

# ELECTORAL AREA A Director's Update

From Jen McCutcheon, Director, Electoral Area A

Mar  
2022

## Director's Report

Hello UNA/UBC/UEL neighbours,

Another month and another set of challenges facing our world. The news out of Ukraine is so heartbreaking and infuriating – my heart goes out to the people of Ukraine, and to all our neighbours who have connections to this brave country.

In addition to the terrible situation in Ukraine, this past month also brought a new, and even more urgent report on climate change from the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

Even amid the devastating news from Ukraine and the scary climate projections, there are stories of hope, and in particular, of individuals doing what they can to help, whether through heroic acts or small gestures. If you would like to donate to support the people of Ukraine, the Canadian government is matching donations by individuals until March 18. You can find out more here.

Another source of hope are the brighter days, blooming flowers, and the indications that the COVID-19 situation in BC seems to be moving

steadily in the right direction. It is great to hear of people being able

to gather and to travel again. While I don't have any international travel plans yet, I am enjoying diving in into the logistics of a multi-day family kayak trip for this summer. It definitely feels good to have nice things to look forward to!

I hope you enjoy this month's newsletter, and as always, please reach out if you have any questions, suggestions or concerns that I may be able to assist with.

All the best,

*Jen McCutcheon*

Jen McCutcheon, Metro Vancouver Director for Electoral Area A ([www.areaajen.ca](http://www.areaajen.ca) or [areaajen@gmail.com](mailto:areaajen@gmail.com))



Daffodils blooming in the shape of a yellow peace sign in Boston the spring after the Boston marathon bombings. I remember feeling a sense of hope each time I passed this simple act of kindness that a neighbour planted in our (Boston) community. I hope you can find both heroic acts as well as small gestures of kindness as we navigate these challenging times.

*Image source: Jen McCutcheon*



Jen planning for summer family adventures here in beautiful BC.



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### New Minister of Municipal Affairs



As you may have heard, Premier Horgan announced in late February that the previous Minister of Municipal Affairs, Josie Osborne, was moved to Land, Water, and Resource Stewardship and Minister Responsible for Fisheries. Nathan Cullen, MLA for Stikine (in northwestern BC) is our new Minister of Municipal Affairs. I have requested a meeting with him to review concerns and requests from Electoral Area A, and especially from the UEL where he acts as the governing body on matters such as land use, taxes, and rezoning (including the proposed cannabis store rezoning application). You can read more about the ministerial change [here](#), and about the UEL administration [here](#).

### Resources from my Recent Engagement Session on Plastics

The audio recording of the recent engagement session about recycling is [now available](#). Hear about how best to recycle plastics, as well as what happens to our recycling, garbage and compost here in Metro Vancouver, you can listen to the audio recording [here](#). The slides for both Paul Henderson (General Manager for Solid Waste Management at Metro Vancouver) and Julia Gellman (Sustainability Specialist for the University Neighborhoods Association) can be reviewed on the "Resources" page of my website [here](#).



Some specific resources that were referenced during the presentation:

- UNA Green Depot (which offers recycling services in Wesbrook Village): <https://www.myuna.ca/depot/>
- If you are not sure if something is recyclable, you can usually find out here: <https://recycling.metrovanancouver.org> or call 604-RECYCLE
- If you would like to check if the recycling company that your condo/apartment building uses is part of Recycle BC, you can ask them at [info@recyclebc.ca](mailto:info@recyclebc.ca) or 778-588-9504

### Conversation with Antarctica Climate Scientist



Dr. Holland speaking to  
Metro Vancouver Directors

Sea level rise due to climate change is an imminent threat to coastal communities around the world and in Metro Vancouver, warned climate scientist Professor David Holland during an engaging event on February 18.

Holland spoke to Sav Dhaliwal, chair of Metro Vancouver's Board of Directors and Adriane Carr, chair of Metro Vancouver's Climate Action Committee, as well as members of the Metro Vancouver Board of Directors, Climate Action Committee, and the Flood Resiliency





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Task Force about the changing landscape of Antarctica as a result of global warming and the implications for global sea level rise.

