



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Mayor Richard Stewart
Chair, Liquid Waste Committee
Metro Vancouver
rstewart@coquitlam.ca

June 5, 2019

Re: Lions Gate Wastewater Treatment Plant

Dear METRO VAN Liquid Waste Committee Chair, Richard Stewart, and Committee members:

I am the Member of Parliament for North Vancouver and the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard. My colleague, Terry Beech, the Member of Parliament for Burnaby North–Seymour and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, has also reviewed this letter and wishes to lend his full support to its contents.

In both my capacity as North Vancouver’s MP and as Minister of DFO, I am well aware that there are a number of discussions ongoing regarding the construction of the new Lion’s Gate wastewater treatment plant in North Vancouver. Given the importance of the issues involved, I wanted to ensure that you, as elected officials, are aware of our views on this important subject.

Over the past few years, I have expressed to senior Metro Vancouver officials, and to provincial and municipal leaders on the North Shore, that I am most interested in working to help define reasonable and mutually acceptable pathways to move towards a higher level of wastewater treatment than secondary. As you are aware, the current design for the Lion’s Gate Wastewater Treatment Facility is aimed at simply meeting the minimum federal/provincial wastewater treatment requirements.

I was very much involved in working to obtain federal funds that would enable this project to proceed. However, even at that time – in 2015/16 – I made clear my preference for Metro to build a tertiary treatment plant – a plant that would address emerging contaminants of concern and provide for superior environmental outcomes.



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Last year, when I was in the role of Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, the federal government convened an Expert Panel on Emerging Contaminants of Concern. This Panel was chaired by Dr. Don Mavinic, a leading wastewater expert and a resident of the North Shore. The findings eventually published by this panel suggest that we undoubtedly can and should – from an environmental perspective - be looking at doing more than the bare minimum.

As MP for North Vancouver, I am determined to see how we can collectively work towards what we all know are more effective levels of environmental protection. In my role as federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, with primary responsibility for recovery efforts relating to the Southern Resident Killer Whales and for the overall health of our marine ecosystem, I am very much interested in seeing a higher level of treatment of wastewater and associated contaminants before the water is deposited into the Salish Sea.

I recognize that there are a number of important timing and cost-related issues facing Metro Vancouver regarding this matter. Engaging in discussion about what would be entailed in moving to a higher level of treatment – whether in the immediate term or over some reasonable period of time – is important. Of course, Metro Vancouver, the North Shore municipalities, the Province, Environment Canada and the Squamish Nation must be involved in any such conversation.

As you are likely aware, a number of weeks ago in my capacity as MP for North Vancouver, I convened an initial discussion on this subject with the North Shore municipalities, the Squamish Nation, Metro Vancouver and Environment Canada. At that meeting, Metro Vancouver officials advised participants that it had in fact asked staff to look at issues and options associated with tertiary treatment.



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By way of this letter, I want to state clearly that I am – as is my colleague Terry Beech - interested in working with Metro Vancouver and all key stakeholders to determine what can be done to ensure that the major capital decision that Lion’s Gate represents, is something that will provide cost effective and environmentally sensitive services to citizens of Metro Vancouver and to our surrounding environment for decades to come.

We look forward to continuing to engage in this important discussion, and would be happy to speak with your Committee in person.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Wilkinson,
M.P. for North Vancouver

Terry Beech,
M.P. for Burnaby North–Seymour

Cc: Metro Vancouver Liquid Waste Committee members:

Mike Little, VC
Lisa Muri
Pietro Calendino
Lisa Dominato
Doug Elford
Steve Ferguson
Alexa Loo
Ryan Svendsen
Mary Trentadue
Rob Vagramov
Val van den Broek
Darryl Walker

Bowinn Ma, MLA North Vancouver-Lonsdale
Jane Thornthwaite, MLA North Vancouver–Seymour
Mike Little, DNV
Linda Buchanan, CNV
Mary Ann Booth, DWV
Chris Lewis, Chair, Squamish Nation Service Agreement Committee
Don Mavinic, Chair, Expert Panel on Emerging Wastewater Technologies