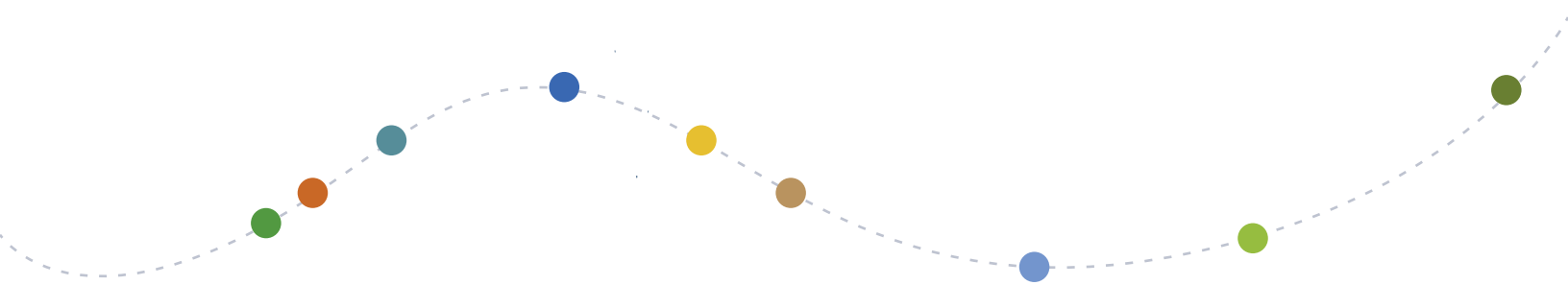


SUSTAINABLE REGION INITIATIVE 2002–2011:  
**A Roadmap to Sustainability**



# METRO VANCOUVER



- CITY OF ABBOTSFORD
- VILLAGE OF ANMORE
- VILLAGE OF BELCARRA
- BOWEN ISLAND MUNICIPALITY
- CITY OF BURNABY
- CITY OF COQUITLAM
- CORPORATION OF DELTA
- CITY OF LANGLEY
- ELECTORAL AREA A
- TOWNSHIP OF LANGLEY
- VILLAGE OF LIONS BAY
- DISTRICT 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

**Who we are:** Metro Vancouver is a political body and corporate entity operating under provincial legislation as a 'regional district' and 'greater boards' that delivers regional services, planning, and political leadership on behalf of 24 local authorities.

- Population:** 2.3 million
- Members:** 24 local authorities
- Land area:** 287,736 hectares

a regional community  
**working together**  
 for SUSTAINABILITY

## VISION

Metro Vancouver seeks to achieve what humanity aspires to on a global basis – the highest quality of life embracing cultural vitality, economic prosperity, social justice and compassion, all nurtured in and by a beautiful and healthy natural environment.

We will achieve this vision by embracing and applying the principles of sustainability, not least of which is an unshakeable commitment to the well-being of current and future generations and the health of the planet, in everything we do.

As we share our efforts in achieving this vision, we are confident that the inspiration and mutual learning we gain will become vital ingredients in our hopes for a sustainable common future.

## MISSION

Metro Vancouver's mission is to:

### SERVE THE REGION

Attain the highest possible levels of excellence in meeting its service delivery responsibilities

### PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

Develop and use an integrated system of plans to manage all activities carried out by Metro Vancouver and others within its mandated influence towards the achievement of a sustainable region

### FACILITATE COLLABORATION

Build and facilitate collaborative processes, including those that engage citizens, to achieve a robust region-wide partnership working together for a sustainable region

## Values

*Integrity* is our foundation

*Passion* for our work and pride in our accomplishments are our drivers

*Respect* for the needs, interests, values and opinions of the public and *compassion* in all our relationships are our guideposts.

We are Metro Vancouver.





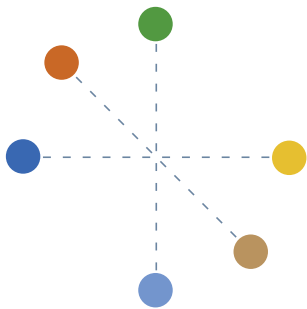
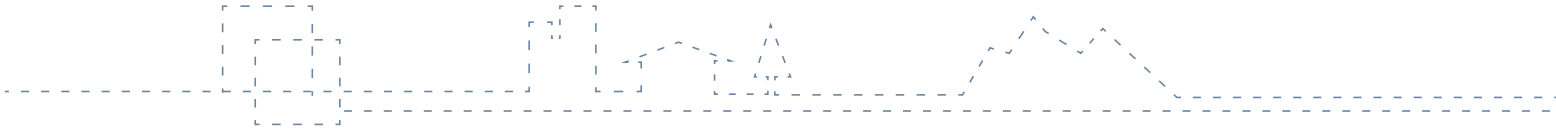
Capilano Chlorination Plant site, placing 36" high pressure valve. 15 March, 1953.



# SUSTAINABLE METRO VANCOUVER

The entity that is now Metro Vancouver emerged less than 100 years ago in an original act of collaboration. It was 1914 and the demand for clean drinking water in the communities in and around the Lower Mainland had outstripped the capacity of the local streams. It would have been unaffordable – economically unsustainable – for any individual municipality to pipe fresh water from the North Shore Mountains, so they opted to work together, to form the Greater Vancouver Water District.

