

City of Maple Ridge

COUNCIL WORKSHOP AGENDA

March 29, 2022

11:00 a.m.

PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE IN TIME

Virtual Online Meeting including Council Chambers

The purpose of the Council Workshop is to review and discuss policies and other items of interest to Council. Although resolutions may be passed at this meeting, the intent is to make a consensus decision to send an item to Council for debate and vote or refer the item back to staff for more information or clarification.

The meeting is live streamed and recorded by the City of Maple Ridge.

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2.1 Minutes - March 8, 2022

3. PRESENTATIONS AT THE REQUEST OF COUNCIL

4. UNFINISHED AND NEW BUSINESS

4.1 123 Corridor Upgrades

Presentation by the Director of Engineering

4.2 Assessment of Employment Future in Thornhill and 256th Street Industrial Area

Staff report dated March 29, 2022 recommending that staff proceed with expanding use in the 256th Street Industrial Area and that the Official Community Plan policies and designations for Thornhill be updated to Industrial Reserve.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

6. BRIEFING ON OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST/QUESTIONS FROM COUNCIL

7. MATTERS DEEMED EXPEDIENT

8. NOTICE OF CLOSED COUNCIL MEETING

9. ADJOURNMENT

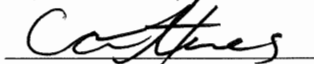
APPROVED BY:



DATE:

Mar 25, 2022

PREPARED BY:



DATE:

March 25, 2022

CHECKED BY: _____

DATE: _____

City of Maple Ridge

COUNCIL WORKSHOP MINUTES

March 8, 2022

The Minutes of the City Council Meeting held on March 8, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. held virtually and hosted in the Council Chambers of the City Hall, 11995 Haney Place, Maple Ridge, British Columbia for the purpose of transacting regular City business.

<i>PRESENT</i>	<i>Appointed Staff</i>
<i>Elected Officials</i>	S. Hartman, Chief Administrative Officer
Mayor M. Morden	C. Carter, General Manager Planning & Development Services
Councillor J. Dueck	T. Thompson, Acting General Manager Corporate Services
Councillor C. Meadus	S. Labonne, General Manager Parks, Recreation & Culture
Councillor G. Robson	D. Pollock, General Manager Engineering Services
Councillor R. Svendsen	S. Nichols, Corporate Officer
Councillor A. Yousef	
 <i>ABSENT</i>	 <i>Other Staff as Required</i>
Councillor K. Duncan	C. Goddard, Director of Planning
	M. Halpin, Manager of Transportation
	T. Hansvall, Accountant 1
	F. Smith, Director of Engineering
	T. Thompson, Director of Finance

These Minutes are posted on the City Web Site at www.mapleridge.ca

Note: Due to COVID Councillor Dueck, Councillor Robson, and Councillor Yousef participated virtually. The Mayor chaired the meeting from Council Chambers.

1. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

R/2022-WS-008

It was moved and seconded

That the agenda of the March 8, 2022 Council Workshop Meeting be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

2. *ADOPTION OF MINUTES*

2.1 Minutes of the February 22, 2022 Council Workshop Meeting

R/2022-WS-009

It was moved and seconded

That the minutes of the Council Workshop Meeting of February 22, 2022 be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

3. *PRESENTATIONS AT THE REQUEST OF COUNCIL* – Nil

4. *UNFINISHED AND NEW BUSINESS*

4.1 Strategic Transportation Plan Project – Interim Report #2

Staff report dated March 8, 2022, summarizing public feedback received and recommending endorsement of the vision, goals and supportive strategic directions prior to proceeding to Phase 4, Plan Development.

M. Halpin, Manager of Transportation provided a summary presentation. Staff and Allison Clavelle, Urban Systems, responded to questions from Council.

R/2022-WS-010

It was moved and seconded

That the Abernethy Extension and the 240th Bridge project's move to a higher priority and that staff bring back options in the final report to fund and build those project's within a short period of time.

DEFEATED

Councillor Dueck, Councillor Meadus, Councillor Svendsen and Mayor Morden –
OPPOSED

R/2022-WS-011

Moved and seconded

That the Strategic Plan Project - Interim Report #2 be endorsed.

CARRIED

4.2 117 Avenue Multi-Use Path Capital Project Update

F. Smith, Director of Engineering, provided a summary presentation on the project and provided the next steps in the project. Staff responded to questions from Council.

4.3 Quarter 4, 2021 Preliminary Financial Update

Staff report dated March 8, 2022, titled "Quarter 4, 2021 Preliminary Financial Update" providing a preliminary financial update to the end of 2021.

T. Hansvall, Accountant 1, provided a summary presentation and staff responded to questions from Council.

5. *CORRESPONDENCE* – Nil

6. *BRIEFING ON OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST/QUESTIONS FROM COUNCIL* – Nil

7. *MATTERS DEEMED EXPEDIENT* – Nil

8. *NOTICE OF CLOSED COUNCIL MEETING*

R/2022-WS-012

Moved and seconded

That the meeting will be closed to the public pursuant to Sections 90 (1) and 90 (2) of the Community Charter as the subject matter being considered relates to the following:

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| Section 90(1)(e) | the acquisition, disposition or expropriation of land or improvements, if the council considers that disclosure might reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the municipality; |
| Section 90(1)(i) | the receipt of advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose; |
| Section 90(1)(k) | negotiations and related discussions respecting the proposed provision of a municipal service that are at their preliminary stages and that, in the view of the council, could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the municipality if they were held in public; |

Any other matter that may be brought before the Council that meets the requirements for a meeting closed to the public pursuant to Sections 90 (1) and 90 (2) of the Community Charter or Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

CARRIED

9. *ADJOURNMENT* - 11:17 a.m.

