



# City of New Westminster

## Report to Council

**To:** New Westminster City Council  
in Regular Council

**Meeting Date:** October 6, 2025

**From:** Lisa Leblanc, Director, Engineering  
& Deputy Chief Administrative  
Officer

**Report No.:** 2025-286

05.1035.10  
(DOC#2770754)

**Re: Metro Vancouver Liquid Waste Management Plan - Follow-Up from March 17, 2025 Open Workshop**

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### Staff Recommendation

*That the report titled “Metro Vancouver Liquid Waste Management Plan - Follow-up from March 17, 2025 Open Workshop” from the Director, Engineering and Deputy CAO, be received for information.*

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### Purpose

To respond to the motion from council at the March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025 workshop motion “*THAT the request to approve the Liquid Waste Management Plan be referred to the Regular Council meeting of Monday, October 6, 2025, or until such a time that Metro Vancouver has provided the public with a truly independent, thorough, and adequate response to massive and unexplained cost overruns at the North Shore Wastewater Treatment Plant*”.

### Executive Summary

Liquid waste management for the City of New Westminster, as a member of the Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District (GVS&DD), is regulated by the Ministry of Environment and Parks through a regional liquid waste management plan (LWMP). The Province has directed Metro Vancouver to submit an LWMP on behalf of all GVS&DD member jurisdictions to comply with Provincial regulations. The GVS&DD Board endorsed an updated Interim Draft Liquid Waste Management Plan for the region on November 29, 2024. The GVS&DD Board approved further consultations with municipal councils, First Nations councils, the public and stakeholders on the plan in 2025. The final updated LWMP is scheduled for submission to the provincial Ministry of Environment and Parks in the fall of 2025.

The March 17<sup>th</sup> 2025 staff report requested that council support the submission of the final Plan to the Ministry of Environment and Parks following GVS&DD Board adoption. Council amended the motion requesting “THAT the request to approve the Liquid Waste Management Plan be referred to the Regular Council meeting of Monday, October 6, 2025, or until such a time that Metro Vancouver has provided the public with a truly independent, thorough, and adequate response to massive and unexplained cost overruns at the North Shore Wastewater Treatment Plant”.

Metro Vancouver have confirmed that there is no formal requirement for the LWMP to be approved by city councils and as such they will not be reporting back on this topic and will continue to submit an LWMP on behalf of all GVS&DD member jurisdictions to comply with Provincial regulations.

## **Background**

### Development of the liquid waste management plan

Over the past three years, as required by the Ministry of Environment and Parks, the GVS&DD and its members have engaged stakeholders and First Nations in updating the LWMP. The updated interim draft LWMP has been developed with extensive input from the Regional Engineers Advisory Committee, Liquid Waste Subcommittee and the Stormwater Interagency Liaison Group. This plan reflects the priorities of communities across the region who shared their perspectives during extensive engagement. It demonstrates Metro Vancouver and members’ commitment to involve First Nations in wastewater management, and includes new actions developed in collaboration with First Nations. The focus has been on reducing system demands through measures such as green infrastructure and repairing leaky sewers, and continuing with sewer separation programs that cause excess rainwater to enter sanitary systems.

The plan shifts away from expanding infrastructure to deal with *symptoms* of problems and towards addressing the *root causes* of system deficiencies. This shift can help consider system capacity to accommodate growth and defer major capital projects. The overall direction of the Plan has been well-received by the Liquid Waste Committee and GVS&DD Board, which approved proceeding with further consultations with First Nations and municipal councils in the last phase of engagement.

### Regulatory requirements

Through a provision of the provincial Environmental Management Act, the Minister of Environment and Parks has directed Metro Vancouver to submit an LWMP on behalf of all GVS&DD member jurisdictions to comply with Provincial regulations. The two primary objectives for LWMPs are to:

1. protect public health and the environment and
2. properly engage the public and First Nations.

The approved LWMP authorizes local governments, in accordance with operational certificates, to proceed with measures in the plan to ensure that the management, resource recovery and disposal of treated wastewater sufficiently protects public health and the environment.