You can listen to this fascinating conversation with Antarctica climate scientist, David Holland [here](https://vimeo.com/678930007/a4c25300e6) (<https://vimeo.com/678930007/a4c25300e6>)

### NW Marine Drive Closures for Replacement of a Stormwater Outfall

The UEL is starting construction on a new stormwater outfall on NW Marine Dr to replace an existing wood stave pipe which is past the end of its service life. This replacement will continue to service a significant portion of the UEL's developed area that includes all of Area B and peak flows from Areas A and D. Changes required to the existing system to realize the full catchment area include:

- sewer separation of Area B to meet the goals of the region's Integrated Liquid Waste and Resource Management Plan related to sewer separation (removing rainwater from the sanitary sewer system).
- diversion of peak storm flows from Areas A and D at Acadia Road and Chancellor Boulevard to mitigate erosion in the Salish Creek ravine as recommended in the UEL's 2007 Drainage Master Plan.
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Based on the above noted works, incremental increases in flow are expected over the next 50+ years. The outfall will require an extension of the UEL storm sewer of approximately 325 m on NW Marine Drive with an outfall structure that discharges to a rip rap lined channel to the Burrard Inlet foreshore.

Work is expected to continue until the end of April and includes a full road closure of NW Marine Dr. Access to the Acadia Beach parking lot will be maintained; currently vehicles and pedestrians can access from the west but at some point, access will only be from the east (Jericho). The Pacific Spirit Park trail system will remain open although some points of access to NW Marine Dr will be blocked as construction work proceeds.



NW Marine Drive closures while a new stormwater outfall is constructed



## Community Connections

*This section highlights community initiatives and people that we think would be of interest to neighbours. Please send me your ideas about people who are going out of their way to make our neighbourhoods even better. I know there are lots of examples and I'd love to hear from you about some of them (email me at [areaajen@gmail.com](mailto:areaajen@gmail.com)).*

I thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the subject of this month's Community Connections, Olivia Fermi, and I think you will, too. She comes from a fascinating background (the scientists out there may recognize her last name...) and has an enlightening perspective on life.

**Jen: We first met on the mall here at UBC and then I learned your grandfather was the Nobel-prize winning physicist Enrico Fermi. He made a number of major contributions to twentieth century physics, including building the first self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction (CP-1) and working on the development of the first atomic bombs during WWII. How has being Enrico Fermi's granddaughter changed your life?**

Olivia: My maternal grandfather Enrico died a few years before I was born so I never met him. Yet somehow I felt his energy in the house. There was something thrilling about him, though I barely comprehended what. From childhood, more was expected of me because of my grandfather's genius. Being told I could achieve anything was a gift I'm grateful to my parents for. At the same time, such high expectations from one's family were a burden I've grappled with for most of my life.



*Electoral Area A Resident, Olivia Fermi*

I liked the attention when someone who loves science or history of science learned of my relation to Enrico—that special connection is a delightful conversation starter!

As I grew older and slightly more mature, I realized I was bothered that too many folks are raised to feel that they are not special, they are not smart. Lots of people have these internalized messages from their parents or from school that they're stupid. That's not right. Each of us is unique, each of us, given half a chance, can express our own greatness in whatever form. In graduate school, I was studying for an MA in Applied Behavioral Science with an emphasis in Leadership in Human Systems (1999). I had a requirement to give a presentation to our faculty and my cohort. I chose to talk for the first time in a more public forum about what it might be like to have someone great in your ancestral lineage. I asked everyone to choose a real figure who they

admired and to imagine they were a descendent of that person. What inspiration might that give them? Only after that did I talk about my grandfather and his impact on me. For a couple of days after that, folks came up to thank me for the inspiration I'd offered. When I was in Rome in 2011, I was invited to give a TEDx talk, which I called "[Becoming the Inspiration We Seek](#)".





