

# north shore news

## Sewage treatment plant a top priority

### New facility needed to meet environmental regulations

[Jane Seyd](#) / North Shore News

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The proposed Lions Gate Wastewater Treatment Plant Photograph by: image supplied, North Shore News

Regional politicians have declared a new \$700 million sewage treatment plant for the North Shore the top priority for infrastructure funding in the Lower Mainland - ahead of transportation projects like a new Broadway rapid transit line.

Metro Vancouver's board of directors confirmed Friday that the Lions Gate Wastewater Treatment Plant is at the front of the line for any funding from senior governments.

City of North Vancouver Mayor Darrell Mussatto, chair of Metro's utilities committee, said regional politicians will meet with provincial ministers next week to drum up support for the project.

Politicians also expect to head to Ottawa once their funding application is submitted to the federal government's \$14 billion Building Canada Fund.

Mussatto said Metro Vancouver is hoping to submit an application in the next two months and hear back by the end of the year.

Securing funding for the new treatment plant from senior governments is considered crucial for the project.

Historically, similar large infrastructure projects have relied on Ottawa coming up with about one-third of the costs, while the provincial government has paid another third.

Mussatto said he is still feeling optimistic about the chances of getting that funding.

The regional government has until 2020 to get a new secondary treatment plant on the North Shore up and running, in order to meet current environmental regulations. Vancouver's Iona sewage plant must also be upgraded soon after. So far, the regional government has already spent \$16 million on engineering, public consultation and preliminary designs for the new Lions Gate sewage plant, said Mussatto.

Metro politicians approved a preliminary design last fall, which will include a "state of the art" odour containment system and generate electricity from methane gas.

Regional politicians have also ruled out the prospect of a private partner operating the plant or heading up the construction project, following a detailed review. Because the government already operates five other treatment plants, "We know how they operate," said Mussatto. "The risk is very low for us."

When the plant is built, Metro will hold back \$50 million of the final payout for two years to ensure it is operating as it should.

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