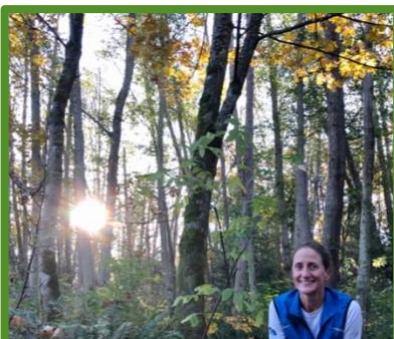




Director's Report

Dear neighbours in the UNA, UBC, and UEL communities

As the days get shorter and cooler, and the pandemic drags on with cases on the rise, my message for this month is about **kindness and compassion**. Kindness to yourself, kindness to those close to you, and even to those you don't know. For me, 2020 has brought some days when life feels somewhat normal, and others when the impact of the pandemic and everything else going on around us is pretty overwhelming. And from what I can tell based on many conversations with community members, this feeling is increasingly common. There is a growing concern for our neighbours who may be more adversely impacted by the pandemic – whether due to economic hardship, loneliness, fear, discrimination, declining health (mental or physical), loss of loved ones, or isolation, just to name a few. This is our time to go out of our way to look for opportunities to support each other through kindness and compassion.



Taking some time to recharge in my happy place – running in Pacific Spirit Regional Park

To start with, don't forget to take a few moments to look after yourself. These are crazy times, and this pandemic is more like a marathon than a sprint. Marathons are all about pacing yourself, and staying in tune with your body needs, and when. If we don't take the time to be kind to ourselves, it will be that much harder it is hard to care for others, and that much harder to navigate the challenges that the coming months will bring.

Next, look for opportunities to show kindness to those around you. This could mean picking up the phone to reconnect with a friend (or better yet, planning to meet for a take-out cup of tea from a local business), engaging in a longer conversation than just "hi how are you?" with a neighbour, or mailing a card or care package to a loved one.

And finally, for those people you don't know, now is the time to practice patience, compassion, and empathy. Offer a greeting or a kind word as you pass someone on the sidewalk (from behind your mask or from a 2-metre distance, of course!), and take a deep breath before passing judgement on someone else's decisions or actions. Appearances aren't always as they seem, and someone may be having a tougher day than you or I could imagine. Behind someone's curt response in the grocery store, or a reply of silence when you've tried to reach out, may be a sign that the individual could really use a little extra compassion and kindness – heck, couldn't we **all** use a little extra dose this year?!

We never know when our gesture of kindness could turn someone's day around, or when our connection will lead us to realise that someone is really suffering and needs more help (and we may be able to help find that assistance). By seeking out opportunities to show kindness to those around us, each of us will feel better, too.



You can read more about one small initiative to reconnect neighbours in this time of physical distancing in the “Community Connections section” on page 5.

If you are feeling isolated, reach out to someone you know, or feel free to email me. I love meeting neighbours and would truly welcome the chance to go for a physically distanced walk together, or hot drink. We don't need to suffer alone.

I realise that all this may sound corny to some, and obvious to others, but I really think we need to be extra attentive right now to those who may need a little extra kindness in their lives, and again, I think we all could use a little boost this year. If you have suggestions about how we, as neighbours, can support each other, I'd love to hear them.

In other news, I was recently invited to sit down with former CBC broadcaster Jaeny Baik to talk about my role as Metro Vancouver's Director for Electoral Area A. You can watch and listen to that conversation [here](#). This clip will give you a better sense of my broader role, including for the more rural parts of our region.



