

City of Maple Ridge

TO: Her Worship Mayor Nicole Read
and Members of Council
FROM: Chief Administrative Officer
SUBJECT: Albion Flats – History and Options Update

MEETING DATE: March 16, 2015
FILE NO:
MEETING: Workshop

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In June 2012, representatives from Ridge Shopping Centres Inc. (Smart Centres) made a formal public presentation to Council and proposed to build a shopping centre in the Albion Flats on the south side of 105th Avenue. Council directed staff to work with Smart Centres on this proposal which would include a land exchange agreement. However, the City was notified on December 22, 2014 in writing that Smart Centres had would not be pursuing the land exchange agreement for financial reasons.

Following that decision, staff were directed to prepare an ‘options report’ for the Albion Flats.

The Albion Flats has a significant history of discussion and attention on potential land uses since the 1990’s. There is a large volume of background information and technical reports that have been prepared. In order to assist Council making decisions on the Albion Flats, it is important that its complex history be understood.

This report can be considered as an introductory report on the ALR exclusion options and land use options. As such, it is not requesting a decision on those options, but anticipates Council seeking further detailed reports on specific options.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the report titled Albion Flats – History and Options Update dated March 16, 2015 be received for information.

DISCUSSION:

A. Background Context:

For consistency, this report uses the same bearings as the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) to describe the land locations in the Albion Flats. The lands on the side of 105th Ave. where Planet Ice is located are described as being south of 105th Ave., while the lands on the opposite side are described as being north of 105th Avenue.

The Albion Flats comprises approximately 133 hectares (329 acres) in south-central Maple Ridge, adjacent to the Lougheed Highway and 240th Street. The majority of these lands are within the

Agricultural Land Reserve, with only a small portion, approximately 20 ha (49 acres) currently excluded located in the vicinity of 240th Avenue, south of 104th Avenue. (Appendix A)

Future land use within the Albion Flats has been under discussion with the ALC since the early 1990's when the Commission informed the municipality that they were prepared to consider a block ALR Exclusion application subject to the municipality providing information on the range of uses that would be permitted, address stormwater issues and determine appropriate site planning standards.

As the working relationship between Maple Ridge and the ALC has developed, discussions have continued regarding the potential land uses for the lands within the Albion Flats south of 105th Avenue, the process the ALC has recommended for exclusion (a block exclusion application by the City) and stormwater mitigation. The ALC has been consistent with their position that the lands to the north of 105th Avenue retain agricultural viability and as such, their exclusion from the ALR will not be supported.

To date, two land use planning exercises have been undertaken for the Albion Flats. The first was in 1999 which resulted in a preliminary concept plan that was approved by the ALC subject to conditions for agri-industrial uses for a number of properties fronting the Lougheed Highway, south of 105th Avenue. This plan was predominantly recreationally-focused, with limited large lot residential adjacent to 104th Avenue and a small component of service commercial adjacent to the historic commercial node where Bruce's Market is located. A copy of that plan has been included for Council's information as Appendix B.

The second concept plan was developed through a Council-directed charette in 2010 that included significant public input and consultation, a two-day design event and four concept scenarios included as Appendix C. Council requested revisions and endorsed a Draft Concept Plan for consultation with the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC). Council endorsed this plan in May 2011, but only for submission to the ALC for comments on the proposed land uses. Generally, the basis for this plan was for a significant mixed employment node to be located south of 105th Avenue, with a significant increase in residential development and densities along 240th Street and an auto-oriented and business office node located north of 105th Avenue. The ALC provided comments to the City that supported the ALR exclusion of lands south of 105th Avenue, but not the exclusion of lands to the north, and also outlined the conditions under which the ALC would support a block exclusion for a portion of the lands to the south of 105th Ave. A copy of this plan is included as Appendix D.

At Council's direction, the endorsed Draft Concept plan was the basis for the discussions with Smart Centers for a land exchange in return for the construction of a new Albion Fair Grounds north of 105th Avenue.

B. Chronology and Key Decisions:

The following chronology and key decisions related to land-use planning within the Albion Flats has been prepared to provide Council with a general overview and background.

March 1993: The ALC notified the municipality that it would consider a range of uses within the Albion Flats Area and would work with staff to identify those uses; identify and address stormwater runoff and mitigation; address uncontrolled weed growth in the area and identify appropriate site planning standards.

Aug. 1998: The City was notified by the ALC that a site at the south-west corner of Slatford Place and 104th Avenue had been excluded from the ALR. The ALC also indicated

that the remaining lands in the south-east portion of the Albion Flats (south of 105th Ave.) could be considered for exclusion and that the City may wish to consider a block exclusion application.

Jan. 1999: A concept plan for the Albion Flats was submitted to the ALC for approval. This concept plan has been attached to this report as Appendix B.

Oct. 1999: The ALC met with Maple Ridge Council to discuss the future land uses within the Albion Flats.

The ALC sent a letter to the City identifying that the January 1999 Concept Plan had been endorsed with conditions. The lands to the north of 105th Ave. were to remain within the ALR and that once a zone for agri-industrial uses was prepared, the ALC would consider delegating authority to Council to decide subdivision and non-farm use applications within that portion of the Plan area (located south of 105th Ave. along Lougheed Highway).

May 2000 –
Sept. 2001: Public open house held to discuss and receive feedback on the Concept Plan.

Council directs issues identified at the May open house be addressed and that an exclusion application be brought forward for consideration.

Council advises property owners in the area and potential applicants that development applications within the Albion Flats cannot be supported in the absence of an adopted area plan.

Report to Council outlining a revised area planning process along with the required supporting studies and reports. Staff recommended that the area planning process occur following the Official Community Plan review.

Council discussion of the Planning Department work program, noting that the area planning process for the Albion Flats would delay the OCP Review. Council directed that the OCP Review would remain the priority and deferred area planning discussions.

Nov. 2006 OCP adopted by Council that includes policies related to area planning, the Albion Flats, growth management, agriculture as an employment activity and long-term implementation of the OCP.