M. Morden, Mayor

Certified Correct

S. Nichols, Corporate Officer



mapleridge.ca

City of Maple Ridge

TO: His Worship Mayor Michael Morden
and Members of Council
FROM: Chief Administrative Officer
SUBJECT: Assessment of Employment Future in Thornhill and 256th Street Industrial Area

MEETING DATE: March 29, 2022
FILE NO:
ATTN: Workshop

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

On March 30, 2021, Council directed staff to prepare a scoping report on background studies for a potential employment future in the Thornhill area. In July 2021, Urban Systems was contracted to assess employment demand and the types of businesses that the area could attract. The Urban Systems study concluded that while there is a future market opportunity for employment use in Thornhill, albeit limited, it cannot be considered without looking at demand for an expanded 256th Industrial Area that would likely be drawing from the same pool of businesses.

On December 14, 2021, the Urban Systems study was presented at the Council Workshop meeting and the following resolution was passed:

"That the Urban Systems Thornhill Employment Lands Opportunity Assessment report be received for information.

And that staff undertake analysis of the report findings and bring recommendations on next steps to a future Council Workshop meeting."

This report presents discussion of staff analysis of the Urban Systems study and a recommendation to proceed with background studies for the 256th Industrial Area, as the priority, and retain Thornhill for employment use in the future. The rationale for the recommendation is provided in this report and summarized as follows:

- To avoid competition between the two areas and unnecessary and expensive upfront infrastructure costs;
- Partial servicing infrastructure (water and sewer) already exists in the 256th Industrial Area;
- The 256th arterial road route improvements have been studied and costed out (at a high level); and
- The two areas up in the 256th Industrial Area that are designated for Industrial use, are largely built out and recent development applications have been received for industrial development on the Industrial Reserve and Rural Resource designated lands.

Additionally, timeline estimates for development of existing and future employment lands is provided as a big-picture view of anticipated employment land development over time.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That staff proceed with expanding employment use in the 256th Street Industrial Area, as described in Section 4.0 Recommendation and Next Steps, of the staff report dated March 29, 2022 titled “Assessment of Employment Future in Thornhill and 256th Street Industrial Area”; and

That the Official Community Plan policies and designation for Thornhill be updated to Industrial Reserve to reflect future employment use for the area.

1.0 BACKGROUND:

1.1 Thornhill Urban Reserve

In preparation of the 2006 Official Community Plan an issues report was presented to Council on January 6, 2006, wherein background was provided on the 1996 OCP that identified Thornhill as an Urban Reserve area. The report informed that in Section 1.4, Capacity for Growth, of the 1996 OCP it states that the existing land in urban growth areas is sufficient to serve housing needs for at least the next 25 years, assuming an average annual growth rate of 3% (note that annual growth rate has been less than 2% since at least 2006). Additionally, the Regional Context Statement from the 1996 OCP states that Maple Ridge will work towards consistency between the OCP and the regional plan over time to determine the appropriate development timing of Thornhill, “depending upon achieving success in meeting the regional compact metropolitan and transportation objectives in the Maple Ridge context”.

The January 2006 report included additional background on the following four ‘Residential Growth Options’ that Council had evaluated:

- Base Case which is based on the current OCP land use designations;
- Option 1 Moderate Intensification and Urban Containment;
- Option 2 Modest Intensification and Northward Urban Expansion;
- Option 3 Modest Intensification and Eastward Expansion into Urban Reserve; and
- Option 4 Moderate Intensification and Northward Urban Expansion.

As noted in the January 2006 report, Council gave consideration to the above options in December 2004 and chose to retain the Thornhill Area as a Potential Expansion Area for residential growth in the community. The report confirms that this Council decision was based primarily on the following reasons: it honoured previous decisions made in earlier Official Community Plans; did not remove land from the Agricultural Land Reserve; and did not require the removal of land from the Green Zone (which was a land use designation in the regional plan at that time).

1.2 Thornhill Background Report

On March 30, 2021, a Thornhill background report was presented to Council providing information on residential growth projections in relation to current OCP Urban Reserve Policies and introduced the potential for an employment use in the Thornhill area in the near to medium term.

The analysis provided in the March 2021 Council report showed that the approach taken through the 2006 OCP policies has successfully created sufficient capacity within existing urban residential lands for long-term growth and concluded that Thornhill lands are not needed for future residential use over the long-term. The Council report also discussed the potential for an employment future in Thornhill,

as the use is supportable through existing OCP policies and recommendations in the Commercial & Industrial Strategy (background studies were estimated to take approximately one year to complete and \$700,000 was approved through the 2022 Business Planning process to complete this work).

