

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 25, 2020 #20-47

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Council Receives Update on Commercial and Industrial Strategy

Maple Ridge, BC: The City of Maple Ridge continues to make progress on the Commercial and Industrial Strategy (CIS), according to a staff update. Among the key findings in the report, which was provided to Council earlier in September, staff noted that the City is on track to achieve a high employment growth scenario with the lands and projects contained in the plan.

Currently, only seven per cent of the City's tax base comes from industrial and commercial sources. Mayor Mike Morden says it's crucial for that number to increase, not only to provide residents with the services they need, but to curb residential taxes.

"Maple Ridge is a great place to live, but we also need to make it a great place to work. You shouldn't have to commute out of town for work. Council is focussed on designating more land that will attract commercial and manufacturing employment for our residents," he said.

Since 2014, when the CIS was endorsed, the City has designated 203 acres of industrial land for future employment needs, nearly meeting the 2042 target of 230 acres. The update also indicated that work is underway to further increase that amount, as some designated lands are challenging to immediately develop or are reserved for future use.

"Some properties are difficult to develop due to site conditions like slopes, watercourses and service constraints," said Christine Carter, General Manager Planning & Development Services.

"Those lands are still important because they'll be used down the line. In the meantime, we're on the hunt for more new industrial land around Maple Ridge that's flat, fully serviced, accessible and ready for development now."

Work to track down this land is well underway, with staff providing updates on possible locations including the Lougheed Transit Corridor, Yennadon Lands and Albion Flats.

“A strong, stable commercial and industrial presence in our community is vital to the short and long-term future of our local economy. Through our Community Social Safety Initiative, Council is working to support existing businesses and put down the welcome mat for much-needed investments that will broaden our tax base,” said Mayor Morden.

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Background Information:

- The CIS recommends that the City designate an additional 170 to 230 acres of industrial land by 2042.
- City staff continue to work with applicants and property owners looking to invest in their industrial land.
- Updates were provided on the following areas:

- **Lougheed Transit Corridor Study**

- In early 2020, TransLink launched the RapidBus service along Lougheed Highway, connecting the City’s downtown with the Coquitlam SkyTrain. As seen across the region, high-capacity transit corridors are places where people want to live and they tend to attract new business and development opportunities. Development on the Lougheed Transit Corridor study began last year with a public consultation process.

The revised version of the draft concept plan proposes a two-storey minimum height requirement and a six-storey maximum to provide opportunities for multi-storey office use. It also proposes a Flexible Employment Designation to allow for business parks, large-format office space and light industrial use, all of which typically offer high-paying jobs. The proposed plan also includes a ‘Highway Commercial’ component creating opportunities for large format grocery and retail stores, restaurants and coffee shops to move into the area.

In addition, the land designation permits post-secondary institutional use. Once the planning process is complete, it’s anticipated that this area will develop quite quickly given its prime location, easy access and servicing. Staff are currently preparing for the plan’s approval process, including drafting bylaws and development permit guidelines for Council consideration.

- **Yennadon Lands**

- Located at 128 Avenue and 232 Street, the Yennadon Lands aren’t currently designated for industrial or commercial purposes. At its July 14 meeting, Council

indicated support for a “neighbourhood innovations village”, which illustrated a business park concept with an eco-business emphasis that conserves greenspace and protected trees. The next step involves public consultation, which is scheduled for sometime this fall subject to any changes to COVID-19 guidelines from the Provincial Health Officer.