That collaborative association grew and changed over the next century. Each time the people of the region ran into a problem that was difficult or impossible to resolve alone, they looked to one another. By mid-century, this pattern of co-operation was proving necessary in adjacent municipalities around the province. In 1965, the Provincial Government created 27 Regional Districts, including the one for the 950,000 people who lived in “Greater Vancouver” – in Metro Vancouver.



## Local Government / Regional Resourcefulness

It was a good solution. Now serving more than 2.3 million residents, Metro Vancouver still operates on the principle that government and services should be provided as locally as possible, to better honour the history, culture and geographic attributes of each place. But when challenges arise that overwhelm single municipalities, Metro Vancouver is the collaborative platform that allows municipalities within the region to work together in adding value where it is cost-effective. When going alone does not make sense, Metro Vancouver is there: a Political Forum; a Policy Maker; and a Service Provider, able to marshal regional resources and good will and to act as a champion beyond the region's borders.

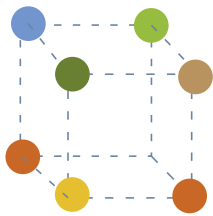


## Entering an Age of Limits

By the turn of this new century, it was becoming more obvious that Metro Vancouver, like the whole world, was beginning to bump up against a series of limits – environmental, social/political and economic.

Physically, some of the elements that make this region both so beautiful and so productive also presented boundaries that would be expensive, dangerous or counterproductive to try to broach. The Coast Mountains, so spectacular from almost any vantage in the Metro region, draw a hard barrier to the north. The ocean, both a rich source of food and a ready highway to the rest of the world, stops development on the western shore; while a protected zone of fertile, agricultural land forms a developmental barrier to the west and south. Add a political boundary – the U.S. border – and Metro Vancouverites find themselves constrained within their own a paradise, one that they must protect or lose.

Residents and businesses in this breathtaking region are also keenly aware of its assets and their value – to our own populations and to the whole, interconnected world. From bogs to beaches, cherished local landmarks also serve, for example, as critical transit points for birds migrating along the Pacific Flyway. The Fraser River is the fragile home to one of the world's great remaining salmon populations, but it's also a major local industrial resource – an essential part of one of North America's busiest and most productive working ports. From farms to forests, from tiny villages to towering urban centres, the communities, First Nations, the businesses and industries of Metro Vancouver are embedded in – and dependent upon – a spectacular natural environment.



## For a Sustainability Challenge: a Sustainability Framework

The challenge – so obvious locally, but equally pressing on a global scale – is just that: how do we enhance our common quality of life while preserving the regional and global capacity to fulfill human needs and ambitions, today and in the future. It’s the same challenge that Gro Harlem Brundtland, chair of the United Nation’s World Commission on Environment and Development, described back in 1987: how can we plan and execute development that “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

With that goal in mind, the Metro Vancouver Board of Directors decided in 2001 to base its land use and air quality planning in sustainability principles and in 2002 expanded that to make sustainability the central tenet of all its activities. They then set about reviewing and updating plans in every area of responsibility – within a Sustainability

Framework that would provide an overarching action plan for achieving a long-term vision for the region. Based in the Sustainability Principles and Imperatives, this framework comprises management plans that provide long-term goals, strategies and actions, and annual action plans that confirm targets and identify deliverables.

