



FONVCA AGENDA

Wednesday October 15th 2014

Place: DNV Hall 355 W. Queens Rd V7N 2K6

Time: 7:00-9:00pm

Chair: Brian Albinson – EUCCA

Tel: 604-980-3475 **Email:** brianalbinson@shaw.ca

Regrets:

1. Order/content of Agenda

- a. Chair Pro-Tem Suggests:

2. Adoption of Minutes of Sep 17th

- a. <http://www.fonvca.org/agendas/sep2014/minutes-sep2014.pdf>
- b. Business arising from Minutes.

3. Roundtable on “Current Affairs”

A period of roughly 30 minutes for association members to exchange information of common concerns.

- a. EUCCA
- b. Delbrook CA
- c. Blueridge CA

4. Old Business

a) Coach House bylaw fast-tracked

Pages 153-187 of

http://www.dnv.org/upload/documents/Council_Agendas_Minutes/141006RC_AGN.pdf

b) Closed Meetings of Council – Chapter 2

5. Correspondence Issues

- a) **Business arising from 0 regular emails:**
Distributed with full package and posted on web-site
- b) **Non-Posted letters – 1 this period**
Distributed as non-posted addenda to the full package.

6. New Business

- a) Questions for 2014 Municipal Candidates
<http://www.fonvca.org/agendas/oct2014/q-letter-final.pdf>
sent to all candidates Sat Oct 11th (1 M & 14C)

- b) Council “lame-duck” period: ethics and legalities
 - reversibility powers of new council
 - provincial/federal limits after “writ” dropped
 - municipalities are a provincial form of authority

c) Verbal and written submissions to PH

- Verbal abuses are dealt with by chair
- Written abuses tend to be ignored – eg.
http://www.dnv.org/upload/documents/Public_Hearings/141007PH_Public_Input/141007_Public_Hearing_-_Public_Input.pdf
- Policy review needed?

7. Any Other Business

a) Slow responses to FOI Requests

<http://www.oipc.bc.ca/report/special-reports>
and more specifically

<https://www.oipc.bc.ca/special-reports/1696>
(partial extracts included in package)

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/240742406/Special-Report-A-Step-Backwards-Report-Card-on-Government-s-Access-to-Information-Responses-April-1-2013-March-31-2014#> for full 67 page report

8. For Your Information Items

(a) Non-Legal Issues

- i) News-Clips for Oct 2014-10-14

<http://www.fonvca.org/agendas/oct2014/news-clips/>

- ii) Urban Design Guidelines for Development

<http://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/planning-and-development/community-plans-and-design-guidelines/design-and-planning-0-1--93>

- iii) Transparency in Local Government

<http://www.wikileakssudbury.org/WKL/E-1.pdf>

- iv) Value of Urban Forests in Canada

<http://www.td.com/document/PDF/economics/special/UrbanForestsInCanadianCities.pdf>

(b) Legal Issues

- i) Supreme Court rules B.C. court fees unconstitutional

<http://www.ccla.org/rightswatch/2014/10/02/chief-justice-rules-b-c-court-hearing-fees-unconstitutional/>
<http://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/14375/index.do>

- ii) 19 Science Experts on Climate Change

<http://citizenactionmonitor.wordpress.com/2014/10/13/silent-no-more-19-climate-science-experts-speak-out-their-message-is-alarming-video/>

9. Chair & Date of next meeting

Wed. Nov 19th 2014

FONVCA Received Correspondence/Subject

15 Sep 2014 → 12 Oct 2014

LINKED or NO-POST	SUBJECT

Past Chair Pro/Tem of FONVCA (Jan 2010-present)

Oct 2014	Peter Thompson	Edgemont & Upper Capilano C.A.
Sep 2014	John Miller	Lower Capilano Community Residents Assoc.
Jun 2014	Diana Belhouse	Delbrook CA & S.O.S
May 2014	Eric Andersen	Blueridge C.A.
Apr 2014	Val Moller	Woodcroft rep.
Mar 2014	Peter Thompson	Edgemont & Upper Capilano C.A.
Feb 2014	John Miller	Lower Capilano Community Residents Assoc.
Jan 2014	Dan Ellis	Lynn Valley C.A.
Nov 2013	Diana Belhouse	Delbrook CA & S.O.S
Oct 2013	Val Moller	Woodcroft rep.
Sep 2013	Eric Andersen	Blueridge C.A.
Jun 2013	Peter Thompson	Edgemont & Upper Capilano C.A.
May 2013	John Miller	Lower Capilano Community Residents Assoc.
Apr 2013	Paul Tubb	Pemberton Heights C.A.
Mar 2013	Dan Ellis	Lynn Valley C.A.
Feb 2013	Diana Belhouse	Delbrook C.A. & SOS
Jan 2013	Val Moller	Woodcroft & LGCA
Nov 2012	Eric Andersen	Blueridge C.A.
Oct 2012	Peter Thompson	Edgemont & Upper Capilano C.A.
Sep 2012	John Hunter	Seymour C.A.
Jun 2012	Paul Tubb	Pemberton Heights C.A.
May 2012	Diana Belhouse	Delbrook C.A. & SOS
Apr 2012	Val Moller	Lions gate C.A.
Mar 2012	Eric Andersen	Blueridge C.A.
Feb 2012	Dan Ellis	Lynn Valley C.A.
Jan 2012	Brian Platts	Edgemont & Upper Capilano C.A.
Nov 2011	Paul Tubb	Pemberton Heights
Oct 2011	Diana Belhouse	Delbrook C.A. & SOS
Sep 2011	John Hunter	Seymour C.A.
Jul 2011	Cathy Adams	Lions Gate C.A.
Jun 2011	Eric Andersen	Blueridge C.A.
May 2011	Dan Ellis	Lynn Valley C.A.
Apr 2011	Brian Platts	Edgemont & Upper Capilano C.A.
Mar 2011	Val Moller	Lions Gate C.A.
Feb 2011	Paul Tubb	Pemberton Heights ← Special focus on 2011-2015 Financial Plan
Jan 2011	Diana Belhouse	S.O.S.
Dec 2010	John Hunter	Seymour C.A. ← Meeting with DNV Staff on Draft#1 OCP
Nov 2010	Cathy Adams	Lions Gate C.A.
Oct 2010	Eric Andersen	Blueridge C.A.
Sep 2010	K'nud Hille	Norgate Park C.A.
Jun 2010	Dan Ellis	Lynn Valley C.A.
May 2010	Val Moller	Lions Gate C.A.
Apr 2010	Paul Tubb	Pemberton Heights
Mar 2010	Brian Platts	Edgemont C.A.
Feb 2010	Special	
Jan 2010	Dianna Belhouse	S.O.S

