

City of Maple Ridge

TO: Her Worship Mayor Nicole Read
and Members of Council
FROM: Chief Administrative Officer
MEETING DATE: April 18, 2016
FILE NO:
MEETING: Workshop
SUBJECT: **Commercial & Industrial Strategy - Potential Employment Lands Update**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Council endorsed the Commercial and Industrial Strategy Implementation Plan Matrix at the October 5, 2015 Workshop. The Implementation Plan contains a long-term 'road map' for current and future Council's to identify projects that contribute to the employment base for the City.

Contained in the Commercial and Industrial Strategy, prepared by Rollo and Associates, is an evaluation of the land base needed in the City over the next 30 years. In order to ensure that there is sufficient industrial land to meet the long-term demand, identifying potential locations now became a key aspect of the Strategy. The analysis of several areas within the City that may be suitable for future employment uses was included in the Immediate Term time horizon for 2016 of the Implementation Plan Matrix.

This report serves as a brief update for Council on the status of the potential future employment sites identified as part of the preparation of the Commercial and Industrial Strategy endorsed in 2015.

RECOMMENDATION:

For information only.

DISCUSSION:

a) Background Context:

On October 5, 2015, Council endorsed the Commercial and Industrial Strategy Implementation Plan Matrix. The Matrix is organized into four time horizons:

- Immediate Term – 2015 and 2016
- Short Term – 2016 to 2018
- Medium Term – 2018 to 2028
- Long Term – beyond 2028.

In addition, there are regular responsibilities and work of various departments that were included in the 'Ongoing Work Plan Items' section of the Matrix.

As part of the Immediate Term horizon, a review of the potential employment lands locations identified during the preparation of the Commercial and Industrial Strategy was identified, along with the following Council Resolutions:

That staff be directed to obtain a more detailed site analysis [of each identified location] to determine feasibility as employment generating lands. (Dec. 2, 2013)

OR – For this work to be completed as part of development application information.

Potential Employment Lands

The Commercial and Industrial Strategy indicates that the City will need upwards of 69-93 hectares (170-230 acres) of additional industrial lands by 2040. As part of this discussion, a number of areas that could potentially accommodate employment-based land uses were identified for discussion with Council and the community. Figure 1 below, includes the potential employment sites first identified for Council in November 2012.