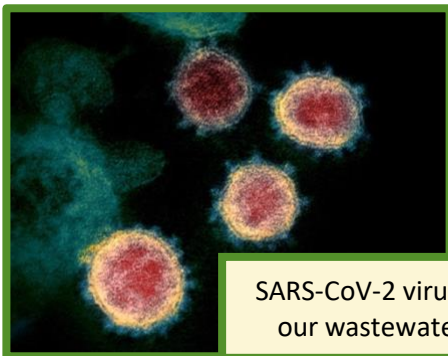
Interview with former CBC broadcaster, Jaeny Baik, about Electoral Area A

Wishing you a November filled with kindness,
Jen McCutcheon (areaajen@gmail.com)

<https://vimeo.com/mvrd/review/454085937/a1b372ee13?sort=lastUserActionEventDate&direction=desc>

Testing for the COVID-19 Virus in our Wastewater

Metro Vancouver is working with the British Columbia Centre of Disease Control (BCCDC) and the University of British Columbia (UBC) to improve the understanding of how the virus that causes COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) appears in wastewater. The initiative is an expansion of an existing project investigating gastrointestinal illness-causing viruses in wastewater that was previously initiated in partnership with BCCDC.



SARS-CoV-2 virus in our wastewater

Wastewater is a complex environment, which makes virus studies challenging. This is why the BCCDC initiated a phased approach using previously developed methods to maximize efficiency. The first step was the development of a methodology to measure the virus in samples of influent collected weekly from Metro Vancouver wastewater treatment plants. Initial efforts were focused on one treatment plant, and more recently the project was expanded to include all five plants.

Currently, information can only indicate whether the virus is present in wastewater and its weekly variations. The next stage will include consideration of flow fluctuations, differences between our four sewerage areas, and the use of other indicators to



allow for comparison across the region. In order to fully understand the community prevalence, additional information will be required, such as how shedding rates vary from person to person.

There are two major national wastewater initiatives related to COVID-19 and Metro Vancouver is participating in both. One includes contribution of knowledge generated by Metro Vancouver/BCCDC/UBC to the Canadian Water Network's COVID-19 Wastewater Coalition, the national collaboration of municipal utilities, researchers and public health agencies. The other is led by Statistics Canada and Public Health Agency of Canada, involving wastewater testing for COVID-19 by the National Microbiology Laboratory in Winnipeg and comparison of results from across the country.

All information generated by these complementary research initiatives will be shared with public health agencies, to provide an early warning of future waves of the disease. Metro Vancouver also hopes to use the research results to gain knowledge about the fate of SARS-CoV-2 throughout the wastewater treatment process, with a goal to understand occupational exposure risks and the amount of virus discharged into the environment following wastewater treatment.



I was excited to learn last week that Metro Vancouver's project "Testing of the Covid-19 Virus in Wastewater" has received a *COVID-19 Response Award* from the Environmental Managers Association of British Columbia!

Complete Communities Engagement Session: November 24

On **November 24th at 7pm**, please join me for an engaging conversation about Complete Communities. This session is based on the premise that our communities are in a constant state of change. These changes can make our communities better or worse depending of different factors such as affordability, density, access to green and other community spaces, amenities, diversity, and access to public transportation.

The session will begin with a presentation by Metro Vancouver Director of Regional Planning, Sean Galloway. He will present the latest evidence on the factors that contribute to a "complete" or

Andy Yan, SFU City Program Director

Michael White, UBC Associate VP, Campus and Community Planning

Sean Galloway, Metro Vancouver Director for Regional Planning

Complete Communities

November 24th 7-8pm

Zoom: <https://ca01web.zoom.us/j/6044516562>
Meeting ID: 604 451 6562
Or by phone: 1.778.907.2071

What makes a community great?

What factors should be considered when planning for the future of a community?

How can we have our say in how our communities change?

What is the vision for our community?

Our communities will undoubtedly change over the coming years – let's get better with age!

Moderated by Jen McCutcheon, Director for Metro Vancouver's Electoral Area



ELECTORAL AREA A Director's Update

From Jen McCutcheon, Director, Electoral Area A

November
2020

"healthy" community. Sean will be followed by Michael White, UBC's Associate Vice President of Campus and Community Planning, who will provide an overview of the vision and plans for development of the UBC residential areas. Our final speaker will be Dr. Andy Yan, Director of SFU's City Program, who will help provide regional context, as well as his insights on this important issue. We will ensure that there is plenty of time for a facilitated and respectful discussion among community members, and with our guest speakers.

Mark your calendars for November 24 at 7pm, and join us via Zoom at <https://ca01web.zoom.us/j/6044516562> (meeting ID: 604 451 6562), or by phone: 1-778-907-2071.

