

# Metro Vancouver Role and Governance



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**Metro Vancouver**

Austin Texas Chamber of Commerce  
InterCity visit to Metropolitan Vancouver  
*6 October 2008*



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

# OUTLINE

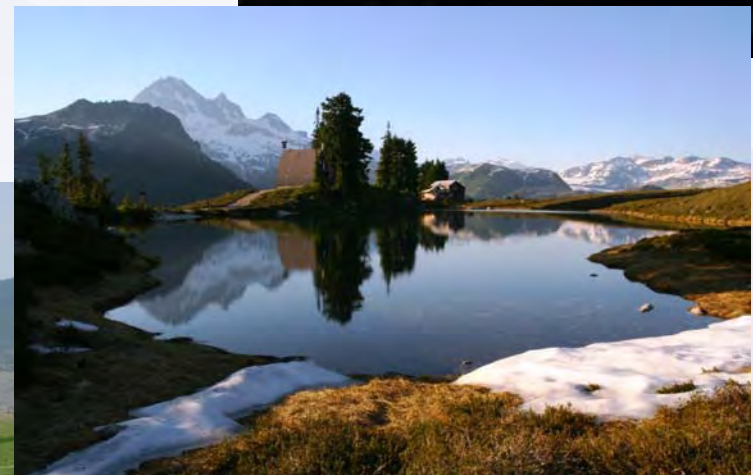
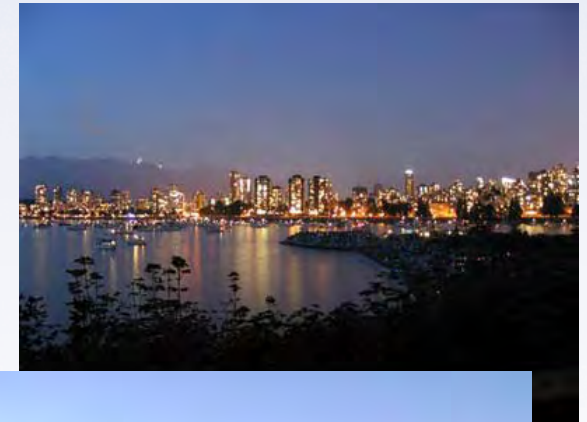
- *Introduction to the region*
- *Introduction to the organization*
- *Roles of Metro Vancouver*
- *Governance*



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# Metro Vancouver LANDSCAPE

- *Mountains*
- *United States Border*
- *Ocean, Rivers, Inlets*
- *Wildlife Habitat*
- *Farmland*



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# Metro Vancouver STATISTICS

- *2.25 million people*
- *40% immigrants*
- *2877 square kilometers*
- *735 people per square kilometer*
- *1.4 million vehicles*



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# Metro Vancouver

- *Canada's only non-amalgamated major metro area*
- *A federation of 22 municipalities and one electoral (unincorporated) area, which vary greatly in size and character*
- *Provides local government services, mainly through the member municipalities*
- *Created in 1967 but core utilities (water and sewer) date back to early 20th century*
- *Single administration for a number of legal entities and subsidiaries*