Nov. 2009 Report to Council outlining the area planning process for the Albion Flats. This report provided Council with a history of discussions with the ALC, relevant chapters and policies contained within the OCP, Provincial and Regional interests and a number of alternatives for consideration.

Jan. 2010 Council directed that a concept plan for the Albion Flats be prepared.

Feb. 2010 Council approved the process and planning area boundaries for the preparation of a concept plan for the Flats.

May – Aug.
2010:

Seven background reports prepared to provide information for the development of the concept plan. HB Lanarc (former Planning and Design consulting firm) was awarded the contract to prepare the concept plan. The process included a background research phase; charrette design event and public consultation; and preparation of the final concept plan for Council's consideration.

Invitations sent to stakeholder groups inviting them to a meeting to discuss the forthcoming charrette event.

Sept. 2010

Preparations for the charrette included the preparation and distribution of a workbook for the meetings with stakeholder groups and community forum event.

Stakeholder meetings were held to discuss topics including agriculture, food systems, recreation, environment and ecosystem, heritage resources, and economic considerations.

All background reports were compiled and made available on the municipal website and binders containing all the background reports were provided to Council and the Library.

A community forum was held to provide interested residents with an opportunity to provide input into the development of the concept plan for the Flats.

Oct. 2010

Property owners were invited to a meeting on each of the two days of the charrette.

A two-day design charrette was held on October 20 and 21, 2010. In addition, a public open house was held on Oct. 21 for interested residents to see the results of the design event and provide feedback and comments.

Nov. 2010

Council was provided with an update on the charrette event. Staff was directed to hold an additional consultation event for those groups not present during the charrette as well as those that participated in the charrette.

Feb. 8, 2011

Council was presented with a Charrette Summary Report that included four land use scenarios. Staff recommended that all four scenarios be referred to the ALC for comment. Council defeated that recommendation and directed further discussion.

Feb 14, 2011:

The following Resolution was passed at Council Workshop:

That the outcome from the February 14th Workshop discussion be moved to a Public Information meeting, with the comments and results of that work being forwarded to the ALC for comment. If an exclusion application is determined, following the comments from the ALC, a Public Hearing on the exclusion application will be held.

That Council request staff to prepare for consideration at the next available Workshop, Scenario 2 with the following additional components:

- 1. Agricultural buildings reflected from Scenario 1, appropriately located in Scenario 2 to enhance food distribution;*

2. *Neighbourhood pub component from Scenario 1;*
3. *Community centre/recreation/meeting space as defined in Scenario 4.*

The following amendment to the above motion was also passed

4. *Expectations that alternative agricultural activities and environmental practice plus agricultural offset options be reflected.*

March 2011: Council discussed the revised Scenario 2 Concept Plan and directed further consultation to be held.

An open house was held for the public to provide comments and feedback on the revised Concept Plan. Comments received were split on support for the revised plan.

May 2, 2011: Council was provided an update on the results of the open house for the revised Concept Plan, including the requested information on agricultural offsets.

Council directed a letter be prepared to the ALC asking for comments on the revised Albion Flats Concept Plan. The package of information to the ALC also included all the background reports, public feedback received, and staff reports, including all attachments and appendices.

May 6, 2011: The Albion Flats Concept Plan and all related background information was sent to the ALC for comment.

Oct. 2011: The ALC discussed the Albion Flats Concept Plan and provided the following decision:

The conclusions of the ALC in respect of the draft Concept Plan are as follows:

1. *The land north of 105th Avenue has agricultural capability, is suitable for agricultural use and is appropriately designated as ALR.*
2. *Apart from the agricultural fairgrounds, the land south of 105th Avenue is of very limited interest to agriculture, thus previous Commission proposals for limiting land use options may be reconsidered.*
3. *The draft concept plan, as proposed, will have an overall negative impact on agriculture in Maple Ridge.*
4. *The draft concept plan is inconsistent with the objective of the Agricultural Land Commission Act to preserve agricultural land.*

The Commission also included requirements for additional works in the portion of the Albion Flats north of 105th Avenue, for the “restoration of an agricultural future”, in conjunction with future land uses other than agriculture south of 105th Avenue.

A copy of the decision is attached for Council’s information as Appendix B.

June 2012 Smart Centres made a formal public presentation to Council, proposing a land exchange to build a shopping centre south of 105th Avenue and moving the Fairground buildings to the north of 105th Ave.

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|----------------|---|
| June 2012 | Council directs staff to enter into negotiations with Smart Centres on the land exchange. |
| Nov. 13, 2012: | Council reaffirmed by Resolution, that the Albion Flats was the priority for the preparation of an Area Plan. |
| Dec. 22, 2014 | Smart Centres notifies the City in writing that they would not be proceeding with the land exchange agreement based on financial reasons. |
| Jan. 6, 2015: | Press Release from the City outlining that the Albion Land Exchange deal with Smart Centres would not be proceeding |

This chronology of key events and decisions outlines that the ALC has been consistent with the message that they would support a block ALR Exclusion application for the lands south of 105th Avenue. They are also now requiring that as a condition of that support, drainage and other restoration works on the lands north of 105th Avenue are required. Council will need to consider this information should they decide to proceed with a block ALR Exclusion application and area planning process.

C. Legislative and Policy Considerations:

The Albion Flats Concept Plan was prepared as the first stage of the Albion Flats Area Planning process. While a concept plan could provide Council and the community with some level of direction for future land uses within the Albion Flats, it does not have the same status as a formal area plan within the Official Community Plan.

In November 2012, Council reaffirmed, by Resolution, that the Albion Flats was the priority for the preparation of an Area Plan.

a) Agricultural Land Commission:

In order to change the land use within the Albion Flats area, the lands currently within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) would need to be excluded from the ALR by the Commission. The ALC decision states that the City may submit a block exclusion application for the lands south of 105th Avenue that the Commission does not feel has agricultural viability. In their decision related to the Albion Flats Concept Plan, the ALC indicated that "... while the Commission is prepared to cooperate towards future commercial or industrial development at Albion Flats, it will do so in conjunction with restoration of an agricultural future for that part of the Albion Flats lying to the north of 105th Avenue." The full ALC decision letter to the City is attached to this report as Appendix E.

