

# ELECTORAL AREA A Director's Update

From Jen McCutcheon, Director, Electoral Area A

Apr  
2022

## Director's Report

Hello UNA/UBC/UEL neighbours,

Happy Spring! As I write this, I feel like we are getting all four seasons in one day! Today, Tuesday, April 12 I've seen sun, rain, wind, hail, and something that looks a heck of a lot like snow. I guess that is fitting for what feels like a bit of an up and down month.

The news out of Ukraine becomes more and more painful each day, leaving me wondering how humans can possibly treat each other so badly. I am simultaneously devastated for, and incredibly inspired by the people of Ukraine and their diaspora around the world.

Closer to home, my camera is once again filled with far too many pictures of stunning spring blossoms, and spring break gave our family a chance to recharge together out in nature. On the local political scene, a number of big decisions are being discussed and decided as we all near the end of our local government term and approach (local elections will be on October 15, 2022). It is good to be part of the decision-making process, though sometimes the politics (which I vowed to avoid while working in government!) can be a little draining.



*Jen and her family recharging on a spring break hike.*

*Photo credit: Murray McCutcheon*

On the pandemic front, it is wonderful to be able to gather with friends again, but of course, the news from other parts of the country and the world reminds us that COVID-19 continues to threaten healthcare systems and vulnerable individuals. As we transition to an endemic response to the virus, I encourage all of you to continue to use the public health measures that we have learned over the past few years, not only to protect ourselves, but also those around us who may be more susceptible to serious illness.

Next week, I look forward to meeting with Minister Cullen to discuss governance and other issues related to the UEL. I'll let you know if there are any updates that arise from that meeting.

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))



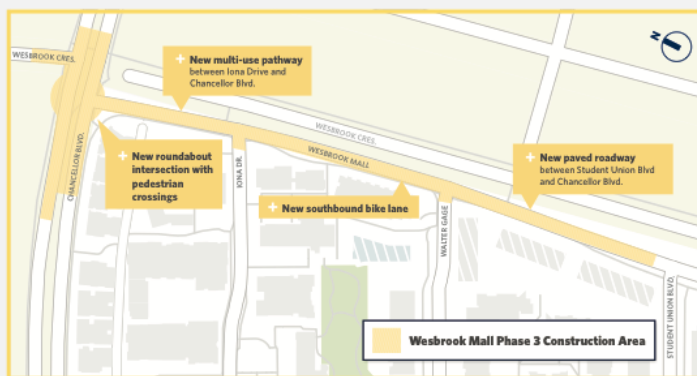
## Wesbrook and Chancellor Upgrades (and construction delays)

### Construction Notice



**Construction along Wesbrook Mall will begin in April 2022 between Student Union Boulevard and Chancellor Boulevard.**

The Wesbrook Mall corridor is being upgraded to repair the condition of the roadway and enhance safety and user experience for all modes of transportation. Nearby streets and sidewalks will also be affected during this time.



For more information and road closure details please visit [planning.ubc.ca/wesbrook-mall-upgrades](https://planning.ubc.ca/wesbrook-mall-upgrades)



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The Wesbrook Mall corridor between Student Union Boulevard and Chancellor Boulevard is being upgraded to repair the roadway, enhance safety, and improve user experience for all modes of transportation. Construction begins this month, and is estimated to continue until September 30, 2022. Road and sidewalk closures will be required to accommodate the construction activity safely.

The upgrades should provide improved walking and cycling options. However, during the construction phase, significant changes to bus routes (especially the 84 and 44 on Chancellor), driving and walking/cycling options will be necessary. Please take a minute to review what to expect during construction please visit: <https://planning.ubc.ca/wesbrook-mall-upgrades>

You can also read more about the short term (i.e., during the construction) changes to Transit in the TransLink section below.

## Metro Vancouver's Zero Emission Innovation Centre (ZEIC)

I've been remiss by not writing about the Metro Vancouver Zero Emission Innovation Centre (ZEIC) to date. This newly established centre aims to accelerate zero emissions innovation in collaboration in local government. I was both very excited and honoured to have been appointed to the inaugural ZEIC Board of Directors in 2021 and again in 2022. I believe that ZEIC has the potential to meaningfully advance the necessary but challenging goal of becoming a carbon-neutral region by 2050.