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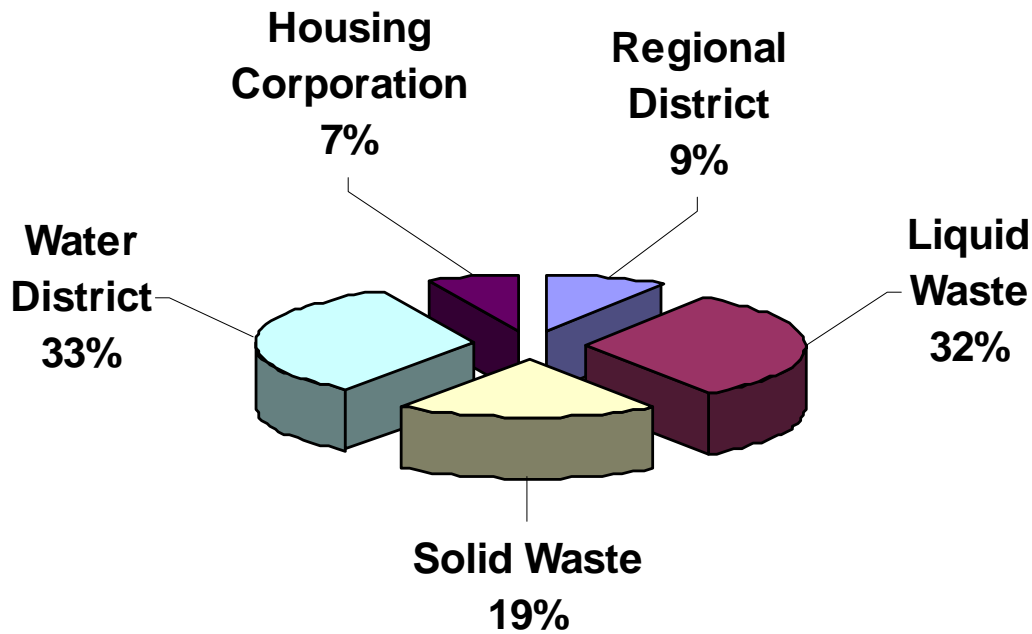
# Metro Vancouver

## FINANCE

- *2009 budget*
  - *\$538.2 million operating expenditures*
  - *\$445 million capital expenditures*
- *Sources*
  - *Utility levies*
  - *Property tax - parks, planning, air quality*
  - *Self-supporting - social housing*



