



CHAPTER 2: KEY TRENDS AND ISSUES

As part of a major metropolitan region, Port Moody continues to be influenced by many of the same social, economic and environmental issues that face other communities within Metro Vancouver and urbanized areas worldwide. Change in all aspects of daily life is occurring at a heightened pace and transforming the nature of cities and smaller communities. Advances in communication, transportation and information technologies have hastened the process of globalization such that events, markets and day-to-day activities in one part of the world have significant impacts for people thousands of kilometres away.

This section highlights some of the key trends and issues facing cities and discusses how Port Moody is affected.

2.1 ENVIRONMENTAL TRENDS

2.1.1 CLIMATE CHANGE

The term climate change refers to the effect of global warming, an average increase in the Earth's temperature, which in turn causes changes in climate. A warmer Earth has been documented through increases in global average air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snow and ice and rising global sea levels, all resulting in a wide range of impacts on plants, wildlife and humans. Coastal areas and small islands are particularly vulnerable. Extreme fluctuations in weather patterns and severe weather events are also attributable to this increase in global warming.

Climate change is often referred to as one of the greatest environmental, social and economic threats facing the planet. Most of this warming has occurred over the last 50 years and has been linked to human activities including the burning of fossil fuels, agriculture and land-use changes like deforestation. The carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases emitted as a result of these activities are responsible for climate change. To bring climate change to a halt, global greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced significantly.

Local governments can play a significant role in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The development of compact, complete communities with a mix of commercial and residential uses in close proximity to transit services helps to make walking, cycling and transit use more attractive than the use of automobiles. Green building strategies, energy efficient infrastructure and the use of renewable energies all contribute to a reduction in fossil fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. The protection of natural habitats is also critical component in reducing vulnerability to climate change.

Addressing climate change also requires adaptation. Increases in climate variability and extreme weather events could have serious impacts on existing infrastructure. The potential negative implications of climate change underline the need to anticipate and adapt local systems to ensure safety and quality of life, as well as reduce long-term costs.

FAST FACTS ON CLIMATE CHANGE*

- Average annual temperatures have warmed by between 0.5 – 1.7 degrees Celsius in different regions of the province during the 20th century. In fact, parts of British Columbia have been warming at a rate more than twice the global average.
- Over the last 50 – 100 years, B.C. has lost up to 50 per cent of its snow pack, and total annual precipitation has increased by about 20 per cent.
- Communities have been experiencing longer summer droughts as weather patterns grow increasingly erratic.
- Sea levels are expected to rise up to 30 cm on the north coast of British Columbia and up to 50 cm on the north Yukon coast by 2050.

- Sea levels rose by 4 to 12 cm along most of the coast, with high-water sea levels in the Vancouver area up 16 – 34 cm over the past century.
- Current projections indicate that B.C. could experience a further warming of 0.9 – 1.8 degrees Celsius by 2080. This climate change will affect water, fish, forests, range and other natural resources, along with the communities and ecosystems that depend on them.

* Source: BC Ministry of Environment, LiveSmart BC

2.1.2 BIODIVERSITY

As an expression of the variety of life forms, biodiversity is recognized as a key measure of the health of local and global ecosystems. Local initiatives can have significant positive impacts on the biodiversity of an area. The City of Port Moody has been successful in preserving large forested areas and protecting environmentally sensitive areas. Ongoing monitoring, maintenance and replanting are necessary to sustain the health and longevity of these areas and the species which inhabit them. The City has also been active in discouraging pesticide use and encouraging the use of native plantings through the Naturescape Program. Biodiversity is also a component of the City's Sustainability Checklist.

2.2 POPULATION TRENDS

It is estimated that Metro Vancouver's population will increase to 3,142,000 by 2036. This growth will be dispersed throughout the region changing the demographic characteristics of all municipalities including Port Moody. These demographic changes will have far reaching impacts influencing transportation, land use patterns, employment opportunities, housing types, cost of living and quality of life.

2.2.1 POPULATION CHANGES IN PORT MOODY

In 2012, Port Moody's population was estimated to be 34,567, approximately 1.4% of the total population of Metro Vancouver. Since 1986, the City's population has seen consistent growth. Between 2001 and 2011, Port Moody's population grew by 36.3%, making it one of the fastest growing municipalities in the region during this period. Since the 2001 Census the total number of dwelling units in Port Moody grew by 48%, the majority of this growth concentrated in the Inlet Centre neighbourhood.