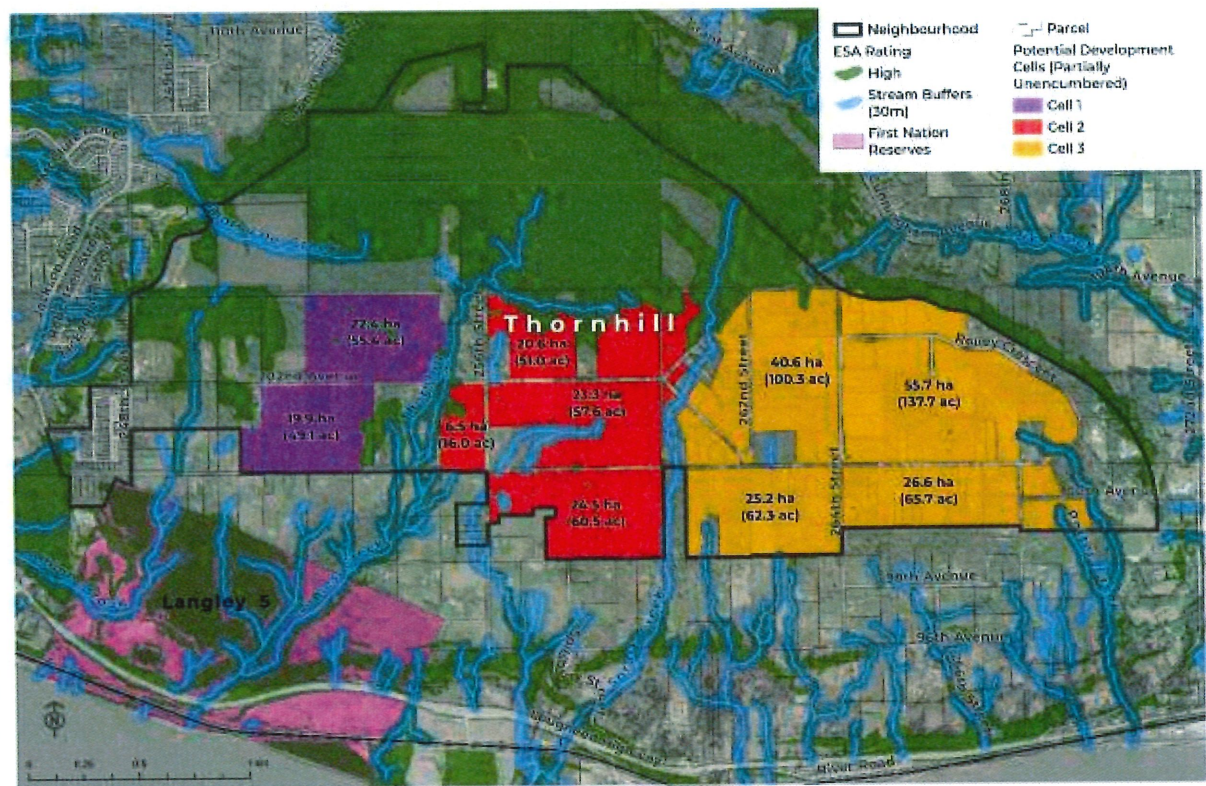
At the March 30, 2021 Council Workshop meeting, staff were directed to proceed with background studies in preparation for completing a Thornhill Employments Lands planning process.

1.2.1 Outcomes of Recent Urban Systems Thornhill Opportunity Assessment

In July 2021, Urban Systems was commissioned to undertake a high level study to assess employment demand potential for the Thornhill area that included looking at future road access, servicing requirements, and current demand for existing employment lands in Maple Ridge.

The Urban Systems study found that while there are three areas, or development cells within Thornhill for future employment use potential, the most viable cell (Cell 1 in purple) is just over 104 acres (42.3 ha) and located west of 256th Street and James Creek, as shown in the map image below.

Figure 24: Potential Development Cells for Employment Lands



Map: Excerpt from Thornhill Employment Lands Opportunity Assessment, Urban Systems, Dec. 6/21

The rationale in the study for what makes Cell 1 viable for light industrial use is as follows:

- Just over 104 acres (42.3 ha) of land in total, with about 53% north of 102nd Avenue and balance south of 102nd Avenue.
- Size is consistent with broker opinion on reasonable size for employment land node in this area.

- Likely the development cell closest to where a future road alignment from Lougheed into Thornhill would run.
- Areas north of 102nd Avenue would be more challenging to develop from a slope standpoint; costs of grading are unknown at this stage.
- There are considerable areas south of 102nd Avenue with low or modest slope (<10%).

The study further states that Cell 1 would “immediately fulfill a clear and growing latent demand in the local market” with a “likely absorption period of 20-40 years” at approximately 5 acres being sold or leased per year. However, the study also found that:

An industrial park of up to 100 acres (+/-) could be successful, provided that up-front costs to bring the infrastructure, perform required earthworks, and develop the lots, can be carried until sufficient revenues can be achieved.

The study stated further that:

Absorption will ultimately depend on overall market strength, pricing, and competitive product in the immediate and surrounding markets.

The Urban Systems study assessed industrial market trends in Maple Ridge and nearby municipalities and found that industrial development in Thornhill would not likely attract major warehouses, logistics, or distribution facilities, as these businesses prefer to locate much closer to Highway 1, but being located close to a major arterial route (i.e. Lougheed Highway) is attractive to the following industries:

- Manufacturing (wood, metals, machinery, food, etc.);
- Construction (and related services);
- Primary resource sectors;
- Business/commercial services; and
- Professional/technical services.