Notetaker

To be determined
Diana Belhouse
Eric Andersen
Dan Ellis
John Miller
John Gilmour
Diana Belhouse
John Miller
Eric Andersen
Sharlene Hertz
John Gilmour
Cathy Adams
Dan Ellis
Sharlene Hertz
Sharlene Hertz
John Miller
Sharlene Hertz
Cathy Adams
Sharlene Hertz
Kim Belcher
Diana Belhouse
John Miller
Dan Ellis
John Hunter
John Miller
Cathy Adams
Eric Andersen
Paul Tubb
Dan Ellis
John Hunter
Cathy Adams
Brian Platts/Corrie Kost
Diana Belhouse
Eric Andersen
Brenda Barrick
None
John Hunter
Paul Tubb
Eric Andersen
Cathy Adams
Cathy Adams
Dan Ellis
Diana Belhouse
K'nud Hille

FONVCA

Draft Minutes of Regular Meeting, Wednesday September 17th , 2014

Place: DNV Hall 355 W. Queens Rd V7N 2K6

Time: 7:00-9:00pm

Chair: John Miller – Lower Capilano Community Residents Assoc.

Email: jimmam@shaw.ca Tel: 604-985-8594

Regrets: Cathy Adams

Attendees:

Eric Andersen	Blueridge Comm. Assoc.
Diana Belhouse (note taker)	Delbrook Community Assoc.
Sharlene Hertz	Delbrook Community Assoc.
Douglas Curran	Gateway Resident
Jim Hanson	Blueridge Comm. Assoc.
Corrie Kost	Edgemont & Upper Capilano Comm. Assoc.
John Miller (Chair Pro-tem)	Lower Capilano Community Residents Assoc.
Val Moller	Assoc. of Woodcroft Councils
Rene Gourley	Delbrook Community Assoc.

1. Order/content of Agenda

- a) Call to Order at 7:03 pm
- b) Chair Pro-Tem Suggests: as is, except for additional item 6(d) Re: List of members on DNV Re-Unification Committee

2. Adoption of Minutes of June 18th , 2014

<http://www.fonvca.org/agendas/sep2014/minutes-jun2014.pdf>

- a. Minutes of June 18th/2014 were approved as circulated.
- b. Business arising: None.

3. Roundtable on 'Current Affairs'

- a) EUCCA – Corrie Kost
 - Reported on a case where trees were to be cut without checking that the trees belonged to the person requesting the permit. The Tree Cutting Permitting process is alleged to be flawed as there are insufficient checks to ensure ownership.
 - Impact of CASL (Canadian Anti-Spam Legislation) on community associations. An analysis of this new Federal Legislation (July 1/2014) by barristers and solicitors Stewart, McDannold & Stuart indicated that if an email from a C.A. is sent to a member recipient who has consented or where consent is implied through

membership, which does not ask for a monetary contribution is safe from legal action. However there must be a method whereby the recipient can unsubscribe at no cost. The requirement for a recipient's consent applies to Community Associations if the e-mail advertises recreational and other events, especially if admission fees are to be charged.

Penalties for violating CASL can be significant and after three years there will be a private right-of-action for individuals who CEM's without consent (SPAM).

- Feedback on FONVCA questions to municipal candidates for elections;
The attendees decided to eliminate posting hardcopies of these questions and replies at the all candidate meetings (too much work by Corrie) and instead to only post them on the FONVCA website using the previous coded stencil.
- EUCCA Procedures and need for common standards
The Organization and Procedural Rules of EUCCA were distributed for information.

b) Delbrook C.A. – Diana Belhouse

- Issue #5 of the Delbrook Digest was distributed in the agenda material.
- DCA AGM and program will be held at DNV Hall Thursday Oct 2/2014
- A 4th Dialogue will be held Monday Oct 20th in the Maple Rm Delbrook RecCentre
- A Municipal All-Candidates meeting will be held Nov 4th – Potlatch Rm. Cap. Library
- Sharlene Hertz explained her agenda attached article (see also item 7(d) on the lack of DNV transparency in holding about twice as many closed (in-camera) meeting as other Metro Municipalities.
- Renee Gourley explained Dialogue #4 following their Oct 2nd AGM “Building Community” convened by Peter V. Hall, Associate Professor of Urban Studies at SFU – panel to discuss ways to increase meaningful personal connections between neighbours.

