



RETHINKING THE REGION

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The Organic City-Region

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What is the real city?

Take a look at the Vancouver region from space, on the title page.

There's clearly something going on here in terms of human settlement. There are developed areas, open areas, edges and signs of important throughput functions such as ports and airports. What city is this?

Is it this?



Credit: Metro Vancouver

At this workshop, we are asking you to think about the Vancouver area as an organic entity rather than a set of political jurisdictions.

What do we mean by “organic entity?”

We mean an entity that defines itself and that grows and responds in reaction **to internal processes** and **external stimuli**. The internal processes include the operation of various “markets” for labour, transportation, commerce, housing and recreation. All of us are participants in these “markets,” which are not usually confined to one municipality. We may live in one municipality, work in another, shop in a third and send our children to post-secondary education in a fourth. In an organic city, different parts play different roles in the lives of residents and in the success of the whole entity, and that’s OK. The organic city has **systems** to serve the needs of the whole, such as transportation systems, water and waste systems, open space systems and so on. The **external stimuli** come from the world outside the organic city and include influences such as migration and international immigration, economic forces and provincial and national policies. The best example of an external stimulus that shaped the Vancouver region is the Canadian Pacific Railway’s decision to locate its tidewater railhead at the Granville town site rather than at Port Moody. That decision had significant implications for what was then the most important place in the region, New Westminster. In one stroke, Burrard Inlet replaced the Fraser River as the region’s most important economic asset.

Governance in an Organic City

Viewed in this context, governance of an organic city cannot be seen as the functioning of one or even all of the local governments in the area. It must be seen as a **complex matrix of decisions and decision-makers**, including not only local governments and school boards but also provincial ministries responsible for highways, health, social services, etc. and federal authorities such as port and airport authorities.

It is a testament to the city as humanity’s most complex and beneficial invention that cities are always governed – somehow. The essential jobs get done. The welfare of residents depends on how well they are done. In well governed organic cities, the activities of all the authorities in the governance matrix are working in **alignment**. To bring the point home, in a well governed organic city you wouldn’t have a provincial authority building massive new roads and a regional authority promoting an automobile-restrained, transit-focused transportation system. Nor would you have one city of more than 21 jurisdictions with a quarter of the region’s population setting itself up as “the greenest city.”

The alignment of the authorities in the urban governance matrix should be a central and continuing priority of regional leadership. The development and continuation of such alignment is greatly strengthened by the development and maintenance of **widely-accepted regional plans**, not only for growth management and transportation but for environmental management, housing, public security, emergency management, etc.

Notwithstanding its challenges, the Greater Vancouver region has a reputation for considerable achievement in planning for the area as a whole. Important key concepts such as livability, sustainability and resilience have permeated our thinking at many levels. This may be the result not only of some inspired leadership but also the combination of the region's visible limits and the unique and unforgettable experience of being here: water like wine, an ever-changing visual landscape and air like a caress.

Our challenge, then, is to continue to think about the region as an organic entity, a system of systems. While there are many equally useful ways to think of our region's key systems, at our workshop, we will be looking in depth at four key aspects of the region from this perspective:

- Economic development;
- Local democracy and governance;
- Health; and
- Transportation.

At the same time, we should not be afraid to challenge the basic architecture of the governance system that has got us this far:

- Is this where we need to be to face the challenges of the future?
- Is a local government structure inherited from 100 years ago the optimal setup?
- Is the constitutional structure established in 1867 appropriate to the nation we have today?

Conclusion

An approach to "Rethinking the Region" that is based on the idea of the **organic city** offers considerable potential for revealing new insights on how some important urban problems can be tackled. It is by no means the only lens through which these challenges can be brought into focus, but it may offer insights that will help inform new solutions, over more traditional approaches.

Regional Economic Development

By Meghan Cross and Jacint Simon

Overview

Metro Vancouver is a diverse economic region with strengths that vary from information communication technologies to natural resources to outdoor apparel to film and television. Although no formal regional body represents our economic interests, a number of different organizations work to promote economic development within municipalities throughout the region.