A final study assessment involved looking at industrial demand for existing employment lands in Maple Ridge and the Kwantlen “Langley 5” Reserve lands and how these areas may compete in terms of industrial demand with potential industrial development in Thornhill. This competitive market assessment looked at the following existing and future locations:

- Kanaka Business Park (256th Industrial Area);
- Webster’s Corner Business Park (256th Industrial Area);
- Industrial Reserve and Rural Resource Lands in 256th Industrial Area;
- Maple Meadows Business Park;
- Albion Industrial Area;
- Hammond Business Park;
- Hammond Mill Redevelopment;
- Yennadon Lands;
- Albion Flats (timing for employment use here is unknown at this time); and
- Kwantlen “Langley 5” Reserve.

It is noted in the study that the trends in Maple Ridge are similar throughout the region, in that prices are increasing rapidly, vacancy rates are low, and new supply is insufficient to meet latent and growing demand. However, while Maple Ridge does have a limited supply of available employment lands, there are several locations that are anticipated to be online in the near future, including Yennadon Lands, Hammond Mill Lands, and Hammond Business Park. Overall, through the study the following three conclusions were made that have informed the recommendation in this report:

1. **Kwantlen “Langley 5” Reserve lands:** *While this [land] is still in the early exploration stages, industrial lands at IR 5 could be a compelling offering for many users given visibility from and immediate access to the Lougheed Highway. This area could become part of a broader employment hub if Thornhill were to proceed but may also slow the pace of absorption in Thornhill.*
2. **256th Industrial Area (including Industrial Reserve and Rural Resource designated lands):** *The industrial market opportunity in Thornhill cannot be considered in isolation, as what happens elsewhere will shape the extent of opportunity at Thornhill. **In particular, while there is a clear market opportunity today and in the future of this area, the City must consider whether opening Thornhill for industrial use is preferable to opening the Industrial Reserve lands for development through extension of Abernethy Way to 256th Street.** Both Thornhill and the Industrial Reserve lands will require substantial infrastructure investments to be made viable (the costs of which are unknown), with the former requiring new access from the Lougheed Highway, and the latter requiring extension of Abernethy Way. Both areas would serve a notable, growing, and substantially overlapping industrial market gap.*
3. **Other Employment Areas (listed in point form above):** The study anticipates little, if any, overlap between businesses locating in the remaining areas (i.e. not located in 256th Industrial Area or Kwantlen “Langley 5”) and those that would choose to locate in Thornhill.

The Urban Systems study was presented at the December 14, 2021 Council workshop and staff were directed to undertake an analysis of the report findings and bring recommendations on next steps to a future Council workshop.

1.2.2 Economic Development Strategy

On December 14, 2021, Council endorsed the Economic Development Strategy. The Strategy identified two key performance indicators of successful implementation:

1. 13.5% non-residential tax base (currently at 9%);
2. 40% of residents working in Maple Ridge (currently at 33%).

Several actions were incorporated into the Strategy and as the City focusses on working towards these two goals, one action in particular stands out in relation to the Urban Systems study. The Strategy has identified that the City should aim to secure 1,000 acres (405 ha) of additional future industrial land.

It should be noted that there is a purposeful rationale as to why two dissimilar approaches were taken with respect to the Urban Systems Study and the Economic Development Strategy, as each study was undertaken for a different purpose: The Urban Systems study focused on estimating future land need based on employment projections and the Economic Development Strategy establishes employment targets to aim, which will involve branding and packaging the City in a new way for (through a "Make It Here" branding and marketing campaign). The approaches are as follows:

- **Urban Systems Study (employment projections):** The Urban Systems study utilizes regional and local employment projection, combined with 'employment density factors', to determine projected employment land needs over time (same approach utilized for the Commercial & Industrial Strategy). This information is important to assist the City to ensure that there is a sufficient amount of land (in appropriate locations) with an OCP land use designation that will permit various employment uses within the community.

Background information for the Urban Systems study includes the Commercial & Industrial Strategy, current OCP policies and the City's GIS data. The forward-looking trends data sources include Metro Vancouver 2050 projections and Statistics Canada NAICS 'place of work' data, as well as:

- Industrial land pricing trends by Metro Vancouver municipal market (transactions data).
 - Pricing of industrial / employment space (for lease and for sale).
 - Industrial development and absorption trends (i.e., pace of building, pace of leasing / sales, speculative build vs. build-to-suit).
 - Emerging trends / opportunities for specific sectors in Metro Vancouver broadly, and in Maple Ridge specifically.
 - Trends in industrial leasing and strata product.
- **Economic Development Strategy (aspirational targets):** The consultant who completed this Strategy, Chris Fields of Rynic, commented on the Urban Systems study in relation to the Economic Development Strategy:

The Economic Development Strategy takes a different approach to projected non-residential land need, using significant progress re a key performance indicator (KPI) – Non-Residential Assessment Ratio – and using current assessment/acre calculation to project to undeveloped lands by land use classification. The target is 13.5% non-residential to current boundary, representing a current average of 24 Metro Vancouver region communities. Projection is 769 additional industrial acres to reach 13.5% non-residential assessment. This represents 26 acres/yr of absorption over 30 years, or 3x the high side 8 acres/yr absorption calculated by Urban Systems.

Neither scenario is wrong. They represent different visions of the future.

