



Director's Report

Hello UNA/UBC/UEL neighbours,

In the following pages, I hope you will find some interesting updates about the work being done in regional and local government. I offer a particular focus on decisions made at the Metro Vancouver Regional District Board and TransLink's Mayors' Council for Regional Transportation, where I serve as your elected representative.

As always, please reach out if you have any questions, suggestions or concerns that I may be able to assist with. If you see me biking, walking or running around the UEL, UNA or UBC, please stop me and say hello!

All the best,

Jen McCutcheon

Jen McCutcheon, Metro Vancouver Director for Electoral Area A
(www.areaajen.ca or areaajen@gmail.com)



Cost Allocation for the North Shore Wastewater Treatment Plant

At the May 31, 2024 meeting, the Metro Vancouver Board approved a cost allocation and phasing framework for the recent \$2.8 billion increase to the North Shore Wastewater Treatment Plant (NSWWTP) program budget.

The approved plan will result in household impacts of an average of \$590 per year for the North Shore Sewerage Area, \$150 per year for the Vancouver Sewerage Area (our sewerage area), \$90 per year for the Fraser Sewerage Area, and \$80 per year for the Lulu Island Sewerage Area. These regional contributions mean that households in the North Shore Sewerage area will pay \$590 per year, instead of \$725 per year (a reduction of \$135 per household per year, on average). The approved cost allocation means households in the Vancouver, Fraser, and Lulu Island Sewerage Areas will pay about \$10 more than what they would have paid under the standard cost apportionment model. To reduce impacts in the short term, costs for the North Shore Sewerage Area will be phased in over five years. Costs for the Vancouver, Fraser, and Lulu Island Sewerage Areas will be phased in over one year.

The Board previously approved the revised budget of \$3.86 billion to complete the NSWWTP Program in March 2024 – \$2.8 billion higher than the previous budget of \$1.058 billion.

The May 31 Board decision regarding cost allocation and phasing will be used to incorporate the \$2.8 billion budget increase required to complete the NSWWTP program into the 2025 budget and 2025-2029 Financial Plan, to be considered in October 2024 as part of annual budget process.



The new plant will provide secondary treatment and tertiary filtration, and serve the growing population on the North Shore. It will replace the Lion's Gate Wastewater Treatment Plant, which has provided primary level treatment for the past 60 years. Tertiary filtration will ensure the plant meets and exceeds regulatory requirements while reducing the release of potentially harmful contaminants and helping protect keystone species such as orca and salmon.

This program is not optional: Metro Vancouver is working to deliver this critical infrastructure program as quickly as possible to meet regulatory requirements and protect the health of residents and the environment for decades to come.



Regional Parks Annual Report and Off-leash Dogs in Pacific Spirit Regional Park

Metro Vancouver recently released its 2023 Annual Report on Parks. You can read the report [here](#) (see page 29).

In 2023, Regional Parks continued to protect natural areas and connect people to nature, and made progress towards the vision of a resilient network of regional parks and greenways that provides important climate, health, and other benefits to park visitors and the region.






The “2023 in Review” graphic on the next page summarizes key highlights from the year.



2023 in Review

In 2023, we continued to protect natural areas and connect people to nature, progressing towards the vision of a resilient network of regional parks and greenways that continues to provide important climate, health, and other benefits to park visitors and the wider region.

The *Regional Parks Plan* drives our work. Key accomplishments in 2023 helped support the identified priority areas of work within five goals:

