

# ELECTORAL AREA A Director's Update

From Jen McCutcheon, Director, Electoral Area A

Oct  
2023

## Director's Report

Hello UNA/UBC/UEL neighbours,

I hope that the new academic year is off to a good start, and that you are settling into new routines. This has been a particularly busy September for me both personally and professionally. Many of the Boards I serve on are in the midst of strategic planning work, which has added to the already busy meeting schedule at both Metro Vancouver Regional District and TransLink's Mayors' Council. This uptick in meetings and planning sessions follows the traditionally August lull for local government work, and I did not prepare a September newsletter as there was not much news from August to report on. As a result, some of the articles in this newsletter date back to the summer, but I thought that they were still worth sharing with you.

Another reason why September was so busy was the annual Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) convention. This week-long event allows local government elected officials to connect, discuss and vote on resolutions to send to the provincial government, and to meet with provincial ministers and their senior staff. During the week, I had the opportunity to speak with provincial ministers about a variety of issues, from follow up actions stemming from the UEL Governance Study, to advocating for increased incentives and support for multifamily residential heat pump retrofits.

As we move into October, my Metro Vancouver meetings will be focused on budgeting for 2024, which will have an impact on the infrastructure and services provided to our region, as well as the tax revenue. The budget will be finalized at the end of October and I should be able to report back to you next month on the budget decisions made. Within this newsletter, I have included information on the taxes Electoral Area residents paid to Metro Vancouver in 2023, and what services those funds are used for.

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))



– it is a great time of the year to enjoy  
the trails of Pacific Spirit Regional Park  
and beyond



## Emergency Planning in the UBC/UEL areas



*Residents in person and online learning from experts at my July Emergency Management Engagement session. If you missed it, you can find the recording and resources on my website.*

On July 26<sup>th</sup>, I hosted an Emergency Management session for residents of the UEL, UNA and UBC. If you missed the session, you can review the recording of the session, as well as the resources provided [here](#).

The meeting focused on how emergency management works in these Electoral Area A communities and how each resident can be better prepared in the event of an emergency. Representatives from Metro Vancouver, UBC, UNA and UEL explained the different roles each agency plays in emergency management and planning in these communities. These agencies work in close collaboration to plan for and respond to emergencies. Residents were also provided information on how to be prepared, including signing up for emergency notifications, making household emergency plans and kits, and actions to take when an emergency strikes.

In addition, I hope that each of you will consider signing up for Alertable, Metro Vancouver's new emergency notification system. You can learn more about the system on my [website](#), or you can click [here](#) to sign up directly. I recommend that all residents of UBC, UNA and UEL sign up for both this new Alertable system, as well as [UBC Alert](#).

Please pass this information on to neighbours within the UNA, UBC and UEL neighborhoods to help ensure that everyone is signed up to receive timely information if a large emergency event occurs on or near our neighbourhoods.

## Walking Tour of UEL for Premier Eby and Minister Kang

In late July of this year, Claire Huxtable, my alternate Director and I hosted a walking tour of the UEL with Honourable Anne Kang, Minister of Municipal Affairs, and our Minister of the Legislative Assembly, Premier David Eby. The purpose of the tour was to provide Minister Kang with a better "on the ground" understanding of this area that she is responsible for, and to discuss some key issues facing the UEL. Some of the issues discussed are summarized below.

**Housing needs and quality** – The 2022 UEL Housing Needs Study highlights there is an existing deficit of 350 rental units. Updating housing policy before any new zoning changes are approved in Area A will help ensure that all





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projects meet the housing needs of the community. Housing policy could include maximizing purpose-build rentals and eliminating the loss of housing units to investors or speculators, and improved energy efficiency requirements such as the Net Zero Ready standard under the BC Net Zero Step Code. The cost of better quality/low carbon buildings is significantly less than the cost of retrofits.

**Community Amenity Charge (CAC)** – A CAC would enable residents to share in the uplift in value that comes with rezoning, as is common in municipalities across the Metro Vancouver region. This benefit could be used to help fund residential retrofits or capital for public realm improvements, or to improve housing quality.

**Bylaw enforcement provisions** – Adding bylaw enforcement though ticketing and bylaw enforcement officers would give community members a tool to address concerns such as smoking in public places, excessive noise, short-term rentals, as well as unkempt properties that attract squatters and crime.

**Developing an energy/decarbonization plan** – The UEL does not yet have a plan for how to meet federal and provincial Net Zero commitments . Energy-efficient and low-carbon construction in new buildings is only part of the equation, with actions needed on retrofits of existing buildings as well as addressing emissions from transportation.