1.3 Commercial & Industrial Strategy

The Commercial & Industrial Strategy was endorsed by Council in 2014 and the aim was to identify steps that would ensure a sufficient amount of lands for both commercial and industrial use. The Strategy highlighted that while Maple Ridge is doing well in provision of commercial lands, more lands are needed for industrial use (170 to 230 acres by 2042) and since 2014 much planning work has been undertaken to continue adding to the industrial lands inventory. Strategy #7 of the document

states that if work has been ongoing in identifying and providing suitable employment lands and demand for industrial land still exists, then consider that:

Maple Ridge has significant lands designated for future residential supply, which should be considered for industrial usage if warranted by demand for employment lands. Maple Ridge needs to maintain a balance between the amount of industrial and residential lands, and over the long-term bringing lands to market should be balanced with new industrial lands.

2.0 256th INDUSTRIAL AREA EXPANSION

Policies, regulations and infrastructure currently exist in the 256th Industrial Area that allow for light industrial and general industrial use. Prior to the Urban Systems Employment Lands Assessment Study, the 256th Industrial area was not being considered for employment expansion until such time that an arterial route is constructed to 256th Street. However, as the Urban Systems study concludes, when comparing infrastructure costs for 256th with Thornhill, the time may be now to start planning for 256th Industrial Area expansion. Strategy #22 of the the Commercial & Industrial Strategy recommends that between 2018 and 2028, the City “move forward with Abernethy connector extension to improve marketability of Northern industrial lands at 256th Street”.

While some research is still needed, the following sections discuss 256th Industrial Area OCP policies, potential infrastructure expansion, potential developable area, and current development applications.

2.1 OCP Policies for 256th Street Industrial Area

Currently, the OCP land use designations within the 256th Industrial area include:

- Industrial;
- Industrial Reserve;
- Rural Resource; and
- Institutional.

The most recent update to the OCP policies for this area was through a land use review started in late 2016 and concluded with adoption of an OCP amending bylaw on September 12, 2017, which added 90 ha (223 acres) of land for employment use under an Industrial Reserve designation and the following OCP policies:

6-58 Maple Ridge will expand the 256th Street Industrial Area, generally located north of 128th and east / west of 256th Street, by retaining certain lands as Industrial Reserve in order to supply industrial lands for long term industrial uses while preserving such lands from competing uses.

6-59 The ongoing intensification of the lands designated Rural Resource, Industrial and Institutional in the 256th Street Industrial Area is encouraged prior to the redevelopment of lands identified as Industrial Reserve.

6-60 As well, prior to industrial development occurring on the Industrial Reserve designated land within the 256th Street Industrial Area, the following must have been fulfilled:

- a) A right-of-way and alignment option, potentially extending the 128th Avenue / Abernethy Way corridor or other alternative routes to the 256th Street Industrial Area, has been established to accommodate industrial traffic through the City, minimizing community and environmental impacts; and
- b) A servicing analysis has been completed to identify any possible servicing impacts and, if required, approval of an extension to the Fraser Sewer Area by the Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District (GVS&DD) Board is achieved; and
- c) Completion of a gravel supply assessment to identify gravel resources within the 256th Street Industrial Area; and
- d) Council has determined that under policy 6-59 sufficient utilization of the land designated Rural Resource, Industrial and Institutional in the 256th Street Industrial Area has been achieved to warrant consideration of further industrial development.

6-61 Until Policy 6-60 has been satisfied, the minimum parcel size for subdivision of land designated Industrial Reserve is 4 hectares, noting that such advance subdivision is strongly discouraged unless the Issues and Objectives of Section 6.4.3 are advanced.

6-62 At the time when the Industrial Reserve designated lands will be considered for development, the following must have been satisfied prior to permitting industrial development:

- a) Completion of an OCP Amendment identifying the lands as 'Industrial' or 'Rural Resource' rather than 'Industrial Reserve'; and
- b) Approval by the Metro Vancouver Board of an amended Regional Growth Strategy and Regional Context Statement identifying the lands regionally as 'Industrial' rather than 'Rural' is provided; and
- c) Removal of identified gravel reserves, unless the subject property is identified in Figure 3 of the Official Community Plan, which identifies potential sources of gravel in the City, in which case gravel removal may take place prior to the need for the OCP Amendment outlined in 6-62(a).

6-63 While not a requirement of Policy 6-62, at the time when the Industrial Reserve designated land will be considered for development, the creation of a new zone that would permit general mixed employment uses may be warranted, in order to accommodate a mix of light industrial, institutional and heavy industrial zones.

2.2 Increasing Demand Through Servicing Improvements

The Urban Systems study notes that there are four key steps to be undertaken for increasing demand for the 256th Industrial Area (also identified in OCP policies 6-60 and 6-62 above):

1. Extension of Abernethy Way to 256th Street Area (note that extension of Abernethy Way does not need to be constructed before expansion of industrial use occurs in this area);
2. Completing a servicing analysis;
3. Completing a gravel supply assessment; and
4. Redesignation of Industrial Reserve and Rural Resource lands to Industrial.

Analysis undertaken in a December 5, 2016 Council report regarding expansion of services for an employment future in the 256th Industrial Area has been updated and provided in Section 2.2.1 below.

2.2.1 Sanitary and Water Service Expansion

Sanitary:

The subject lands have varying degrees of access to the municipal sanitary sewer system depending on their status in the Fraser Sewerage Area. Some of the properties are partially or wholly within the Fraser Sewerage Area, allowing full or limited sanitary connections; whereas some of the lands are not currently within the Fraser Sewerage Area.