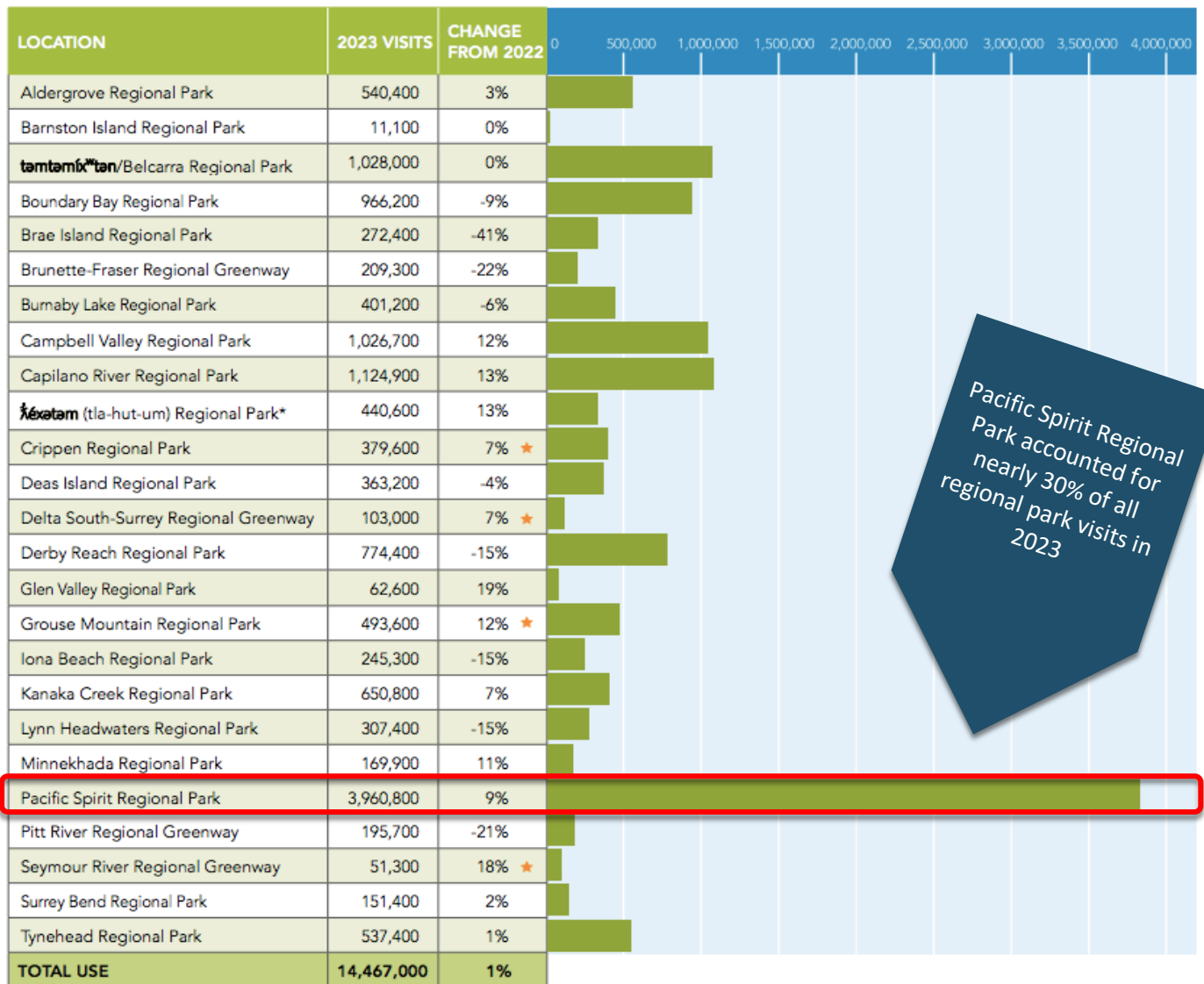
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1. The region's important natural areas are protected in perpetuity
 - Acquired 99 hectares of land
 - Restored areas impacted by the 2022 wildfire in Minnekhada Regional Park
- 
2. Everyone has the opportunity to benefit from exceptional experiences in nature
 - Planning and design of major projects moved forward across the regional parks system including at the proposed park at Cape Roger Curtis on Bowen Island, Iona Beach Regional Park, Campbell Valley Regional Park, and at Crippen Regional Park
 - Delivered 455 field trips and workshops and 123 public programs
- 
3. Regional parks are sustainably managed and well-maintained for the safety of visitors and integrity of ecosystems
 - Maintained, inspected, repaired, and replaced park assets across the system, keeping parks safe and accessible
 - Transformed a mowed lawn to a pollinator meadow in Pacific Spirit Regional Park
- 
4. First Nations have an active role in the planning and stewardship of regional parks
 - Colony Farm Regional Park renamed to ~~Łéxatəm~~ Regional Park. ~~k'wík'wəłəm~~ (Kwikwetlem First Nation) and their members selected the name ~~Łéxatəm~~ (pronounced tla-hut-um) which means "to be invited" in ~~hən̓q̓əmi̓n̓əŋ~~
- 
5. Regional parks adapt to change and contribute to regional resilience
 - Began restoration of an area in Lynn Headwaters Regional Park that was damaged by western hemlock looper moth
 - Created and maintained 37.8 hectares of ecological restoration areas