External factors play a significant role in regional economic health, for e.g.:

- Global trade - energy price fluctuation

- Climate change impacts
- Provincial, federal and international geo-political landscape
- Provincially-mandated transportation referendum

At Issue

Although Metro Vancouver included economic development as one aspect of the Regional Growth Strategy, no document specifically addresses regional economic growth and competitiveness. The absence of a regionally-coordinated economic development strategy puts each municipality head to head with its peers, competing to attract investment and retain businesses.

Key documents include:

Metro Vancouver's Regional Growth Strategy	http://www.metrovancouver.org/planning/development/strategy/Pages/default.aspx
Identifies 26 Urban Centres; Provides policy direction to “focus growth in Urban Centres and Frequent Transit Development Areas” and sets targets for population and employment; Provides guidelines on land use and transportation.	
Metro Vancouver Industrial Lands Report	http://www.metrovancouver.org/planning/development/EconomyIndustrialLands/Pages/default.aspx
Port Metro Vancouver Growth Strategy	Port 2050 http://www.portmetrovancover.com/en/about/corporate/Port2050.aspx
Charting BC's Economic Future	100 Community Conversations Discussion Guide http://www.sfu.ca/publicsquare/community-summit/2013summit/materials-outcomes.html

Regional Economic Decision Shapers

Business Council of BC (BCBC): Provides public policy research and advice to improve BC's competitiveness and prosperity.

Small Business BC: A resource centre for knowledge-based business products and services.

Boards of Trade / BC Chamber of Commerce: The BC Chamber of Commerce is an advocacy organization. Its primary function is to lobby regulatory bodies on the issues that affect its membership of local Chambers of Commerce and Corporate members throughout BC. Boards of Trade and Chambers of Commerce function as business organizations. E.g. *Vancouver Board of Trade's* mission: promote, enhance and facilitate the development of the **region** as a Pacific centre for trade, commerce and travel.

Vancouver Economic Commission: A City of Vancouver agency that aims to promote economic development, trade and investment opportunities.

Port Metro Vancouver: Canada's largest and busiest port. The Port borders 16 municipalities, one treaty First Nation and intersects the traditional territories of several other First Nations.

Metro Vancouver: A political body operating under provincial legislation as a 'regional district' and 'greater boards' that deliver regional services, policy and political leadership. Regional growth is the topic of one of eight regional management plans.

TransLink: The regional transportation authority, responsible for key infrastructure that undergirds the economic system: transit, cycling and commuting options, AirCare, and part of the Major Road Network.

Vancouver Airport Authority (YVR): The Airport Authority assumed local responsibility for the airport, Canada's second busiest, from Transport Canada in 1992. Through its 20 year master plan, the airport authority pursues growth in aircraft and cargo volumes, good returns to its stakeholders as well as good relations with local communities in the region, strategic gateway and sustainability strategies.

Key Regional Economic Decision Forces

Limited remaining supply of industrial land: Industrial lands are intended for use that supports the economy and reduces the pressure to expand industrial operations to other lands.

Carbon Tax: The B.C. carbon tax was implemented on July 1, 2008, and the final scheduled increase took effect on July 1, 2012. The tax puts a price on carbon via a fuel surcharge to:

- encourage individuals, businesses, industry and others to use less fossil fuel and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions;
- send a consistent price signal;
- ensure those who produce emissions pay for them; and
- make clean energy alternatives more attractive.

After a review last year, B.C. confirmed it will keep its **revenue-neutral**¹ carbon tax, the current carbon tax rates, and programs that return the tax through other reductions (tax credits for low income, 5% cuts to personal income tax rates, benefits for northern and rural homeowners, reductions in business tax). *Source: BC Min. of Finance*

Economic 'Hubs': Modern and/or emerging industries in the region include:

- Environmental technologies and engineering
- Film, digital media and/or video game development
- Information/communications technology

¹ "Even though designed to be revenue-neutral, in actuality, the **BC carbon tax has been revenue negative**. The carbon tax has collected less revenue than the government initially forecast." *Source: [Rivers and Schaufele, 2012](#)*

Once a new industry/business is operating within the region, cities compete through general business climate, but mostly on business costs. In 2010, the City of Vancouver was one of the most competitive jurisdictions for business taxes, *internationally*. <http://www.competitivealternatives.com/highlights/cities6.aspx>

Port Metro Vancouver Expansion: a new \$2-billion container terminal at Roberts Bank.