**Jen: *Speaking of inspiration, from reading your website, I understand your grandmother Laura Fermi was also influential in forming your world view. Please tell us about that and growing up in Chicago.***

Olivia: Yes, my grandmother lived close by and we'd see her a couple of times a week. She was a huge inspiration to me, a major role model. Laura was a pioneer in the environmental movement around the time Rachel Carson published her seminal exposé on the interconnected nature of life: *Silent Spring*. One of my earliest memories—I would have been in kindergarten—is of my grandmother and her friends folding flyers and teaching me how to fold them too. They successfully lobbied to transition from coal to natural gas in some of the buildings in Chicago—which at the time was revolutionary. I got a lot of encouragement to express myself creatively from my parents. My grandmother encouraged me to write from the time I was seven years old. She modelled a very forward way of looking at society to see what she might contribute. When the environmental movement gained traction, Laura and her colleague friends moved on to start the first-hand gun control lobby in the US. I learned about human systems thinking from my grandmother at a very young age and it is part of how I look at the world.

**Jen: *Given the US government's controversial decision to push ahead with developing atomic weapons starting in the 1940s and your grandfather's integral role there, the legacy of his work is complicated. This is something that you have addressed head on. I can see how your grandmother's guidance helped you with this. Can you tell me about your Neutron Trail project and your personal work to come to terms with this legacy?***

Olivia: My Neutron Trail project is actually dedicated to all of us coming to terms with our shared nuclear legacy. I went on a kind of pilgrimage (2009-2014) to visit the people and places most impacted by that legacy of nuclear weapons, nuclear waste, and the question of nuclear energy. Los Alamos, where the first bombs were put together, Richland, WA where plutonium was first refined, and Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, where atomic bombs were dropped on civilians, are some of the main stops on my Neutron Trail pilgrimage over those years.

Neutron Trail popped into my mind one day in early 2009. Later I realized where that name came from. Trails aren't obvious like a highway, yet there is a track to follow. Neutrons are neutrally charged particles, part of the nucleus of atoms. Enrico had the intuition to bombard elements in the periodic table with slow neutrons to learn more about the make-up of the universe. He won his Nobel-prize (1938) in part for pioneering this technique—he was a neutron genius.

I'm not a physicist. I'm a humanist, an activist of the soul. To me, these slow-moving, neutral particles with the power to open up the nuclei of atoms are a metaphor for how to create dialogue on the extremely difficult and complex topic of dealing with our shared nuclear legacy. When I went to these places, I went with an open-mind, open-heart, and sometimes quite naïve so as not to have pre-conceived ideas. All sorts of wonderful coincidences happened and profound dialogues that moved me and changed me. And I gather, from the responses I got, changed and impressed those I had contact with. Often I would give a talk and a workshop, though a lot of the dialogue was informal, like I said there were a lot of synchronicities. I shared many stories on my Neutron Trail blog.

***"Inclusive neutrality rather than either/or logic to penetrate the pressing problems putting humanity's future in peril"***

***- Olivia Fermi***

I feel deeply saddened that First Peoples and marginalized peoples around the world have suffered the greatest proportion of harm from nuclear waste stream products, including losing access to their sacred and traditional



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areas to nuclear facilities, as have the Tewa pueblo people of New Mexico, living in the shadow of these facilities, and being exposed to harmful levels of radiation.

While I was trekking the Neutron Trail, I learned about ancestral healing and family constellations (if you haven't heard of constellations, check out Netflix, *Sex, Love & Goop*, ep 5). These modalities connected me more deeply with my grandfather's spirit and I was fortunate to train and become a constellations facilitator to help others with healing their lineages.

**Jen: *What are some of your current interests (personal and professional)?***

Olivia: I'm a counsellor, coach, and constellations facilitator in private practice. I love my work. I also volunteer in my spiritual community (Diamond Approach), with supporting dialogue and assisting with conflict resolution. I enjoy Pilates, walking, deep and quirky conversations, and all different kinds of creative expression. Here on campus, I enjoy my role as Engagement volunteer for the Old Barn Children's Garden. Since we're in the midst of a climate emergency, I'm very interested in how we UNA residents might envision and incorporate substantive actions at a community-wide level, beyond recycling, like retrofitting our homes, more community gardens, that whole arena.



