Metro Vancouver
Role and Governance

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Metro Vancouver

Austin Texas Chamber of Commerce
InterCity visit to Metropolitan Vancouver
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OUTLINE

• Introduction to the region
• Introduction to the organization
• Roles of Metro Vancouver
• Governance
Metro Vancouver LANDSCAPE

- Mountains
- United States Border
- Ocean, Rivers, Inlets
- Wildlife Habitat
- Farmland
Metro Vancouver STATISTICS

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

- **Water District**: 33%
- **Solid Waste**: 19%
- **Liquid Waste**: 32%
- **Regional District**: 9%
- **Housing Corporation**: 7%

**2009 Budget**

- **Regional District**: $47.9
- **Sewerage & Drainage District**
  - Liquid Waste: $171.5
  - Solid Waste: $104.2
- **Water District**: $180.1
- **Housing Corporation**: $35.8

**Total**: $539.5

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Where the Money Comes From

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Solid Waste Tipping Fee</td>
<td>17%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sewer Levy</td>
<td>29%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tax Requisitions</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Rents</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Revenues</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Sales</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax Requisitions</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2009 Budget

- 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

Total: $539.5
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
Three ROLES of Metro Vancouver

1. Service Delivery
2. Plans, Policy, and Regulation
3. Political Leadership
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
Metro Vancouver’s WATER SUPPLY and Facilities

Coquitlam Watershed

Seymour Falls Dam & Reservoir

Seymour-Capilano Water Filtration Plant
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
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

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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
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
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 taxpayers
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
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
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
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
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