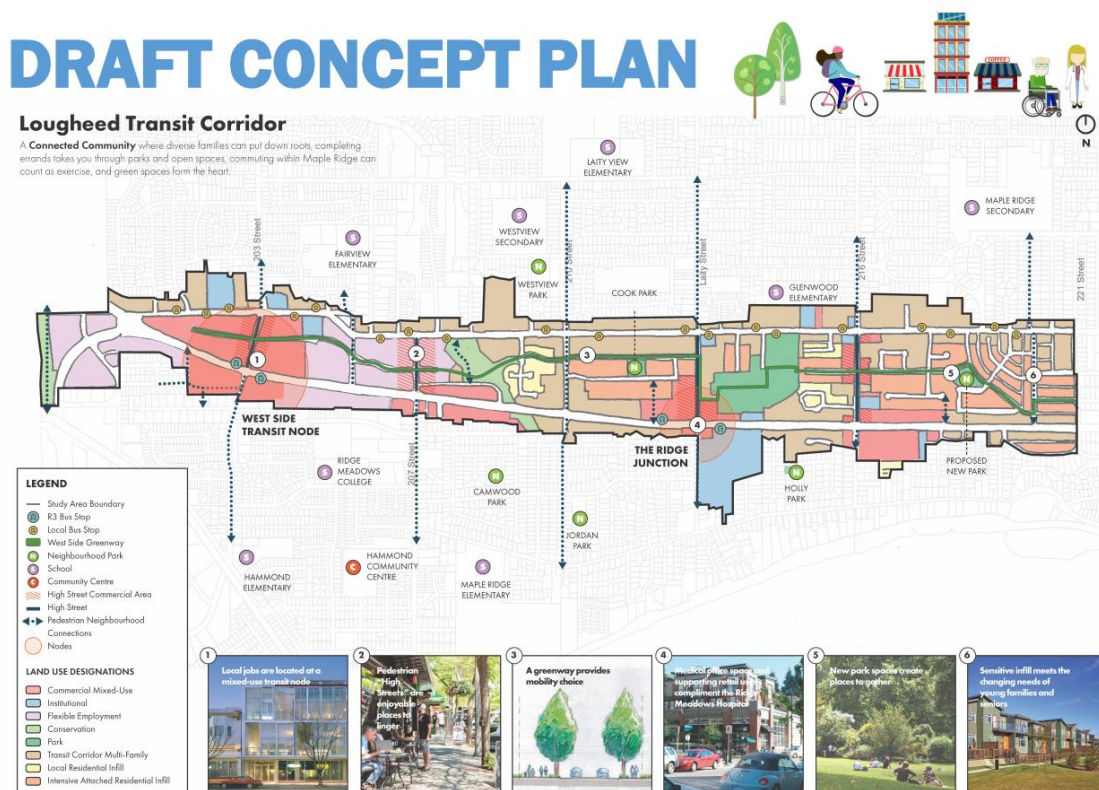
– Albion Flats

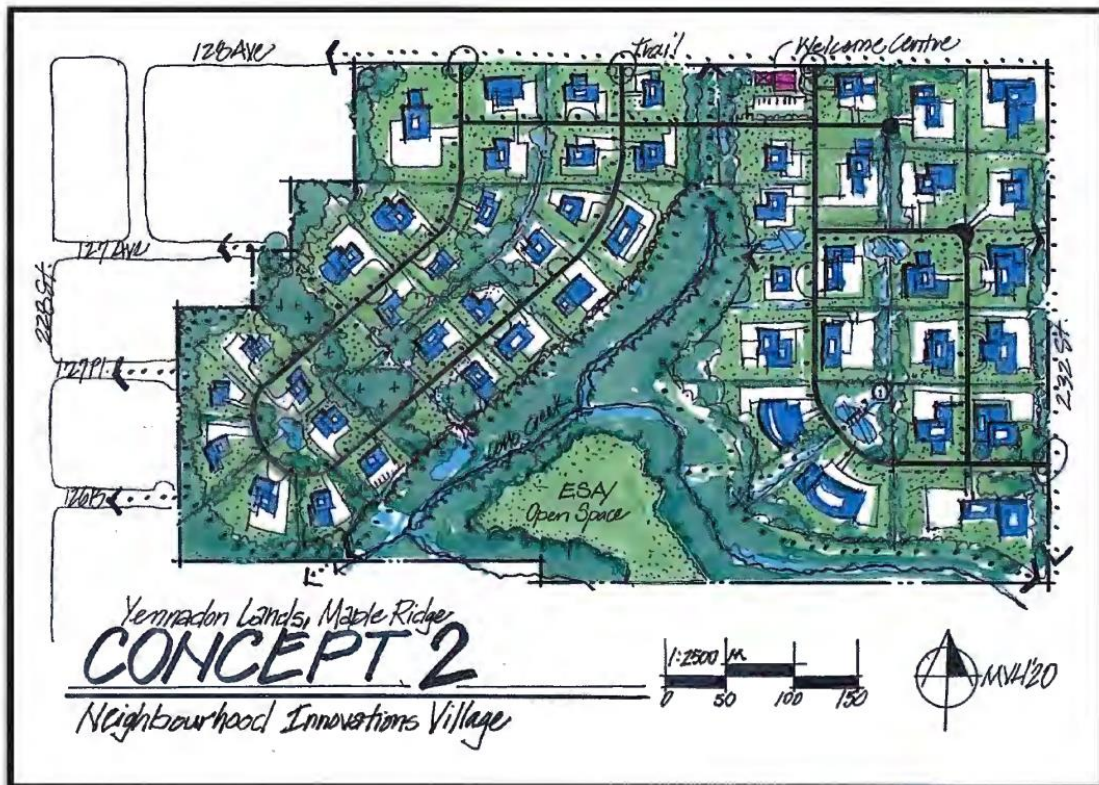
In November 2019, Council endorsed a concept plan for Albion Flats that includes a variety of land uses including residential, retail/restaurant, offices and service commercial. In June, the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) directed its staff to work with the City on drainage options for the area. They also requested the City to prepare an agricultural remedial action plan in order to advance redevelopment discussions. This month, the City met with the ALC to discuss the action plan and other site requirements.

– Other Locations

The City is examining employment development opportunities at the Hammond Mill site, Albion Industrial Park and Maple Meadows Business Park. It’s also considering a proposal for a campus-style business park at 11310 Kingston Street.

Concept illustrations for the Lougheed Transit Corridor and Yennadon Lands that are part of the public consultations currently underway.





■ Employment