The centre is an independent non-profit and pending charity that is part of the Low Carbon Cities Canada (LC3) network established by the Government of Canada and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). ZEIC's mandate is to catalyze, accelerate and scale climate action innovation across Metro Vancouver related to green





buildings, renewable energy and transportation through a combination of investment, grants, partnerships, research and capacity building.

The establishment of ZEIC has been made possible through a \$21.7M endowment by the Government of Canada and the efforts of regional champions including the Renewable Cities at the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue at Simon Fraser University (SFU), City of Vancouver, Metro Vancouver and the Province of British Columbia.

ZEIC is expected to match the \$21.7M endowment over ten years. With the climate action acumen, financial innovators and change-makers in public, private and non-profit sectors across the region and province, the Board is confident the matching requirement can be exceeded and that, together with our partners and industry, the centre can progress climate actions benefiting and transforming construction sites, homes, businesses and transportation corridors across Metro Vancouver and beyond within the province.



You can read more about ZEIC [here](#). If you would like to discuss anything related to the work that ZEIC is doing, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at [areaajen@gmail.com](mailto:areaajen@gmail.com)

## 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)).*

This month, I had the opportunity to interview long-time Electoral Area A resident Alex Volkoff, who has deep familial roots in the area, and a fascinating life story.

*Jen: You have a long history with UBC and the UBC Peninsula. Can you tell me about how you ended up here at UBC?*

**Alex:** Our family's history with UBC goes back to the late 1920s (almost 100 years!) when my uncles and parents were students at UBC. Later, one uncle – Vladimir Okulitch – and my father – George Volkoff – became faculty members and were the first and second Deans of Science when the Faculty of Arts and Science was split into two in 1963. I lived in the University Endowment Lands as a "faculty brat" from the 1950s and got my first degree here. When I retired, I moved back to Vancouver and was happy to find a place to live on campus, less than two kilometres from where I grew up.



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*Jen: I have walked and biked past Volkoff Lane on campus many times. Does this lane have anything to do with you or your parents?*

**Alex:** Indeed, that lane was named after my father. It runs between the Henning and Hebb buildings, and while he was Head of the Physics Department, he would often walk from one building to the other. Maybe his ghost still walks there!

*Jen: Most of us do not have nearly as long or deep a relationship with the UBC Peninsula. Can you share with us some of your favourite things about living out here, and do you have any advice about how to make the most of living out here?*

**Alex:** As a child, the campus was my playground; I enjoyed visiting the farm (much larger back then) and the new calves in the Old Barn, a pleasure that no longer exists. When I was looking for a place to live post-retirement, I considered condos closer to downtown and to public transit, but I'll never forget the feeling when I drove past "The Gates" on University Boulevard towards the campus, and the sense of peace and tranquility descended on me. I knew I had to live out here. I love walking on campus now, and I particularly love walking through the Pacific Spirit Park. What I say to new neighbours is to make the most of the nature around us here – whether it is in the park or down by the beach. I just hope that we never become so urbanized out here that there is no space to breathe.



*Electoral Area A resident  
Alex Volkoff standing on  
Volkoff Lane on UBC  
campus*

*Jen: After growing up here on the peninsula, you've had quite the adventures both here in Canada and around? Can you tell me a little more about your professional career and some of the places it took you?*

**Alex:** Working for The Ubyyssey while I was doing my undergraduate studies led me first to a career as a journalist, and that took me to both Ottawa (where I worked for the CBC) and, in the early 1970s to Iran (where I worked for three years as a freelancer). Subsequent studies in both China and England later led me back to Ottawa to a career as a federal public servant, where I worked mainly for CIDA and Foreign Affairs. That career gave me the opportunity to live in, or travel to, a variety of countries, including China, India, Indonesia, Central Europe (from Estonia down to Romania); I ended my career as Canada's Ambassador to Sweden. But my favourite posting was in Vienna where I worked for the International Atomic Energy Agency – the perfect place for someone like me who loves opera!