Real Estate: The finance, insurance and real estate industry is the largest source of GDP in the services sector, and overall in BC. It alone accounts for approximately a quarter of provincial GDP.

Future Key Challenges

- The Province has made it clear that LNG is its key (if not its only) economic development strategy. What will this mean for the Metro Vancouver economy?
- The outcome of the upcoming Transportation Referendum has unclear but significant implications for economic development. Poor or misplaced investments in transportation infrastructure may mean worsening congestion and other impediments to business.
- Lack of a regional strategy promotes wasteful competition amongst municipalities.
- Increasing real estate costs and growth pressures affects housing affordability. If the region loses its ability to attract and retain talent, it will lose to other west coast regions.

Regional Democracy and Governance

By Mark Friesen and Steven Petersen

Overview

In Metro Vancouver, at the scale of the region, the only government institutions that are structured solely to deal with regional issues are Metro Vancouver and TransLink. The Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) was incorporated as the Regional District of Fraser-Burrard in 1967, and renamed Metro Vancouver in 2007.² Metro Vancouver endeavours to: 1) Deliver Core Services, 2) Plan for the Future and, 3) Act as a Regional Forum for the 22 municipalities, the electoral area and the treaty First Nation that comprise its membership.³

² Bish, R. and Clemens, E. G. (2008). Local Government in British Columbia (4th edition), Richmond, BC: Union of BC Municipalities, p. 49.

³ One municipality - Abbotsford - is a member of Metro Vancouver for the Parks function only. Metro Vancouver,

Metro Vancouver encompasses four corporate entities: The Greater Vancouver Regional District, Greater Vancouver Water District, Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District, and the Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation. Each of the entities listed above has a board of directors, drawn from elected officials who are appointed by the municipal councils from throughout the region. The number of directors appointed from each region, and the number of votes allocated to each director, is based on the population of each municipality. Each director gets 1 vote for every 20,000 people, up to a maximum of five votes per director.⁴

The South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority (aka TransLink) is a quasi-government institution focused on the regional scale. TransLink is administered by a Board of Directors and Mayors' Council of all the mayors in the region.

Electoral citizen participation is thereby indirect - Metro Vancouver boards consist of elected officials appointed by their respective councils, and the TransLink Board is appointed by the Mayors' Council.

There is currently no government body at the regional scale that is directly elected. However, there are elected bodies that have both direct and indirect *influence* over regional issues. Municipalities have jurisdiction over a range of issues within their borders, and both the province and the federal government undertake projects and programs that affect the region. Other organizations that are not elected, such as Port Metro Vancouver and the Agricultural Land Commission, also exert significant influence at the regional scale.

The range of organizations and institutions with influence over regional matters in Metro Vancouver is diverse, and the range of mechanisms that have been employed to try and engage citizens in regional decision-making is varied.

Regional Governance and Democracy

Decision-making bodies with influence over regional issues have employed various *extra-electoral* mechanisms in an effort to gather input from residents in the region. Unfortunately, there is little research or clarity on which mechanisms are best for gathering citizen input, or when and how often they should be used. Surveys, both open-ended and closed-ended, and public meetings are the most often used mechanisms to engage residents in *extra-electoral* decision-making.

Concerning *extra-electoral* democratic decision-making, many reference Arnstein's ladder of citizen

Action Plan 2013, Burnaby BC, 2013, 10. Web: <http://www.metrovancouver.org/about/publications/Publications/ActionPlan2013.pdf>

⁴ Metro Vancouver, Boards, Web: <http://www.metrovancouver.org/boards/Pages/default.aspx>

participation. Arnstein distinguishes forms of participation which serve to *inform or manipulate* constituents, and forms of participation which *genuinely empower* constituents with the authority to make decisions.⁵ For example, closed-ended surveys do not give members of the public the opportunity to shape possible outcomes; only to select from pre-determined choices. Further, public consultations typically do not delegate decision-making authority to participants; final decisions rest with officials or staff members. Information meetings, consultations, and closed-ended surveys are therefore lower in the matrix of participation than are mechanisms which allow for open-ended consultations to take place, or that delegate full decision-making authority (such as Citizens' Assemblies or Referendums, respectively).