c) Blueridge C.A. – Eric Andersen

- Invited Mayor and Gavin Joyce to one of their meetings.
- Progress being made on their “Sharing Gardens”. Team of volunteers needed for next spring. “Sharing Gardens” crops go to charitable organizations, but some will be available for the volunteers growing them/ No produce is sold to the public.
- Wine tasting event to be held by Blueridge CA. Will be held in a resident's home (max 20 attendees). A way to introduce new residents of the neighbourhood.

d) Lower Capilano Residents' C.A. – John Miller

At the public information meeting in January 2014 for the proposed development of 1700 Marine Drive, the literature from the District listed a variance for the setback on the north for the heights of the 3rd and 4th floors. This item was discussed at the meeting and the developer informed the attendees that the District had negotiated a larger setback on Marine Drive (for a future bus lane extension) in exchange for not meeting the setback requirement on the north. The Report to Council at the September 15th meeting did not contain this variance, nor was it listed in the minutes of the public information meeting, which were attached to the report. Upon questioning the planner (prior to the Council meeting), John was informed that the planners' superior interpreted the requirements differently and over-ruled the planner. The attendees of the public information meeting

were never informed of this change/re-interpretation and it appears to be hidden from Council (thereby there appears to exist a problem with the public process).

Further on 3(a) Corrie reported on a change in a development taking place in Edgemont Village – first shown without any restaurant use – then adding a take-out restaurant use just before the public hearing and now – at a subsequent public hearing being further changed to a 30 seat restaurant with a deficit of 3 parking stalls. Corrie alleges the bylaw interpretation to be incorrect and that the parking deficiency would be 6 stalls. Staff did not subsequently address that allegation.

4. Old business

a) Fine Tuning FONVCA “Procedures”

<http://www.fonvca.org/agendas/sep2012/Procedures-before-after.pdf>

After due deliberation of the revised “Procedures” – which were largely cosmetic and consistent with the action by the DNV to no longer provide formal recognition of Community Associations – the members present adopted them. Note that the “Criteria for Official Recognition” are included as reference material to enable members at a FONVCA meeting to determine if those at the table have largely met those criteria.

Doug Curran spoke at some length but was finally told that the Chair could not recognize him as he did not speak as a representative on any community association – but was there merely as an observer who could not participate in any discussions without the consent of members at the table.

5. Correspondence issues

a) Business arising from regular emails:

No discussion since all items are now normally tagged as “NOPOST”

b) Non-Posted letters: It was agreed that all 12 submitted email be posted on the fonvca.org website. Particularly noteworthy was email #5 – “Need to properly manage public property – or possibly lose it” – which included a transcript of the recent BC Supreme Court judgement of District of West Vancouver vs. Jie Lie – implying that municipalities who refrain from properly notifying homeowners who encroach on public land may well lose its public ownership!

6. New Business

a) The UBCM passed and the Province subsequently adopted 4-Yr Terms for Municipal Councils.

This was done without consultation with either consultation of the representatives with their respective council, but more importantly, without consultation with their respective electorates. Highly non-democratic! Despite that, this issue was twice voted on and rejected in prior years. How did DNV representatives vote on this issue? Elections for four year terms will take place Sat. Nov 15th. Note that deadline for submission to be a municipal candidate is Friday Oct 10th.

b) Questions for 2014 Municipal Candidates

DNV 2011 FONVCA Questions/Replies:

<http://www.fonvca.org/Issues/Election-2011/q-letter.pdf> (attached to agenda package)

<http://www.fonvca.org/Issues/Election-2011/replies>

Previous Municipal Elections: <http://www.fonvca.org/municipal-elections.html>

Questions to the candidates for the Nov/2014 election were reviewed, modified etc – resulting in **11 questions** to be put to the candidate approximately October 11th with replies to fonvca@fonvca.org by Friday October 24th.

c) Election promises unenforceable

<http://www.vancouver.sun.com/news/Opinion+hold+politicians+accountable/10052466/story.html>

As indicated in the above article – we cannot legally hold politicians accountable for their promises made prior to being elected. The only recourse is to vote them out at the next election.

d) 2014 North Shore Re-unification Committee struck by DNV

On September 2 the Advisory Oversight Committee met to make appointments to the 2014 North Shore Reunification Review Committee. The following nine people, from a list of 26 applicants, were appointed:

Helen Goodland, Architect (DNV/CNV); **James Ridge**, Senior Public Servant (DNV); **James Boyd**, Retired Accountant (DWN); **Jeff Murl**, Businessman (CNV); **Bob Boase**, Consultant (DNV); **Greg Lee**, Retired President Cap U (DNV); **Mohammad Afsar**, Retired Engineer (DNV); **John Hetherington** (Retired Accountant (DNV); and, **Terri Rear**, Project Manager (CNV).

The committee will assess the scope and complexity of work required to ensure a robust amalgamation study process. Work will begin immediately and the committee will report its findings to District Council on October 6, 2014.

7. Any Other Business

a) Ottawa allows secondary suites in Townhouses.

Details are provided on page 38 (40 of file) of

http://issuu.com/emcorleans/docs/orleans_724

This is a warning of things to come to your neighbourhood!

b) DCC's Revised?

http://www.cscd.gov.bc.ca/lqd/finance/development_cost_charges.htm

No discussion.

c) DWV / CNV/ DNV Coach Houses Update

<http://westvancouver.ca/sites/default/files/dwv/council-agendas/2014/may/05/14may05-5.pdf>

<http://www.cnv.org/Property%20and%20Development/Building%20and%20Development/Development%20Applications/Development%20Permits/Accessory%20Coach%20Houses>

<http://identity.dnv.org/article.asp?c=1152>

No discussion.

d) Too many Closed Council Meetings?