*Jen: Can you describe a really formative experience you've had, and how it has shaped what is important to you today?*

**Alex:** Learning Farsi in Iran and Chinese in China truly helped me become part of the communities in which I lived. I no longer speak those languages as I once did, but the experience helped me learn how to look back at Canada and the West with different eyes. Merely visiting a place doesn't give you that level of understanding. Living in a





different country and learning to speak the language makes one appreciate that there are different but equally legitimate approaches and perspectives. At the same time, we all have the same hopes and dreams for ourselves and our children, and fundamentally there is no “us” and “them”.

*Jen: I know that you are highly engaged in the community out here. What drives you to be so engaged, and what do you most want to see as UBC continues to grow and develop?*

**Alex:** I have a firm belief that as a member of a group or a community, one has the responsibility to contribute to its well-being. Whether that means serving on a Strata Council, helping out with childcare or – as I am now doing – working to ensure that UBC and the communities around it continue to be wonderful places to live and work, we ALL have to do our part. I remember way back in the 1950s and 1960s that sense of a “university community” where people lived, studied and worked together. I hope that in the future, this tip of the peninsula can continue to realize that sense of community that supports the excellent research, teaching and learning that goes on here. I hope it never becomes a soulless urbanized cluster of buildings, but retains its natural aspect and its sense of peace. As long as UBC puts PEOPLE at the heart of its planning, and not the almighty dollar, it will succeed.

## TransLink Updates

### Service changes

TransLink’s Spring Service Changes come in effect on Monday, April 18, 2022. The following is a summary of the service changes that impact Electoral Area A:

- Starting on April 18, the 84 and 44 buses will be detoured off Chancellor Blvd as a result of the Wesbrook Construction (see information on page 2 above). Until fall 2022, these buses will be detour from UBC Exchange to University Blvd (instead of Chancellor Blvd) and then along Blanca to 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. As a result, access to UEL and University Hill elementary school will be suspended.
- Reintroduction of the 42 bus for seasonal service in May
- As with every spring service change, Route 9 along Broadway in Vancouver will terminate at Alma Street beginning April 18 to coincide with the end of the post-secondary semester. Customers travelling to UBC can use the 99 B-Line as an alternative.
- Decreased service on the 84 bus to match lower demand as the UBC term ends.

Details of all the Spring Service Changes, as well as the most up to date information about service changes [here](#).





### TransLink Releases New Plan to Enhance Customer Experience

TransLink recently released its new Customer Experience Action Plan to better serve the changing needs of customers over the next five years. The plan outlines five key priority areas to provide customers with a more exceptional experience on transit. These priority areas include making transit more personalized, easier to use, more reliable, safer, and more climate friendly. The plan was developed through extensive research including more than 1,200 ideas from customers, input from front-line transit workers, and a review of the best customer practices of other sectors. [Read the full Customer Experience Action Plan here](#)



### Mask Mandate Lifted for Metro Vancouver Transit



In alignment with provincial health orders, masks are no longer mandatory on most TransLink services. This change is consistent with the Provincial Health Officer's decision earlier in March to repeal the public health order requiring masks in public spaces. TransLink customers and employees are welcome to continue wearing masks on-board transit vehicles and at transit stations, depending on their own level of comfort. TransLink is ready to welcome customers back to its world-class transit system as the economy reopens. TransLink will continue increased cleaning and improved sanitization on vehicles with thorough ventilation.

I still feel that it is important to wear a mask in public indoor spaces like buses and SkyTrain. This is not only to protect my family and me from the current Omicron variant, but also as an extra layer of protection for my fellow transit users who may be vulnerable to more severe impacts of the virus.

### Metro Vancouver Regional Growth Strategy Ready for Public Consultation (April 20)

At the March Metro Vancouver Board Meeting, we advanced the new Regional Growth Strategy to public consultation.

Metro Vancouver is updating Metro Vancouver 2040: Shaping our Future (Metro 2040), the regional growth strategy. The update is called Metro 2050. Since its adoption in 2011, Metro 2040 has been a strong and effective tool representing the regional federation's collective vision for livability and managing growth anticipated to come to our region over the long term.

A regional growth strategy is a long-range, strategic land use plan aimed at advancing the region's livability and sustainability by managing anticipated growth. Regional growth strategies align projected long-term growth with





transportation and infrastructure planning while protecting agricultural, green spaces, and industrial lands. These strategies are authorized under the BC Local Government Act.