The following are three key decisions that reflect the ALC's position relating to requests for exclusion in Maple Ridge. The two recent decisions relating to properties on the north side of 105th Ave. reaffirms the Commissions position that this area has agricultural viability and that the City is expected to restore the lands for agricultural activity.

Recent ALR Exclusion Application Decisions:

- Pelton Nursery Lands – 12930, 12662, 12766, 12960 203rd Street; 12987 210th Street; 20370, 20650 132nd Avenue:

In April 2010 the owners of the above identified properties – collectively known as the Pelton Nursery Lands, made application for exclusion from the ALR in order to increase employment generating opportunities within Maple Ridge.

The ALC met in Oct. 2010 to consider the application and rendered the following decision:

The Commission concluded:

1. *That the land under application has agricultural capability and is appropriately designated as ALR;*
2. *That the land under application is suitable for agricultural use;*
3. *That the proposal will impact agriculture;*
4. *That the proposal is inconsistent with the objective of the Agricultural Land Commission Act to preserve agricultural land.*

THAT the application be refused.

Following the ALC's decision on the Albion Flats Concept Plan in 2011, two applications to exclude land from the ALR north of 105th Avenue were made by land owners in 2013.

- 23451 105th Avenue:

The owners of the property on the north side of 105th Avenue made application for exclusion from the ALR on the grounds that the property has been rendered unsuitable for agriculture through the actions of parties other than the owners of the parcel. This application was subsequent to an earlier application for exclusion from the ALR made by the owners in 2004 that was denied by the Commission.

The ALC met in January 2013 to consider this application and rendered the following decision:

The Commission concluded:

- *That the agricultural suitability problems encountered by the applicants are real;*
- *That they result primarily from inadequately serviced urban development;*
- *That ultimate responsibility for ensuring adequate urban development servicing lies with the local government, which now operates the drainage district;*
- *Thus the District of Maple Ridge, in consultation with Fisheries and Oceans Canada, is in a position to ensure that the problems are remedied and agricultural suitability is restored.*

THAT the request for exclusion of the subject property from the ALR be refused.

Resolution #196/2013

- 23623 105th Avenue:

The owners of the property on the north side of 105th Avenue also made application for exclusion from the ALR on the grounds that it has been rendered unsuitable for agriculture through the actions of parties other than the owners of the parcel. This application was subsequent to an ALR exclusion application in 2004.

The ALC met in March 2013 to consider that application and rendered the following decision:

The Commission concluded:

- *That the agricultural suitability problems encountered by the applicants are real;*
- *That they result primarily from inadequately serviced urban development;*
- *That ultimate responsibility for ensuring adequate urban development servicing lies with the local government, which now operates the drainage district;*
- *Thus the District of Maple Ridge, in consultation with Fisheries and Oceans Canada, is in a position to ensure that the problems are remedied and agricultural suitability is restored.*

THAT the request for exclusion of the subject property from the ALR be refused.
Resolution #197/2013

The ALC decisions regarding the above Exclusion applications and the City's Albion Flats Concept Plan suggest that the Commission is taking a firm position on the protection of these lands within the ALR.

b) Metro Vancouver:

The Metro Vancouver 2040 Shaping Our Future Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) identifies the Albion Flats area as a Special Study Area, with underlying Regional land use designations of Agricultural, Conservation and Recreation and General Urban. Appendix F is a detail from the adopted Maple Ridge Regional Land Use Designation Map, which forms part of the Regional Context Statement found in the Official Community Plan.

The intent of the Special Study Area signifies that the municipality and Metro Vancouver acknowledge that the current land uses within will change at some point in the future, following the preparation of an area plan and application to amend the Regional Growth Strategy.

The RGS contains a process for a municipality to apply for an amendment, which is dependent on the level of significance of the proposed amendment(s). An amendment to or within a Special Study Area would be considered a Type 3 Minor Amendment. A Type 3 amendment requires an affirmative 50%+1 weighted vote of the Metro Vancouver Board and does not require a regional Public Hearing.

Should Council decide to proceed with a block ALR Exclusion application and area plan for the Albion Flats, It is anticipated that the Planning Department would engage in discussions with Metro Vancouver for comments prior to bringing an Official Community Plan amending bylaw forward for Council's consideration.

Fraser Sewer Area:

The Albion Flats is not located within the Fraser Sewer Area Boundary (FSA). As such, as part of the RGS amendment process, the City will also have to apply to have these lands included within the FSA in order to permit sewer services to be extended.

c) Maple Ridge

Official Community Plan:

The Official Community Plan contains a suite of policies related to growth management (Chapter 2), employment (Chapter 6) area planning (Chapter 10) and implementation (Chapter 11),

Currently the majority of the Albion Flats is outside of the Urban Area Boundary, which is reflective of the fact that most of the lands area within the Agricultural Land Reserve. The exceptions are generally along 240th Street, south of 104th Avenue where there is residential, the Albion Elementary School and the historic commercial node where Bruce's Market is located.

Section 6.2.3 of the OCP addresses the Albion Flats by outlining the Issues, Objectives and Policies as follows:

Issues:

- *The Albion Flats is an area of Regional and Provincial interest. It is mostly within the Agricultural Land Reserve, and is identified as Agriculture in the Regional Growth Strategy, the long range plan for Metro Vancouver. This area is therefore within municipal, Regional and Provincial jurisdiction. For these reasons, the area is currently considered unavailable for urban development and is outside the Urban Area Boundary. *(Note – the lands within the identified Albion Flats Area Plan also include General Urban lands in the RGS).*
- *The area is also strategically located adjacent to the Provincial Highway network. It is within the floodplain of the Fraser River, and is associated with high ecological value. For these reasons, a number of diverse interests have noted that this area is well suited for a variety of purposes, such as agricultural, commercial, industrial, or recreational uses.*

Objective:

- *To collaborate with other jurisdictions to determine the role of the Albion Flats in meeting community, Regional and Provincial goals.*

Policies:

6-15 *Maple Ridge will work with Metro Vancouver, the Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District (GVS&DD) and the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) to determine the future of the Albion Flats in conjunction with community, Regional and Provincial goals.*

6-16 *Prior to Council giving consideration to a change in land use, an extension of municipal services, or an amendment to the Urban Area Boundary, Maple Ridge will:*

- i. develop and implement a Comprehensive Strategy as outlined in Section 11.1.3; and*
- ii. collaborate with Regional and Provincial authorities to complete a comparative analysis to review land use, social, economic and environmental goals.*

The Comprehensive Strategy identified in Policy 6-16(i) refers to the preparation of an agricultural plan, an Urban Area Boundary Review and preparation a commercial and industrial land use strategy, all of which have now been completed.