Community Connections

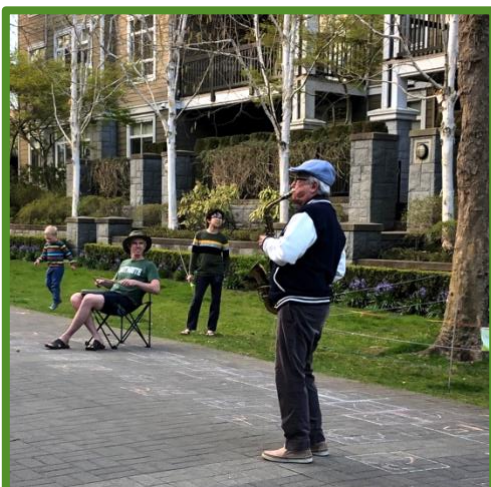
This section aims highlight awesome community initiatives. Please send me your ideas about people who are going out of their way to make our neighbourhoods even better. I know there are lots of examples, and I'd love to hear from you about some of them (email me at areaajen@gmail.com).

This month, I have two connections to share with you. The first is a guest piece written by Susan Edie, a resident of the UNA who offers her reflections on some silver linings from the past number of months.

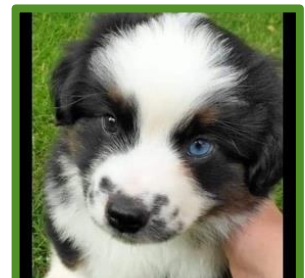
Moments of Connection: While Doing our Part to Tamp Down the Virus

...During a walk on Eagles Drive we approached chatter, laughter, bouncing balls. Ah! we found young neighbours gathering friends and passersby while offering lemonade.

... Another reminder that community grows, even in COVID times: a bark! Excited calls from various yards, "Murphy is coming!" Young and old run to chat and pat our new furry neighbour. New encounters each day Murphy is out gathering a new group of folks together.



Community members gathering to sing and play and hear tunes



Young Murphy – a neighbourhood celebrity!

...Evening gatherings on the Mall: the seven o'clock sounds of trombone, ukulele and bagpipes bring us out to hear old favourite tunes and our neighbour's song to Dr. Bonnie Henry.

...A sunny summer day and the neighbourhood café patio is full. A young woman insists that an elderly couple take her table, "I'm only talking to my friend. I can walk and talk." Only time to exchange a wave this time.

...Spring days warmed and we all delighted in getting outdoors. In the park, a mom and her baby approach, eager to chat. We exchange accounts of how we experienced the rainy, quiet days of March to May indoors. She said it was hard for babies to adjust to new people and



sounds outdoors after quiet months indoors. We shared our names and learned the meanings of her baby's names in her culture and language. We will stop to chat next time our paths cross.

Some wonderful encounters would not happen in non-pandemic times.

Submitted by Susan Eadie, UNA Resident



Thank you, Susan – this month's guest contributor

Talking Mile

"Tell me more about your favourite places to travel"

"How did your presentation go this week?"

"How are you really doing?"

These are the kinds of questions neighbours are asking each other and getting the chance to hear more than a one-sentence response during a weekly "Talking Mile".

In one neighbourhood within the UBC Peninsula, residents are getting creative about how to get outside and be active, while also striking up in-person conversations with neighbours... all while respecting and following Dr. Henry's COVID prevention guidelines. Dubbed the "Talking Mile," neighbours aged 8 to 80, meet at a selected location within their local community, and in groups of about three people, neighbours walk together, two metres

apart and usually wearing a mask. This simple activity is giving neighbours a chance to connect, get to know each other better, and to help fight off isolation and loneliness. Laura, a teenaged participant who moved to Canada (and the neighbourhood) in March commented, "it was nice to meet a range of different people in the community – I really enjoyed the walk. Everyone was very friendly, and genuinely seemed to care about me and my life." People and dogs of all ages and abilities are welcome.