Metro 2050 has five key goals to help define where and how our region develops over the next 30 years.

**Goal 1: Create a Compact Urban Area:**

Metro 2050 reinforces the established framework of concentrating growth into compact, walkable, complete communities, where development is transit-oriented, and people can access a range of housing choices that are close to jobs, amenities, and services.

**Goal 2: Support a Sustainable Economy:** Metro 2050 protects important job lands and supports the land base, location choices, and transportation integration required to nurture a healthy business climate for both the traditional and emerging economies. Agricultural lands are protected to support local food security.

**Goal 3: Protect the Environment and Respond to Climate Change and Natural Hazards:** Metro 2050 protects the unique and vital natural environment, and takes action to respond to climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving regional resilience to climate change and natural hazards.

**Goal 4: Provide Diverse and Affordable Housing Choices:** Metro 2050 draws greater attention to the importance of housing as a key component of growth management, and establishes region-wide objectives for increasing housing supply, diversity, and affordability, particularly in transit-oriented locations.



### SCOPE OF THE UPDATE

- Build on strengths of *Metro 2040*
- Extend timeline to 2050 (required)
- Align with update to the Regional Transportation Strategy
- Advance policy to address critical issues in the region
  - Climate Change / Resiliency
  - Affordable Housing near Transit
  - Social Equity Outcomes
  - Build Capacity along Corridors

*Discussing the new Regional Growth Strategy (Metro 2050) at a recent Metro Vancouver Board Meeting*

**Goal 5: Support Sustainable Transportation Choices:** Metro 2050 supports transit-oriented urban forms with a range of sustainable transportation choices including expanding opportunities for transit, walking, and cycling. It supports efficient goods movement and job growth in the region's employment areas and urban centres, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

You can read more about the plan [here](#), or you can download the executive summary [here](#). In addition, if you are interested in attending (in person or virtually), the Metro 2050 public hearing, it will be held on April 20 at 6pm. Learn more on the [Metro 2050 Engagement Page](#).

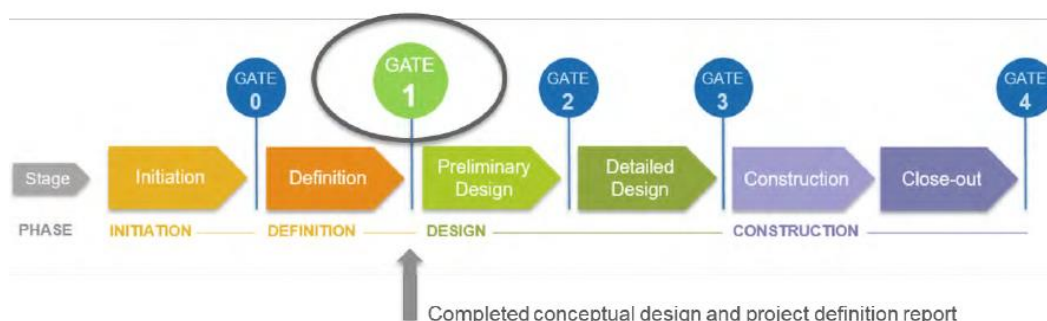


## Iona Wastewater Treatment Plant Project Definition and Conceptual Design Approval

Work towards the new Iona Wastewater treatment plant continues to move forward (slowly!). At our most recent meeting, the Metro Vancouver Board voted to approve the project definition, which will allow staff to focus on the next phases of the projects related to advancing the design and undertaking early and enabling works to prepare the site for future construction of the WWTP upgrades, so that the proposed schedule can be maintained. This will mitigate further delays in meeting the regulatory requirements and avoid the potential for increasing costs through escalation. You can read more about the project [here](#).

Completing the project definition, and confirming the project scope and budget, will also allow for clearer more focused efforts in pursuing and securing sources of funding for this major capital project and for collaborating with member jurisdictions on finalizing cost apportionment and household impacts. Current cost estimates for this project are at approximately 10 **billion** dollars.

With approval of the project definition and conceptual design, staff will continue with subsequent phase of works including the wastewater treatment plant design, as well as the early and enabling site works.