In terms of good regional governance, six major criteria were identified in a review completed for TransLink in 2013.⁶ These criteria are: accountability, transparency, responsiveness, clarity of purpose, advocacy and productive relationships.

The following section lists some issues that are currently facing the region, along with the *extra-electoral* processes that were utilized and the organization(s) vested with final decision-making authority.

Issues

Decision Makers

Fraser Surrey Docks - Direct Transfer Coal Facility

In June 2012, Fraser Surrey Docks submitted an application to Port Metro Vancouver to expand the terminal on the Fraser River to facilitate the transshipment of coal.⁷ Opposition from the public for the proposed expansion includes a public letter from 200 prominent climate scientists, academics and environmental groups asking the Port to delay expansion plans.⁸

Government/Organizational Authority:

- Federal government
- Port Metro Vancouver

Extra-Electoral Processes:

- Survey - open ended (written submissions via e-mail or online were accepted)

⁵ Kennedy Stewart, "Write the Rules and Win: Understanding Citizen Participation Game Dynamics," *Public Administration Review*, Nov/Dec 2007, 1068.

⁶ Acuere Consulting, *TransLink Governance Review*, March 2013. Report for the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation. Web: http://www.acuere.ca/docs/TransLink_Governance_Review_-_March_21_2013_Final_Report.pdf

⁷ SNC-Lavalin, *Environmental Impact Assessment for the Direct Transfer Coal Facility*, November 18, 2013, Burnaby BC. Web: http://www.fsd.bc.ca/_documents/coal/appendices/Volume%201%20-%20Main%20Document%20and%20Executive%20Summary.pdf

⁸ Voters Taking Action on Climate Change, *Open Letter Opposing Port Metro Vancouver Coal Export Expansion*,

Regional Growth Strategy (RGS)

In 2006, the Greater Vancouver Regional District began a process to create a new regional plan. In 2011, after 4 years of consultations, the RGS was approved by all local member authorities.

Draft versions of the RGS included more regulatory powers whereby municipalities wishing to amend their Official Community Plans would have to appeal to the Metro Vancouver Board. Municipalities opposed this, and these regulations were relaxed, although changes that are “regionally significant” or that involve changes to RGS designations still require Metro approval.

Government/Organizational Authority:

- Metro Vancouver
- Member local authorities

Extra-Electoral Processes:

- Stakeholder forums
- Survey – closed + open-ended (draft strategies were available for public comment and written submissions)
- Public meetings
- Interactive website
- Electronic voting during public meetings

New Waste-to-Energy Facility

Metro Vancouver is planning a new waste-to-energy facility. Permission to build the facility was obtained in 2011 when the BC Ministry of Environment approved the regional Solid Waste Management Plan.

Metro Vancouver has identified 10 prospective proponents to complete the facility. Four potential sites were announced on November 21, 2013 as part of the procurement process.⁹

Government/Organizational Authority:

- Metro Vancouver
- BC Ministry of the Environment

Extra-Electoral Processes:

- Consultations for the Integrated Solid Waste & Resource Management Plan:
 - Public Meetings
 - Survey-open ended

Bike Lanes

Formerly the Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition, Hub is a non-profit set up in 1998 to address cycling in Metro Vancouver. HUB engages with governments and others to promote cycling.

Government/Organizational Authority:

- City councils; Provincial government

Extra-Electoral Processes:

- Voluntary citizen participation

Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)

The ALR has been effective in slowing development on agricultural land. In 2006, the region produced 27% of the province’s gross farm receipts on only 1.5% of the

Government/Organizational Authority:

- Provincial Government
- Agricultural Land Commission

Extra-Electoral Processes:

November 27, 2012. Web: http://vtacc.org/vtacc_template.php?content=open_letter#Open_Letter

⁹ Metro Vancouver, *New Waste-to-Energy Capacity*, Web: <http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/solidwaste/planning/Recover/WTE/Pages/default.aspx>

BC's land. However, land continues to be removed from the ALR, pressured by economic development and increased land values. Local and regional governments, as well as provincial agencies, are expected to plan in accordance with the provincial policy of preserving agricultural land. Public concern has mounted following indications that B.C. Agriculture Minister Pat Pimm was planning to give more control over farmland to the B.C. Oil and Gas Commission.