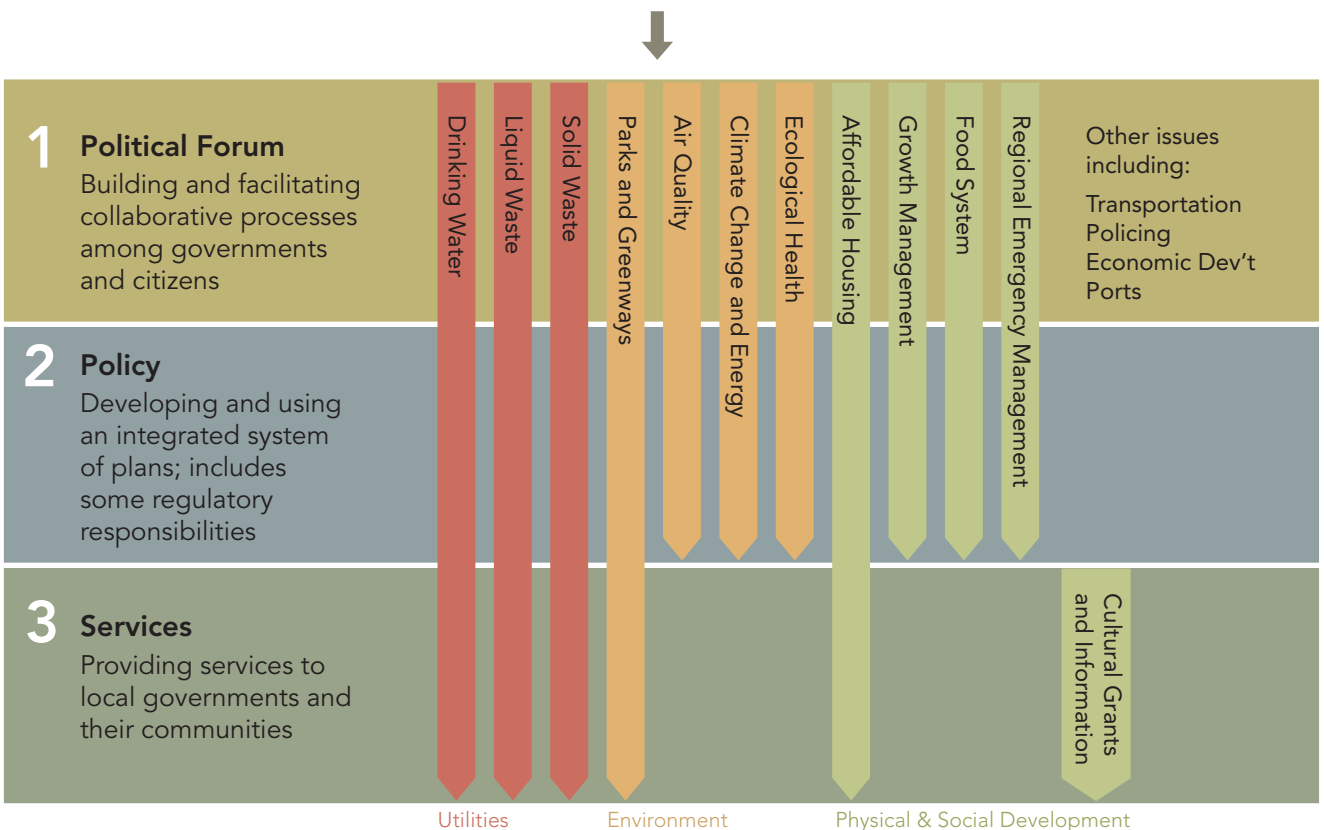
The Framework also enables both internal monitoring and external accountability through regular reviews of management plans, the regional sustainability report and the corporate sustainability indicators.

This document presents the result of those efforts. Encompassing the full set of Strategic Plans – in every utility and area of responsibility – these state exactly how we intend to make Metro Vancouver healthy, efficient, livable and prosperous – now and long into a sustainable future.

## Metro Vancouver Sustainability Framework



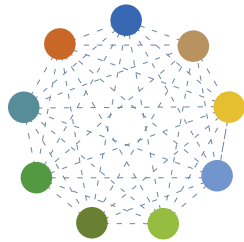
...these are the foundation for Metro Vancouver's three interconnected roles:



Progress towards a sustainable region is measured by



which establish strategic priorities and key activities



# METRO VANCOUVER GOVERNANCE

## Responsible, responsive—and always collaborative

From its earliest days, the partnership that is Metro Vancouver has worked best when its members worked together. In providing its core services, its earliest collaborations have evolved to the point that they are now legislated and regulated by higher levels of government. For example, in the provision of clean water, in the maintenance and monitoring of clear air and in the management of waste both liquid and solid, Metro Vancouver has direct legal accountability for its performance and standards. In a very measurable way, the health of the region depends upon it.

Some of Metro Vancouver’s policy duties have also been codified in provincial law, perhaps especially in its role as the body responsible for coordinating regional planning.

But the regional government is most innovative and responsive in areas where it becomes obvious that there are holes to fill in urban governance or issues in need of resolution. The emergence of a Regional Food Systems Strategy provides a good example.

The rising public awareness about food security and the risk of disappearing farmland emerged as a critical issue at the World Urban Forum in 2006. The Forum, hosted by Metro Vancouver

and attended by 10,000 participants validated the concerns that locals had been expressing in an ongoing series of community sustainability breakfast discussions. Its regional significance, however, was further explored in a future of the region sustainability dialogue, and came to a head in 2008 at Metro Vancouver’s inaugural Sustainability Summit, where upwards of 500 community leaders identified local agriculture and food systems as a regional economic priority.

Metro Vancouver built on those ongoing dialogues with a 100-person workshop entitled Building a Resilient Food System. The next year, key stakeholders joined together in a Regional Food Systems advisory group, producing a Framework for Action. That was followed, in 2010, with a 150-person symposium entitled Food Connections, which ultimately led to a Regional Food Systems Strategy that was adopted by the Metro Vancouver Board of Directors.

This illustrates the collaborative approach of regional government, in which the political leaders and professional staff of Metro Vancouver respond to needs raised by members of the public and draw people together to find shared solutions.