*“Municipal law was changed to require that municipal governments hold meetings that are open to the public, in order to imbue municipal governments with a robust democratic legitimacy. The democratic legitimacy of municipal decisions does not spring solely from periodic elections, **but also from a decision-making process that is transparent, accessible to the public, and mandated by law.**”* - The Supreme Court of Canada.

<https://www.ombudsman.bc.ca/how-to-make-a-complaint/online-complaint-form>

http://www.ombudsman.on.ca/Files/sitemedia/Images/Reports/1590-OMLETAR-ENGLISH-WebResolution_1.pdf

<http://www.fonvca.org/agendas/nov2012/walton-26oct2012.pdf>

Extract from Delbrook CA Sep 2014 Newsletter was also included in the full agenda package.

See agenda item 3(b) for more on this issue. As detailed in the attachment, nearly twice as many hours were spent yearly in closed (in-camera) council meetings as in “regular” council meetings!

As was noted by the BC ombudsperson *“Local governments should provide as much detail as possible about the basis for closing the meeting without undermining the reason for closing the meeting in the first place. This will help to limit speculation, increase public trust and enhance the credibility of the local government”*

It was especially noted in the attachments that section 12 of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act requires that much of the background information of these closed meetings must be released after 5 years – and all of it after 15 years!

8. For Your Information Items:

The items listed in this section were not discussed – except to point out the utility of having the title of all the monthly collections of community related news-clips stored on the web site in item 8(a)(i).

9. Chair and Date of next FONVCA meeting:

Next Regular Meeting: 7pm Wed. October 15th 2014 – Chair Pro-tem – Peter Thompson
(It was suggested, if available, a rep. be chosen from either Norgate or Pemberton Heights)

Meeting declared Closed: ~ 9:15pm

14 CAPILANO ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

MULTIPLE

Description

This project would set aside funds for improvements to be made as part of the installation of Metro Vancouver’s Capilano Watermain No. 9 project.

The District may wish to provide additional improvements that would have been outside of the original project scope, but that are best delivered with the watermain project. Details will need to be negotiated with Metro Vancouver, but improvements could include:

- Cycling infrastructure;
- New sidewalks;
- Sidewalk width to allow for bus shelters or wheelchair pads;
- Upgrades to east-west trails expecting additional use as detours; and
- Funding to make new traffic signal permanent at intersection of Edgemont Boulevard and Ridgewood Drive.



Similar Metro Vancouver construction to the upcoming Capilano Watermain project

Origin Transportation Plan (2012), Bicycle Master Plan (2012) and community input

Project Benefits

When Capilano Road is under construction, it will be beneficial to include detours for pedestrians and cyclists as well as vehicles. There seem to be opportunities to introduce trail connections for pedestrians where a road link is not possible due to topography.

The reconstruction of Capilano Road presents the opportunity for the appropriate pedestrian and cycling infrastructure to be implemented. The need for improved conditions for walking and cycling on Capilano Road is long-standing.

Funding

Funding will be subject to negotiation with Metro Vancouver.

Timing

2015-2016

Corporate Goals

- Implementing the OCP Building strong foundations Improving the way we do business

FONVCA AGENDA ITEM 6(a)

Oct 11/2014

To: All Candidates running for Mayor/Council
in the District of North Vancouver

From: FONVCA (Federation of North
Vancouver Community Associations)

Dear Candidate,

As you may be aware, a number of community associations in the District of North Vancouver regularly meet to discuss common concerns and communicate information with each other. At our FONVCA meeting of September 17/2014 a list of 11 questions was drafted by members of community associations for prospective members of Council, including the Mayor, to which we kindly request a written reply. We ask that these replies be **emailed to fonvca@fonvca.org**

All replies will be collated and subsequently:

- redistributed to FONVCA members; and
- placed on our web site www.fonvca.org.

Knowing your position on these important ISSUES & PRINCIPLES will enable our communities to make more informed decisions at the polls on November 15th.

We ask that you return your answers as soon as possible but **no later than Fri Oct 24/2014.** When appropriate, please feel free to keep your responses brief!

Yours truly,

John Miller (FONVCA Chair pro-tem)

The 11 questions...

1. What practical experience and accomplishments qualify you for local governance?
2. What three major issues are you most concerned about in the DNV, and how can they be addressed?
3. What role should community associations play?
4. What is your solution to the downloading of costs by the Provincial and Federal governments to the municipalities?
5. Will you commit to the removal, during the next term of Council, of all encroachments which block public access to the waterfront?
6. What is your definition of "affordable" housing?
7. Will you push for and support doing a published review of DNV salaries, wages and especially benefits, as compared to the private sector?
8. What is your position on adherence to the current OCP?
9. Do you support the retention of public and public assembly zoned lands?
10. What is your position on the pace and style of densification?
11. How would you address increased traffic congestion?

FONVCA AGENDA ITEM 7(a)

B.C. privacy responses taking step backwards, says commissioner's report

THE CANADIAN PRESS SEPTEMBER 23, 2014



B.C. Information and Privacy Commissioner Elizabeth Denham says provincial government response to access to information requests is getting slower.

Photograph by: DARREN STONE, VICTORIA TIMES COLONIST

VICTORIA — Outdated government policies on sharing and managing information are choking off the fulfilment of thousands of information requests made by British Columbians every year, says a report released Tuesday.

