

AGENDA INFORMATION	
☐ Regular Meeting	Date: _____
☐ Other:	Date: _____

Dept. Manager	GM/ Director	CAO
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The District of North Vancouver REPORT TO COUNCIL

June 21, 2026

File:

AUTHOR: Councillor Herman Mah

SUBJECT: Request for Public Inquiry Regarding the NSWWTP by the Inspector of Municipalities

RECOMMENDATION:

WHEREAS the District recognizes the need for accountability and transparency of Metro Vancouver's management of the North Shore Wastewater Treatment Plant (NSWWTP) project;

WHEREAS North Shore residents have been burdened with a disproportion share of the cost overruns and have faced project delays and ongoing uncertainty associated with the NSWWTP project;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the District of North Vancouver Council submit a complaint to the Inspector of Municipalities of British Columbia regarding Metro Vancouver's management of the NSWWTP, pursuant to section 765 of the Local Government Act ("the Act");

AND THAT the complaint specifically requests:

1. A public inquiry into the NSWWTP cost overruns, to restore public confidence and establish an independent record of what occurred;
2. A provincial review of Metro Vancouver's governance framework, particularly the mechanisms by which it can borrow billions on behalf of member municipalities without their meaningful consent; and
3. A fairness mechanism to protect municipalities from bearing the cost of massive, uncontrolled escalations on regional mega-projects over which they have no effective oversight.

REASON FOR REPORT:

Metro Vancouver, which is responsible for regional infrastructure projects, is constructing a new wastewater treatment plant (NSWWTP), on District lands at 107 Pemberton Avenue.

The cost increases, the share of the cost overruns to be borne by District residents, and the construction delays related to the NSWWTP are serious concerns for North Shore residents. Despite many requests for information, the District still does not have a full accounting of the finances, and residents will pay significantly more for sewage costs than any other region within Metro Vancouver's jurisdiction for the next 30 years.

This lack of public accountability and the withholding of financial information from the District of North Vancouver by Metro Vancouver are unacceptable.

SUMMARY:

Section 765 of the Act permits a municipality located within a regional district to make a complaint regarding any bylaw, order, decision, or action of the board. If a complaint is received, the Inspector, or a person authorized by the Inspector, may hold an inquiry. An inquiry under this section must be open to the public. The person holding the inquiry must report to the Lieutenant Governor in Council on the evidence received, the representations and argument made, and must make recommendations. The Lieutenant Governor in Council may, upon receipt of the report, make an order. An order under this subsection is binding on the board.

BACKGROUND:

On March 5, 2026, the Mayors of the District of North Vancouver and the City of North Vancouver met with the Premier of British Columbia. In this meeting, they requested:

1. A public inquiry into the NSWWTP cost overruns, to restore public confidence and establish an independent record of what occurred;
2. A provincial review of Metro Vancouver's governance framework, particularly the mechanisms by which it can borrow billions on behalf of member municipalities without their meaningful consent; and
3. A fairness mechanism to protect municipalities from bearing the cost of massive, uncontrolled escalations on regional mega-projects over which they have no effective oversight.

These requests were reiterated in a joint letter from the Mayors to the Premier dated April 28, 2026ⁱ.

Concurrence:

North Shore municipalities have raised concerns through many channels. To date, the response from Metro Vancouver has been inadequate and lacks transparency.

Financial Impacts:

In 2013, Metro Vancouver initially estimated that the project would cost \$700 million. By March 2024, this estimate had increased to \$3.86 billion, not including operating and maintenance costs for the new wastewater treatment plant or the costs of decommissioning and remediating the old facility. These overruns account for a significant portion of the increase in Metro Vancouver fees found on District of North Vancouver residents' utility bills.

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Social Policy Implications:

North Shore municipalities were never properly consulted nor asked to participate in a meaningful discussion to determine how to proceed when the budget dramatically increased. Instead, decisions by Metro Vancouver were made behind closed doors.

Despite repeated requests through appropriate internal Metro Vancouver governance channels, the District's serious concerns have not been satisfactorily addressed.

Metro Vancouver is not appropriately serving the taxpayers and residents of the District of North Vancouver on this critical issue.

Conclusion:

Given the significant escalation in costs, ongoing delays, and lack of transparency surrounding the NSWWTP project, it is imperative that the District of North Vancouver take appropriate steps to protect the interests of its residents. A formal complaint to the Inspector of Municipalities, including a request for a public inquiry, represents a necessary and reasonable course of action to ensure accountability, restore public trust, and establish a fair and transparent framework for managing large-scale regional infrastructure projects. Without such intervention, the financial and governance concerns identified will remain unresolved, to the detriment of North Shore communities.