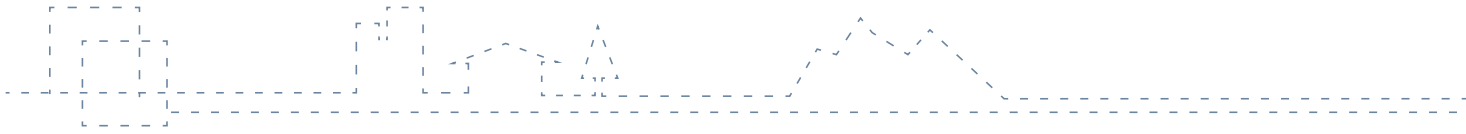
## Planning under a new—local and global—paradigm

It has been clear for decades that the old paradigm – extract, use and discard – cannot continue. We can no longer act as if the Earth offers an inexhaustible supply of natural resources; or a limitless capacity to absorb waste. Indeed, there is an increasing amount of evidence that our current style of life and level of consumption cannot be sustained. The reasons for this can be canvassed in four broad categories:

### 1. We are exceeding the carrying capacity of the earth.

There is general agreement that if every human consumed at the rate of an urban North American, we would need more than four additional planets the size and wealth of earth to satisfy our combined appetites. Many commodities are oversubscribed. Globally, we may already have used more than half the world's available oil and phosphorus. We also pour too much effluent into our atmosphere and our oceans, challenging their capacity to nurture and sustain life as we know it. Locally, we see the effect as we draw down our wealth in the forests and fisheries – or overshoot our capacity to produce food. Everywhere, there are limits that we once thought we could ignore.

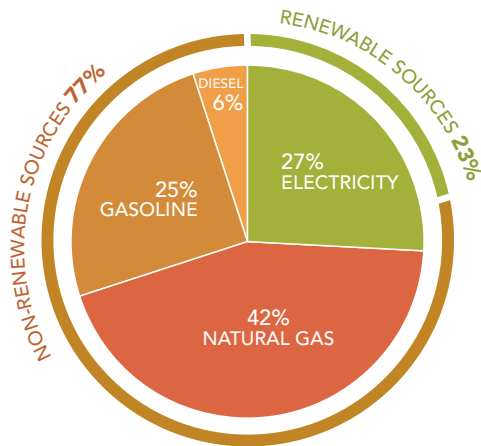




**2. We are changing the climate, with potentially dangerous consequences.**

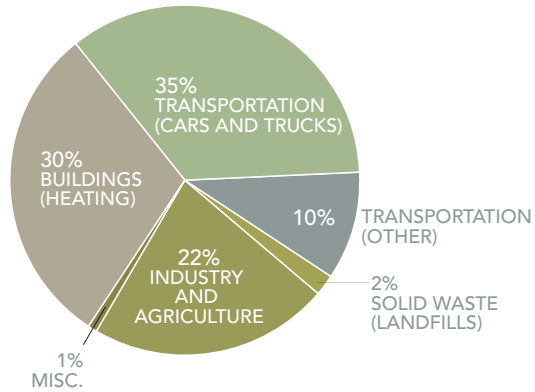
We have just passed the hottest decade in recorded history, breaking the record we set in the 1990s. Floods, droughts and other extreme weather events are a destabilizing influence the world over, displacing populations, compromising the global capacity to grow food and creating devastating costs in damaged and destroyed infrastructure. Metro Vancouver itself faces sharply increased risks (and costs) from impacts such as sea level rise and storm surges.

ENERGY SOURCES IN METRO VANCOUVER



TOTAL ENERGY USED IN 2007:  
265,655 TERA JOULES (TJ)

GHG EMISSIONS IN METRO VANCOUVER



TOTAL GHG EMISSIONS IN 2007:  
16,363,686 TONNES

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### 3. Inequity among people brings instability in society.

Inequity in our own community creates problems such as poverty, substance abuse, untreated mental health suffering and homelessness. These are all destabilizing, potentially contributing to everything from increases in crime to threats to public health. Globally, one-fifth of the world population survives on less than \$1 a day, again creating health and social problems that can no longer be isolated and viewed from “a safe distance.” In an increasingly unsettled world, the wars and famines in one region give rise to disruptive migrations and actions in others. More locally: in a society that prides itself on its inclusiveness, inequity breaks down our sense of community. It undermines our sense of security and hampers our ability to work together to achieve common goals.

### 4. Globalization (and urbanization) has the capacity to transmit risks (as well as benefits) to every corner of the earth, with unprecedented speed.

Thanks to global trade and travel, everything both good and bad can traverse the planet in hours or days. We are irrevocably connected to every other human, through our economic systems and our shared environment. We may benefit by those connections in a world of wealth and opportunity; but that very connectedness also leaves us vulnerable to economic shocks, political upheaval (which can play out in acts of terrorism anywhere in the world) and disease transfer. Even in a community that prides itself on – and benefits from – its multiculturalism, globalization also exacerbates the clash of values that can occur among people with starkly different religious or cultural traditions. Some of these conflicting values can be respected – or ignored – across local or global fences. Others, such as equality for women, create challenges that must be faced and overcome.

These four global factors interact with – and are complicated by – local factors. For example:

- **Population Growth:** the beauty, the abundance and the success of our local and national economy make Metro Vancouver a favourite global destination for migrants as well as travellers. Yet the regional boundaries set by mountains, water and an international border bring into sharper relief the finite nature of our own immediate world. As the world's expanding population tests global limits, Metro Vancouver's political and physical constraints challenge the community to steward its resources and manage its land to efficiently achieve multiple objectives: economic, social and environmental.