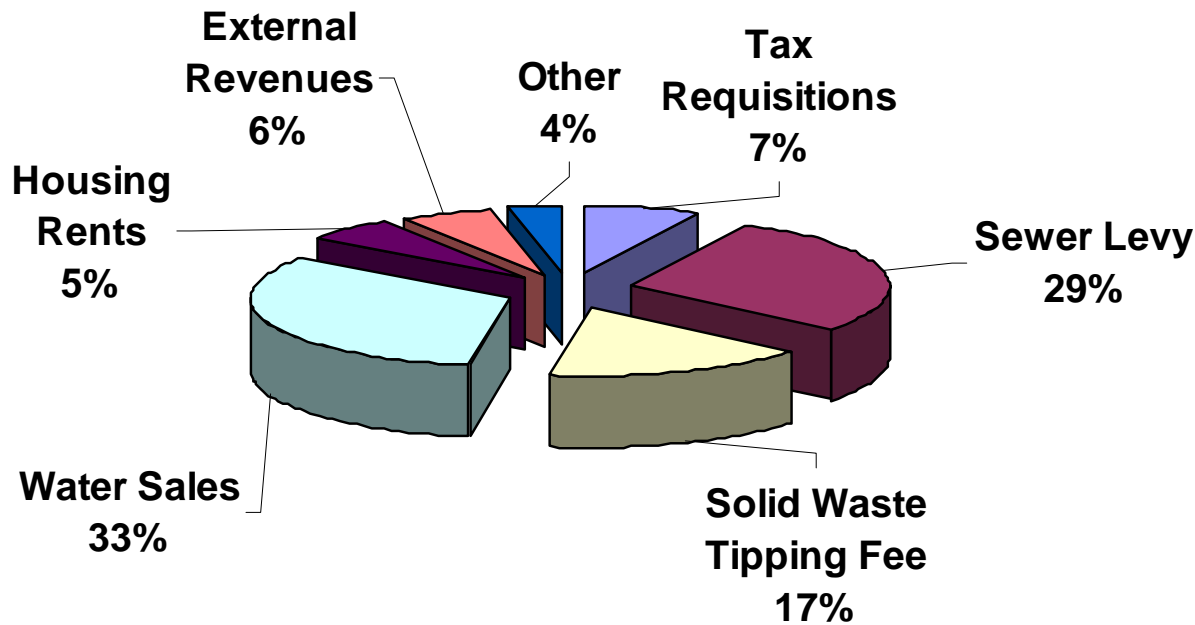
# Where the Money Goes



	<u>2009 Budget</u>
<b>Regional District</b>	\$ 47.9
<b>Sewerage &amp; Drainage District</b>	
Liquid Waste	171.5
Solid Waste	104.2
<b>Water District</b>	180.1
<b>Housing Corporation</b>	35.8
<b>Total</b>	<u><u>\$ 539.5</u></u>



# Where the Money Comes From



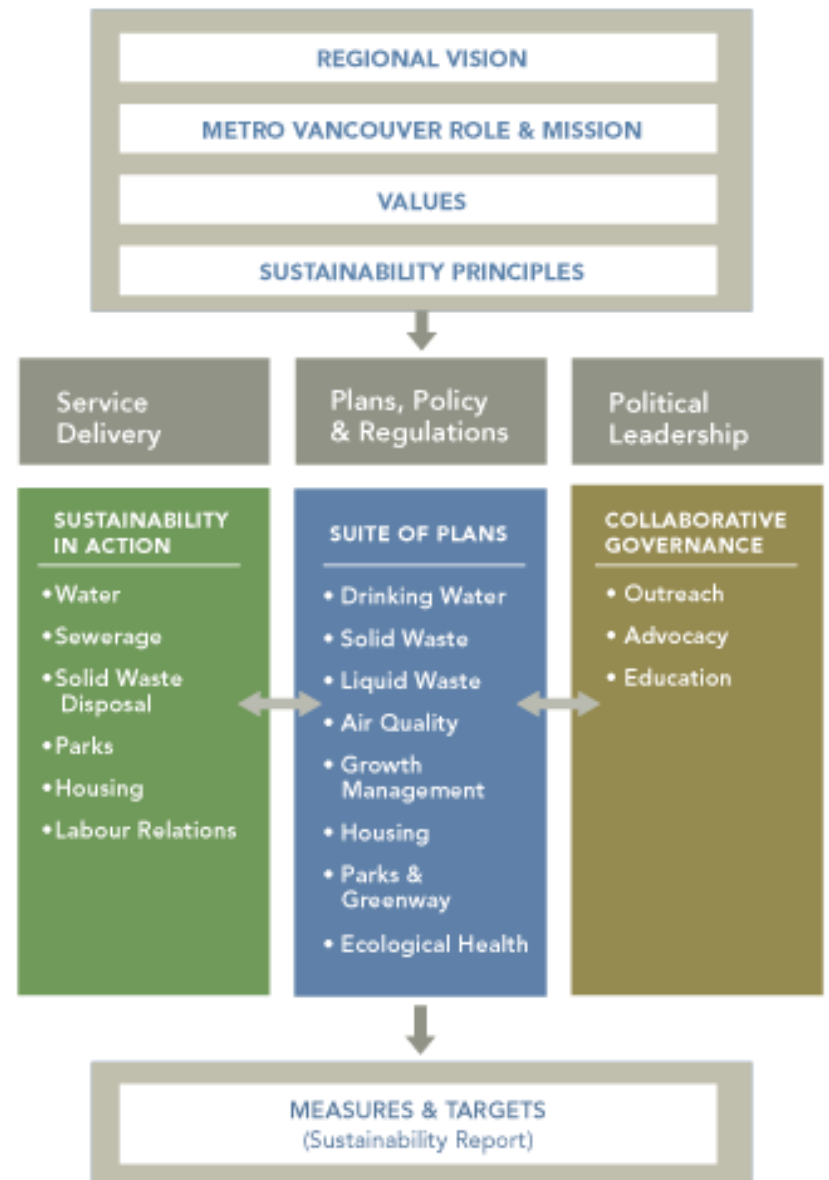
	<u>2009 Budget</u>
Tax Requisitions	\$ 39.5
Sewer Levy	153.8
Solid Waste Tipping Fee	89.4
Water Sales	177.4
Housing Rents	29.6
External Revenues/Grants	31.5
Other (includes Reserves, BOD/TSS, DCC)	18.3
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>\$ 539.5</u></b>