Lands outside of the Fraser Sewerage Area, roughly south of 130 Avenue, are currently serviced by a private septic system to deal with sanitary requirements. Industrial development on private septic systems is currently the case at the M-2 (General Industrial) zoned Kanaka Business Park to the east of the subject lands. While industrial development is feasible on septic, more employment dense industrial uses may benefit from municipal sanitary service and inclusion in the Fraser Sewerage Area.

Prior to development, a sanitary sensitivity analysis is required to determine the capacity limit for industrial development. A sanitary sewer sensitivity analysis to assess system capacity would be reserved as a future work item for either the Engineering Department or a qualified consultant. A study is required to determine what upgrades to the sewage collection system would be required to accommodate the proposed change in land use. Should the sewer sensitivity analysis identify the need for downstream capacity upgrades, onsite treatment may be the most cost effective solution.

It should be noted that if through the sewer sensitive analysis it is determined that there is capacity for sewer extension, an application to Metro Vancouver would be required to extend municipal sanitary to a greater number of properties in the area.

Water:

Municipal watermains are currently located along 256th Street, 128th and 130th Avenues; however, not all of the subject lands fronting these roads have a water connection. A detailed review of water requirements will be required to confirm the need for any upgrades to accommodate the change in land use. Any necessary upgrades would be required as part of the industrial development process, or as a City Capital Works Project.

Drainage:

Note that proving out 3 tier stormwater management requirements with respect to drainage is required as part of any development application in Maple Ridge.

2.2.2 Improving Road Access

A future consideration for expanding access to the 256th Industrial Area, as discussed in the Urban Systems study, is extension of the Abernethy Way Connector to 256th Street. The rationale is made through the study which states:

If the Abernethy Way extension were completed, this would provide current and future users of industrial lands in the 256th Street area a much more direct route for accessing the Golden Ears Bridge and Highway 1. It would also tie together multiple industrial areas within Maple Ridge, if the Yennadon Lands proceed with an industrial/business park land use.

It should be noted that a route for truck access currently exists along Dewdney Trunk Road, east of 232nd Street and this route is currently sufficient to handle existing traffic volumes and there is also capacity for this route to support increased industrial growth in this area.

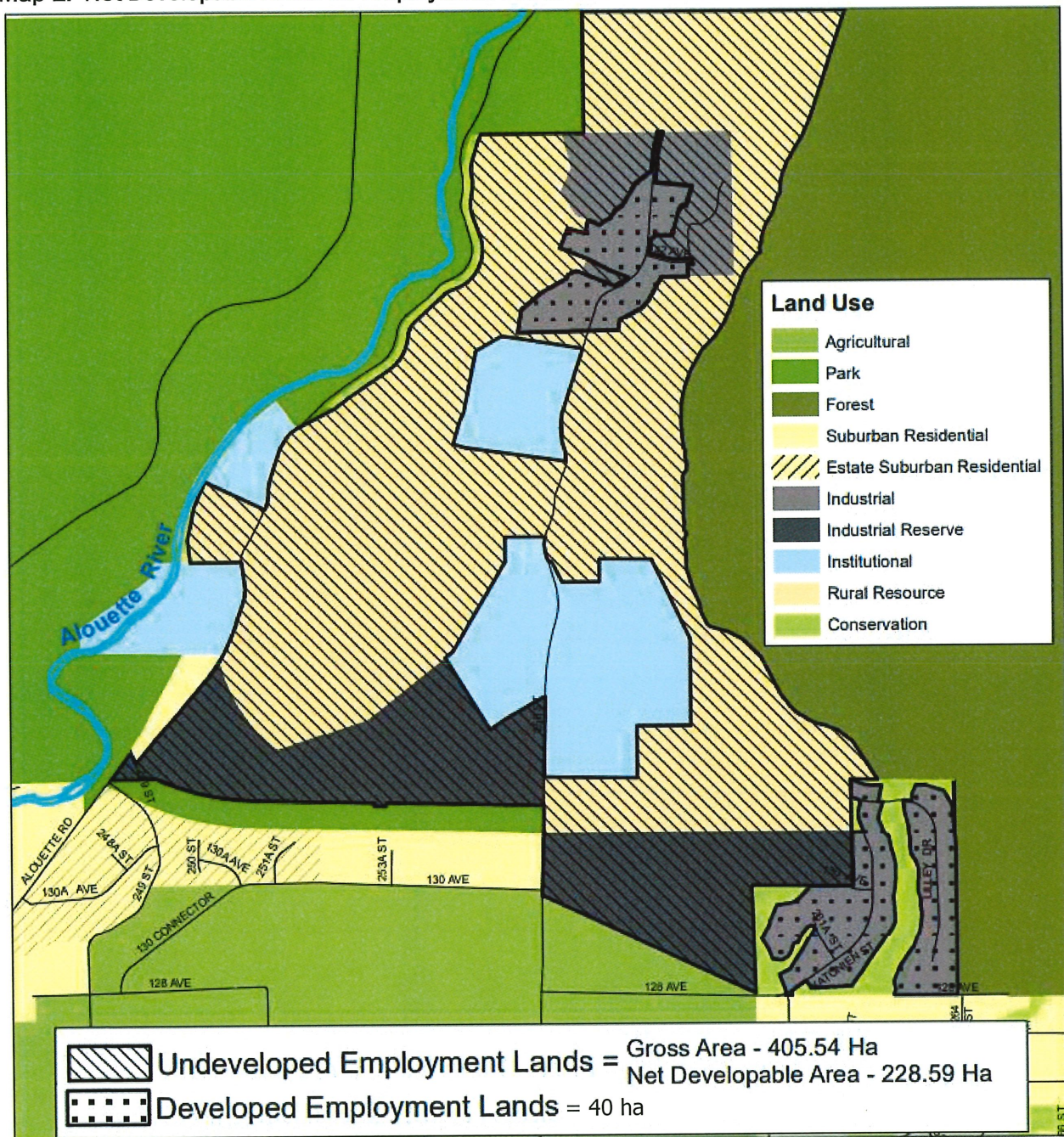
The Engineering Department has been working on an Abernethy Way extension to 240th Street, from its current eastern terminus at 232nd Street. A feasibility study, completed by McElhanney, for undertaking the Abernethy extension work was endorsed by Council in November 2019 (stage 1). In November 2020, Council approved a stage 2 extension from 240th Street to 256th Street.