- **Resource Restrictions:** As food and commodities become scarcer on the global market, they will become more expensive in our own communities, putting pressure on the local economy and threatening to undermine the fabric of our society by pushing more people into poverty.

- **Funding Challenges:** In times of economic strain, governments at every level are inclined to reduce their spending, even as citizen demand grows for services like education and healthcare and for infrastructure renewal or enhancement (eg. public transit). With the fewest tools for raising money, local governments are also closest to the people, forcing them to contend directly with economic crises even as other levels of government limit or withdraw support.

In recognition of these challenges – and in the context of a region that deserves to be not just preserved, but enhanced – the Metro Vancouver Board turned to sustainability as its central management and planning philosophy. We can no longer be content to measure whether something would have worked yesterday or might still work today. Now, the test is whether it will continue to work indefinitely, whether it will meet our needs and those of our children – and their children.



## Sustainability Imperatives

Metro Vancouver has identified three Sustainability Imperatives, three overarching precepts that must be reflected in every plan and activity at the regional level. The Sustainability Imperatives are:

### 1. Have regard for local and global consequences and long-term impacts

In a report prepared for the Canadian Commission on Conservation – and released in 1915 – the authors wrote: “Each generation is entitled to the interest on the natural capital, but the principal should be handed on unimpaired.” Just as we cannot spend more than we make or consume more than we produce as individuals, globally, we cannot safely draw down our shared environmental “capital” without damaging the capacity of future generations to survive – indeed, without endangering our own long-term prospects.

### 2. Recognize and reflect the interconnectedness and interdependence of systems

Countless systems are operating within an urban setting – transportation systems, water systems, education systems, governance systems, climate systems, etc. – and they are all inextricably linked. Achieving sustainability in Metropolitan Vancouver requires using a whole systems approach – where thinking through the web of connections and dependencies of various components provides a view of the whole, not just portions, of a system. This type of thinking can lead to solutions that treat the root of a problem, not just the symptoms, helping to avoid unintended consequences.

Managing within a single system is complex on its own. But systems are also dynamic; changing constantly on their own and in relation to other systems with which they interact. Thus, a whole systems approach is essential for planning at a regional scale. For example, the drinking water system cannot be planned and managed without consideration for a liquid waste system – not to mention the demands of food and agricultural production or the effects of climate and weather, cultural practices or surrounding ecosystems.

### 3. Be collaborative.

Metro Vancouver was born of the need to collaborate on large or complex challenges. As neighbours (and municipalities) moved closer together over the last century, it was no longer practical or acceptable to deal with garbage by throwing it over the fence. As the demand for services grew, it was more efficient and affordable to work in partnership on major projects, such as delivering drinking water from the North Shore Mountains.

These limits and efficiencies apply all the more directly to issues of sustainability. The world has come to a sometimes painful understanding of the consequences when too many parties try to take uncontrolled advantage of a finite resource – for example, when too many people vent their airborne pollutants into a common “airshed.”

The partners in Metro Vancouver recognize that just as no single entity can be held solely responsible for overwhelming the regional ecological capacity, no single entity can be solely responsible for putting things right. Neither can any party succeed if others are evading their responsibilities. Only in cooperation can all jurisdictions achieve the goal of protecting and enhancing a larger community that is robust and sustainable – ecologically, socially and economically.

NATURAL CAPITAL is the stock of natural resources, living systems, and ecosystem services that enable life on earth. It includes finite (non-renewable) resources such as minerals and fossil fuels, and renewable resources such as food crops and forests.

SOCIAL CAPITAL is the human element, including the knowledge, skills and competencies of individuals that help create personal, social, and economic well-being. It also includes the social systems of governance that assure public welfare, justice and health.

ECONOMIC CAPITAL is the cash and investments that provide a mechanism for production and exchange of quality-of-life-enhancing goods and services. It also includes the stock of material resources such as buildings, infrastructure, and equipment.

## Sustainability Principles

In addition to Sustainability Imperatives, Metro Vancouver uses the following principles to guide its policies and decision-making.

### 1. Protect and Enhance the Natural Environment

- a) Protect, restore, and enhance natural ecosystems; exercise extraordinary care with ecosystems that contain species which are rare or endangered or are critical to living systems.
- b) Allow extraneous material to be introduced to ecosystems only in such forms and quantities as can be absorbed by the receiving systems without material harm.
- c) Use renewable resources at no greater rate than they can be replenished.
- d) Use non-renewable resources only in ways that permit their beneficial re-use or at rates not faster than the rate of creation of renewable substitutes.

### 2. Build Community Capacity and Social Cohesion

- a) Develop and apply decision making processes which are transparent, inclusive, and respectful of the interests of all affected parties.
- b) Identify the determinants of physical and mental health and encourage measures which promote long term health.

c) Foster a culture of learning so that successive generations can absorb and build on the accumulated knowledge and wisdom of prior generations.

d) Foster social cohesion through an appreciation of, and involvement in, the civic and cultural life of the community, emphasizing the involvement of young people and those who, through reasons of culture, or economic or physical circumstance, might not be engaged.