Information and Privacy Commissioner Elizabeth Denham said her report raises concerns about the ongoing backward steps contributing to increasing delays in the legislated 30-business-day deadline to complete access to information requests.

The 67-page report, *Backwards: Report Card on Government's Access to Information Responses*, states in the past two years on-time access to information response requests have dropped from 93 per cent to 74 per cent.

The report concluded the four government ministries with the lowest on-time rates were: Justice, 72 per cent; Energy and Mines, 66 per cent; Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training, 65 per cent; and Ministry of Children and Family Development, 52 per cent.

The report said the completion of access requests suffered significantly in the last fiscal year with the children's ministry ranking lowest and slowest of the 19 ministries.

"This is an alarmingly low statistic that reveals that for nearly half of all access requests, (the children's ministry) is taking too long to respond to its access to information requests," stated the report.

In 2012/13, no ministry was below the current government average on-time rate of 74 per cent, the

report said.

Access to information requests have increased by 63 per cent between 2008 to the fiscal year 2013/14, the report stated.

Denham said the delays in response times for information frustrates those who file the requests and erodes the public's right to know.

"I'm concerned that it's a trend and the issues are systemic," she said in an interview. "It's the law and one-in-four requests are responded to outside of the legal limits, and I think that's a serious problem for the public."

Denham said she's also troubled by the government's record management and the deletion of emails that staff consider short term in nature. She suggested government officials make sure the documents are archived.

The report makes seven recommendations, including ensuring government builds access and privacy into any new information management system.

"What this speaks to is the need for British Columbia to develop a modern, statutory framework for information management that addresses the full life-cycle of a record, from creation and management through to final disposition and archiving," the report stated.

Such a system would fundamentally improve government's ability to respond to requests, the report concluded.

The report also recommends allowing more public access to the calendar and appointment records of cabinet ministers and senior public officials to loosen the load of officials processing other access to information requests.

Requests to view calendar information — filed primarily by other political parties — accounts for 75 per cent of the overall increase in access requests over the past two years, the report stated.

"You wouldn't want any security risks, for example, people to figure out where an official is always going to be on a second Tuesday of a month, but I think most information on a calendar going through an FOI request is releasable," she said.

Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services Minister Andrew Wilkinson said in a statement the government is always looking for ways to improve access to information for British Columbians.

The statement does not say if the government will heed Denham's suggestion and release minister and bureaucrat calendar information. Wilkinson could not be immediately reached for comment.

The Freedom of Information and Privacy Association said in a statement that the government must move immediately to stop the backward trend.

"It's disgraceful," said executive director Vincent Gogolek. "This type of backsliding is not acceptable, and the government has to act immediately to remedy this situation."

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Executive Summary

This special report addresses three issues.

The first is an examination of the timeliness of government responses to access to information requests under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. Second, this report revisits the issue of “no responsive records” replies to general access to information requests. Third, this report examines government's issuance of fee estimates in response to access requests.

With respect to **timeliness**, the legislation requires public bodies to respond within 30 business days of receiving a request, with provisions for time extensions in specific cases. To measure timeliness we use three benchmarks – percentage of requests responded to *on time*, the *average processing time* a ministry took to respond to access requests, and the *average number of business days overdue*. The first of the three measures is the most important in the scoring methodology.

Since the publication of our last timeliness report in 2011, the average on-time response across all Ministries has dropped from 93% to 74%, average processing times have increased from 22 business days to 44 business days, and the average number of business days overdue rose from 17 to 47.

Special attention is given in this report to one type of request: calendars of Ministers and senior officials. This type of request accounts for 75% of the overall increase in volume over the last two fiscal years, and 18% of all access requests submitted to government. This report recommends government routinely release calendar information on a monthly basis. This would significantly lower the administrative burden associated with processing the large number of these requests and would also be consistent with the open government initiative.

With respect to circumstances where general access to information requests result in **no responsive records**, this report provides an update on my office's prior investigation of this issue. The most recent data indicates that the percentage of no responsive records replies across government has been reduced from 25% in 2011/12 to 19% in 2013/14.

The Office of the Premier consistently has a higher percentage of no responsive records replies than government average. In the course of reviewing the reasons for this trend we discovered that, in some instances, individuals were deleting received and sent items in bulk from email accounts. These individuals stated that they did so because they believed the records to be transitory in nature. To address this issue government-wide, this report recommends a new email

management system to document and preserve the email records of Ministers and senior government officials.

With respect to the issue of **fee estimates**, this report examines the sizable discrepancy between fee estimates provided to persons requesting government records and the total fees actually paid. Members of the public had expressed concern that government's issuance of high fee estimates may be to deter applicants from pursuing their requests. This report concludes that the discrepancy is accounted for by government's work to assist applicants to narrow broad requests to the records they are most interested in, thereby eliminating or significantly reducing the fee.

This report contains seven recommendations which, if implemented, will significantly improve government's overall performance responding to access requests and help get them back on track.

5.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1

Government should define and implement steps to eliminate the backlog of access to information requests and, in the forthcoming budget cycle, should give priority to providing more resources to dealing with the greatly increased volume of access requests.

RECOMMENDATION 2

As recommended in my report entitled *A Failure to Archive: Recommendations to Modernize Government Information Management*, government should adopt a modern statutory framework to address the needs and realities of the digital age, recognizing the importance for government to effectively track records from their creation through to their archiving.