**Tree protection bylaw** - Unlike other jurisdictions in the region, there is no Tree Protection bylaw in the UEL. Homeowners can remove beautiful mature trees as they choose. A Tree Protection Bylaw with enforcement provisions would help preserve the green environment that residents in both the single-family and multifamily areas value.

**Iceberg homes** – Excessive sub-grade construction has a significant impact on subsurface drainage and could impact slope stability.

**TransLink rectifier** – We shared community feedback that the proposed location of the rectifier did not work for residents. TransLink has since agreed to find an alternate location. You can read more about this decision on page 5 below.



*Conducting a walking tour of the UEL for Minister Kang (Minister of Municipal Affairs) and with my alternate director, Claire Huxtable.*

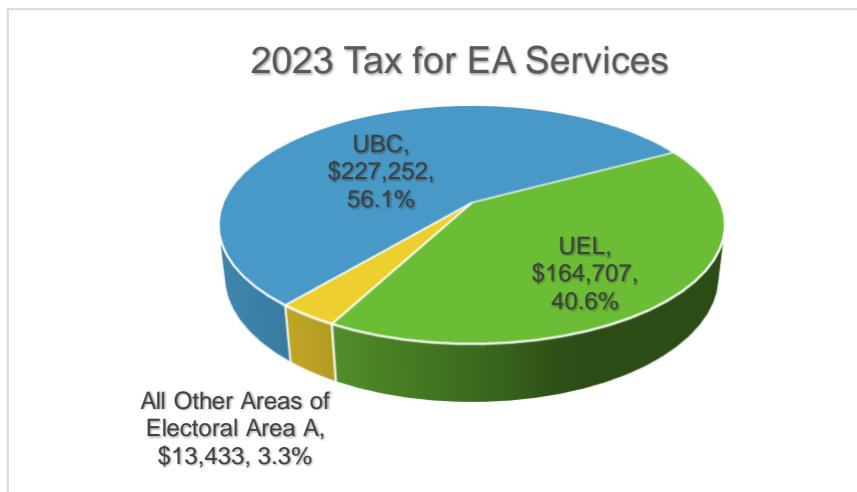
## Understanding Metro Vancouver Services Funded by Your Taxes

As Metro Vancouver considers its annual budget and 5-year financial plan, it is a good time to refresh our understanding of the services that Metro Vancouver provides to Electoral Area A and how our taxes pay for those services.

For property owners in the UEL or UBC, the line item “A METRO VANCOUVER” on your tax bill shows the property tax levied for Electoral Area A and regional services. For 2023, the total amount payable by Electoral Area A property



owners for both Electoral Area A and regional services is \$998,979. Of this amount, 40.6% (\$405,391) is for Electoral Area A services and 59.4% (\$593,588) is for regional services.



As shown in the adjacent chart, properties located on UBC lands contribute 56.1% (\$227,252) of the total collected, and properties within the UEL contribute a further 40.6% (\$164,707). The other areas of Electoral Area A include Barnston Island, Passage and Bowyer Islands, water access homes up Indian Arm and on the west side of Pitt Lake, as well as three mainland communities located between West Vancouver and Lions Bay.

The table below presents the estimated amounts of residential property owners paid in 2023 for Electoral Area A and regional services.

Assessed Value	Electoral Area A \$ Portion	MVRD (Regional) \$ Portion	"A METRO VANCOUVER" Total \$ Amount
\$100,000	\$3.56	\$5.22	\$8.78
\$500,000	\$18	\$26	\$44
\$1,000,000	\$36	\$52	\$88
\$2,000,000	\$71	\$104	\$175
\$5,000,000	\$178	\$261	\$439

Some of the Electoral Area A services provided to UEL and UBC residents and funded by the Metro Vancouver property tax include:

- Local emergency planning and response, which includes ongoing emergency coordination between Metro Vancouver, UEL, UBC, RCMP, and others, as well as support for community preparedness activities and emergency notification
- Conducting an election every four years for the Electoral Area A Director
- Administering the Community Works Fund, which helps to pay for local projects that benefit UEL and UBC/UNA communities
- Local government services for liquor and retail cannabis licence applications to the Province, which includes ensuring local community concerns are addressed
- Communicating local and regional matters through the regular Director's Update





Some of the regional services funded by the Metro Vancouver property tax include:

- **Regional Parks:** Metro Vancouver's regional parks system includes 22 regional parks, three park reserves, two ecological conservancy areas and five greenways. These protect important natural areas and ecosystems in the region and help residents connect with nature. <https://metrovanancouver.org/services/regional-parks>
- **Air Quality & Climate Action:** Metro Vancouver develops and implements plans, policies, regulations to project and improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. These plans and policies are supported by air quality monitoring and tracking of emissions in the Lower Fraser Valley airshed. <https://metrovanancouver.org/services/air-quality-climate-action>
- **Regional Planning:** Metro Vancouver's regional growth strategy *Metro 2050* strives to contain and structure the growth coming to our region, protect important lands, and ensure the efficient provision of infrastructure like utilities, transit and community amenities. <https://metrovanancouver.org/services/regional-planning>
- **Other regional services** include regional emergency management, 9-1-1 emergency telephone service, a global navigation satellite system service, as well as affordable housing

Metro Vancouver provides drinking water, liquid waste treatment and solid waste management services to most municipalities and to the UBC/Uel portion of the Electoral Area. These services are not funded by the Metro Vancouver property tax but instead have different cost recovery mechanisms.

For additional information on Metro Vancouver's budget and five-year financial plan:

<https://metrovanancouver.org/about-us/budgets-and-financial-plans>

## TransLink Updates

### TransLink Trolley Bus Rectifier Project Update

As you may remember from my June [newsletter](#), TransLink was considering placing a new rectifier on the northwest corner of University Boulevard and Western Parkway. Following consultation with the community, TransLink will not be proceeding with the location. TransLink would like to thank UEL community members, the UEL Community Advisory Council, and other stakeholders who provided feedback on the proposed site to relocate the Parkway rectifier.

TransLink is now working with the Ministry of Transportation to identify, and submit an application for, a new location for the rectifier, which is necessary to provide power to the electric trolleys on the UBC peninsula. They will be engaging with community stakeholders and will share more information once the project timing, site location, and next steps in the application process are confirmed.

Please contact TransLink Public Engagement if you have any questions or concerns about the project: [publicengagement@translink.ca](mailto:publicengagement@translink.ca)





### Fall Transit Service Changes

TransLink has released its upcoming [Fall Service Changes](#), which will increase service on 22 bus routes and introduce the route 44 UBC/Dundarave extension with express trips on weekdays between West Vancouver and UBC. As students return to schools across the region, service is also being increased on four routes serving UBC, SFU, and Capilano University. The changes took effect on September 4, 2023. Go to [translink.ca/servicechanges](https://translink.ca/servicechanges) for more information on specific route changes.

Service adjustments are being made on 54 bus routes in total, in order to best allocate bus service to meet customer demand. Some routes will have service increases at busier times of the day, offset by reductions during periods of lower demand. Transit service changes occur every January, April, June, and September, based on seasonal patterns and recent trends in customer demand. TransLink continues to monitor ridership to ensure service is provided where it's needed most.

### TransLink launches Trip Diary survey to help guide future transportation decisions

TransLink's Trip Diary survey is now open for submissions from the public. Conducted twice every decade, the Trip Diary is crucial in helping determine how people travel throughout Metro Vancouver and the Fraser Valley. Approximately one third of households in those regions will soon receive letters asking them to participate.

#### 2023 Trip Diary Survey



Each household that participates will be given a \$20 gift card, and an additional \$10 gift card for every household member who participates through the smartphone app, which can be downloaded for free. Participating households will also be automatically entered into a draw to win cash prizes up to \$2,000.

Those who receive invitation letters and would like to participate should enter their invitation PIN into the [Trip Diary survey webpage](#) or use the QR code found on the letter. Participants will be asked to fill in a travel survey and some socio-demographic information. To ensure survey participation is random, only those who receive letters can participate. Travel patterns have changed significantly over the past few years, and this data will help TransLink, political leaders, and stakeholders better understand those new patterns when making transportation plans for the region. Learn more about the Trip Diary by visiting the [Trip Diary survey webpage](#).