2023 saw 14.5 million visits to regional parks and greenways, and records were set at four locations. In 2023, 49,828 people took part in 578 programs, events, and outreach activities, while 4,747 volunteers and park partners contributed 18,022 hours to stewardship, education, and interpretive programs and events. Ninety-nine hectares were added to the regional parks system and staff advanced numerous planning, design, and asset management initiatives. Visits to Pacific Spirit Regional Park totaled close to four million in 2023 (3,960,000) which makes up close to 30% of all visits to regional parks.

ELECTORAL AREA A Director's Update

From Jen McCutcheon, Director, Electoral Area A

May/June
2024



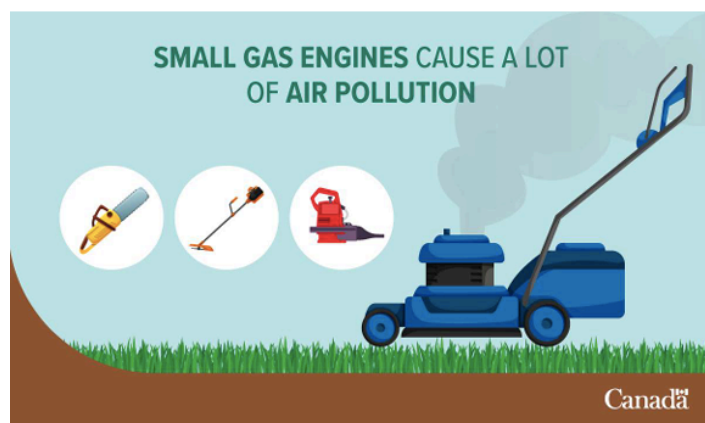


May/June
2024

One of the unintended consequences of such large and growing number visits to Pacific Spirit is an increase in incidents with off-leash dogs. Over the past few years, I've heard more and more complaints from pedestrians, runners, bikers, and on-leash dog walkers about negative interactions with off-leash dogs. As the park becomes more and more popular, we may need clearer and stricter rules for pets and owners. I brought up this issue at the at the May Metro Vancouver Board meeting, and follow up directly with the Parks Committee and staff, requesting further analysis and engagement around options to make our beloved park safer and more pleasant for all visitors. I welcome your feedback on this.



Engagement on Emissions from Small Engines



Operating a gas-powered leaf blower for one hour = driving > 1,700 kilometres in a 2017 Toyota Camry.

Image from delegation presentation by Dr Blair at the May 2024 Metro Vancouver Regional District Board Meeting

At its May meeting, the Metro Vancouver Board meeting directed staff to engage with interested audiences on options for developing a supportive framework and potential requirements to reduce health-harming air contaminant emissions from small non-road equipment, like leaf blowers and lawn mowers.

I'm a strong supporter of a move to electric landscaping equipment because of the significant health and nuisance implications of gas and deasil equipment. I know that the UEL office has moved to primarily using electric equipment, and I hope that UBC and the UNA can do the same as well.

Conventional leaf blowers, lawn mowers, and other equipment used in landscaping and light industrial applications emit about half as much air contamination as do the 1.5 million light-duty vehicles in the region. They also cause considerable noise and nuisance in the community. At the same time, the popularity,

availability and performance of electric equipment, which cuts down on emissions and noise, is growing.

Metro Vancouver's member jurisdictions have expressed interest in a regional approach to addressing these machines. Staff have had initial conversations with industry associations, equipment manufacturers, member municipalities, and the provincial government, and by July 2023, over 1200 residents and professionals responded to a questionnaire. Engagement with interested audiences will inform the development of a supportive framework,



and will include a dialogue on a potential regulatory approach. After engagement, staff will present a summary of feedback and recommendations for the Board's consideration and further direction.