RECOMMENDATION 3

After discussion and agreement between government and the political parties currently making calendar requests, the minister responsible for FIPPA should develop a system to proactively disclose calendar information of ministers, deputy ministers, assistant deputy ministers as well as certain other staff whose calendars are routinely the subject of access to information requests. This release should, at a minimum, contain the names of participants, the subject and date of meetings and be published on a monthly basis.

RECOMMENDATION 4

The Ministry of Children and Family Development should give attention on a priority basis to its statutory obligation under FIPPA to respond to access to information requests within legal timelines. Planned actions should include addressing elements such as printing and retrieving difficulties regarding the ICM system, staff levels related to access to information and providing effective ongoing training to ICM users.

RECOMMENDATION 5

Government should ensure it builds access and privacy into any new information management system at the design stage in order to ensure the system operates from a records management perspective as well as from a program perspective.

RECOMMENDATION 6

Where government does not have records responsive to an access to information request, IAO should provide a brief explanation to the applicant as to why this is the case.

RECOMMENDATION 7

Government should implement the Capstone or a similar email management system with respect to senior government officials to document its key decisions. This system should also be adopted by the Office of the Premier and Ministerial offices.

6.0 CONCLUSION

I am deeply concerned with government's decrease in performance with respect to the timeliness of its responses to access requests. While I am somewhat encouraged that government is taking steps to address the backlog of overdue files, in my view it needs to take further action to completely eliminate the backlog and to create a permanent solution.

Government should make meeting its legislated timeliness obligations a priority that it will meet. Dealing with the increase in the volume of requests by reviewing staffing levels in the forthcoming budget cycle would be a major step in meeting these legal obligations.

Government should also take steps to proactively disclose high-volume requests such as calendars. Nearly 20% of all requests are for calendars of government officials. These requests are repetitive in nature and target particular positions within government. I believe it is in government's own interest to come up with an efficient method of releasing this information without the need for an access request by dealing directly with political party representatives to seek a resolution.

The problems that MCFD are facing also need attention. The fact that nearly half of all requests that were closed by MCFD in the last fiscal year were in violation of the timeliness requirements under FIPPA is not acceptable. MCFD needs to work to rectify this situation.

For long-term government-wide success in meeting its statutory obligations under FIPPA, government needs to adopt a new framework for information management to address the needs and realities of the digital records age. The current model is not sufficiently effective for government ministries to identify and locate records that are potentially responsive to access to information requests. Government also risks losing records that will have historical significance to British Columbians. A new approach would allow government to more easily track records from their creation through to archiving and should greatly improve government's ability to respond to access requests in a timely manner.

With respect to quality of responses, I found that government's performance has improved statistically since I last examined the issue of no responsive records in 2013. Since that time, we have seen a decrease across government from 25% to 19% of access requests not receiving any records. I will continue to monitor this issue as I am somewhat concerned that while statistics have improved, government practices do not appear to have changed significantly.

The Office of the Premier's lack of responsive records on broad requests to senior officials supports the need for government to enact a legislated duty to document key decisions. A legislated duty to document is crucial in terms of accountability and good governance as well as the trust of the public. As a step towards this legislated duty, government could implement an email management system that preserves the email of senior government officials so that it preserves records responsive to future access to information requests.

I did not find evidence that government is using fee estimates as a means of deterring applicants from pursuing access to information requests. Instead, my office's review of files indicated that where government's initial fee estimate is high due to a broad request, it is working with applicants to narrow requests to areas of particular interest. I am satisfied with government's efforts in this regard.

I am committed to re-visiting government's performance in responding to access to information requests once statistics are available for the current fiscal year and will consider whether a public report is needed at that time. I realise it will take slightly longer for government to completely solve the problems it currently faces in this area, but it is essential for the sake of facilitating the rights of all British Columbians under FIPPA that they take immediate steps to make the necessary changes and create a new model for electronic records management.

We live in a time where searches for information on the internet are measured in fractions of a second. While government has to ensure it properly severs records before releasing them, our citizens should not have to accept that a typical access to information request to government will take months, or in some cases years, until they receive a response.

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SPECIAL REPORT

FONVCA AGENDA ITEM 8(a)(iv)



TD Economics

September 24, 2014

THE VALUE OF URBAN FORESTS IN CITIES ACROSS CANADA

Highlights

- Urban forests are the trees and other plants found on the streets, in our yards, in parks, and surrounding our major cities.
- These forests provide a multitude of benefits, enhancing the landscape, reducing pollution, and helping control heating/cooling costs.
- The greater Halifax, Montreal, and Vancouver areas together contain more than 100 million trees, worth an estimated \$51 billion (Halifax: \$11.5b; Montreal: \$4.5b; Vancouver: \$35b).
- The return on trees is significant: for each dollar spent on maintenance, between \$1.88 and \$12.70 in benefits are realized each year, depending on the city.

In June of this year, TD Economics released the report “Urban Forests: The Value of Trees in the City of Toronto”, available [here](#). It demonstrated the various benefits of trees from a range of dimensions that are often underappreciated. The report found that the urban forest was worth \$7 billion and residents receive from \$1.35 to \$3.20 in benefits for each dollar spent on forest maintenance (Table 1).

The report received strong interest from across the country, which naturally led to requests for similar estimates for other Canadian urban centres.

This report examines the economic and environmental benefits of the forests in and around three major Canadian cities: Halifax, Montreal, and Vancouver. We describe the environmental benefits provided by these forests, and then examine the unique characteristics of each city’s urban forest. In contrast to the Toronto report, this report looks at the forests within the greater area surrounding each city. Our analysis thus includes the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM), Greater Montreal, and the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD).