The Reconciliation Pole located on Main Mall at UBC.  
Image source: [here](#)

**Jen: *On your Neutron Trail website, you describe an approach of using "inclusive neutrality rather than either/or logic to penetrate the pressing problems putting humanity's future in peril." How can we apply this approach to the challenges we are currently facing in our world today?***

Thank you, yes, that's the heart of the project. Here is a short answer. I think we have to chunk it down, "think global, act local." Basically, choose the places where you personally have the resources and passion to make a difference. That could be in your family, your community, at work—there's so many possibilities. The main things are to not give in to doubt, guilt, or shame and to remember you have your unique greatness to offer the world. And to keep doing your inner growth work as you take action.

I often walk by [Reconciliation Pole](#) and reflect on its messages to us. In terms of your question about inclusive neutrality, Reconciliation Pole stands as a profound and literal statement of the Coast Salish ways that were before European contact (bottom third of pole), the Indian Residential School genocide (middle) and the incredibly generous gesture at the top of the pole to the possibilities for navigating together into the future. Near the base, standing on the Salmon House, between the legs of Bear Mother is *sGaaga* who signals when to begin the salmon harvest. He waits until some of the first

and strongest salmon have gone by out of respect and care for all our relations. Reconciliation Pole is inclusive and raw in the truths portrayed.

You can learn more about Olivia [here](#) and about *On the Neutron Trail* [here](#).



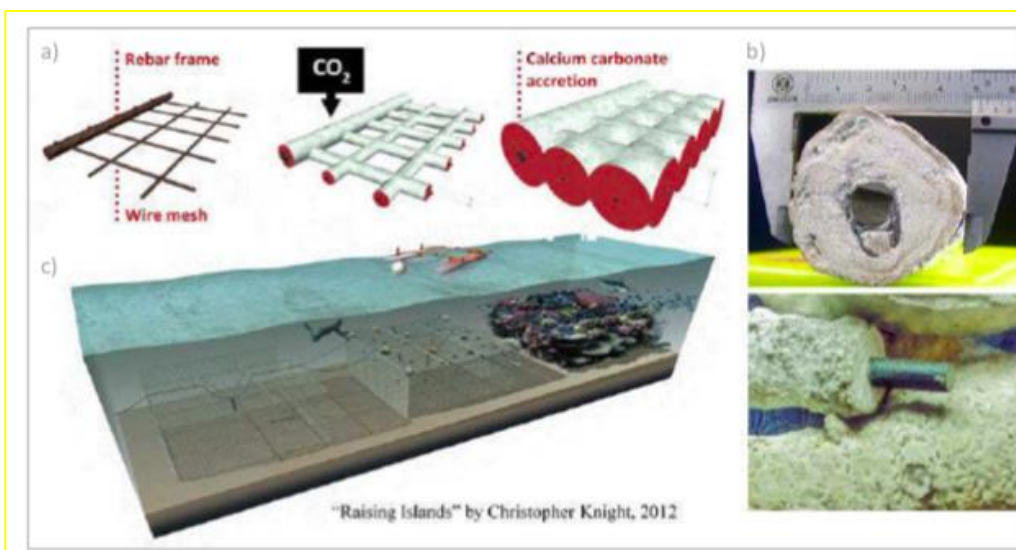
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## Sustainability Innovation Fund Projects Look to Advance Climate Action

As a member of the Metro Vancouver Climate Action Committee, I get the opportunity to learn about (and vote whether to endorse!) a variety of innovation projects for the region. A salmon enhancement action plan and an initiative to use “biorock” to sequester carbon and protect coastal infrastructure are two of the exciting projects included in Metro Vancouver’s 2022 [Sustainability Innovation Program](#).



Biorock formation process – an innovative way to sequester carbon and protect coastal infrastructure

The program consists of projects or initiatives undertaken by Metro Vancouver that contribute to the region's sustainability. After being approved by the Board, projects are financed from the Sustainability Innovation Fund and delivered by Metro Vancouver staff and project partners.

This year’s projects advance big moves in climate action across the region, as set out in the *Climate 2050 Strategy*. A full list of the projects can be found [online](#).

## Food Waste Action Week!

Canadians produce nearly 10 million tonnes of greenhouse gases each year, simply by wasting perfectly edible food at home — however, there are plenty of simple actions everyone can take to help prevent unnecessary food waste.