*The long process of constructing the new Iona WWTP. Secondary treatment is anticipated to be operational by mid-2035, with construction completion forecasted for 2038.*

## Stricter Lawn Watering Regulations begin May 1

Starting May 1, lawn watering will be allowed [once a week](#). Metro Vancouver is introducing enhanced [seasonal lawn watering regulations](#) for homes and businesses in order to better conserve the region's drinking water during the hot, dry summer months.

"Last summer, our region experienced a record-breaking heatwave that resulted in unprecedented and sustained high water use. This challenging event, during which we were confronted with the urgency of the climate emergency, highlighted the need to further reduce consumption of water for cosmetic outdoor uses through the whole summer, so we can get through the dry spells without requiring a switch mid-season to Stage 2 restrictions," said Sav Dhaliwal, chair of Metro Vancouver's Board of Directors.





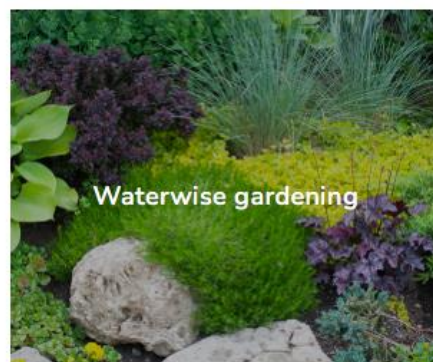
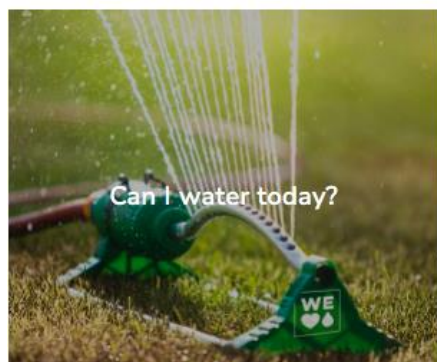
New this year, residents and businesses will be permitted to water lawns one morning per week during Stage 1 of the [Drinking Water Conservation Plan](#), with designated days determined by property address and type. Trees, shrubs, and flowers may be watered in the morning when using a sprinkler, or any time when hand watered or using drip irrigation. Edible plants are exempt from the regulations. Lawn watering regulations will be in place May 1 until October 15. Anyone with automatic watering systems is encouraged to adjust them by May 1.

If there is a need to move to Stage 2 during the summer, lawn watering will not be permitted at all for residential and non-residential properties.

**STAGE 1 RESIDENTIAL LAWN WATERING ALLOWED:**

- Even-numbered addresses: Saturdays — automatic watering between 5:00 am and 7:00 am, and manual watering between 6:00 am and 9:00 am
- Odd-numbered addresses: Sundays — automatic watering between 5:00 am and 7:00 am, and manual watering between 6:00 am and 9:00 am
- Trees, shrubs, and flowers can be watered with a sprinkler any day between 5:00 am and 9:00 am, or any time by hand or using drip irrigation.

Find tips and tricks for indoor and outdoor water conservation at [welovewater.ca](http://welovewater.ca).



**Apply for a Regional Cultural Grant Now!**

Local arts and culture organizations can now apply for Metro Vancouver's 2022 regional cultural grants. A total of \$150,000 in funding is available to help organizations deliver arts and culture projects that benefit the region. A maximum of \$10,000 will be awarded per project.

These annual grants support region-serving arts and culture projects, providing funding for expenses related to project creation, production, dissemination, audience development, research, project staff, and administrative capacity building.