The Talking Mile: a chance for neighbours to connect safely in person and outdoors

If you are interested in starting a similar weekly event in your local neighbourhood, please let me know and I'd be happy to help you to get this off the ground in your neighbourhood.



Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation Updates

BC NDP's Ambitious Transit Agenda

Although we're waiting for the final count, it looks likely that the BC NDP will form our next provincial government. During the election, the party shared ambitious transit promises that would expand the network and support the transition to green technology. The platform included commitments to:

1. Work with TransLink on a strategy to recover ongoing COVID-related losses so that we can maintain the transit service the region needs from now through recovery and rebuilding.
2. Provide \$200M to accelerate the transition to electric buses.
3. Fund and build the Surrey-Langley SkyTrain, which will service a fast-growing and transit-dependent part of the region that is currently very underserved. This opens the door to the region shifting its focus to the next set of rapid transit expansion priorities including SkyTrain extension to UBC.
4. Make transit free for 12 and under

I look forward to working with the new government and minister to advance the goals of the Mayors' Council.

Free Transit for Veterans on November 11

This Remembrance Day will look very different. Although Royal Canadian Legion Remembrance Ceremonies are by invitation this year, we can all watch via Global TV ([info here](#)).



Since Wednesday, Nov. 11 is a statutory holiday, TransLink will be operating Sunday/holiday schedules. And on Remembrance Day, TransLink offers free service to veterans and uniformed members of the armed forces, Coast Guard, BC Ambulance, and police and fire departments.

[Find details on TransLink's website here](#)

The Future of Transportation

How has the pandemic affected the ways people travel? TransLink explores the trends and how they might reshape cities in a recent blog.



This is part of TransLink's Transport 2050 program, through which the organization is developing the next long-term transportation strategy for our region. You may have taken part in Phase 1 last year or visited TransLink at the PNE, and they're gearing up to start Phase 2 next year.

What will transportation look like in the future in Metro Vancouver?

[Read the blog here](#)



TransLink CEO Kevin Desmond Leaving his Position in Early 2021

In October, Kevin Desmond, TransLink's Chief Executive Officer, announced that he will be resigning in February 2021. This is sad news for the organization but given that his wife and family live in the Seattle area, I am happy for him personally.



TransLink CEO, Kevin Desmond announces that he will step down in early 2021

Under Mr. Desmond's leadership, TransLink's reputation has dramatically improved, and ridership growth has been the highest in North America. In 2019, TransLink was named the American Public Transportation Association's top large transit system. Now, with emergency financial aid from the Federal and Provincial governments secured, TransLink has been able to stabilize their finances in the near term and can concentrate on rebuilding finances and focusing on a new 30-year vision for this great region.

I am grateful for Kevin's leadership at TransLink and wish him all the best in the future.

MVRD Board Adopts 2021 Budget for Electoral Area A

On October 30, our Metro Vancouver Regional District (MVRD) Board approved the 2021 Annual Budget and endorsed the 2021 – 2025 Financial Plan ([click here](#)). The budget and financial plan include both regional and local services that Metro Vancouver provides to Electoral Area A.

Local services include emergency planning and response, conducting the election every four years, and administering the Community Works Fund, which is used to fund local projects. Regional services include the regional park system, which any resident that enjoys Pacific Spirit Regional Park is very familiar with, and air quality monitoring stations that monitor and track emissions across the Lower Fraser Valley airshed.

The 2021 tax requisition for local Electoral Area services 2021 will increase by 3.3% over the previous year, totaling \$389,401. More details on these services and a tax breakdown was included in my August 2020 Director's Update ([click here](#) and scroll to page 4).



2021 Metro Vancouver 2021 Budget Approved (image: CBC)



Zero Waste Conference 2020 - November 13, 2020

Metro Vancouver's 2020 Zero Waste Conference is just around the corner! I was able to attend this conference last year (and will do so again this year). It was eye opening and inspiring to hear experts and local leaders speaking about a future where we stop focusing on single use and instead, shift to a "circular economy" where products and packaging are designed for repeated use.