### 3. Provide for Ongoing Prosperity

- a) Develop and efficiently use those activities and physical infrastructure that are critical to the long term economic health and creative strength of the region.
- b) Use pricing mechanisms ('full pricing') which account for economic, environmental and social, short and long term, and local and global costs and benefits.
- c) Ensure decisions and actions are affordable and do not accumulate liabilities for future generations.
- d) Ensure the economic benefits and capacities are adequately distributed so as to avoid the development of concentrations of persistent economic hardship.



# CROSS CUTTING THEMES – WHOLE SYSTEMS THINKING

Metro Vancouver uses “systems thinking” to better understand, and act upon, both challenges and opportunities within a larger context. This is true of the corporation’s role as a convenor and facilitator. This is where the range of players meet to tackle regional challenges, to plan, finance, and evaluate regional projects. This is equally and increasingly true of the corporation’s inner workings. Metro Vancouver staff members have endeavoured to break down silos that might once have separated different departments and now actively monitor how the goals and strategies in each management plan interact and affect the operations and practices elsewhere in the corporation.

In that effort, six cross-cutting themes have emerged – six subject areas that affect or are affected by many or all aspects of Metro Vancouver operations. In the years to come, Metro Vancouver will use these themes to analyse and monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of regional government.

The six themes are as follows:

## 1. Collaboration

Cooperation and teamwork are fundamental to Metro Vancouver’s role as a regional convenor and facilitator. It is therefore worthwhile to ensure that Metro Vancouver’s operations are organized in a way that maximizes collaborative

potential with other regions and jurisdictions, and other levels of government. Similarly, internal systems function best as internal communications and interactions are planned and executive in a highly collaborative spirit.

## 2. Waste Elimination

For an organization legally charged with the safe management of both solid and liquid waste, it is much in regional interest to eliminate that waste to the greatest extent possible. This can also be conceived as “dematerialization” – how can Metro Vancouver best encourage and support people, businesses and organizations in the region in their efforts to reduce the amount of material that they create or import, only to discard shortly thereafter. Equally, Metro Vancouver is committed to eliminating the “waste” of time, energy and resources – to improving the efficiency of every part of its own operations and interactions.

## 3. Energy

Waste is also a consideration in the use of energy. An urban region, poorly planned, will consume much more energy than one that is efficiently organized. And to a great extent, energy equals cost. Effective management of energy usage can pay dividends in time, efficiency and regional financial security. Given the finite supply of fossil fuels – still by far the largest source of

regional and global energy – Metro Vancouver also has an opportunity to develop and/or convert to alternative forms of renewable energy – to enhance the sustainability of our region and to insulate the regional economy against the economic shocks that will come with increasing fossil-fuel energy shortages.

#### 4. Security

While “security” generally summons images of policing – of walls and fences – it can equally be considered as a synonym for “community.” Historically, people have gathered in communities to enhance their personal security, whether it be from external physical threats or from starvation or even loneliness. Metro Vancouver has a role in a wide range of issues from food security to regional economic security and these various roles are inevitably interlinked.

#### 5. Climate Change

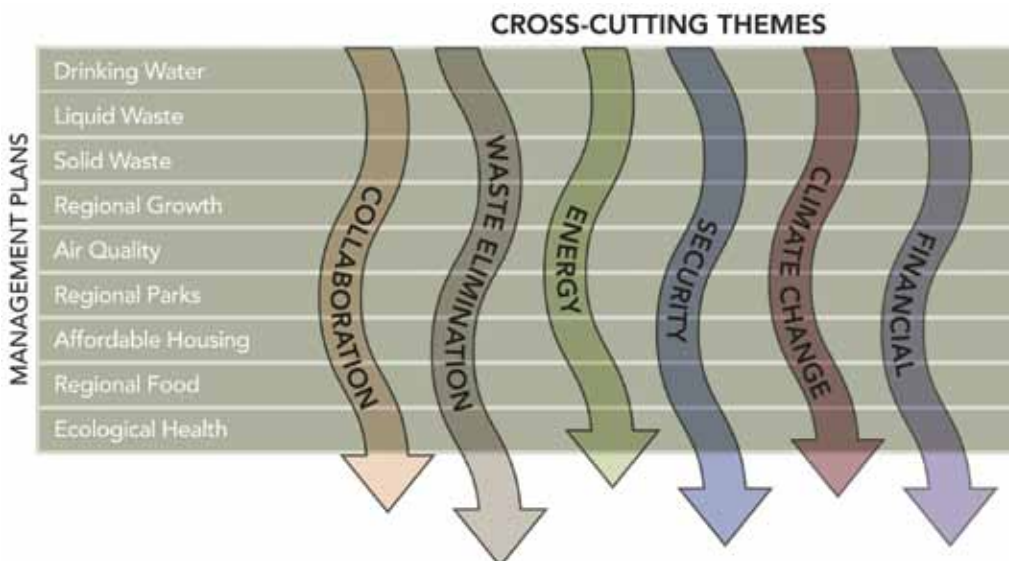
Perhaps the greatest global challenge of the age, Climate Change presents immediate and long-term threats that will force populations around the world to mitigate or adapt. Metro Vancouver has an opportunity to show significant leadership in mitigation – in

reducing its own greenhouse gas emissions and in helping to mould a region that is more energy efficient and less wasteful, one that does much less to contribute to a global problem. At the same time, the region will also have to remain attentive to the challenges of adaptation, whether the threats come from such things as sea level rise or from increased fire and drought risk in the watershed.