### Metro Vancouver's Climate 2050 Annual Report is now available

Metro Vancouver's *Climate 2050* Annual Report 2022/2023 provides an update on the development and implementation of each of the [Climate 2050](#) roadmaps, and highlights progress on key climate action projects that are working towards a carbon-neutral, climate-resilient region. You can read the Annual Report here: [here](#)





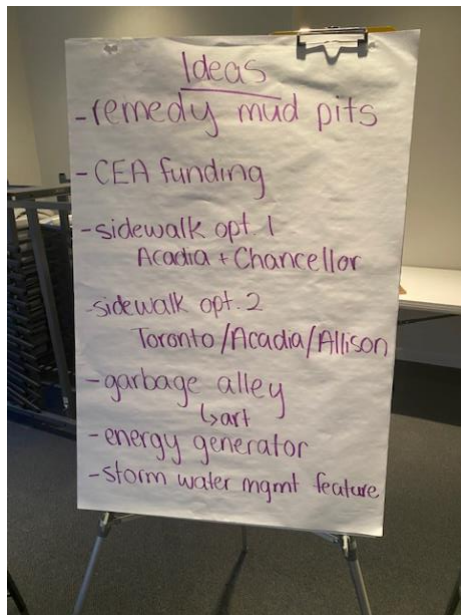


## UNA's Campus Resident Newspaper is Back!

I am excited that the UNA's Campus Resident is now back! You can find the September paper issue in the Wesbrook or Old Barn Community Centres, and online versions can be found [here](#).



## UEL CAC Brainstorms Ideas for Community Works Fund Projects



On September 18, Metro Vancouver staff attended the UEL Community Advisory Council (CAC) meeting and presented background information on the Community Works Fund to CAC members, UEL staff, and other residents in attendance. The background information helped meeting attendees come up with a list of initial project ideas that would benefit the community. Some of the project ideas discussed included improving drainage for the trees along Dalhousie Road, community energy plans and resilience, sidewalk improvements, sprucing up the alley behind the McDonald's, a playground, and several other ideas.

The list of project ideas will be used to gather additional information (high-level costs, complexity, etc.) and will be circulated back to the UEL CAC to prioritize.

The Community Works Fund comes from the federal gas tax and is delivered through UBCM to all BC local governments through a direct annual allocation to support local priorities. Eligible project categories are wide-ranging, from transit and road improvements, to infrastructure, to community plans. The amounts available are based on population, with the UEL currently having approximately \$150,000 to spend on projects in their community.

Metro Vancouver considers and approves funding for Community Works Fund projects in Electoral Area A, which includes the UEL, UBC and UNA. Last year, Metro Vancouver approved the recommendations from the UNA and UBC on how to use their funding, and those projects are currently being implemented.

## UBC Practices for Emergency Response through their Mass Care Event

During my July Emergency Management Engagement session, reference was made to the UBC Mass Care Program, which is accessible to all UBC and UNA constituents in the aftermath of an emergency and will support our community through the provision of potable water, food and shelter.

UBC's Safety & Risk Services' Emergency Management team organized a [Mass Care Open House](#) on June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023 to educate the community on what UBC does to prepare for major regional emergencies. After several years of planning, the Emergency Management Team was able to see the plan come to life in a full set up. The team of



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UBC staff and volunteers set up registration, group lodging, and feeding services, including the set up of 260 emergency cots, and invited the community to experience what support evacuees could expect during a disaster.

Simultaneously, community members received emergency preparedness information at the Preparedness Fair. Numerous on and off-campus partners, such as Campus Security, Shake Out BC, Disaster Psychosocial Services, Total Prepare and others provided resources and expertise to interested visitors.

The online resource, <https://ready.ubc.ca>, has extensive information to help residents *Get Informed* about the hazards, *Make a Plan* for emergencies and *Build a Kit* with the things you need to look after yourself and your loved ones.



You can find out more A short 2-minute video from the event can be found

here: [https://learning.media.ubc.ca/media/UBC+Mass+Care+Exercise+--+June+2023/0\\_s914p2ek](https://learning.media.ubc.ca/media/UBC+Mass+Care+Exercise+--+June+2023/0_s914p2ek)

### Jen's Board and Committee Appointments for 2023

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
- Chair of the Electoral Area Committee, MVRD
- Climate Action Committee, MVRD
- Mayors' Committee, MVRD
- Flood Resiliency Taskforce, MVRD
- Caucus of Committee Chairs, MVRD
- TransLink Planning & Priorities Committee
- Co-chair of TransLink's Indigenous Relations Working Group
- TransLink Small Communities Committee
- Board Member for Metro Vancouver Zero Emission Innovation Centre (ZEIC)
- ZEIC Governance Committee
- ZEIC Human Resources Committee Co-chair
- Fraser Valley Regional Library Board of Directors
- Lower Mainland Local Government Association (LMLGA) Third-Vice President
- Municipal Finance Authority of BC Alternate Director

### Links & Connections

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

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

[Jen McCutcheon's Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AreaAJen)

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

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

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

[Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation](http://www.translink.ca)

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