This year, from March 7 to 13, Canada will join with environmental charity WRAP for the first global Food Waste Action Week, with the goal of driving home the message, “*Wasting Food Feeds Climate Change*.” The international week of action will be delivered through the National Zero Waste Council, an initiative of Metro Vancouver, and its well-known Love Food Hate Waste Canada campaign.

Sixty-three per cent of the food Canadian households throw away is considered avoidable, meaning it could have been eaten. Nationwide, that amounts to almost 2.2 million tonnes of edible food wasted each year, at a cost of more than \$17 billion. The environmental impact of this waste is equivalent to 9.8 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, or 2.1 million cars on the road.



Globally, around one-third of all food produced is lost or wasted, which accounts for between eight and 10 per cent of total greenhouse gas emissions. Fighting food waste at home has a direct impact on these emissions: every tonne of household food waste that is avoided is the equivalent of taking one car off the road each year.

To participate in Food Waste Action Week, Canadians are encouraged to use the food-saving tips shared on the Love Food Hate Waste Canada social channels ([Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [Twitter](#)) and through the #foodwasteactionweek hashtag. From storing food correctly, to using up leftovers and making sure none of the food we love goes to waste, every small change can make a big difference.



## TransLink Updates

Please note that in my February 2022 update, I mistakenly stated that TransLink was committed to achieving net zero emissions by **2022**. This should have read 2050, not 2022. My apologies for the error. This has been corrected in the online version, located [here](#).

### Free WiFi on TransLink Vehicles

Earlier this month, TransLink and Shaw Communications launched free WiFi for customers on six Rapidbuses, on three SkyTrains, at Edmonds Station in Burnaby, and at Carvolth Exchange in Langley. This is the beginning of a system-wide rollout that will provide free WiFi for customers on all buses, SeaBuses, SkyTrains, transit station, and major transit hubs. TransLink expects the rollout of WiFi to be complete in 2026. [Visit TransLink's WiFi webpage](#)







### HandyDART Discounts

As of October 1, HandyDART customers can now benefit from age-based discounts and contactless payment through Compass Cards and Tap to Pay. These improvements are a result of the HandyDART Modernization Program, and will make HandyDART more equitable with the conventional transit system while simplifying use and payment through Compass. These improvements will reduce costs for HandyDART customers aged 65+, and for customers between the ages of 13 and 18.

[Register at TransLink's HandyDART webpage](#)

### Tap In To win.

As of November 1, TransLink customers can be eligible to win a series of amazing prizes with the tap of their compass card! TransLink launched its first ever sweepstakes to thank customers, help boost economic recovery, and rebuild ridership. Upon registration, customers are eligible for monthly prize draws which run for the next five months. Prizes include 2 e-bikes, 5 one-year Compass Cards, 15 stay-and-play packages including hotels, restaurants, and attractions, and more!



[Register and find out more on the Tap In To Win page](#)

## Impacts of COVID-19 on Mental Health – Round 4 Survey Results

Some of you may remember that around this time last year, I hosted an engagement session on coping and connecting during the pandemic. One of the guest speakers for that event was UBC researcher and UNA resident, Dr. Emily Jenkins, a lead investigator in a national longitudinal study on the impact of COVID-19 on mental health, conducted in partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA). Earlier this month, results of the fourth round of their national monitoring survey *Assessing the Impacts of COVID-19 on Mental Health*

Far from feeling the pandemic is over, most people in Canada are stressed about what's next, with 64% worried about new variants and 57% worried about COVID-19 circulating in the population for years to come. Two years of pandemic-related stressors, including grief and trauma, are likely to lead to significant long-term mental health effects on both our population and the frontline mental health providers caring for them.



You can read a summary of the survey findings [here](#).