#### 6. Financial

Government budgets, like non-renewable resources, are finite. It is incumbent up every level of government to make best use of the resources at hand, to operate efficiently and, especially, to monitor closely the cost that one operation might impose upon another. As local governments receive only a small share of the total taxes collected, Metro Vancouver must be particularly attentive not only to its own cost-effectiveness but also to the impacts on its member municipalities.

These are some of the most obvious themes at this time but should not be seen as a limiting. As such, cross-cutting themes illustrate how Metro Vancouver management plans are related and integrated.

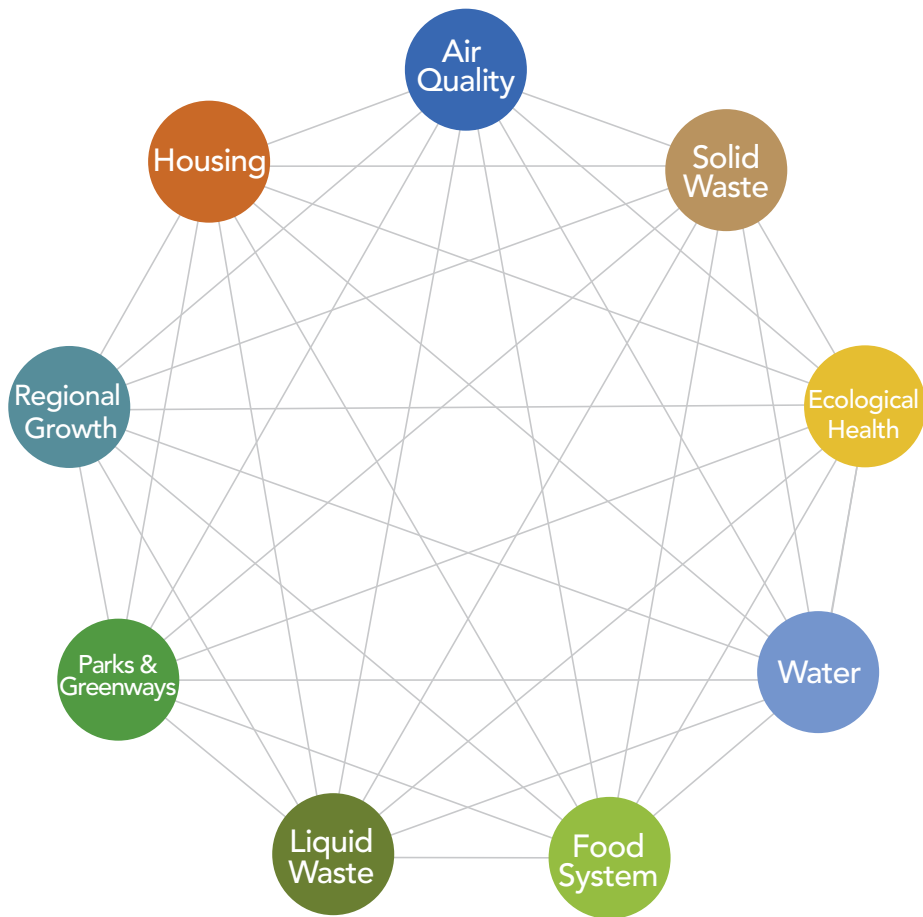




## SUITE OF PLANS: SPECIFIC COMMITMENTS AND ACTIONS

Metro Vancouver's suite of regional plans is based on the vision, mission, values, and sustainability imperatives and principles found in the Sustainability Framework. Each plan provides policy objectives, our action commitments and the performance measures to be used to evaluate progress to becoming a sustainable region.

Each plan can stand alone, but all are most meaningful in the context of the suite of plans (and in the context of all systems at work in the region). So, while each plan is primarily designed to manage a discrete system—drinking water, solid waste, affordable housing, etc. — each is designed to be consistent, and supportive if appropriate, with the objectives of the interdependent regional services and management plans. This integrated approach is critical to delivering efficient and effective services and the specifics of these linkages is described in greater detail in the plans themselves.





Drinking Water Management Plan

Metro Vancouver and member municipalities work together to supply clean, safe drinking water to more than 2.3 million people in the region’s homes and businesses. This plan sets out a strategy to meet those needs affordably and sustainably. Just as critically, the plan sets efficiency and conservation measures to ensure a reliable supply for an expanding future population – while at the same time minimizing any negative impact on the environment.