Commercial and Industrial Strategy:

The Commercial and Industrial Strategy, prepared by GP Rollo and Associates, outlines a series of strategies and actions for the City to address commercial, office and industrial land use needs through to 2042. The Strategy was endorsed by Council on August 26, 2014.

Contained within the Industrial supply and demand section of the Strategy, is a brief discussion on lands within the ALR and specifically that are in the vicinity of Golden Ears Way and 203rd Street where the Pelton Nursery Lands are located. The Strategy reflects the ALC decision on these lands as follows:

8.7.8 Strategy #8 ALR / ALR Exemptions [Pelton Lands]

Pursuing ALR exemptions for future land supply is considered a risk filled strategy that should only be pursued in the long term if other initiatives prove insufficient for meeting demand for industrial land. The Agricultural Land Commission has changed the process for reviewing applications for ALR exemptions [exclusions] and they are becoming stricter than in the past.

The ALC official that was interviewed gave the example that an application to exempt the Pelton Lands would have less chance of gaining approval that it did in 2010 when it was unanimously denied by the ALC Board.

D. Options:

There is a long history of planning activities and ALC and Council decisions related to the Albion Flats. Through written correspondence the ALC has expressed support for a block ALR Exclusion application for the lands to the south of 105th Avenue subject to a number of conditions. The previous Council directed that a block Exclusion application be pursued and identified that the Albion Flats would continue to be the priority for area planning. However, Council may wish to proceed in another direction. Should this be the case, a forthcoming report will seek Council's direction on two fundamental questions:

1. Does Council support the Exclusion of land from the ALR in the Albion Flats?
2. Does an area plan for the Albion Flats remain Council's priority for area planning in the City?

A brief summary of the options that would be discussed in more detail in a subsequent report are as follows:

a) Options for ALR Exclusion:

Council is faced with two choices regarding those lands south of 105th Avenue that are currently in the ALR:

- i. To proceed with a block Exclusion application. This option would have the City apply for removal of City-owned lands and on behalf of private land owners.

The ALC decision requires that the City address the drainage issues on the lands north of 105th Avenue prior to their consideration of an exclusion application for the lands south of 105th Avenue. These requirements may have significant financial implications to the City, once the full scope of the work required is identified.

Based on the preliminary research prepared as part of the Smart Centers agreement, preliminary estimated costs for the drainage remediation works are \$2,100,000. Cost estimates are yet to be determined for the agricultural access and buffering and redress of potential site contamination.

Should Council wish to continue with the block Exclusion application, the City will need to determine how the ALC conditions relating to drainage improvements and restoration north of 105th Avenue would be satisfied. Options may include developing a borrowing bylaw to cover the up-front cost for the works and exploring cost recovery mechanisms and potential amenity contributions. Details regarding the funding options would be outlined in a subsequent report to Council.

- ii. Not to proceed with a block Exclusion application.

This option would leave the land in the ALR and individual applications would be considered on their own merits. It is important to note that it is uncertain if the ALC would be supportive of this approach. It is also noted that the ALC's requirement to restore the agricultural capability on the lands north of 105th Avenue, including the funding of the estimated \$2,100,00 for drainage improvements would remain. If this option is pursued, it is assumed that the private land owner(s) would up front these costs.

b) Options for Land Use:

Council has two options related to the land use within the Albion Flats:

- i. To proceed with an area planning process. This option would have staff prepare a report on the process to complete the area plan for the Flats, including a discussion on the boundaries, scope, anticipated timeline and budget requirements.
- ii. Not to proceed with an area plan. This option would see all land use planning activities in the Albion Flats cease, with the current land use designations of *Agriculture* and *Park in the ALR*, remaining.

c) Options for an Area Planning Process:

The current Concept Plan (Appendix D) was endorsed for the purpose of submission to the ALC for comments, including a package of information to provide the ALC Board with the information necessary to assess the Concept Plan. The decision identified that the Commission did not support the Concept Plan in its entirety and would not support exclusion of lands to the north of 105th Avenue.

If Council decides to proceed with an area planning process, staff could revisit the results of the 2010 design charrette scenarios or begin a new area planning process as outlined below:

- i. *Revisit the previously endorsed Draft Concept Plan.*

The ALC decision received in Oct 2011 indicates that the Commission will not support land uses other than agricultural on the north side of 105th Avenue. As such, the Draft Concept Plan will need to be amended to remove employment and non-farm uses, reflecting the Commissions direction, should Council wish to pursue the land uses identified on the south side of 105th Ave.

ii. *Revisit the Charrette results:*

The Charrette Summary report prepared by HB Lanarc and presented to Council in February 2011 provided four overall land use scenarios within the Albion Flats Area Plan boundaries, based on two concepts for the portion south of 105th Avenue (Jobs & Commercial and Recreation & Mixed Use) and two for the portion north of 105th Avenue (Agriculture and Auto Oriented Commercial). The four scenarios (Appendix C) that were included in the summary report are:

- Scenario 1: Jobs, Commercial and Agriculture
- Scenario 2: Jobs & Auto Oriented Commercial
- Scenario 3: Recreation, Mixed Use and Agriculture
- Scenario 4: Recreation, Mixed Use and Auto Oriented Commercial

Given the ALC's decision regarding the lands to the north of 105th Avenue, the auto oriented commercial land use concept will likely not be supported. As a result, some re-thinking of what the most appropriate agricultural and agricultural-supportive land uses will be required.

iii. *New Land Use Planning Process:*

Council also has the option of starting the land use planning process over again, including redefining the study area boundaries, without using the previous work as the basis for future land uses. This option is not recommended as it would be the third public process and there is very sound background materials and recommendations that were prepared during the 2010 Charrette exercise.

d) Relationship between ALR Exclusion Options and Land Use Options

Should Council decide to pursue a block ALR Exclusion application, it would appear that based on the comments from the ALC, the land use decisions for the lands south of 105th Ave. could proceed separately and independent of the exclusion application.

