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Subject: Metro Vancouver Update - July 31st

Dear Staff,

I hope you are all doing well. I wanted to check in with an update as we are now well into the summer – as always, please feel free to drop me a note; I always enjoy hearing from you.

COVID-19 Update

I know many of us are carefully watching what's happening south of the border, and around the world. I remain thankful that there are no current cases of COVID-19 amongst our MV staff team. As this pandemic continues to rage globally, it's so important that we all continue to stay vigilant, and do not let our guards down, so we can prevent a resurgence or spread. We continue to follow the guidance of our Provincial Health Officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry, and we are fortunate that we are in such good hands. We will stay informed by their best available science. We will continue our current adapted operations (guidelines, safety protocols and practices for both field and office,) until the foreseeable future, or until we hear otherwise from our PHO. It's really important that we continue the 2 metres physical distancing. Let's stay kind, calm, and safe, as we deliver our services and support our region.

Additionally, Metro Vancouver continues to work with our partners, our Board and other orders of government on how we want to support how our region rebuilds following this global pandemic. What's clear is that while we are still on the path of a long road, this pandemic will eventually end, we will come out of this, and we do want to come out of this stronger than ever. I continue to be so struck by how disproportionately society has been impacted by the pandemic and its impacts. Social inequities and disparity are becoming more clear, and it affects mostly those on the frontlines. 70% of the job losses have been to those making under \$20 an hour. We need to be part of the solution. A few weeks ago, we issued a [media release](#) where we called for infrastructure investment to be an essential part of the recovery and rebuilding. We continue to work with provincial and federal governments on this, who also see the necessity in the projects and programs that Metro Vancouver provides and delivers. We also recently [achieved carbon neutrality](#), a really exciting milestone for our organization. I strongly believe that achieving our ambitious climate change and environment goals can be done in partnership with our work on core operations and project delivery, and I look forward to us incorporating this into our collective rebuilding.

Resilient Region Strategic Framework

Throughout these last few months, I have been struck by the ability of our organization to respond to such uncertain times. The importance of resilience has been top of my mind for a long time, and it has only increased with the global pandemic. All of the work that we do here at Metro Vancouver contributes to the resiliency of the region. With that in mind, I want to further embed resilience into every aspect of our work. This morning the Board endorsed the development of a Resilient Region Strategic Framework. With all of the long-range planning work being undertaken in the organization, now is the perfect time to ensure we are *unifying these plans under a common framework of resilience*. Resilience doesn't just pertain to our ability to prepare for and recover from events such as earthquakes

and pandemics. It's also about those chronic stresses that weaken the fabric of our society: lack of affordability, racism and inequality, to name a few. As we've seen with the pandemic, not everyone is impacted in the same way by these types of events. That is why the framework will seek to build an increased emphasis on equity throughout all areas of the organization. I'm proud of the work Metro Vancouver undertakes and I'm excited to see us taking steps toward building a more equitable and resilient region. You can read the report to the Board [here](#).

Vacation and Self-Care

I hope many of you aren't even reading this (I'll try not to take it personally,) and are instead on a well-deserved vacation. If not, and you're having to listen to me drone on again in this email, I hope you have one upcoming. I am grateful to all of you who have worked tirelessly during one of the most uncertain times in living history. Many of you worked literally through the night to ensure our operations continued, and that the region could continue to rely on us. I owe all of you my thanks. I look forward to the day when we can gather to celebrate all you have achieved this year, together. Until that time, I continue to thank you for your deep commitment to the people of this region, and our work.

It's thus really important that we all take all of our vacation this year. This is always important, as we are at our best when we are rested, and our work is critical, as are our lives outside of work. This has been a difficult, tumultuous year. All indications are that it will continue to be challenging for quite some time, and that we are in for a busy Fall and remainder of 2020. We need to ensure our operations are covered and successful delivery continues, and so it's more important than ever that that you take the time to rest, recharge, and recuperate. My expectation is that you take the time and take all of your vacation. Set some self-care goals. Be deliberate with this. One of the other things I've learned this year is that we all need to act on the plans that we've been thinking about for some time. I'm trying to walk the talk here, and I've set some personal health goals. After being inspired by our [employees biking to work](#), I've since been riding my bike to work 4 days a week. (Okay, full disclosure- it wasn't just our employees biking to work that inspired me. Well, they sure did originally, and then I made the mistake of telling co-workers here that I was inspired and was going to do the same. They since haven't stopped reminding me of that statement. Then I went to my doctor and he gave me a 'time to lose weight' lecture. I also then had to face the stark reality of needing to buy a full new wardrobe of navy blue everything, or starting to ride my bike... So here I am, me, my bike, and the somewhat open road...) And it's great - I almost feel the freedom of when I was a kid cycling through the New Westminster side streets. Moral of the story is that peer pressure works! Cycling has been great and as most times with exercise, I'm finding it is just as good for the mind as it is for the body.

We live in a noisy, busy world, and so I hope you all do take some time for self-care, whether it's going for a walk on the lunch hour or riding your bike/getting other exercise. I know I will be taking a good portion of August off as vacation, and am planning on exploring our local areas and enjoying more of our regional parks – say hi if you see me on my bike!

I wish you all a restful few weeks.

It's an honour to work alongside you all.

Together we make our region strong.

Jerry

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Commissioner/Chief Administrative Officer

