuring that Committees and the Board can make informed decisions by preparing reports that are informed by research, data, analytical tools, input from member jurisdictions, input from the public, and input from First Nations.

About the Corporate Officer and Board and Information Services (BIS)

The Corporate Officer, or designate, is required to attend all duly convened Board and Committee meetings. The Corporate Officer also acts as the Director of the Board and Information Services (BIS) team, which is responsible for the statutory responsibilities for corporate administration under the *Local Government Act*, including:

- Board agenda and meeting management
- Elections and alternative approval process
- Bylaw management
- Correspondence control
- Policy management
- Records management
- Freedom of information and privacy
- Library and information centre services

Corporate Structure

Metro Vancouver staff are organized to provide maximum efficiencies across the organization while focusing on delivering the critical services the region needs. Staff from multiple departments support across all four legal entities.



4.0 Metro Vancouver Financial Planning Process

Metro Vancouver’s Budget

Financial planning is a year-round activity, which culminates in the approval of an annual budget each fall. Metro Vancouver’s financial framework is governed by several legislative statutes including the *Local Government Act*, *Community Charter*, *Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District Act*, *Vancouver Water District Act*, and *British Columbia Corporations Act*.

Member jurisdictions are required to deliver a financial plan bylaw and property tax bylaw by May 15 each year, and as such, Metro Vancouver times the approvals of the annual budget and 5-Year Financial Plan so that members can take the rates into account as they develop their budgets.

Key Financial Reports

Annual Budget and Financial Plan:

The annual budget is approved by the Board each fall and provides the budget for the year ahead and endorses the forecasts for the subsequent years in the Financial Plan, which provides a set of projects to support both Metro Vancouver and member jurisdictions’ future planning.

Annual Financial Report:

The annual financial report communicates Metro Vancouver’s financial story, including progressive fiscal policies that focus on long-term financial sustainability while considering the affordability for regional ratepayers.

Long Term Financial Plan:

Metro Vancouver is currently developing a long term financial plan.

Timeline of Budget Workshops and Meetings

SPRING:

Board workshop on the overall strategic plan



SPRING:

Board budget workshop to guide the upcoming budget and financial plan



SPRING-SUMMER:

Metro Vancouver reviews the proposed capital plans with member jurisdictions for alignment on their own capital work



FALL:

Board Budget workshop with opportunity for public input on budget



OCTOBER:

Metro Vancouver Board of Directors considers the next year’s budget and 5-Year financial plan and approves and endorses as appropriate

Financial Policy and Processes

Financial Management Policy (2018)

Asset Management Policies

Operating, Statutory and Discretionary Reserves Policy

Corporate Allocation Policy

[Financial Planning webpage](#)

Installation of Katzie artist Rain Pierre's mural at Golden Ears Pump Station and Storage Tank.





5.0 Metro Vancouver History

Then

In 1886, Vancouver and Coquitlam Waterworks were founded.

The mission was clear: to find and deliver a good, reliable source of water for a growing population.

In 1887, the first sewer was built to carry away the region's drain water.

So began a series of investments: clean potable water and safe management of liquid waste.

Now

Metro Vancouver extends from Lions Bay to Langley, with 21 municipalities, one electoral area, and one treaty First Nation.

Our range of services has expanded to match the growth and complexity of our region, to ensure we can adapt to changing conditions and to maintain the quality of life our residents expect.

We connect our 23 members so that we work as a federation. Together we provide the services and solutions that underlie a livable region.



Vital Events in Our History

1886

Coquitlam and Vancouver Waterworks Companies Founded



1887

First wooden box sewers constructed in Vancouver at Burrard Inlet and False Creek



1914

Vancouver and Districts Joint Sewerage and Drainage Board created



1949

Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board established



1927

Watershed leases secured for Capilano and Seymour watersheds



1924

Greater Vancouver Water District (GVWD) Act approved by BC Legislature



1954

Cleveland Dam opens



1961

Lions Gate Wastewater Treatment Plant opens



Seymour Falls Dam opens



1966

Official Regional Plan institutes regional land-use planning



Regional Parks Plan for the Lower Mainland Region published

1987

Seymour Demonstration Forest opens



1988

Metro Vancouver Waste-to-Energy Facility operational



1994

Air Quality Management Plan adopted by the GVRD Board – the first plan of its kind in Canada



1983

Paper and glass recycling begins



1976

Annacis Island Wastewater Treatment Plant opens



1974

The Greater Vancouver Housing Corporation (one of the first non-profit societies established in Canada) legally incorporated



Solid waste disposal becomes a GVRD responsibility



1967

The Greater Vancouver Regional District was incorporated (GVRD)

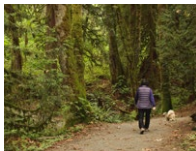


The Regional Parks system created



1969

First six regional parks opened to the public



1972

GVRD takes on delegated authority for air quality in the region



1995

Solid Waste Management Plan adopted with 50 percent diversion goal



1996

Livable Region Strategic Plan adopted by the GVRD Board



1997

Annacis Island Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrades to include secondary treatment



2005

Drinking Water Management Plan adopted by GVWD board



2004

Seymour Capilano Water Filtration Plant construction starts



1998

Solid waste 50 percent diversion achieved (2 years ahead of schedule)



2009

Regional composting facility for food and garden waste unveiled



Greater Vancouver Regional District renamed Metro Vancouver Regional District
metrovancouver

2010

Seymour Capilano Filtration Plant official opening



2011

Metro Vancouver 2040: Shaping our Future, the regional growth strategy, adopted



Integrated Liquid Waste and Resource Management Plan approved by Provincial government



2021

Updated the name of Belcarra Regional Park to təmtəmíxʷtən/Belcarra Regional Park with Tseil-Waututh Nation



2022

Opened United Boulevard Recycling and Waste Centre and Central Surrey Recycling and Waste Centre



2024

100 year anniversary of Water Services



2020

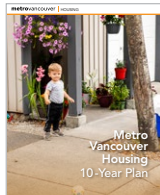
Launched Invest Vancouver as the region's economic prosperity leadership service

INVEST VANCOUVER

2019

Endorsed Climate 2050 and committed to becoming a carbon neutral region by 2050

Adopted Housing's 10-Year Plan



2017

50th Anniversary of Regional Parks



2014

Ultraviolet water treatment facility opens in Coquitlam



2015

Twin tunnels open connecting Capilano Reservoir to Seymour Capilano Filtration Plant



2016

49 housing sites with 9,400 people housed in Metro Vancouver Housing





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