If Council decides not to proceed with a block exclusion application, individual owners would be able to do so. The completion of an area plan would be helpful for applicants, but it is uncertain if the ALC would require the completion of the area plan prior to considering an exclusion application.

It should be noted that decisions regarding the Exclusion application will inform decisions related to land use planning. For example, if Council decides not to proceed with an Exclusion application, the lands will remain in the ALR and the land use designation will remain Agricultural.

E. Interdepartmental Implications:

The Albion Flats process requires the skills of diverse departments in the City including Property management, Parks and Leisure Services, Engineering, Planning, and the Finance Department

F. Next Steps:

The preparation of a follow-up report is anticipated based on Council's input and feedback on the questions and options outlined in this report.

CONCLUSIONS:

This report provides a detailed history on the Albion Flats and also introduces a number of options on how or how to proceed. Further discussion regarding the financial implications, land use planning options and process would be outlined in a subsequent report, pending Council direction.

“Original signed by Jim Charlebois”

Prepared by: Jim Charlebois, MURP, MCIP, RPP
Manager of Community Planning

“Original signed by Christine Carter”

Approved by: Christine Carter, M.PL., MCIP, RPP
Director of Planning

“Original signed by Frank Quinn”

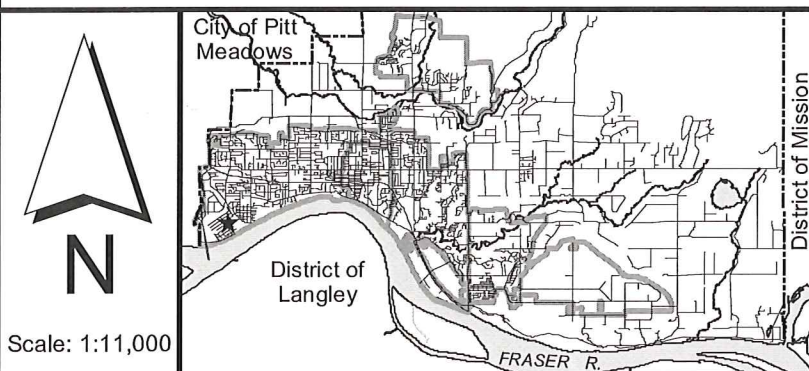
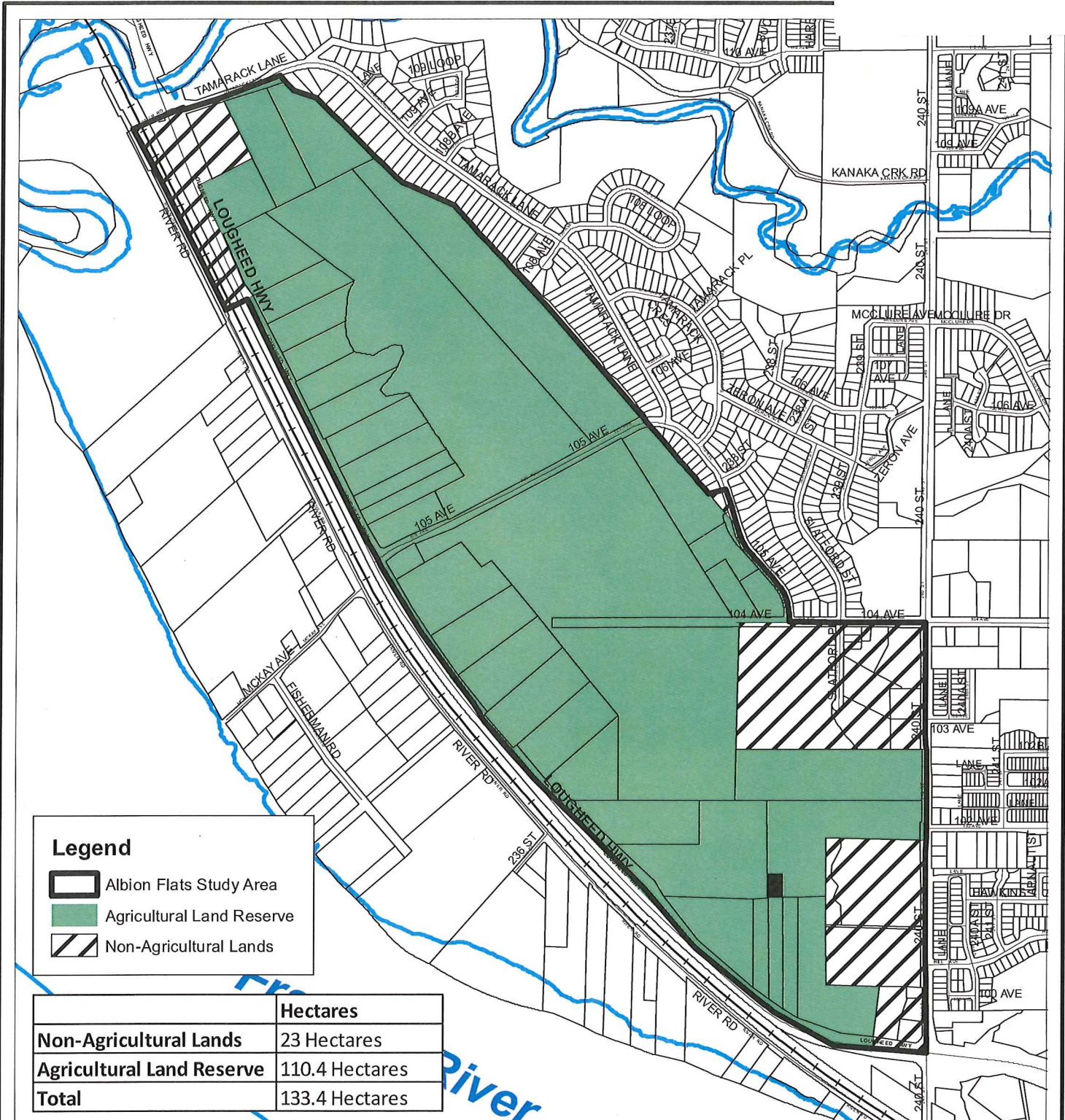
Approved by: Frank Quinn, MBA, P.Eng
GM: Public Works & Development Services