- N/A

Future Challenges

The question of Metro Vancouver's authority and jurisdiction, and regional decision-making in general, has a contested history. This is most apparent in a final report of the Public Hearing Process to ratify the RGS. Three of the main comments from this public process were as follows:¹⁰

- the RGS provides too much authority on land use decisions to the Metro Vancouver board
- the RGS provides too much authority to local governments and not enough to Metro Vancouver
- the RGS provides too much regulatory authority on land use to TransLink

There is little agreement on what, or who, should have the final say when it comes to some regional issues. Further, for authorities with final decision-making authority, there is little understanding of whether, or how, to engage residents of the region. Democracy at the regional scale is thereby convoluted at best, and lacking in transparency and accountability at worst.

¹⁰ Metro Vancouver, *Proposed Amendments to the Regional Growth Strategy and Next Steps in the Ratification Process*, GVRD Board Meeting January 14, 2011, Web: <http://www.metrovancouver.org/planning/development/strategy/RGSDocs/ProposedAmmendmentsNextStepsRatificationProcess.pdf>

Regional Transportation

By Jordan Magtoto and Terry Sidhu

Overview

Transportation is a driver of growth in our region. As the RGS suggests, our region will continue grow at a high rate. We can be prepared to create jobs and housing for these new residents, but how these places are located and connected --coordinating land use and transportation--will be key to manageable growth.

This document is intended to outline the guiding documents addressing regional transportation issues in the coming decades: the RGS, Regional Transportation Strategy, and an alternate view from Smart Growth. This document will also outline the key transportation issues and projects facing the region, and the potential challenges that we must overcome.

Decisions and Decision Makers: Key Transportation Policies+Documents

Regional Growth Strategy (RGS):

In the RGS, Metro Vancouver identified transportation as a goal area: municipalities must support sustainable transportation choices. As an example, Burnaby will grow its town centres and connect them with skytrain and bus rapid transit stations.

<http://www.metrovancouver.org/PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT/STRATEGY/Pages/default.aspx>

Regional Transportation Strategy, Framework 2013

TransLink's Transport 2040 strategy began to consider a 30-year future of transit infrastructure investment, starting in 2008. The 2013 strategic framework document is an initial step toward a new Regional Transportation Strategy, expected in 2014, for a further 30 years of strategies and 15 years of implementation priorities for TransLink. The 2013 strategic document sets two headline targets for 30 years from now: first, that half of all trips are done by walking, cycling and transit. Second, that people reduce the distance they drive by one third.

http://www.translink.ca/~media/documents/plans_and_projects/regional_transportation_strategy/rts_strategic_framework_07_31_2013.ashx

Other notables:

Nongovernment organizations have tried to add a voice in regional transportation strategies. Although now defunct, Smart Growth BC's 2005 Transportation Policy articulates a vision for regional transportation. <http://www.smartgrowth.bc.ca/Portals/0/Downloads/SGBC%20Transportation%20Policy.pdf>

An active NGO in local transportation is Better Environmentally Sound Transportation, which creates programs and initiatives from Reclaim Your Street, to Cycling for Health, to age-specific programs.

<http://best.bc.ca/>

How is TransLink Governed?¹¹

The Mayor's Council on Regional Transportation: This includes mayors or other elected leaders from all the local municipalities. The Council approves TransLink transportation, funding, and borrowing plans.

TransLink Board of Directors: Selected based on skills and expertise, these directors are appointed by an unelected nominating committee. The Board oversees the executive, strategic planning, major capital projects, finances, and operations.

Regional Transportation Commissioner: Appointed by the Mayors' Council, the Commissioner approves cash fare adjustments, monitors customer service, and approves sales of major assets.

Provincial Government: The provincial government delegates authority for TransLink through its governance structure and contributes funding for major projects.

Metro Vancouver: Metro Vancouver provides advisory input on TransLink's long range transportation plan and borrowing limit increases.

Key Future Issues in Transportation

What is the most effective transit system in Surrey?

By 2041, Metro Vancouver forecasts Surrey to have a population of 740,000, an increase of 327,000 persons. Surrey leads growth in the region; to facilitate this growth and comply with the RGS, Surrey needs a more robust transit service.

What is the future of the Broadway Corridor's transit infrastructure?