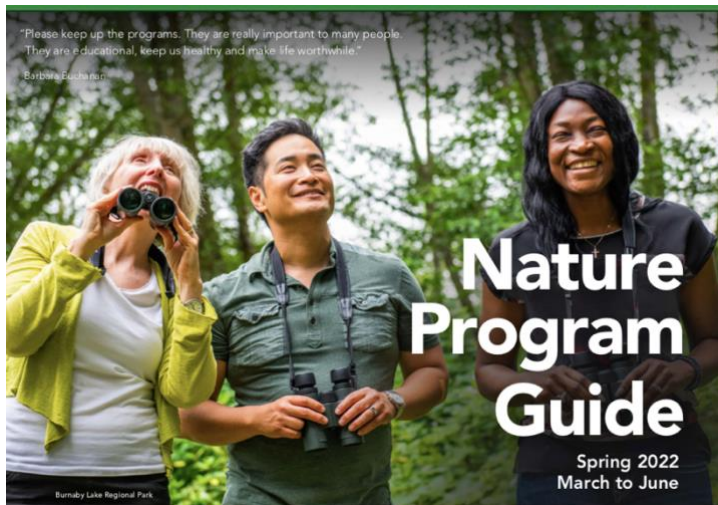
Completed applications must be submitted by 4:00 pm on **Wednesday, May 4, 2022**.



The 2022 application, along with information about project eligibility and selection criteria, is available at [metrovanancouver.org/cultural-grants](https://metrovanancouver.org/cultural-grants).

Regional Culture Grants now open: [http://www.metrovanancouver.org/media-room/media-releases/board-information/719/submissions-now-being-accepted-for-\\$150k-in-regional-culture-grants](http://www.metrovanancouver.org/media-room/media-releases/board-information/719/submissions-now-being-accepted-for-$150k-in-regional-culture-grants)

## Find Out What is Happening in our Regional Parks this Spring



While I was disappointed to see that “Night Quest” had to be cancelled this past March in Pacific Spirit Regional Park, there are a number of interesting programs being offered in parks across the region. These events can be a great opportunity to explore some of the many treasures our parks offer. Metro Vancouver Regional Parks offers programs year-round to connect you with nature. Nature activities, guided walks and events reveal the natural world through exploration and discovery. There's a lot going on in our regional parks. Download the Nature Program Guide [here](#).

Also if you are interested in Regional Parks, take a minute to give your input on updates to the Regional Parks Plan [here](http://www.metrovanancouver.org/services/parks/learn/projects-and-initiatives/regional-parks-plan-update/). <http://www.metrovanancouver.org/services/parks/learn/projects-and-initiatives/regional-parks-plan-update/>

## Grow Green Livestream with UBC Botanical Gardens' Allison Luke - April 21<sup>st</sup> at 12:15pm

On April 21, the next free livestream event by Grow Green will feature Allison Luke from UBC Botanical Garden. Details on the [MV Events Calendar](#).

Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Planner, Karin England, will be joined by Allison Luke, Principal Instructor of the UBC Botanical Garden Horticulture Training Program, for a discussion on soils and compost in our gardens.

To access the live stream, go to [Metro Vancouver's page on Facebook](#) at 12:15pm, or follow them on Facebook to receive notifications for this and future live events. Free for anyone to attend.







## Research Opportunity

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted many aspects of daily life in and around the Metro Vancouver area, including resident's ability to participate in environmentally responsible behaviours.

Raymond Belmonte, a master's student at Royal Roads University, is studying this relationship and invites residents of the Metro Vancouver area to participate in his study. Residents are encouraged to participate by completing a survey at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZFWZRSV>

Please share with your networks where appropriate. Questions can be directed to the researcher at:

- **Email** | [raymond1.belmonte@royalroads.ca](mailto:raymond1.belmonte@royalroads.ca)
- **LinkedIn** | [Raymond Belmonte](#)

## Jen's Board and Committee Appointments for 2021

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

- Metro Vancouver Regional District (MVRD) Board of Directors
- TransLink Mayors' Council for Regional Transportation
- Climate Action Committee, MVRD
- Finance Committee, MVRD
- Chair of the Electoral Area Committee, MVRD
- Mayors' Committee, MVRD
- E-Comm Board of Directors
- Human Resources Committee, E-Comm
- Fraser Valley Regional Library Board of Directors
- Joint Regional Planning Committee for TransLink
- Inaugural Board Member for Metro Vancouver Zero Emission Innovation Centre (ZEIC)
- Ocean Watch Action Committee

## Links & Connections

[Jen McCutcheon's Website](#)

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

[Jen McCutcheon's Facebook](#)

[www.facebook.com/AreaAJen](https://www.facebook.com/AreaAJen)

[Metro Vancouver](#)

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

[Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation](#)

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