## Metro Vancouver SUSTAINABILITY Framework

- Vision for the region and organization
- Management philosophy
- Overarching organizational framework for everything we do
- Triple bottom line focus
  - Environmental
  - Financial
  - Social



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# Three ROLES of Metro Vancouver

- 1. Service Delivery*
- 2. Plans, Policy, and Regulation*
- 3. Political Leadership*



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# 1. SERVICE Delivery

- *Core services provided principally to municipalities*
  - *Water*
  - *Sewerage and drainage*
  - *Solid waste management*
- *Services provided directly to the public*
  - *Parks*
  - *Housing*
- *Other services*
  - *Labour relations*
  - *9-1-1 emergency*
  - *Municipal borrowing*



# Service Delivery Jurisdictional Responsibilities: WATER SUPPLY

- **Metro Vancouver**

- *Collects water in 3 mountain-fed watersheds and 5 dams*
- *Treats water in 2 plants to meet federal and provincial drinking water guidelines*
- *Sends water to municipal transmission system*
- *Prepares long-term drinking water management plans as per provincial & federal requirements*
- *Recovers water supply costs through user fees*

- **Municipalities**

- *Transmits water to customers via local distribution system that they build and maintain*



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# Metro Vancouver's WATER SUPPLY and Facilities



Capilano Watershed



Coquitlam Watershed



Seymour-Capilano Water Filtration Plant



Seymour Falls Dam & Reservoir



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## Service Delivery Jurisdictional Responsibilities: LIQUID WASTE

- **Municipalities**

- *Collects liquid waste from customers and transport it, via underground transmission pipes, to Metro Vancouver's trunk collection system*

- **Metro Vancouver**

- *Operates 5 wastewater treatment plants and discharges effluent that meets provincial and federal regulations*
- *Prepares long-term liquid waste management plans as per provincial and federal requirements*
- *Procures funding for capital improvements from higher levels of government*
- *Recovers wastewater treatment costs through users fees*



# Metro Vancouver's LIQUID WASTE Facilities



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## Service Delivery Jurisdictional Responsibilities: SOLID WASTE

- **Municipalities**
  - *Collects solid waste at curbside from residents, either with municipal fleets or private sector contractors*
  - *Promotes waste reduction and recycling*
  - *Vancouver operates 1 regional disposal site*
- **Private Industry**
  - *Collects solid waste at curbside from businesses*
  - *Processes and markets recyclables collected from residential and industrial sectors*
- **Metro Vancouver**
  - *Promotes waste reduction and recycling*
  - *Contracts out operation of 6 transfer stations and 2 disposal facilities for residential and light industrial waste*
  - *Prepares long-term solid waste management plans as per provincial requirements*
  - *Recovers recycling, transfer and disposal costs through tipping fees*





# Metro Vancouver's SOLID WASTE Disposal Facilities



## 2. PLANS, Policy, and Regulations

- *Three main areas of planning and regulatory responsibility*
  1. *Regional growth land use (through municipalities) and transportation (through Translink)*
  2. *Waste management*
  3. *Air quality management*
- *Suite of Plans*
  - *Drinking Water, Solid Waste, Liquid Waste, Air Quality, Growth Management, Housing, Parks and Greenways, Ecological Health*



## 3. Political LEADERSHIP

- *Main political forum for discussion of significant community issues at the regional level*
- *Collaborative Governance*
  - *Outreach*
  - *Advocacy*
  - *Education*



# Regional GOVERNANCE



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## Metro Vancouver as a Working Partnership - PRINCIPLES