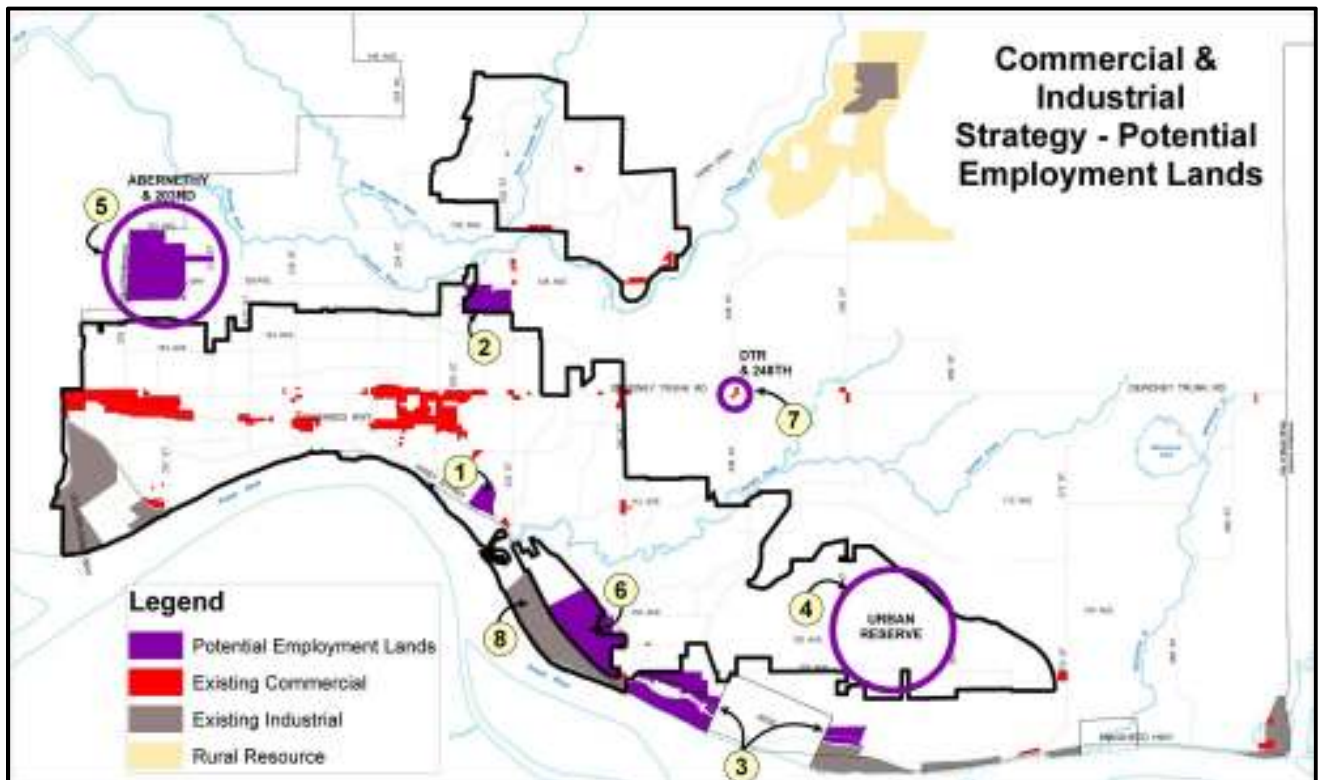


Figure 1: Potential Employment Lands

A summary of each site indicated on Figure 1 is as follows:

1. Ministry of Transportation Lands on Loughheed Highway:

As part of a development application in 2014, analysis was completed by City Spaces Consulting and reviewed by Rollo and Associates, in accordance with the Council Resolution. The analysis determined that this site is not suitable for employment-based lands. As a result, it is now under application for residential development with a small local commercial node. Council granted first reading to the development application in November 2015.

2. Properties at 128th Avenue and 232nd Street:

These properties have been the subject of a number of development enquiries over the past few years, which has resulted in a development application submission (2015-365-RZ) for two properties at 12640 228 St. and 12639 232 St., located immediately north of the existing Urban Area Boundary identified on Schedule “B” of the Official Community Plan. The application consists of a mix of residential and live/work buildings and limited neighbourhood commercial uses. It includes an Official Community Plan amendment to establish a new employment land use designation and Zoning Bylaw amendment to establish a new Mixed Employment zone. It is anticipated that this application will be presented to Council for First Reading in the near future.

The property located at 23008 128th Ave. has recently been sold for an anticipated employment development.

These development applications suggest that employment uses in this area of the City are viable. It is recommended that any development application that does not include a significant element of employment uses should continue to be required to provide a pro forma analysis that proves that the site is not viable for employment.

3. Lands east and west of the Kwantlen First Nation on Lougheed Highway:

These locations were included in the potential employment lands discussion as they are not within the Agricultural Land Reserve and located on a major transportation corridor. These lands are outside of the City’s Urban Area Boundary and Metro Vancouver’s Urban Containment Boundary and Fraser Sewer Area. Any employment-based uses would require Official Community Plan amendments and Regional approvals.

To date, no analysis has been undertaken on their suitability for employment-based lands.

4. Thornhill Urban Reserve:

The Thornhill Urban Reserve is a long-term reserve area within the City. The policies contained in the Official Community Plan outline the conditions required to be met, prior to Council directing the preparation of an area planning process. The analysis of employment viability will be incorporated into a future area planning process once the established triggers in the OCP have been met.

5. Abernethy and 203rd St.:

On January 20, 2014, the following Resolution was passed in regard to the lands at Abernethy and 203rd Street:

That the Abernethy and 203 Street site shown on Map Index 5 be considered as a long term venture once other options are explored.

These lands are within the Agricultural Land Reserve. These lands have recently been sold, but a development application has not yet been submitted. Should an ALR exclusion application be received, Council would consider the application on its merits, and would decide whether, or not

to forward the application to the Agricultural Land Commission for consideration. It is understood that the property owner can make the application for exclusion. Given the exclusion history on this property, it is likely that the question the Commission would ask is “what is new?” from the previous submission. Staff also understand that any rationale regarding community need would need to come from the City, rather than the applicant. Such rationale could be contained in the City staff report for the ALR exclusion application, plus Council would also have an opportunity to provide comments to the Commission.