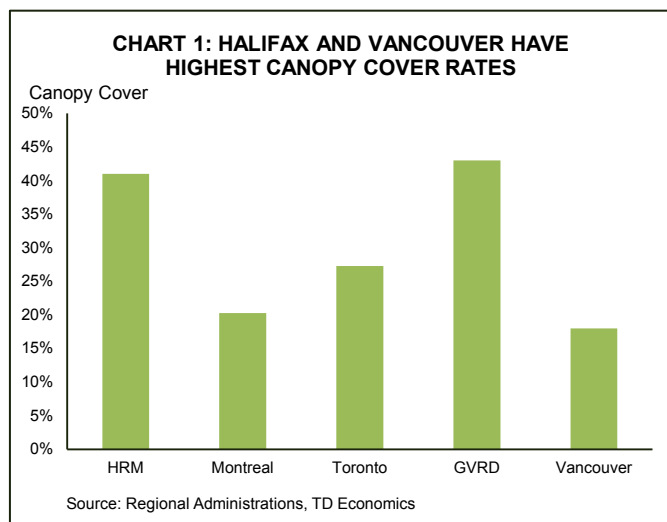
A high level of variation exists across cities: for instance, as Chart 1 shows, canopy cover (the share of a city area shaded by trees) varies widely. Even within an area, variation can be observed, as the canopy within the City of Vancouver is much lower than for the Greater Vancouver area overall/ in general.¹

Table 1 - Annual benefits provided by Toronto's urban forests

Benefit	\$ value (millions)	\$/tree
Wet-weather flow	\$53.95	\$5.28
Air quality	\$19.09	\$1.87
Energy savings	\$6.42	\$0.63
Carbon sequestration	\$1.24	\$0.12
Energy emission abatement	\$0.58	\$0.06
Total benefit	\$81.29	\$7.95
Cost benefit ratio	-	\$1.35 - \$3.20

* Carbon avoided and sequestered is net of the emissions from the decomposition and maintenance of trees.

Source: Toronto Parks, Forestry & Recreation, TD Economics.



Benefits of Urban Forests

Investing in the development and maintenance of urban forests is in many ways an investment in the health and well-being of the city and its residents. While people may enjoy having trees around for personal reasons, such as the calm of sitting in a park or walking the dog, the benefits of urban forests extend well beyond enjoyment and include numerous economic, environmental and social benefits.

Economic and social benefits that accrue from urban forests include, for example, recreation or tourism, and the associated spending. These may be sizeable, particularly for Montreal (Botanical Gardens), and Vancouver (Stanley Park, Grouse Mountain, others). Trees can also help reduce the frequency of road repairs, and have been shown to improve property values for both residential and commercial buildings.

Key benefits provided by urban forests include:

- **Wet weather control:** The canopy and root systems of urban trees help to reduce strain on city infrastructure by absorbing precipitation, reducing the pollutants entering city water systems, and reducing erosion.
- **Air quality:** By their very nature, urban trees improve the atmosphere around them by removing carbon, ozone, sulphur dioxide and other pollutants from the air, while producing oxygen. They also reduce small particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) that can affect human respiratory systems.
- **Energy savings:** Trees that are located near homes and other structures help to reduce energy bills. Tree canopies provide shade to buildings in the summer,

reducing cooling costs; while in the winter, their structures reduce the cooling effect of winds, helping to lower heating bills. In addition to the direct cost savings, depending on the energy source mix in a given city, emissions of pollutants are also reduced as demands on power plants fall.

- **Carbon sequestration:** In addition to removing air pollution, trees also capture and store carbon as they grow, keeping it out of the atmosphere; helping to mitigate potential climate effects.

The value of these benefits is the focus of our analysis. By examining the annual costs of water purification, or energy costs, we can calculate the money saved by the presence of trees. Similarly, the costs associated with air pollution provide a value for the pollutants that trees remove. The money that is saved by the presence of trees is the economic benefit of these trees. Because we focus only on these benefits of urban forests, the dollar value we calculate will under-estimate the complete annual benefits of urban forests, which would include tourism, recreation and other social benefits that one cannot put a dollar value on.

Urban Forests in Halifax

Halifax, the most populous city in Eastern Canada with a metro area population of around 415 thousand, is surrounded by forest in nearly all directions. As a result, canopy coverage across the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) is fairly high, at 41 per cent. In addition to the trees surrounding the city, Halifax also features a number of large urban parks, including Point Pleasant Park, Sir Sandford Fleming Park, and Shubie Park. Halifax has had a long history of forestry, both in support of shipbuilding and for export. Consequently, the forests around Halifax are relatively young, with lower

Table 2 - Annual benefits provided by urban forests in Greater Halifax

Benefit	\$ value (millions)	\$/tree
Wet-weather flow	\$2.10	\$0.04
Air quality	\$12.59	\$0.22
Energy savings	\$12.40	\$0.21
Carbon sequestration	\$4.28	\$0.07
Total benefits	\$31.37	\$0.54
Cost benefit ratio	-	\$12.70

Source: Halifax Regional Municipality, TD Economics.

value fast-growing species such as red maple, white and gray birch, poplars, and serviceberry dominant. Younger trees provide less environmental benefits, resulting in lower per-tree benefit values.

Data from the HRM’s Urban Forestry Management Plan show that nearly 58 million trees grow in Halifax. That is over 130 trees per resident, by far the highest tree-to-population ratio of the cities in our sample. The replacement value of these trees is approximately \$11.5bn, or about \$200 per tree, reflecting the young age of the trees.