You can view Dr. Blair, MD's presentation to our board about the health impacts of gas-powered landscaping equipment [here](https://metrovancover.org/boards/GVRD/RD-2024-05-31-PPT.pdf). I found it very informative. (<https://metrovancover.org/boards/GVRD/RD-2024-05-31-PPT.pdf>)

I followed up with the UNA and the UEL to find out more about how the electrification process is going in Electoral Area A. UEL Manager, Will Emo, provided the following summary for the UEL:

On the vehicle side we have 9 of 22 pieces of equipment that are electric, including a garbage truck, pickup, 1-ton truck and ride-on mower as well as smaller utility vehicles and cars. On the small equipment side we have a variety of electric landscape equipment including a pole saw, weed wackers, hedge trimmers, leaf blowers and chainsaws.

In general we look for an electric replacement first before considering anything gas powered and have a good amount of success with electric vehicles, including the electric landscape truck purchased last year (pic included). The landscape truck is a VMC 1200 dump truck that is built by a local company in Aldergrove and has filled an important part of the market with 1-ton trucks suitable for vocational work. The electric mower is a Greenworks 24kWh ride-on unit suitable for the large grass boulevards that we manage, and replaces a diesel version.

The small electric equipment is suitable for smaller jobs in the UEL and would be best suited for home maintenance – we find that the power needed or the battery life isn't quite enough for this commercial setting. I encourage the use of electric equipment first but there are times where only gas powered will get the work done in a reasonable time frame. This is often seen with backpack leaf blowers as the electric option does not have the capacity of a gas-powered unit.

With the two-stroke gas powered leaf blowers especially, we try to find other methods to get the work done and this includes sweeper attachments for our loader or a commercial leaf blower for our John Deere equipment.

Like any kind of electric equipment, there is a learning curve for adoption. It has taken some time for staff to incorporate electric equipment into their daily tasks but the more they use them the more familiar they become with the benefits and limitations of electric.

The UEL has also built a solar carport to help offset the increased electrical demands from charging, particularly with the electric refuse truck. Currently we have 27kW of solar panels and during a sunny day the works yard is generating more electricity than it uses, offsetting total demand.



TransLink Updates

At its April meetings, the TransLink Mayors' Council and Board approved the *2024-2033 Investment Plan*. This plan was developed over the course of 2023-2024, in collaboration with the Mayors' Council, the TransLink Board of Directors, the Province of British Columbia and TransLink staff. It addresses urgent near-term transit service and

The 2024 Investment Plan will:



Address urgent transit service needs



Fund an additional year of local government cost-share programs



Purchase buses to prepare for expansion

This plan is a **short-term measure** that will bridge the gap until the next Investment Plan, anticipated for 2025, which will offer longer-term solutions to the region's growth.



transportation needs, including addressing overcrowding, increasing access to underserved neighbourhoods, and ensuring that bus priority, road, and active transportation programs are funded in 2025. These investments are proposed to be funded by a one-time increase in property tax in 2024, and annual fare increases. This investment plan is a near-term bridging plan, with another investment plan required in 2025 to address TransLink's structural deficit and funding the first phase of the *Access for Everyone Plan*.

The *2024 Investment Plan* is focused on meeting the region's urgent transportation needs, including:

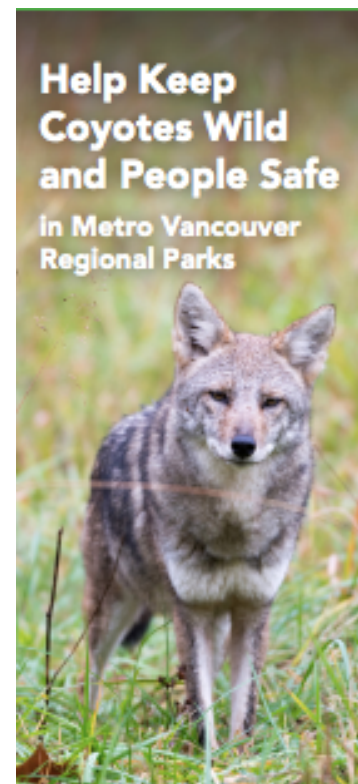
- Delivering previously funded services, programs and projects for expansion and state of good repair.
- Increasing bus service hours to address existing and emerging overcrowding at off-peak times on over a quarter of all bus routes. In addition, extending the hours of operation on 11 bus routes in the late evening, and implement previously committed bus route in East Fraser Heights in Surrey. These improvements are to be phased in starting in September 2024.
- Increasing peak frequencies on the Canada Line, starting in 2025, and continuing to implement previously approved service increases on the Expo/Millennium Lines, and on the West Coast Express.
- Delivering earlier SeaBus service on weekday mornings.
- Improving late evening service on HandyDART.
- Making investments in fleet and facilities to support early implementation of the *Access for Everyone Plan*, including new buses and supporting infrastructure.
- Extending the *Bus Speed and Reliability Program*, as well as TransLink's walking, cycling, and road safety programs with local governments, through 2025.