Should the ALC application be successful it is noted that a Regional Growth Strategy amendment would also be required. The amendment would be considered a Type 2- Minor amendment which requires a 2/3 Board vote and Regional Public Hearing. City OCP and zone change amendments would also be required.

6. Albion Flats, south of 105th Avenue:

The Albion Flats Area Plan was reconfirmed as the priority for area planning in the City, at the November 13, 2012 Council Workshop meeting. The planning process was restarted in the spring of 2015 with an background report and process for completing the plan.

Most recently, in February 2016, the Planning Department lead Council through a workshop to identify the likes and desires for the Albion Flats, based on the four options produced through the design charrette process in 2010. The Planning Department is currently in the process of devising new land use concept options that will be presented to Council for further discussion.

7. Dewdney Trunk Road at 248th Avenue:

This location was evaluated for a potential Village Commercial Node. This new commercial centre expands the commercial hierarchy outlined in the Official Community Plan and provides another layer of opportunity for a node of approximately 25,000ft² in commercial floor space.

The Official Community Plan has been amended to establish this new type of commercial node and a development application is currently at Third Reading. The applicant is in the process of completing the conditions required prior to Council considering Final Approval of the zone amending bylaw.

8. Albion Industrial Area:

The Implementation Plan Matrix includes an Immediate time horizon project to engage with the landowners and businesses in the Albion Industrial Area. The Economic Development Department is leading this engagement process.

On January 27, 2016, an open house was held to initiate the discussion with the Albion Industrial Area owners and businesses. Staff from Economic Development, Planning, Engineering and Sustainability and Corporate Planning were present to discuss a range of topics. The event was well attended with a summary report presented to Council at the April 11, 2016 Council Workshop. The report and discussion with Council identified the next steps to be undertaken for the area.

When reviewing the properties identified on Figure 1: Potential Employment Lands, only the MOT lands on Lougheed Highway (#1) have been identified as unsuitable for employment uses with four other areas - 248th & DTR (#7) Albion Industrial Area (#8), 128th & 232nd (#2) & Albion Flats (#6) advancing with employment uses. Thornhill (#4) and 203rd & Abernethy (#5) are long term options, leaving the sites east and west of the Kwantlen First Nation on Lougheed Highway (#3) as the two unresolved areas.

b) Policy Implications:

The Commercial and Industrial Strategy Implementation Plan Matrix has identified the analysis of four sites for the feasibility for future employment (#1 MOT lands, #2 128th & 232nd, #3 lands east and west of Kwantlen First Nation). At that time, Rollo and Associates estimated the cost of the analysis to be between \$7500 to 10,000 per site.

Through the preparation of the Commercial and Industrial Strategy and Implementation Plan, the establishment of a new land use designation for 'general employment' in the Official Community Plan was identified. It is intended to be a land use that would fit between the traditional ideas of commercial and industrial land uses, combining limited components of both uses. The analysis of the sites for potential employment uses would provide potential locations for the new land use designation.

Currently, the establishment of a new 'mixed employment' land use designation and zone is part of the development application in the 128th/232nd area.

c) Alternatives:

There are several alternatives that Council could consider for the feasibility analysis of the identified potential employment lands:

- i. Engage a consulting firm to complete the analysis for the lands east and west of the Kwantlen First Nation on Lougheed Highway. A budget allocation, not to exceed \$20,000 would be required.
- ii. Continue to require any development applications for the remaining locations that do not include a significant employment component in the proposal to submit an analysis outlining why the entire site is not suitable to be used for employment-based land uses.

CONCLUSIONS:

Identifying locations for future employment lands within the City is a key element of the Commercial and Industrial Strategy. It is anticipated that Maple Ridge will need an additional 170-230 acres of lands designated for employment and industrial uses by 2040.

The Commercial and Industrial Strategy Implementation Plan Matrix includes the analysis of those sites identified for potential future employment in the Immediate time horizon for 2016. To date, one site has been determined as unsuitable, four are proceeding with employment uses and two

remain long term options. This leaves the sites east and west of the Kwantlen First Nation on Lougheed Highway, east of 240th Street as the unresolved locations.

The Implementation Plan Matrix identifies the City's willingness to consider employment uses on the lands east and west of the Kwantlen First Nation on Lougheed Highway. Council may wish to advance this work and direct staff to engage a consulting firm to complete the required feasibility analysis.

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