“Original signed by Kelly Swift” for

Concurrence: J.L. (Jim) Rule
Chief Administrative Officer

The following appendices are attached hereto:

Appendix A: Albion Flats ALR lands
Appendix B: 1999 Albion Flats Concept Plan
Appendix C: 2010 Albion Charrette Scenarios (4)
Appendix D: 2010 Albion Flats Concept Plan
Appendix E: ALC Decision regarding the 2010 Albion Flats Concept Plan
Appendix F: Maple Ridge RCS Regional Land Use Designations – Albion Flats Area Detail



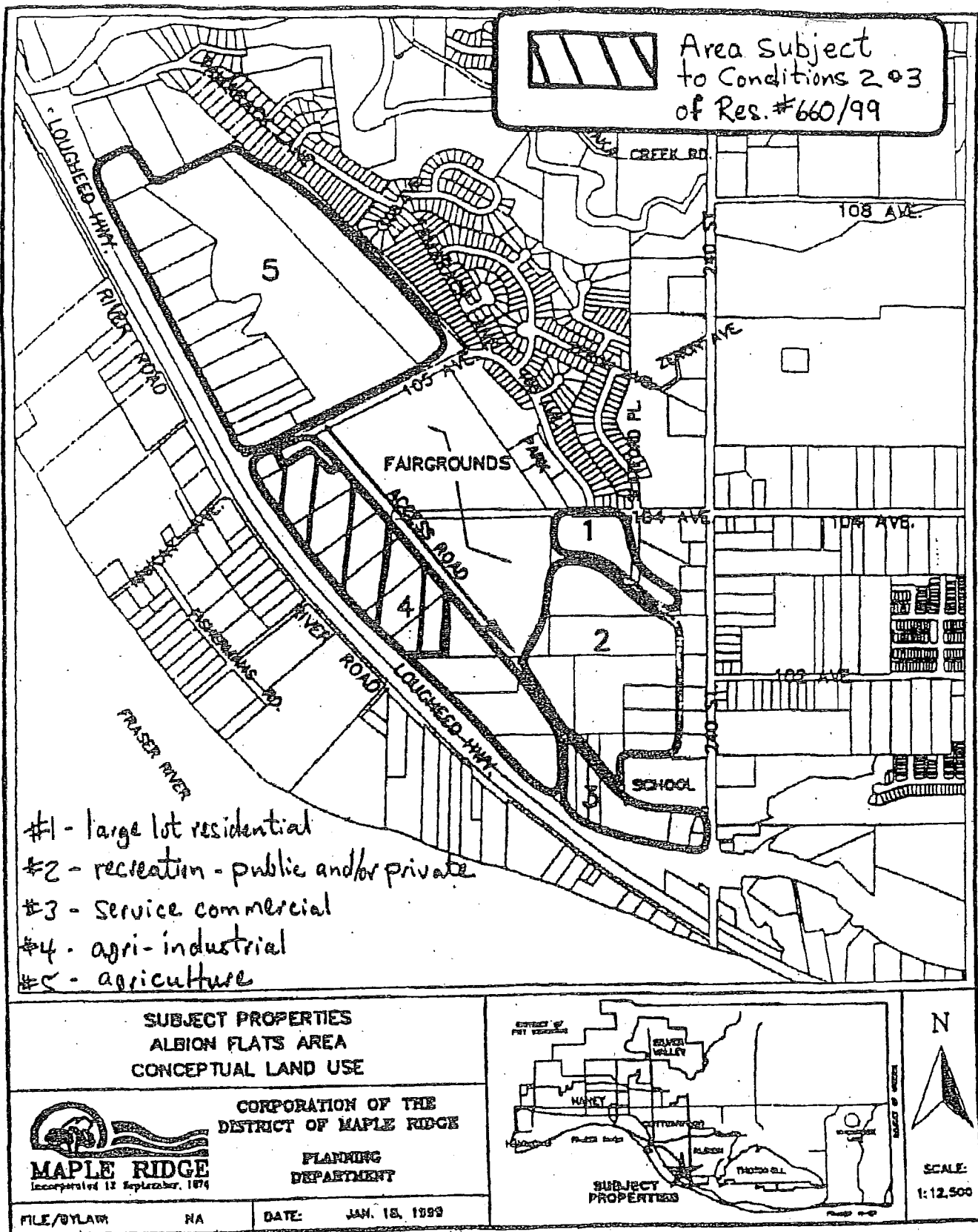
Albion Flats



CITY OF MAPLE RIDGE
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

DATE: Feb 24, 2015

BY: DT



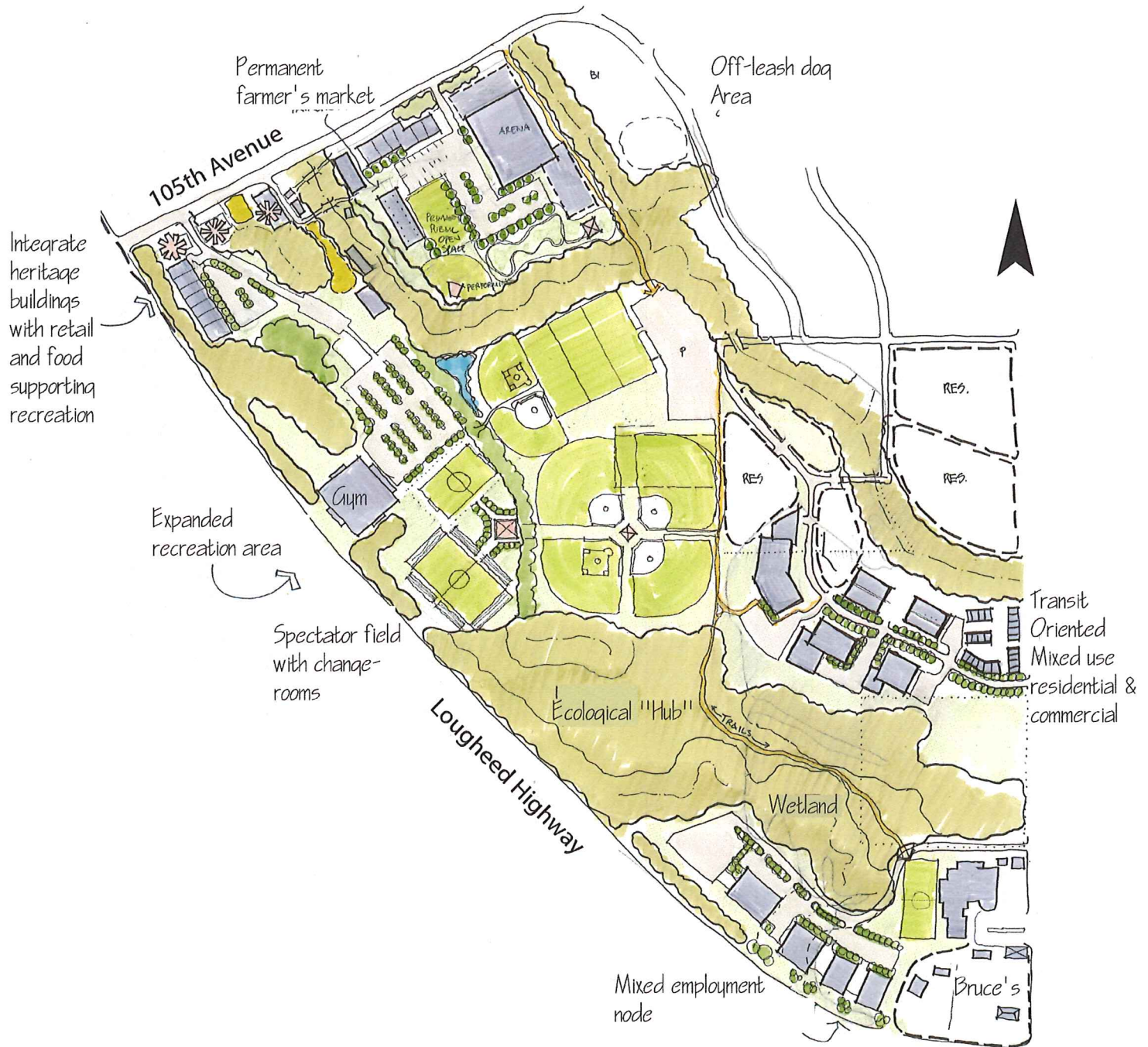
Concept A: Jobs & Commercial

Concept A introduces jobs and commercial landuses into the existing uses of the site. Mixed use is also introduced.