TRANSIT INVESTMENTS		STREETS PROGRAMS
More bus service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase service on 60 routes to address overcrowding. Extend late evening hours on 11 routes. Increase off-peak and weekend frequencies on 14 routes. Implement previously committed route in East Fraser Heights. 	Preparing to implement Access for Everyone <p>Fleet and facilities infrastructure to prepare for expansion, including Bus Rapid Transit.</p>	Funds for walking, cycling, safety <p>Extend local government streets funding programs through 2025.</p>
More rail service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Canada Line: increased frequencies starting in 2025. Expo/Millennium Line: increasing to prepare for BSP and SLS (previously committed). West Coast Express: more capacity as needed on existing trips. 	Earlier SeaBus service <p>Begin the first trip of the day 15-minutes earlier in both directions.</p>	Bus speed and reliability <p>Fund bus speed and reliability program with local governments through 2025.</p> <p>TRANS LINK</p>
	HandyDART service <p>Improved late evening service.</p>	

Co-Existing with Coyotes

Every spring, I receive an increase in feedback on interactions with coyotes. This time of year, the many coyotes that share our community are having and raising their pups. Like human parents, they are very protective of their babies, and this can result in more aggressive behaviour towards humans and dogs. Metro Vancouver has recently produced a brochure on keeping coyotes wild in our parks. I found the information in the brochure relevant not just for interactions in our parks, but also in our communities as well. You can read the brochure [here](https://metrovanancouver.org/services/regional-parks/Documents/regional-parks-coyote-brochure.pdf)



Protective parents <p>Coyotes become more active, vocal, and territorial during mating and pupping season in spring.</p> <p>During this time, coyote parents are more protective of denning areas and more active in hunting food.</p> <p>In summer, when pups begin to venture out, parents become even more protective. A coyote that might usually leave when encountering a person or dog will now stand its ground.</p>	
Keep coyotes wild and people safe <p>Here are some simple things you can do to help:</p> <p>When on the trail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep dogs leashed (especially during denning season) Pick up small dogs if a coyote is near <p>When picnicking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Never feed or leave food for coyotes Never leave food unattended Put all trash in wildlife-proof garbage bins 	
<p>Bad habits are hard to change</p> <p>Coyotes are usually wary of people and will avoid us whenever possible.</p> <p>However, coyotes that learn to associate food with people lose their natural avoidance of humans.</p> <p>They become bolder and more aggressive in seeking food, putting themselves and people at risk.</p> <p>Help keep coyotes wild and people safe by making sure that you don't leave any food or garbage that might tempt a hungry coyote.</p>	
<p>Report coyote encounters to Metro Vancouver Regional Parks at 604-430-6200 or regionalparks.info@metrovanancouver</p>	

<https://metrovanancouver.org/services/regional-parks/Documents/regional-parks-coyote-brochure.pdf>



UNA Board Elections Happening this Fall

A heads up to residents of the UNA: the next UNA Board elections will be happening this fall. If you are considering putting your name forward to serve your community on this Board, you can find out more about the UNA on their [website](https://www.myuna.ca/), or reach out to existing Board members. <https://www.myuna.ca/>.

I am happy to speak with anyone interested in this role, and can help out you in touch with staff and board members from the UNA.



Jen's Board and Committee Appointments for 2024

Here is a list of the boards and committees that I serve on in my role as Electoral Area A Director. Feel free to reach out to me if you would like to learn more. I was excited to be elected by my peers as the second vice president of the Lower Mainland Local Government Association in May. The LMLGA is our regional branch under the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM).

- 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
- 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) Second-Vice President
- Municipal Finance Authority of BC Alternate Director

Links & Connections

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

www.areaajen.ca

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

www.facebook.com/AreaAJen

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

www.metrovancouver.org

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

www.translink.ca