For the past 10 years, Metro Vancouver's annual Zero Waste Conference has been at the forefront of Canada's journey into the circular economy. This year, the Conference promises insightful keynote speakers and dynamic sessions in a new, virtual format. This year's lineup includes circular economy experts and leaders from business, government and scientific fields, both from within our region and abroad. The major conference themes are ocean plastics, new materials, buildings and 'build back better.'

Here are a few sessions I'm looking forward to in particular:

Opening Keynote: Beau Lotto, Professor of Neuroscience, Author, Founder & CEO, Lab of Misfits
Setting the stage for the conference, neuroscientist and entrepreneur Beau Lotto will shed light on scientific discoveries about perception to help us adapt and thrive in an ever-changing world.



Keynote Conversation: Solving the Plastics Challenge in One Generation - From Science to Solutions

This high-profile session focuses on Canada's role in solving the ocean plastics crisis and features The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada, Horacio Barbeito, President & CEO of Walmart Canada and Chelsea Rochman, a leading ocean scientist, from the University of Toronto.

Spotlight on Next-Generation Materials

This session is dedicated to the growing field of bio-engineered materials – creating everyday products by harnessing the power of fungi, bacteria, yeast and algae. The keynote, Suzanne Lee, is one of the pioneers in this field and continues to inspire designers and brands around the world.

The above examples offer just a taste of what's in store at the Zero Waste Conference – I encourage you to have a look at the conference [program](#) and register. Discounted student rates are available.

Virtual Conference – November 13, 2020

Conference info: <http://www.zwc.ca/>

Learn more on the Zero Waste Conference Blog: <https://zwcblog.org/>

Registration: <https://registration.metrovanancouver.org/zwc>



More Local Updates (these ones from the UNA, but applicable to all residents)



What Lights You Up? | Design Competition

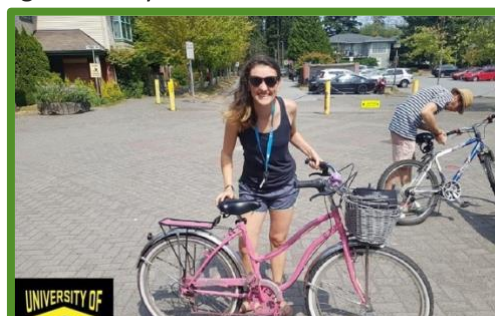
Liven up Lee Square with your art or animation! Submissions are due by November 18, 2020.

We all find hope and joy in our own ways. During this time, it's more important than ever to recognize the people, places and activities that "light us up" and share it with others. In this design competition, UTown invites you to create an art or animation that showcases what lights you up. One of the categories of the contest is for children and youth.

The winning designs will be selected by a judging panel and projected onto UBC's Money and Raymond M.C. Lee Square (by the UBC Bookstore). The Lee Square Projector is a permanently installed, overhead projection system that illuminates the square's ground with colourful light designs throughout the year. For more details on rules and eligibility, read below or go to utown.ubc.ca/lights.

UNA/UBC 529 Bike Registration

The UNA/UBC 529 campaign is still on! Many bikes are now registered in UNA, but the more, the merrier. If 529 can keep a record of every single bicycle in our community, the authorities will respond better to this issue. **All the bikes should be registered!** UNA is drawing a Bike Kitchen tune-up prize every other week. Everyone that registers automatically enters the pool. UNA will also be drawing a bicycle prize in December. Download the 529 app, register your bike and write to Vicente.regis@myuna.ca to get your shield sticker. You can also use the [UBC 529 registration page](#) to register online. Thank you for contributing to a safer community.



Register your bike to decrease the chance of it getting stolen and to increase the chance of getting it back if it is stolen.

Links & Connections

[Jen McCutcheon's Website](#)

www.areaajen.ca

[Jen McCutcheon's Facebook](#)

www.facebook.com/AreaAJen

[Metro Vancouver](#)

www.metrovancouver.org

[Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation](#)

www.translink.ca

[Union of BC Municipalities](#)

www.ubcm.ca

[University Neighbourhoods Association](#)

www.myuna.ca

[University Endowment Lands Administration](#)

www.universityendowmentlands.gov.bc.ca

[UEL Community Advisory Council](#)

www.uelcommunity.com