While deteriorating mental health was seen in 37% of the general population, the following population subgroups were disproportionately impacted:

- 57% of those who are unemployed due to COVID-19
- 56% of those with a pre-existing mental health condition
- 47% of students
- 44% of those with a disability
- 49% of LGBTQ2+ people

Researchers also asked survey respondents about coping mechanisms that they are using to help their mental health. The following were the most common responses by respondents in British Columbia

- Going for a walk or exercise outside (57%)
- Maintaining a healthy lifestyle (e.g. balanced diet, enough sleep, exercise, etc.) (46%)
- Connecting in- person with friends or family (37%)
- Doing a hobby (38%)
- Enjoying outdoor activities with friends or family (34%)



This is the fourth round of a cross-sectional monitoring survey on the impacts of COVID-19 on mental health in Canada led by academic researchers from the UBC in partnership with CMHA and Maru/Matchbox. Early iterations of the survey questions were informed by a UK longitudinal survey commissioned by the Mental Health Foundation in March 2020 and guided by research evidence on mental health impacts of past pandemics as well as input from people with lived experience of mental health conditions. Questions were refined for the Canadian context and to respond to emerging issues of priority. Round 1 data were collected May 2020, Round 2 data were collected September 2020, Round 3 data were collected January 2021, and Round 4 was collected November/December 2021. Round 4 included a total of 3,030 respondents, representative of the adult Canadian population by age, gender, province/territory, and household income. The maximum margin of error for proportions derived from this sample is +/- 1.79% at a 95% level of confidence (overall sample).







## What to Do with Old Clothes? Think Thrice!

During my recent engagement session on plastics recycling, a question came up about what consumers can (and should) do with their old clothing and other textiles. I hope that this segment provides further insight on this topic.

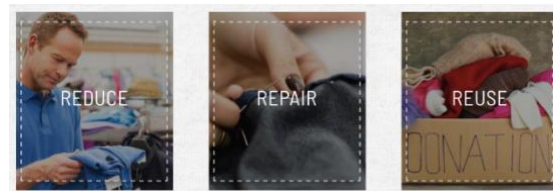
When clothing is at end of life, putting those items in the donation and recycle stream benefits the community and the environment. There are plenty of local opportunities to swap, sell or donate unwanted clothing, and even frayed, stretched, lightly stained, or otherwise worn-out clothes can be donated, as long as they're clean.

Textile waste is one of the fastest growing categories of waste globally, and makes up about five per cent of garbage produced each year in Metro Vancouver. The region's residents dispose of an average of 20,000 tonnes of textiles each year, which works out to eight kilograms of clothing per person, or the weight of about 44 t-shirts.

Starting March 10, learn about tailoring and repair service providers, donation services, brands tackling clothing waste, and more with an interactive [Facebook Live](#) series, hosted by Metro Vancouver solid waste experts. Follow Metro Vancouver's Facebook page ([facebook.com/metrovancouver](https://facebook.com/metrovancouver)) for updates and notifications.

Before your clothes even get to the end of their life, think thrice about your clothes:

- Reduce: Develop an eagle-eye for finding quality items
- Repair: Make the most out of your existing wardrobe
- Reuse: Find great second-hand gems and donate what you're done with



Find tips and information about reducing clothing waste at [think-thrice.ca](https://think-thrice.ca), and visit [mvrecycles.org](https://mvrecycles.org) to find locations to donate or recycle unwanted clothing items.

## Jen's Board and Committee Appointments for 2022

Below are the boards and committees that I serve on. Feel free to reach out to me if you would like to learn more.

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|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Metro Vancouver Regional District (MVRD) Board of Directors</li> <li>• TransLink Mayors' Council for Regional Transportation</li> <li>• Climate Action Committee, MVRD</li> <li>• Finance Committee, MVRD</li> <li>• Chair of the Electoral Area Committee, MVRD</li> <li>• Mayors' Committee, MVRD</li> <li>• MVRD Flood Resiliency Task Force</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E-Comm Board of Directors</li> <li>• Human Resources Committee, E-Comm</li> <li>• Fraser Valley Regional Library Board of Directors</li> <li>• Joint Regional Planning Committee for TransLink</li> <li>• Inaugural Board Member for Metro Vancouver Zero Emission Innovation Centre (ZEIC)</li> <li>• Ocean Watch Action Committee</li> <li>• Lower Mainland Local Government Association Board Director</li> </ul> |
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## Links & Connections

[Jen McCutcheon's Website](#)  
[www.areaajen.ca](https://www.areaajen.ca)



# ELECTORAL AREA **A** Director's Update

From **Maria Harris**, Electoral Area A Director

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2016

[Jen McCutcheon's Facebook](#)  
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