Beyond the replacement value of Halifax’s urban forests, they also provide benefits of more than \$30 million per year, as shown in Table 2. The greatest benefits result from improvements in air quality, and the energy savings associated with having trees near homes and other buildings.

Trees in Halifax remove nearly 120 thousand tonnes of carbon from the atmosphere each year – equivalent to the annual emissions of 80 thousand motor vehicles.

There are costs associated with maintaining urban forests, as trees must be planted each year, dead and dying trees removed, trees pruned around power lines, and root damage to sidewalks repaired. Many of the trees are in wild and semi-wild areas, and so require relatively little maintenance – this allows Halifax to maintain a relatively modest forestry budget – as a result, it has the largest cost-benefit ratio of the cities in our sample, with almost \$13 in annual benefits received for each dollar spent on forestry.

Urban Forests in Montreal

The financial capital of Quebec, and with over 3 million residents, Montreal is the second most populous Canadian city. Montreal has significantly less urban forest than the other cities examined in this report, with an estimated urban forest of about six million trees and a canopy cover of 20 per cent, based on a city tree policy report. This represents a ratio of just 2 trees per resident within the Montreal area. Nonetheless, Montreal has a number of sizeable urban parks, including Parc du Mont-Royal, Parc Nature Bois-de-Liesse, and Parc Maisonneuve, which includes the Montreal Botanical Gardens. A wide variety of trees grow in and around Montreal. The most common species are maples (Norwegian and Silver), honey locust, ash, and elm trees.

Although Montreal has a relatively small urban forest, it is of high quality, with many mature trees. Consequently, individual trees are, on average, quite valuable, with an estimated replacement value of about \$750/tree for an overall

Benefit	\$ value (millions)	\$/tree
Wet-weather flow	\$15.95	\$2.66
Air quality	\$6.19	\$1.03
Energy savings	\$1.72	\$0.29
Carbon sequestration	\$0.58	\$0.10
Total benefit	\$24.44	\$4.07
Cost benefit ratio	-	\$1.88

Source: City of Montreal, TD Economics.

replacement value of approximately \$4.5 billion.

Due to its high population density and fairly even distribution of trees, the largest benefit provided by the Montreal forest is via the reduction in wet-weather flow and its associated strain on infrastructure. At \$16 million per year, trees help to reduce the city’s water treatment bill by over four per cent per year. The energy savings provided by Montreal’s urban forest is enough to pay for more than 1000 households’ annual energy bills. Overall, Montreal’s urban forests provide nearly \$25 million in annual benefits, or more than \$4 per tree.

Per dollar spent, Montreal receives among the lowest benefits of the cities in our study. That said, nearly \$2 in benefits are received for each dollar spent on urban forestry, which is still an excellent return on investment. Additionally, plans have been announced to further increase the urban forest, with the goal of increasing the urban canopy cover to 25 per cent by 2025, in part by planting 300 thousand trees.

Urban Forests in Greater Vancouver

Nearly 2.5 million people call Greater Vancouver home. Stretching from the British Columbia/Washington State border in the south, across to Langley in the east, into Cypress provincial park in the north, and Bowen island in the west (see map), Greater Vancouver includes more than 10 cities within its boundaries.

Because it covers such a large and diverse area, Vancouver contains a wide variety of landscapes, from the dense vertical development of central Vancouver, to the verdant forests of the university endowment lands and the multiple provincial parks contained within its boundaries. For this reason, Vancouver presents a set of unique challenges related to its urban forest. For instance, while the overall canopy cover is estimated at 43%, there is large variation across



the relatively low canopy cover in urban areas, and local weather patterns, the annual energy savings are relatively low – on a per-tree basis, Greater Vancouver sees the lowest benefit of the cities under consideration.

Overall, Greater Vancouver receives the largest annual benefit from its urban forests, of nearly \$225 million per year. Although the urban forestry budget (including all cities/municipalities in the region) is relatively high, a significant payoff to this budget is seen. For each dollar spent on forestry, residents receive at least \$4.59 in benefits each year. Several cities within the area, including Vancouver, have committed to growing their canopy cover, which will further increase the value of the urban forest.

Bottom Line

Urban forests - the trees that line our streets, and grow in our yards and parks - do much more than beautify our surroundings. As this report has shown, they are valuable environmental resources. Urban forests within Halifax, Montreal and Vancouver have a combined replacement value of \$51 billion. In addition they provide environmental benefits of over \$250 million per year, or more than \$330 million per year when Toronto is included. It also bears repeating that these are lower bound estimates which don't include the value of tourism, recreation, or increased property values. What this means is that urban forests don't just green our neighborhoods, they also help keep the green in our pocketbooks.

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Table 4 - Annual benefits provided by urban forests in Greater Vancouver

Benefit	\$ value (millions)	\$/tree
Wet-weather flow	\$96.43	\$1.34
Air quality	\$115.86	\$1.61
Energy savings	\$4.64	\$0.16
Carbon sequestration	\$7.21	\$0.10
Total benefit	\$224.15	\$3.21
Cost benefit ratio	-	\$4.59

Source: i-Tree Canopy, City of Vancouver, City of North Vancouver, City of Surrey, Metro Vancouver, Manitoba Hydro, TD Economics.

ENDNOTES

- 1 It should be noted that the city of Vancouver excludes the University Endowment Lands (and thus Pacific Spirit park), while this area is included in the Greater Vancouver area.

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