

To: Intergovernment and Finance Committee

From: Ralph G. Hildebrand, Corporate Solicitor, Legal and Legislative Services
 Heather Shoemaker, Senior Director, External Relations

Date: September 1, 2016 Meeting Date: September 14, 2016

Subject: **Metro Vancouver Legal Entities Name Change**

RECOMMENDATION

That the GVRD Board petition the Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development to amend the letters patent of the GVRD to rename it “Metro Vancouver Regional District”.

That the GVWD Board petition the Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development to amend the *Greater Vancouver Water District Act* to rename it “Metro Vancouver Water District”.

That the GVS&DD Board petition the Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development to amend the *Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District Act* to rename it “Metro Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District”.

PURPOSE

To update the Board on the recognition of the Metro Vancouver name and to recommend next steps in the development of the Metro Vancouver brand. This report is being brought forward to seek approval of the pursuit of name changes for the three related entities, GVRD, GVWD and GVS&DD by substituting the references to “Greater Vancouver” with “Metro Vancouver”.

BACKGROUND

In late 2006 the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) considered the desirability of changing its name to “Metro Vancouver”. The name “Metro Vancouver” was considered and viewed by the Board to be more accessible and understandable to both the public and to external agencies in describing the GVRD as a regional federation. The name change was submitted to the Province with the request to remove the reference to “regional district” to assist the organization in distinguishing Metro Vancouver as a large regional urban centre within a national and international context. At its July 27, 2007 meeting, the Board resolved:

That the GVRD Board:

Adopt the name of ‘Metro Vancouver’ and petition the Minister of Community Services for formal recognition of the name change through letters patent;

The Chair forwarded the request to the Minister and, in a letter dated December 20, 2007, Minister Ida Chong replied that she was unwilling to recommend a legal name change that did not include the term “regional district”. While the Minister refused the request, she did indicate support for the use of the name “Metro Vancouver Regional District” and acknowledged that the GVRD could use ‘Metro Vancouver’ as a brand. The GVRD decided not to pursue a name change to the MVRD but in May

2008, the Greater Vancouver Housing Corporation (GVHC) did proceed to formally change its name to the “Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation” (MVHC).

This report is being brought forward to consider the options to revisit a formal name change for all three legal entities.

SUCCESS OF “METRO VANCOUVER” AS A BRAND NAME

Since receipt of the letter from the Minister, the GVRD, GVWD and GVS&DD have been actively using “Metro Vancouver” as a brand name both individually and collectively for all three legal entities. Public recognition of Metro Vancouver continues to grow with close to 80% of the public recognizing it in a 2016 survey.

While the use of the name has been extremely successful and the brand “Metro Vancouver” is now broadly accepted both within the organization, and among the media, public and external agencies as an interchangeable reference to our three legal entities, this success occasionally creates some confusion. In the execution of legal documents, policies and in formal communications with outside agencies, for example, the interchangeable use of both the brand name and the legal entity names can be confusing. To simplify this practice and to build upon the success of “Metro Vancouver” as a brand, it is proposed that the Board may want to consider changing the legal names of all three entities (GVRD, GVWD, GVS&DD) by replacing “Greater Vancouver” with “Metro Vancouver”.

LEGAL ENTITIES NAME CHANGE PROCESS

The process for changing the name of the GVRD is different than that for the GVWD and GVS&DD. The differences are described below.

GVRD Name Change. The GVRD was created by letters patent. Letters patent of a regional district may be amended by the Lieutenant Governor in Council upon the recommendation of the Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development. The process to complete the name change is relatively straight forward and would be initiated by ministry staff upon receipt of a resolution from the GVRD requesting a name change.

GVWD and GVS&DD Name Changes. Both the GVWD and the GVS&DD are statutory bodies created by their respective statutes. Section 3 of the *Greater Vancouver Water District Act*, SBC 1924 Chapter 22 states:

There is hereby created and constituted a body corporate and politic under the name of the “Greater Vancouver Water District,” with the objects, powers, and mode of management set forth in this Act.

Section 3 of the *Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District Act*, SBC 1956 Chapter 59 uses identical language to create and constitute the Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District.

Since both of these bodies are incorporated by statute, the name change cannot be effected by an order in council but will have to proceed by way of statutory amendments to their respective acts. In all three cases ancillary amendments will need to be made to additional acts which reference either GVRD, GVWD or GVS&DD by name.

Given the success of the Metro Vancouver brand through the broad use of the brand in referencing all three legal entities interchangeably, there exists an opportunity to build upon this success and to strengthen this relationship between the three legal entities and the MVHC by pursuing a formal name change for each entity as presented below.

ALTERNATIVES

1. That the GVRD/GVWD/GVS&DD respectively adopt the following recommendations:

That the GVRD Board petition the Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development to amend the letters patent of the GVRD to rename it “Metro Vancouver Regional District”.

That the GVWD Board petition the Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development to amend the *Greater Vancouver Water District Act* to rename it “Metro Vancouver Water District”.

That the GVS&DD Board petition the Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development to the *Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage Act* to rename it “Metro Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District”.

2. That the Intergovernment and Finance Committee receive the report dated September 1, 2016 titled “Metro Vancouver Legal Entities Name Change” and provide alternate direction.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications anticipated under alternative one. Since 2007 the Metro Vancouver entities have been utilizing “Metro Vancouver” as an identifying name for the three legal entities on the website, in advertising, correspondence, signage and business cards. It is not expected that the name changes will generate additional costs to the entities.

While the name changes are relatively straight forward, ancillary changes will have to be made to approximately 11 other provincial acts such as the *Local Government Act*, the *Vancouver Charter* and the *Environmental Management Act* to ensure that the acts appropriately reference the respective entities.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS

In 2007 the provincial government declined a request from the GVRD to change its name to “Metro Vancouver”. However, the province did indicate that it would support a name change to “Metro Vancouver Regional District”.

Since 2007 the Metro Vancouver group of entities have successfully marketed the Metro Vancouver brand. With that success some confusion has been created between the use of the proper legal names, the reference “Greater Vancouver” and the use of the brand name “Metro Vancouver”. Given the overwhelming success of the Metro Vancouver brand name and its broad use in referring to all three legal entities interchangeably, the opportunity exists to build upon this success and to strengthen this relationship between the three entities by pursuing a formal name change for each entity. In light of the maturity of the Metro Vancouver brand, it is recommended that the provincial government be requested to rename the GVRD, GVWD and GVS&DD to Metro Vancouver Regional District, Metro Vancouver Water District and Metro Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District respectively as presented under alternative 1.