While further work is needed on proceeding with the 240th to 256th Street extension, including public consultation, Council has identified a preferred route along the 124 Avenue corridor. The Engineering Department will be reporting back regarding next steps later this Spring.

2.3 Steep Slopes and Developable Area

A high level assessment was undertaken for this Council report to determine the potential 'net developable' area for employment use after estimates are made regarding 'undevelopable' steep slopes and watercourses. Map 1 below shows the total 'gross undeveloped area' that is currently within the Industrial, Industrial Reserve, and Rural Resource land use designations, which totals 406ha (1,003 acres) and it is estimated that the 'net developable' area is approximately 229 ha (566 acres) (note this does not include the area needed for road right-of-ways to support new development). Based on the Urban Systems study that stated the demand for employment use in Thornhill (a directly comparable industrial use area) would have a development absorption rate of +/- five acres per year, it can be inferred that proceeding expansion of the 256th Industrial Area would take many decades to reach buildout. However, as the following section on development applications highlights, development interest is steadily growing in this area.

Map 1: Net Developable Areas for Employment Use in 256th Industrial Area



Map 1 above also shows the areas 'already developed' for industrial use, totaling 40 ha (100 acres), with general industrial uses on the Industrial designated lands at the northern end and light industrial uses at the south end.

The Industrial designated lands have been developing for some time and are getting close to buildout. Gravel removal operations have been occurring on the Industrial Reserve and Rural Resource lands and minimal development activity was anticipated for these lands until gravel extraction is complete. However, a gravel resource study is proposed under next steps and could include an assessment of how to best proceed with industrial development in these reserve areas while gravel stores still remain throughout the area.

It should be noted that Maple Ridge owns approximately 60 ha (148 acres) of land in the Rural Resource designation, of which it is estimated that 18 ha (44 acres) has development potential (no allowance was made for road right-of-ways in this net area estimate).

2.4 Current Development Activity

Planning has recently received two rezoning applications, one in the Industrial Reserve designation and one in the Rural Resource designation, as well as one subdivision application in the Industrial designation. Of the two rezoning proposals, one is for a concrete manufacturing plant and the other is for a light industrial park. The intended use under the subdivision application has not yet been provided to staff. All of these proposals intend to utilize the existing 256th and Dewdney Trunk Road route to access their sites.

3.0 EMPLOYMENT LANDS IN MAPLE RIDGE

3.1 Employment Lands Development Timeline Estimates

Taking a look at the bigger picture of development occurring on existing and future employment lands in Maple Ridge, Table 1, Employment Lands Development Timeline Estimates (see below), is intended to provide a rough timeframe of when development may occur over time. Timeframe estimates are based on land use potential and an assumption (i.e. best guess) that once lands are designated for employment use, development interest will occur within a one to three year timeframe. The timeline estimates are colour-coded and described below to depict very short (close to build-out), short, medium, long-term and unknown estimates. To help show development potential across Maple Ridge over time, Table 1 corresponds with attached Map 2, Employment Lands Development Timeline Estimates (see Appendix A).

- Red: Close to build-out – most of the lands within this category are built-out, but some small parcels or redevelopment opportunities may still be available;
- Blue: Short-term development potential - many of these lands are either currently under application or any applications received are supportable for employment use;
- Green: Medium-term development potential – planning work needed to conceptually plan the area and update land use designations to encourage more development interest;
- Orange: Development potential uncertain (due to land complexities to be addressed), although Concept Plan has been endorsed by Council; and
- Yellow: Potential Industrial Reserve Lands for long-term planning of employment use.