In 2011, the average family size in Port Moody was 2.61, down from 2.79 in 2001. Household sizes of 3 or more now make up 45.4% of the total number of households in Port Moody, down from 48.6% in 2006 and 50.3% in 2001. Two person households continue to grow (31.8% in 2006 to 32.3% in 2011) and one person households now make up almost 22.3% of all households in the City.

TABLE 1: POPULATION GROWTH IN PORT MOODY

YEAR	PORT MOODY	% INCREASE	METRO VANCOUVER	% INCREASE
1976	11,955		1,118,298	
1981	15,353	28.4%	1,209,365	8.1%
1986	16,340	6.4%	1,324,245	9.5%
1991*	18,216	1.1%	1,586,139	19.8%
1996	21,631	18.7%	1,911,498	20.5%
2001**	25,308	17.2%	2,199,121	9.5%
2006	28,747	13.6%	2,116,581	5.1%
2011	34,509	20%	2,406,446	9.4%

Source: BC Stats, Figures include an estimate of census undercount.
 * Includes extension of Port Moody boundary to take in the loco area.
 ** Metro Vancouver boundary expansion to include Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows

While families with young children still make up a significant proportion of Port Moody households, there continues to be a growing number of seniors and younger single and couple households reflective of broader demographic trends within the region. This trend toward smaller households, coupled with increasing housing costs, has led to increased demand for smaller housing units.

2.2.2 AGING POPULATION

It is estimated that by 2021, the number of senior citizens in British Columbia could outnumber the number of children 19 and under. This "greying" of society is often associated with the significant number of baby boomers who are now entering the 65+ age range, increases in life expectancy and changes in fertility patterns. There are significant implications associated with population aging including impacts to housing, labour markets, health care and recreation.

Housing markets will change to respond to increasing demands for housing types that seniors seek and require as they age. These trends will reflect the changing housing behaviour of seniors as they live longer, healthier and more independent lives. It is expected that there will be a general shift away from collective and institutional housing towards independent housing such as owner-occupied ground oriented dwellings and apartments.

On a local level, the preference among seniors to age in place will influence the provision of adaptable housing, support services and neighbourhood design that provides for a mix of housing, transportation options and uses in close proximity. Safety and accessibility will also continue to be of importance as will recreation and community programs to suit the demands of a growing senior population.

2.3 ECONOMIC TRENDS

2.3.1 ENERGY CONSERVATION

In an effort to reduce the amount of energy consumed in public buildings, the City of Port Moody has adopted a Energy and Green House Gas Management Corporate Action Plan to retrofit existing facilities to achieve better energy efficiency. New facilities such as the Public Safety Building have incorporated alternative energy sources such as geothermal energy. On a community wide level, the City is embarking on a Community Energy and Emissions Plan to track current energy consumption levels and set targets for energy reduction in new and existing buildings.

2.4 SOCIAL TRENDS

2.4.1 HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Housing affordability continues to be one of the key challenges facing municipalities in Metro Vancouver as housing prices climb throughout the region. In 2013, the Metro Vancouver average house price was 9.5 times the median household income. This is significantly above the national average of 4.7 making Metro Vancouver housing the least affordable in Canada. Low vacancy rates (less than 3%) have also made it increasingly difficult to find rental accommodation. This trend is expected to continue as new rental supply remains very limited.

The incidence of homelessness continues to be a concern, not only on a broader regional basis, but also increasingly more locally within the Tri-Cities. Efforts to address homelessness and affordable housing at a local level is the focus of the Tri-Cities Homelessness and Housing Task Group.

The Metro Vancouver Affordable Housing Strategy adopted in November 2007 outlines a number of actions which could be adopted at both regional and municipal levels to expand housing choice and affordability in the region. To address the affordability challenge, several municipalities in the region, including Port Moody, have been working on innovative approaches to address this issue including affordable housing reserve funds and support for affordable housing types such as secondary suites, laneway housing and live/work housing types. To adequately address this issue, however, support from both provincial and federal governments is critical.