- *One non-hierarchical system of local government*
- *Provides regional coordination/ leadership, some direct regional services, but mostly services to municipalities*
- *Region must add value or leave at local level*
- *The interests of individual partners will prevail over everything except the collective interest of the partners*



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## Metro Vancouver as a Working Partnership - PRINCIPLES

- *Resolve issues through consensus and avoid surprises and destructive conflict*
- *Result should be coherent regional action which:*
  - *respects and reinforces the diversity, character and integrity of local municipalities*
  - *protects the natural environment*
  - *maintains cost effective service delivery to tax payers*

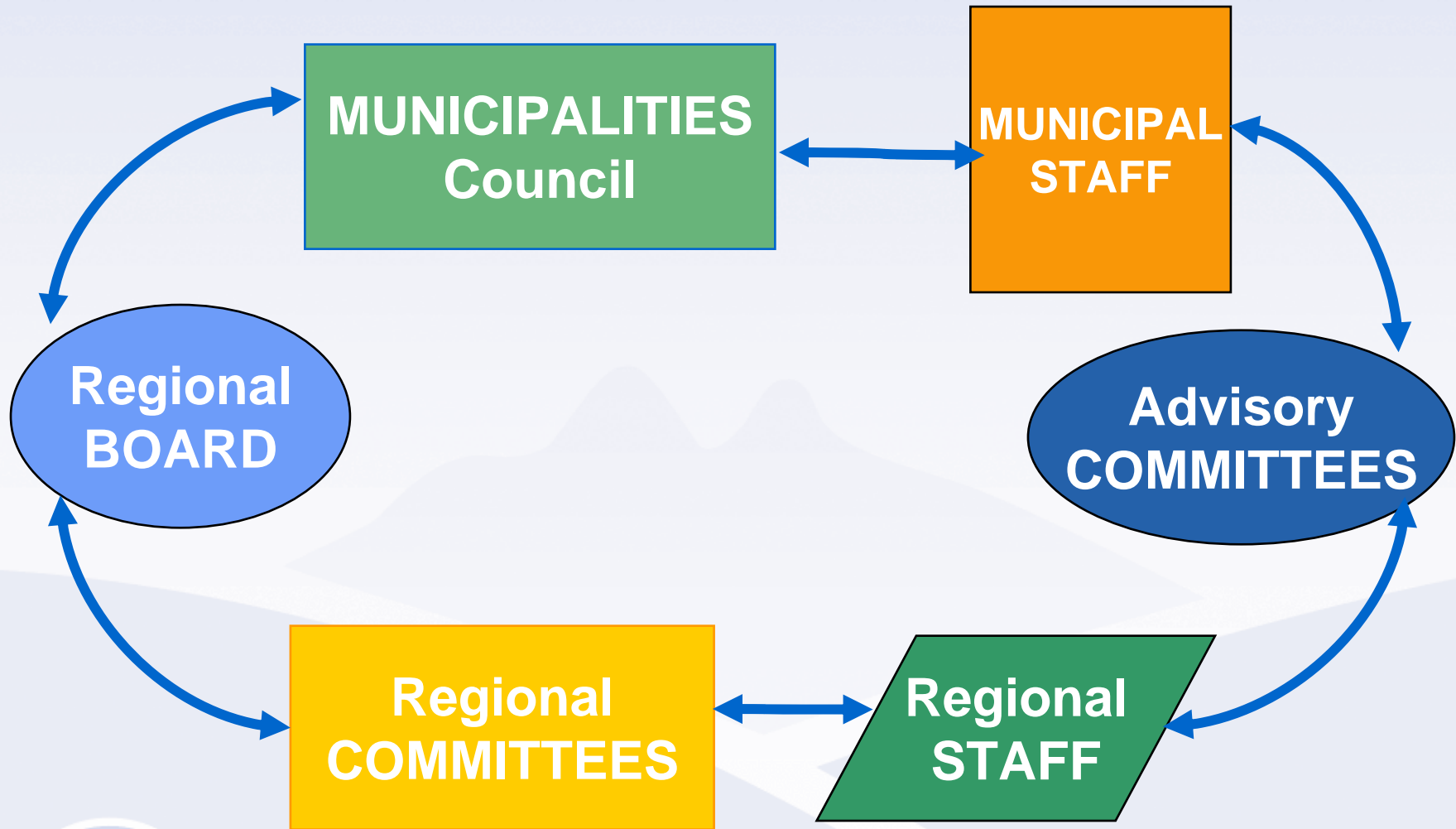


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## Metro Vancouver as a Working Partnership - MECHANICS

- **Board** decisions are taken only after public consultation and municipal review
- **Municipal staff** involvement through active committees - managers, engineers, treasurers, planners, and direct dialogue with specific municipalities on specific issues
- **Council of Councils** meetings provide opportunity for dialogue and direction-setting







## Metro Vancouver BOARD of Directors

- *36 Directors on 2008 Board appointed by municipal councils (Electoral Area is an exception)*
  - *one director per 100,000 residents*
  - *one vote per 20,000 residents*
- *Every member municipality and electoral area*
- *is represented*
- *Tsawwassen First Nation to become a member in 2009*



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## ROLE of the Directors

- *Set regional objectives and corresponding financial objectives*
- *Approve number, scope and objective of programs and corresponding budget*
- *Monitor organizational objectives, program and financial performance and reporting*
- *Represent Metro Vancouver to the public and to municipal colleagues*
- *Significant delegation of administrative and operational authority to staff*



## The COMMITTEE System

- *Standing committees – process most of the reports from staff; advise the Boards*
- *Ad hoc committees – special purpose committees usually of limited duration*
- *Advisory committees*
  - *citizen-based*
  - *municipal staff-based*
- *Council of Councils*



## PUBLIC Involvement

- *Delegations to Board and committee*