Key issue areas for the LWMP are as follows:

- Wastewater treatment. The Province requires all Metro Vancouver wastewater treatment plants to provide secondary treatment at a minimum. The LWMP commits to upgrading the North Shore and Iona Island wastewater treatment plants to secondary treatment by 2030 and 2040, respectively.
- Combined sewer overflows. Provincial policy requires the elimination of all combined sewer overflow systems. The LWMP requires that combined sewer overflows be eliminated by 2050 in the Vancouver Sewerage Area and by 2075 in the Fraser Sewerage Area.
- Sanitary sewer overflows. Provincial policy requires reducing the volume of sanitary sewer overflows from storm or snowmelt events with a less than five-year return period, by an average of 10 per cent per year. Metro Vancouver and member jurisdictions are reducing sanitary sewer overflows through actions that keep rainwater and groundwater from entering the sanitary system (inflow and infiltration).

Approved LWMPs become enforceable under the Act. The Ministry of Environment and Parks requires LWMPs to be developed by local governments in consultation with the community, First Nations and interested parties. The previous LWMP for Metro Vancouver and member municipalities was approved by the Province in 2011.

## **Analysis**

### Implications for Member Jurisdictions

The shift to address leaky pipes and reduce inputs to the system upstream of the wastewater treatment plants will require additional effort at the municipal level, and Metro Vancouver is dedicated to supporting those efforts. When all 19 member jurisdictions do their part upstream, this has a multiplier effect downstream. It will ultimately reduce and defer the need for major capital expenditures, help to avoid over-building at wastewater treatment plants, and reduce costs for member municipalities over the long term.

Some areas in the LWMP that require continued resourcing support from City of New Westminster include:

- The development of Master Sewer Servicing Plans;
- Asset management planning including:
  - incentives for replacement of private sewer laterals;
- Rainwater/Stormwater Management including:
  - Integrated Watershed Management Plans;
  - Facilitation of First Nations involvement in plan development;
  - Dedicated municipal budget to rainwater management;
- Sanitary sewer overflow prevention; and,
- Combined sewer separation programs.

While many of these actions were already included in previous LWMPs, the updated LWMP renews and increases member jurisdiction and Metro Vancouver commitments to

making more progress on actions that will have the most impact on reducing inputs to the system upstream. This will improve the efficiency of the liquid waste system and reduce the costs of managing liquid waste overall. If there are substantive changes to the LWMP following finalization, these will be brought back to GVS&DD municipalities for consideration.

### March 17, 2025 Workshop

With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Peter Navratil, General Manager, Liquid Waste Services, Metro Vancouver, provided background information regarding the Liquid Waste Management Plan and highlighted the following information:

- Metro Vancouver is collaborating with municipalities to reduce demand on the system through various means including (i) reduction in dry weather flows, (ii) diversion of organic loads, and (iii) repairs to cross-connections and leaky pipes to reduce wet weather flows;
- A number of upgrades and expansions at the North Shore, Northwest Langley, Annacis Island, and Iona Island Waste Water Treatment Plants are forthcoming;
- Wet weather pricing was introduced in 2024 and is a user-pay approach, whereby member municipalities pay fees that reflect the sewer capacity used during wet weather; and
- Sewer separation is the City's best value in that it removes the most rainwater from the system to reduce the volume of the combined sewer overflows to the Fraser River

Council amended staff's recommendation to be as follows:

1. *THAT the updated Interim Draft Liquid Waste Management Plan, adopted at the November 29, 2024, GVS&DD Board meeting, be received for information.*
2. *THAT the request to approve the Liquid Waste Management Plan be referred to the Regular Council meeting of Monday, October 6, 2025, or until such a time that Metro Vancouver has provided the public with a truly independent, thorough, and adequate response to massive and unexplained cost overruns at the North Shore Wastewater Treatment Plant.*

Metro Vancouver have confirmed that there is no formal requirement for the LWMP to be approved by city councils and as such they will not be reporting back on this topic.

Staff are providing this report as an update in response to the Council's resolution from the March 17, 2025 Workshop meeting.

### **Financial Implications**

The requirements for the current LWMP have been incorporated into the approved 2025-2029 Capital Plan.

### **Next Steps**

Metro Vancouver will continue to submit an LWMP on behalf of all GVS&DD member jurisdictions to comply with Provincial regulations.

**Report Approval**

Submitted By

Kwaku Agyare-Manu, Deputy Director, Engineering Services

Agreed By

Lisa Leblanc, Director of Engineering Services & Deputy CAO

Approved By

Lisa Leblanc, Director of Engineering Services & Deputy CAO

Lisa Spitale, Chief Administrative Officer