The Broadway corridor from Commercial Skytrain Station to UBC is, by some reports, already one of the busiest bus-based transit corridors in North America. Currently being served by regular buses, and a quasi-BRT B-Line, at peak hours the buses are over-capacity and cannot accommodate current demand.

What will be the effect of the Pattullo Bridge replacement project?

The Pattullo Bridge was built in 1937, and is one of the oldest bridges in the region. It is in need of seismic and structural repair, or outright replacement. TransLink, the City of Surrey, and the City of New Westminster have stakes in the aging bridge's replacement. An upcoming challenge is that while Surrey has advocated for a 6-lane replacement bridge, New Westminster insists on a 4-lane design.

¹¹ Legislation for change is being introduced by Minister Todd Stone, <http://www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/2014/02/letter-metro-vancouvers-regional-transportation-referendum-and-governance-of-translink.html#.UvP1Y4kXc8c.twitter>

What is the effect of the George Massey Tunnel replacement bridge project?

The George Massey Tunnel is currently at capacity during peak hours, and heavily used at other times. The existing structure has 10-15 years of life left until major component will need to be replaced.

Beyond repair, there are options to build a replacement tunnel, build a replacement bridge, repair and build a new parallel crossing, or build a new crossing elsewhere –with or without rapid transit capacity.

If the new Fraser River crossings have tolls, then how will having only three of four crossings tolled affect traffic flows?

The Province has committed to replacing the George Massey Tunnel, and some type of tolled repair or replacement of the Pattullo bridge is inevitable. Also, some Port Mann Bridge and Golden Ears Bridge commuters have demonstrated that they will avoid tolls if possible.

Human and Environmental Health

By Amy Farahbakhsh and Chelsea Hunter

Overview

Health is a broad concept that affects communities within Metro Vancouver, and encompasses concern for environmental quality, access to health care services, healthy food, and housing, as well as opportunities for recreation and physical activity. All of these forms of health in the region affect quality of life as well as cities' reputation. Thus health is a major priority in our region.

Regional plans in these areas focus on providing services in ways that promote human health, and ecological health is incorporated into the region's various strategies.

Issues

Metro Vancouver is faced with a number of issues that affect both environmental and human health. Due to increasing population and regional economic development, as well as the region's important role in the province, Metro Vancouver must attend to the quality of life of residents, as well as how resources are managed.

Regional environmental health issues include:

- Loss of green space to residential and industrial development.
- Loss of land from the Agricultural Land Reserve because of economic development and increased land values.
- Dwindling landfill space and waste management practices that are inefficient and not environmentally sound.

The following are some of the region's official strategies that address environmental health concerns.

- Integrated Liquid and Solid Waste and Resource Management Plans: Focus on reducing the amount of waste requiring disposal, as well as improving recycling and waste recovery.

- **Drinking Water Management Plan:** Outlines how Metro Vancouver will provide safe drinking water for residents while protecting watersheds.
- **Integrated Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Management Plan:** Aims to minimize emissions of particulate matter.
- **Zero Waste Challenge:** Adjusting a range of waste management practices with the goal of diverting 70% of waste from disposal.
- **Regional Growth Strategy:** Guides development in the region, promoting contained urban growth, and compact and walkable development.

Decisions and Decision Makers

While health care is considered a matter of provincial jurisdiction in BC, there are important ways in which regional actions have a big input into our health before we enter the health care pipeline. Following are some strategies and plans related to health that have been put in place and spearheaded by some of the region's leading organizations.

Regional Parks and Greenways Plan: Last updated in 2011 with four new goals:

1. Promote ecological health
2. Promote outdoor recreation for human health and wellness by increasing opportunities and experiences for recreation while promoting the physical and mental health benefits of recreation
3. Support community stewardship, education and partnerships
4. Promote philanthropy and economic opportunities

Regional Food Systems Strategy: In addition to promoting ecological health with a strong local food system, the strategy aims to create a sustainable food system that improves the well-being of individuals and reduces stress on the health care system through better food choices. The strategy has five goals to address a number of interrelated components of the food system.

Regional Cycling Strategy: This will contribute to TransLink's longterm strategic goals by supporting more and safer cycling in the region. Among the strategies are the development of the Central Valley Greenway and the BC Parkway that provide over 26 km of multi-use pathways, linking multiple destinations, communities and workplaces region-wide.