Integrated Liquid Waste and Resource Management Plan

Liquid waste includes: wastewater, which is collected from homes, businesses, industries and institutions; and stormwater, rainwater runoff and snowmelt that can become contaminated by washing pollutants from streets, lawns and gardens. Metro Vancouver is legally mandated to manage and treat liquid waste to achieve public health and environmental objectives. It also looks beyond the traditional view of waste as an unusable by-product needing collection, treatment and disposal, recognizing a source for renewable energy (heat from sewage and biogas generated during treatment), nutrients and other materials.



Integrated Solid Waste and Resource Management Plan

Metro Vancouver’s guiding principle of this plan is to: avoid the generation of solid waste; to minimize waste generation at source; to maximum reuse, recycling and material recovery; to recover energy from the waste stream through safe waste-to-energy facilities; and to landfill only that which cannot be reused or recycled, or is left as residue after energy recovery. The plan sets out a comprehensive program of political action, public information campaigns, regulations and infrastructure development to implement these principles.



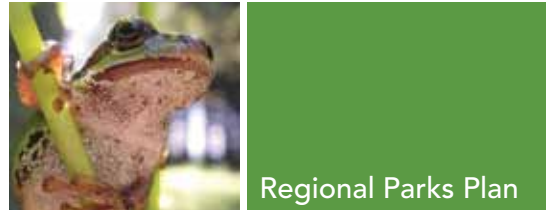
Regional Growth Strategy

The Regional Growth Strategy focuses on land use policies that will guide future development of the region in a way that will support the efficient provision of transportation, regional infrastructure and community services. As more than 35,000 new residents move to the region each year, growth must come either with sprawl or with greater density. Carefully structured, denser development can: reduce congestion; improve the economics of transportation infrastructure and public services; increase the viability of retail and service centres; and foster the creation of vibrant centres of culture and community. The

strategy also addresses: the building of healthy, complete communities; the support of economic prosperity; protection of the natural environment; readiness to respond to climate change and other natural hazard risks; and the protection of agricultural land.



Healthy, clean and clear air is a foundation of Metro Vancouver's high quality of life, robust economy, and spectacular natural environment. Clean air is essential to the health of residents, as well as to local ecosystems that provide food, jobs, and recreational opportunities. Clear air provides us with unobstructed views of the region's natural beauty. The plan sets out Metro Vancouver's strategies and responsibilities to monitor and continuously improve air quality. The Greenhouse Gas Management section – along with the Corporate Climate Action Plan – also set out the commitments to reduce regional greenhouse gas emissions and to make Metro Vancouver's own operations carbon neutral.



Regional Parks Plan protects biodiversity, provide outdoor recreation opportunities, and offer education programs that foster environmental stewardship. Parks also link well to other Metro Vancouver priorities: helping stormwater and floodplain management objectives where greenspace functions as recharge, filtration and natural drainage areas; supporting the regional economy by providing recreation facilities and opportunities that attract visitors; providing educational programs that enhance the understanding of residents and other visitors about nature and the value of more sustainable behaviours; and by reducing health costs through active living and wellness programs. The Regional Parks Plan contributes to the livability of the region by managing and promoting these assets.



### Affordable Housing Strategy

While two-thirds of households across Metro Vancouver have access to reasonable and affordable housing, the remaining third face significant challenges: by prices beyond their income; by a tight rental market; and an attendant increase in the incidence and duration of homelessness. The Housing Strategy recognizes that regional and municipal governments, though limited in the actions that they can take, are nevertheless in a position to partner with provincial and federal governments and to play a role in providing affordable housing through land use regulation as well as through the use of municipal assets. Metro Vancouver can also act through the Greater Vancouver Housing Corporation and through the Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness. The Regional Growth Strategy also promotes and supports policies and actions that advance long-term housing affordability.



### Regional Food System Strategy

Recognizing that a sustainable, resilient and healthy food system meets the needs of the present generation and protects the ability of future residents to meet their needs, Metro Vancouver is committed to working with others to support and enhance the regional food system – to ensure economic prosperity and preserve our ecological legacy. This will require protecting and conserving the region's rich farmland, supporting the local food sector, promoting healthier eating habits, reducing food waste and addressing inequities in food access.



### Ecological Health Action Plan

Recognizing the connections between a healthy functioning ecosystem and the health and well-being of the human population, the Ecological Action Plan summarizes how the protection and enhancement of regional ecological health is integrated with and incorporated into Metro Vancouver's entire suite of plans. It also sets out 12 pragmatic projects – ranging from the construction of a green infrastructure network to the targeting of toxic wastes – that can be implemented in the next two to five years.



## NAVIGATING THE ROAD AHEAD

In a first, bumpy decade, the 21st century has already delivered a series of shocks and warnings, calling global attention to limits of human activity. Economically, environmentally and socially, there have been numerous demonstrations that current practice is not “sustainable.”

Over the past 10 years, the Board of Directors and the professional staff at Metro Vancouver responded to those wake-up calls with a decisive shift in approach. Sustainability was identified as the underlying planning principle and, with that direction, every management plan was reviewed, reconsidered and renewed.

The result – a compendium of plans – is the culmination of that work, a realization of the Board’s early vision. It will now form the sturdy platform from which to work toward a more sustainable future.