2.4.2 PORT MOODY'S RESIDENT LABOUR FORCE AND LOCAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Finance and business services as well as educational, health and social services dominate employment among the labour force both locally and regionally. This trend is expected to continue. A large proportion of local residents are also employed in the service sector which is expected to be the source of most new employment in the future.

One of the goals of this Official Community Plan is the development of a complete community within Port Moody. Among other objectives, a complete community involves achieving a balance between the number of employment opportunities and the number of employed residents within a municipality. In general terms, the ultimate goal is to achieve a 1:1 ratio of jobs to employed residents. The 2011 Census results show that the total number of jobs in Port Moody was 7315. This figure represents an increase of 850 jobs or 13.1% during the period of 2006 – 2011. The resulting jobs to employed residents ratio of 0.21 remains largely unchanged from 2006 due to increases in both jobs and population during this period.

To help increase the number of employment opportunities in Port Moody, the City continues to promote developments that generate local jobs and integrate residential areas with retail and other forms of commercial space. In order to encourage residents to seek employment within their own community, economic development strategies also need to promote jobs that are reflective of the resident labour force. To minimize the loss of existing employment opportunities, land use policies need to ensure that redevelopment of existing industrial areas continues to integrate intensive employment generating uses.

TABLE 2: POPULATION GROWTH ESTIMATES, 2011 – 2041

YEAR	POPULATION ESTIMATE
2011	34,509
2021	39,660
2031	44,820
2041	50,000

TABLE 3: OCCUPATIONS OF PORT MOODY RESIDENTS, 2011

INDUSTRY	2011	SHARE (%)
Sales and service	3,535	18.7%
Business, finance and administration	3,245	17.2%
Management	3,085	16.4%
Education, law and social, community and government services	2,635	14.0%
Trades, transport and equipment operation	1,990	10.6%
Natural and applied sciences	1,790	9.5%
Health	1,200	6.4%
Arts, culture, recreation and sport	920	4.9%
Manufacturing and utilities	335	1.8%
Natural resources, agriculture and related production	95	0.5%
Total	18,830	100%

TABLE 4: PORT MOODY RESIDENTS' SECTOR OF EMPLOYMENT, 2011

INDUSTRY	2011	SHARE (%)
Wholesale and retail trade	2,835	15.1%
Professional, scientific & technical services	2,205	11.6%
Health care and social assistance	1,840	9.8%
Education	1,810	9.6%
Finance, insurance & real estate	1,505	8.0%
Public administration	1,305	6.9%
Construction	1,295	6.9%
Accommodation & food services	1,075	5.7%
Information & cultural industries	1,015	5.4%
Manufacturing	970	5.2%
Other	880	4.7%
Management & administrative services	780	4.1%
Transportation & warehousing	655	3.5%
Arts, entertainment & recreation	340	1.8%
Utilities	165	0.9%
Primary industries, including agriculture, forestry, mining and oil & gas	155	0.8%
Total	18,830	100%

Tables 3 and 4 show that the majority of employed Port Moody residents have jobs in the sales and service area; government, health and education fields; and the finance and business service sectors. In order to facilitate a better match between jobs and the skills of employed residents, land use policies and development bylaws need to support employment opportunities in these sectors.

2.5 TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS



Transportation is intricately tied to land use and the economy. It is necessary for the efficient movement of goods and people and strongly influences land use decisions on both a regional and local level.

Port Moody's transportation system is complex and operates within the larger context of events on a subregional, regional and provincial level. Population growth within the northeast sector and the Fraser Valley has led to increasing volumes of traffic for residents and commuters and pressure for improved transit and roadways. Given its location in the region, Port Moody has long experienced the impacts of traditional and historical commuting patterns as traffic passes through its borders en route to points east and west.

The Evergreen Rapid Transit Line is expected to be completed in 2016 connecting Coquitlam and Port Moody to the existing Millennium Line. Studies are also underway to determine how the Murray-Clarke Corridor should evolve to serve the future transportation needs of the community and region. Both of these projects will help support the high density residential and commercial development in Inlet Centre and stimulate redevelopment in other parts of the City, particularly Moody Centre.

There is also a need to continue to promote alternative forms of transportation including walking and cycling through land use policies that support an integrated bicycle and pedestrian trail system and the development of complete, compact communities that reduce reliance on private automobiles.