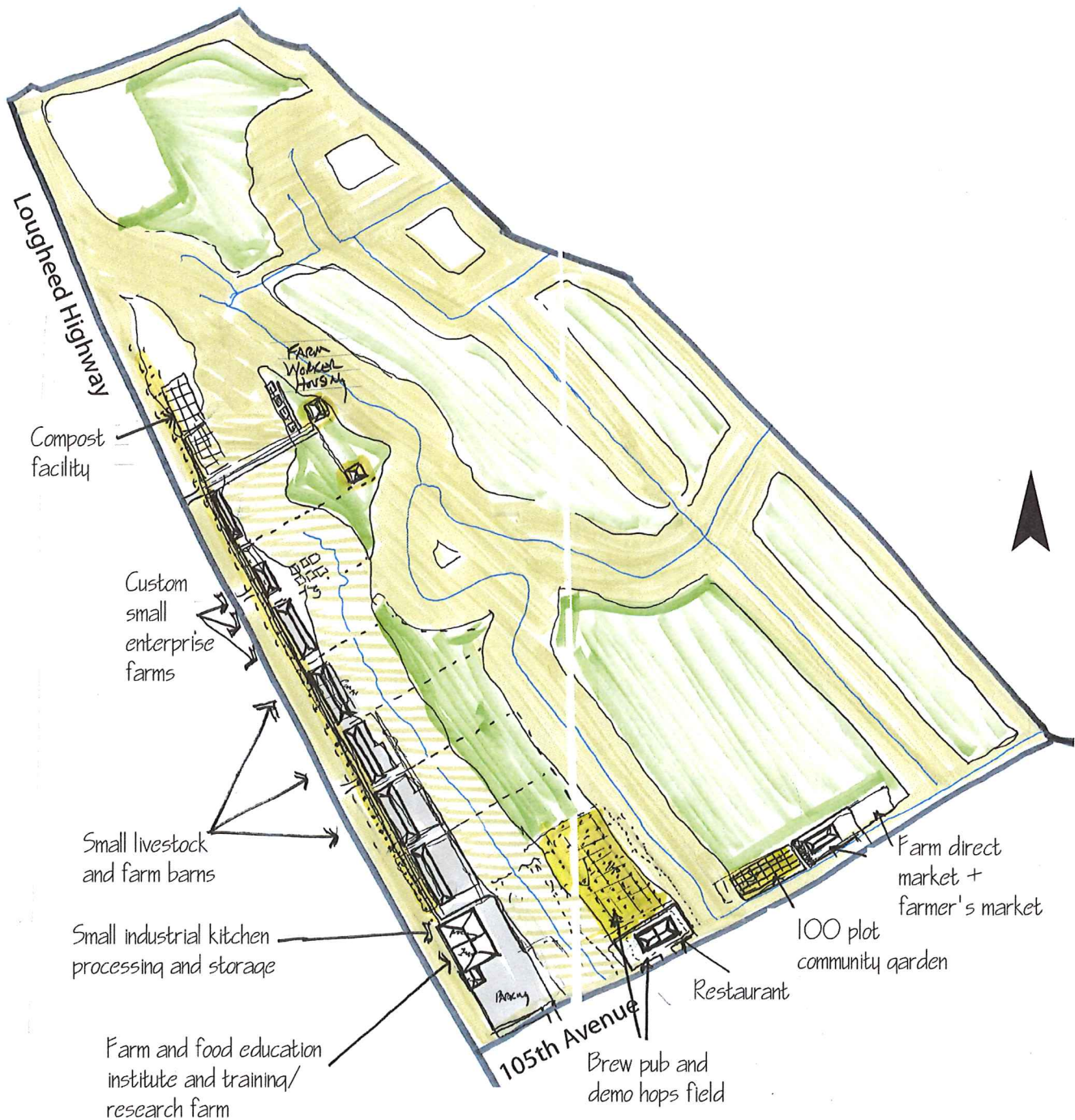
Concept B: Recreation & Mixed Use

Concept B looks at an expanded recreation program as well as introducing limited commercial/mixed use



Option 1: Agriculture

Option 1 maintains the agricultural land use (including farm structures) with the exception of a restaurant and brew pub



Option 2: Auto-Oriented Commercial

Option 2 looks at large-format, auto oriented commercial/retail, North of 105th



Draft Concept Plan



Proposed Land Use	Area hectares*	Area acres*
Agricultural Fairgrounds & Farm Cluster	5.6	13.8
Agriculture Fields & Community Garden	4.6	11.4
Auto Oriented Regional Serving Retail	9.8	24.2
Mixed Employment Node, Light Industrial, Business Office & Agri-Industrial	27.2	67.2
Green Space & Stream Setbacks	42.6	105.3
Institutional (school site)	2.1	5.2
Recreation (includes multi-purpose recreation facility)	20.0	49.4
Townhouse	8.0	19.8
Transit-Oriented Mixed Use	4.8	11.8
TOTAL	124.7	308.1

* Area calculations are approximate

As directed by Council, the Consultants original numbers have been refined.



PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION

A meeting was held by the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission on October 27, 2010 at the offices of the Commission located at #133 – 4940 Canada Way, Burnaby, B.C.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Richard Bullock	Chair
Jim Collins	Commissioner
Lucille Dempsey	Commissioner
Denise Dowswell	Commissioner
Jennifer Dyson	Vice-Chair
Gordon Gillette	Vice-Chair
Jim Johnson	Commissioner
Bert Miles	Commissioner
Jerry Thibeault	Commissioner

COMMISSION STAFF PRESENT:

Colin Fry	Executive Director
Brian Underhill	Executive Director
Tony Pellett	Regional Planner
Eamonn Watson	Land Use Planner

Planning Review ID: #175

PROPOSAL: Review draft Albion Flats concept plan endorsed by the District of Maple Ridge ("DMR") Council in the context of a package of reports submitted by DMR for review by Commission members and staff.

COMMISSION CONSIDERATION:

Context

Section 6 of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* identifies the purposes of the Commission as: (1) to preserve agricultural land; (2) to encourage farming on agricultural land in collaboration with other communities of interest; and (3) to encourage local governments, first nations, the government and its agents to enable and accommodate farm use of agricultural land and uses compatible with agriculture in their plans, bylaws and policies.

The draft concept plan would encourage non-farm development throughout the Albion Flats area while preserving a few small, isolated fields as "edible landscapes" and possibly also encouraging the development of greenhouses on rooftops of commercial/industrial buildings. DMR's Agricultural Plan, adopted December 2009, states, "The primary goal with respect to larger, established farming operations...is to plan for their retention as farms....Limited to highly specific situations, the secondary goal...is to explore a policy of compensation from development that enables funds to be generated so that the net agricultural capability of DMR is enhanced by investment elsewhere."