Affordable Housing: The Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness (RSCH) is a coalition of community organizations and all levels of government with the mandate to implement the Homelessness Partnering Strategy to develop a regional understanding of homelessness. RSCH is moving towards updating their homelessness strategy and is conducting regional consultations on Housing First and what the Housing First model could mean for Metro Vancouver. RSCH spearheads the annual Homelessness Action Week, which focuses on bringing public awareness and understanding to the issue of homelessness in Metro Vancouver.







Health Care: My Health, My Community is a partnership between Vancouver Coastal Health, Fraser Health and the eHealth Strategy Office of the UBC Faculty of Medicine. The program seeks to involve residents, their communities and community organizations to learn how lifestyle, environment,

neighbourhood characteristics and daily interactions affect individuals' health over time by gathering information on the health status and health care needs of regional populations.

Future Challenges

1. The future expansion of coal exports and proposed Kinder Morgan Pipeline development (the twinned pipeline that would pass through Vancouver and would require 400 oil tankers to travel through Burrard Inlet each year).
 - The 5x increase in tanker traffic and expanded coal exports would increase air and water pollution, and an oil spill could seriously damage both marine and terrestrial wildlife.
 - This is especially pertinent considering the funding cuts to and subsequent closure of Burrard Inlet Environmental Action Program (BIEAP) and the Fraser River Estuary Management Program (FREMP). These organizations previously coordinated environmental management of the Burrard Inlet and Fraser River and were unique in that they brought together implicated actors across municipal, and even regional boundaries.
2. Protecting the natural environment of the region while allowing for continued growth.
 - Municipalities' ability to 'amend' the RGS threatens to erode the urban containment boundary over time, such that the RGS may not effectively protect green space.
3. Increasing the capacity of health care services.
 - As the population in the MV region drastically increases over the next 10-20 years, the regions two health authorities, Vancouver Coastal Health and Fraser Health, will see an increased pressure to provide effective and efficient care as a result. How can the health authorities work together to ensure health care needs are met throughout the region?

About the Speakers

	<p>George Abbott, Former Minister, multiple portfolios, Government of B.C. One of the most effective ministers of the last three decades, George Abbott served as BC's Minister of Education (2010-12), Health (2005-09), Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation (2009-10), Sustainable Resource Management (2004-05) and Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services (2001-04). Prior to his election to the Legislature, he served for 17 years in local government.</p>
	<p>Ken Cameron, FCIP, is Adjunct Professor of Urban Studies at SFU. Ken worked for 26 years in local government in the Vancouver region, most recently as Manager of Policy and Planning with the GVRD (now Metro Vancouver). Ken also led the BC Homeowner Protection Office. In 2007, Ken coauthored <i>City Making in Paradise: Nine decisions that saved Vancouver</i>, with Mike Harcourt and Sean Rossiter.</p>
	<p>Anita Huberman is the Chief Executive Officer of the Surrey Board of Trade, the second largest such Board in the province. She began work at what was then the Chamber of Commerce at the age of 19, as an intern while she studied at SFU. In addition, Anita is a recent appointee to the National Film Board.</p>
	<p>Dr. Anthony Perl, Professor, SFU Urban Studies and Political Science, is the author or coauthor of four books, most recently <i>Transport Revolutions: Moving people and freight without oil</i> (2008). Anthony's research crosses disciplinary and national boundaries to explore the policy decisions that affect transportation, cities and the environment. Active regionally, Anthony serves on the External Advisory Panel, Sustainable Gateway strategy, for Port Metro Vancouver.</p>
	<p>Dr. Tim Takaro, Professor, SFU Health Sciences, is a physician-scientist trained in occupational and environmental medicine, public health and toxicology. His research is primarily directed toward the links between human exposures and disease, and determining public health based preventive solutions to such risks. His current research on human health and climate change includes a focus on water quality in BC communities.</p>
	<p>Vicki Huntington was elected as an independent MLA for Delta South in 2009 and in 2013 made history as the first BC independent ever to be re-elected. Formerly, she served 5 terms as an elected councilor in Delta, where she has earned a reputation for her commitment to farmland preservation and environmental issues.</p>