



The Greater Vancouver region, located on Canada's West Coast, is home to 2.3 million people. The city of Vancouver, surrounded by mountains and the Pacific Ocean, is often regarded as the city with the highest quality of life in the world. Many of its citizens enjoy sports and outdoor leisure activities, which have a positive impact on health. As well, allotment or community gardens, which can be found in parks or along boulevards, enable residents to stay connected to nature as well as participate in beautifying their neighbourhood.

In terms of transportation, approximately 60% of people who get around in the downtown core do so without a motorized vehicle (by walking, cycling...), and emphasis is placed on public transit. With respect to construction, efforts are focused on certified green buildings: as of 2007, all new buildings that will obtain a building permit will have to be built to the equivalent of LEED Silver. The Sustainable Building Centre offers advice and guidance to citizens, developers, and construction firms on techniques or materials to be used. The municipality emphasizes the need for greater urban density, or "EcoDensity".

The social dimension is also a strong component of sustainable development. Over half of Vancouver's population is of foreign origin. Immigrants benefit from a special welcoming program that helps them integrate better; they receive assistance in getting official documents, in registering their children for school, and in looking for work.

In one of Vancouver's neighbourhoods, the Downtown Eastside, live a few thousand people, many of whom are highly disenfranchised. Various local organizations bring support, such as *Pigeon Park Savings*, or *United We Can Bottle Depot*, which helps the less fortunate earn a bit of cash by paying for collected empty cans and bottles.

The municipality encourages its citizens to think about the future and participate in the planning of their city through meetings that are organised at the neighbourhood level as part of the city's Community Visions Program. The goal is to identify community needs and aspirations, and implement public realm improvements.

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Aiming for the Peak of Sustainability
 Vancouver - Canada

8 minutes



Video DVD in English and French

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