CONCLUSIONS:

1. That the land north of 105 Avenue has agricultural capability, is suitable for agricultural use and is appropriately designated as ALR.
2. That apart from the agricultural fairgrounds, the land south of 105 Avenue is of very limited interest to agriculture, thus previous Commission proposals for limiting land use options may be reconsidered.
3. That the draft concept plan, as proposed, will have an overall negative impact on agriculture in DMR.
4. That the draft concept plan is inconsistent with the objective of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* to preserve agricultural land.

IT WAS

MOVED BY: Commissioner Collins

SECONDED BY: Commissioner Miles

THAT the Commission not endorse the draft concept plan entirely as submitted, but only in part;

THAT DMR be advised that while the Commission is prepared to cooperate towards future commercial or industrial development at Albion Flats, it will do so in conjunction with restoration of an agricultural future for that part of Albion Flats lying to the north of 105 Avenue;

AND THAT focusing on the area north of 105 Avenue the Commission will expect DMR to undertake a comprehensive review of drainage and stream flow conditions in the Road Thirteen Dyking District with a view to resolving issues identified in the Golder Associates overview agricultural assessment and the HB Lanarc environmental baseline report, that review to include

- preliminary consultation with Fisheries and Oceans Canada,
- preparation of an agricultural remedial action plan in consultation with the Commission, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the land owners, such a plan to address all relevant issues including but not limited to drainage, long term access, buffering or consolidation, and
- design to ensure that traffic patterns enable practical access and use by farm vehicles;

AND THAT the Commission will expect DMR to submit an application under section 29 of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* to exclude from the ALR the land lying south of 105 Avenue and west of 240 Street together with any remnant areas elsewhere in DMR identified by the Commission as being unsuitable for agriculture; Commission approval of such an application may be in part or in whole conditional on progress toward the foregoing action plan;

AND THAT this response does not suggest or promote any move to eliminate the use of land at Albion Flats as an agricultural fairground;

AND THAT the Commission recognizes that any implementation or action to be taken with respect to the Commission's response to the concept plan will require that DMR and land owners be responsible for complying with applicable Acts, regulations, and decisions of any authorities that have jurisdiction under an enactment.

CARRIED

Resolution # 2635/2011