Options:

1. THAT the Mayor, on behalf of Council, submits a letter to the Inspector of Municipalities to file a complaint pursuant to section 765 of the Local Government Act regarding the NSWWTP.
2. THAT no further action is taken.

Respectfully submitted,



Herman Mah
Councillor

Attachment: Letter to the Premier from the Mayors of the District of North Vancouver and the City of North Vancouver, dated April 28, 2026.

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REVIEWED WITH:					
☐ Business and Economic	_____	☐ Finance	_____	External Agencies:	
☐ Bylaw Services	_____	☐ Fire Services	_____	☐ Library Board	_____
☐ Clerk's Office	_____	☐ GIS	_____	☐ Museum and Archives	_____
☐ Climate and Biodiversity	_____	☐ Human Resources	_____	☐ NSEM	_____
☐ Communications	_____	☐ Integrated Planning	_____	☐ NS Health	_____
☐ Community Planning	_____	☐ ITS	_____	☐ NVRC	_____
☐ Development Engineering	_____	☐ Parks	_____	☐ RCMP	_____
☐ Development Planning	_____	☐ Real Estate	_____	☐ Other:	_____
☐ Engineering Operations	_____	☐ Review and Compliance	_____		
☐ Environment	_____	☐ Solicitor	_____		
☐ Facilities	_____	☐ Utilities	_____		

[North Shore Wastewater Treatment Plant – Meeting Follow-Up](#)

March 5, 2026

The Honourable David Eby, KC
Premier of British Columbia
Office of the Premier
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Premier Eby:

Re: Immediate, full, and independent governance, program, and service review of Metro Vancouver by the Province of British Columbia

Affordability is the defining issue facing people across Metro Vancouver. Families, seniors, and businesses are under relentless pressure from rising costs, and they expect governments at every level to respect taxpayers and use public dollars responsibly.

As Mayors of the City and District of North Vancouver, we are writing to express our deep concern that the status quo at Metro Vancouver is no longer acceptable.

Recent media reports have exposed serious governance failures at Metro Vancouver that demand immediate provincial attention. Recurring issues reveal an organization that has lost its way, operating without meaningful accountability while critical infrastructure projects spiral out of control. The repeated governance breakdowns demonstrate that Metro Vancouver cannot fix itself from within.

Metro Vancouver's governance structure is failing to meet the needs of our residents. The organization has expanded well beyond its core mandate while struggling to deliver major essential services effectively. Decision-making processes have become inaccessible and unaccountable to the municipalities and taxpayers who fund operations. **The disconnect between Metro Vancouver's spending priorities and the fiscal capacity of member municipalities has reached a breaking point.**

We can no longer accept a regional body that operates without meaningful collaboration and accountability to the municipalities and residents who bear the financial burden of its decisions and we are calling on the Province to act.

Both of our municipalities are making difficult choices to protect taxpayers and maintain fiscal discipline. We expect the same commitment to responsible governance at the regional level.

We are particularly concerned about the North Shore Wastewater Treatment Plant project, which has experienced staggering cost overruns that our residents simply cannot afford. Our municipalities were never properly consulted or asked to participate in a meaningful discussion to determine whether we should proceed with the dramatically increased budget, a decision that was made behind closed doors. Despite repeated requests through appropriate internal Metro Vancouver governance channels, our serious concerns have not been resolved. Metro Vancouver is not serving the taxpayers and residents of North Vancouver appropriately on this critical issue.

We therefore call for an immediate, full, and independent governance, program, and service review of Metro Vancouver by the Province of British Columbia. This review must be comprehensive, conducted at arm's length, and designed to evaluate whether Metro Vancouver's current structure, mandate, and operations serve the interests of member municipalities and their residents. We need substantive recommendations that restore accountability and fiscal responsibility.

Meaningful reform requires independent oversight and genuine structural change. The recent repeated governance issues make clear that Metro Vancouver cannot address these problems from within. The Province must lead a thorough examination that prioritizes efficient service delivery, fiscal responsibility, and transparent accountability to member municipalities and their residents.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you directly to discuss our outstanding concerns regarding the wastewater treatment plant and the broader governance challenges at Metro Vancouver. Our residents deserve better stewardship of their tax dollars and meaningful consultation on projects of this magnitude.

Our residents are counting on provincial leadership to ensure their tax dollars are protected and that regional governance serves their interests effectively.

We urge you to act swiftly to initiate this comprehensive review.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Linda C. Buchanan".

Linda Buchanan
Mayor, City of North Vancouver

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Mike Little".

Mike Little
Mayor, District of North Vancouver

c.c. City of North Vancouver Council
District of North Vancouver Council
Hon. Christine Boyle, Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs
Hon. Bowinn Ma, Minister of Infrastructure and MLA North Vancouver-Lonsdale
Susie Chant, MLA for North Vancouver-Seymour