- *Public consultation on specific issues*
- *Citizen-based advisory committees*
- *Community partnership approaches*
- *Public information dissemination*
- *Information and data requests*



## Collaborative GOVERNANCE Initiative

- *Builds on public involvement experience*
- *Sustainability breakfasts*
- *Future of the Region Dialogues*
- *Regional Sustainability Summit and Discussion Forums*



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## Strengths of the PARTNERSHIP

- *All members benefit from joint borrowing on collective credit*
- *Strives to keep costs down and balance priorities - regional and local; social, economic and environmental*
- *Sensitive to local issues*
  - *municipalities make the decisions*
  - *local issues handled exclusively by municipalities*
  - *Region respects local autonomy where not in conflict with regional purpose*



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## Strengths of the PARTNERSHIP

- *Municipally appointed politicians have the skills to contribute to regional decision-making and policy.*
- *Every municipality has a voice at the table*
  - *empathy for local issues*
- *Thorough, inclusive approach to decision-making*
- *United front in dealing with senior government*
- *Parochial concerns need to be addressed enroute to consensus*



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## Some CHALLENGES

- *Hard to handle “taxation without representation”  
– Whom do you hold accountable?*
- *Consensus can be hard to find and maintain*
- *Parochial concerns surface with distribution of cost:  
money and taxation*
- *Reluctance of municipalities to delegate or share  
decision-making on new issues at regional level*





## Some CHALLENGES

- *Must want the system to work - cooperative system is more vulnerable to internal dissent – necessitates constant attention to local municipal interests*
- *Failure on a major issue tends to lead to questioning of the whole system*
- *Difficult to explain and communicate regional system*



## Lessons for SUCCESS

- *Non-hierarchical relationships can work*
- *Clear accountability for roles*
- *Respect for local municipal interests*
- *Know the common and divergent interests*
- *Know the regulatory requirements*
- *Keep focus on cost-effectiveness*
- *Know where the expertise lies*
- *Work towards consensus whenever possible*
- *Transparent process for decision-making*