Table 1: Employment Lands Development Timeline Estimates

Employment Lands	Land Area (approx.)*	Industrial Type	Status & Estimated Development Timeframe
256 th Industrial Area			
• Kanaka Business Park	31 ha (76.6 acr)	Light industrial	Close to build-out (6mos – 1 yr)
• Wester's Corner Business Park	1.38 ha (3.4 acr)	Light industrial	Close to build-out (6 mos – 1 yr)
• Other Industrial designated land	39 ha (96 acr)	General industrial	Vacant land designated for employment use. Development estimate is 6 mos – 1 yr
• Industrial Reserve	90 ha (222 acr)	Future light & general industrial	Interest starting to occur with inquiries and applications. Development estimate 5-20 yrs.
• Rural Resource	293 ha (724 acr)	Future light & general industrial	Interest starting to occur with inquiries and applications. Development estimate 5-20 yrs.
Maple Meadows Business Park	40 ha (100 acr)	Light industrial	Close to build-out (6 mos–1 yr)
Albion Industrial Area	82 ha (204 acr)	General industrial	Some lands underutilized / light industrial use is permitted here. Development estimate is 6 mos – 2 yrs.
Hammond Business Park	42 ha (104 acr)	Light industrial	Has received 1 st reading. Development estimate is 2-3 years.
Hammond Infill Employment	1.9 ha (4.7 acr)	Light industrial	Lands designated for employment use. Development estimate 1–2 yrs.
Hammond Mill Redevelopment	13 ha (32 acr)	Light industrial	DP only required; At pre-application stage and development estimate is 6 mos - 2 yrs.
Yennadon Lands	25.4 ha (63 acr)	Light industrial	2 nd reading of Yennadon Plan is anticipated in April 2022. Development estimate is 1-3 yrs.
Albion Flats (south of Jim Robson Way)	62.5 ha (154 acr); includes arena and sports fields	Light industrial	Concept Plan endorsed; ALC requirements to be addressed (development timeframe unknown)
Lougheed Transit Corridor – Flexible Employment	21.4 ha (53 acr)	Light industrial/ office use / highway commercial	New employment use designation for this area creates opportunity for redevelopment. 2 nd reading of Area Plan anticipated in May 2022. Development estimate 6 mos – 1 yr.
Lougheed Industrial Lands	114 ha (282 acr)	General industrial	Redesignated to Industrial in 2017. Development estimate 1-2 yrs.
Whonnock & Ruskin Lands	43 ha (107 acr)	General industrial	Development estimate 6 mos - 1 yr.
Thornhill Employment Lands	640 ha (1,581 acr)	Light industrial	Proposed for Industrial Reserve designation (est. 20+ years)

* Note: Most land areas noted in Table 1 above are based on gross developable area.

Table 2 above indicates that approximately 72.38 ha (178 acres) (in red) is largely developed with minimal opportunities left for new or redevelopment. Most of the existing employment lands 382 ha (943 acres) (in blue) are anticipated for short-term development, as the lands are either already designated for employment use or have a Council endorsed concept plan, wherein development applications may proceed accordingly. The 256th Industrial Lands that are currently designated Industrial Reserve and Rural Resource have a gross developable area (not including road network) of 383 ha (946 acres). If the Albion Flats Area Plan proceeds within the next five years (although the timeframe is unknown at this time), this area will bring an estimated 62.5 ha (154 acres) of employment lands into the inventory. With a total employment lands area of 900 ha (2,223 acres) that are either being utilized, currently available for development, or potentially available for development within the next five to ten years (includes all lands above, except Thornhill area), it is likely that Maple Ridge will have a strong supply of employment lands for at least the next 20+ years.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION AND NEXT STEPS

Expanding employment lands potential in the 256th Street Industrial Area and the Thornhill Employment Lands will not be a short-term endeavor, as both involve the need for background research, public consultation, OCP policy amendments, and regional approvals. Active development will require a long-term and considerable outlay of financial reserves of the City. While planning for an employment future in both of these areas will help ensure Maple Ridge continues to grow the employment land base, the Urban Systems study cautions against proceeding with these two areas simultaneously:

- *The Industrial Reserve, accessed via Abernethy Way, would attract many of the same user groups that would otherwise look to Thornhill.*
- *Given the possible scale of these lands, it is questionable whether both this area and Thornhill could move forward simultaneously.*

Table 2 below shows the necessary planning work to be undertaken for both the 256th Street and Thornhill areas and is intended to assist in determining the most prudent area to proceed with next steps.

Table 2: Planning Work Comparison for 256th Industrial Area and Thornhill Employment Lands

Planning Work to be Completed	256 th Industrial Area	Thornhill Employment Lands
Background Studies		
• Transportation Study	Arterial route assessment to 256 th	Arterial route needed from Lougheed
• Water/Sewer Expansion Study	◆	◆
• Gravel Supply Study	◆	
• Environment/Hazard Management Study	◆	◆
• Agriculture Impact Study	◆	◆
• Aquifer Groundwater Study	◆	◆
• City vs. Private Sector Infrastructure Cost Assessment	◆	◆
Public Consultation Process		
• Public consultation including open house events, public surveys, etc.	◆ Note employment future already confirmed for this area.	◆ Anticipated to be contentious public discussion and several public meetings may be needed.
Preparation of Land Use Plans and Policies		
• Prepare conceptual land use plan and guiding principles for policy development	◆	◆
• Prepare area plan policies and development permit guidelines	◆	◆
• Prepare OCP amending bylaws and zones specific to employment uses	◆	◆
Municipal Approvals		
• Council endorsement of concept plan and guidelines principles	◆	◆
• Outside agency referrals process	◆	◆
• Four bylaw readings and a public hearing	◆	◆
Regional Approvals		
• Application for land use amendment to Metro Vancouver after OCP policy amendment bylaw receives third reading	◆	◆
• Application to GVS&DD for inclusion into Fraser Sewerage Area	◆ Water service exists already and some of this area is in FSA. Sewer currently extends to prison.	◆
Estimated Costs		
• Background studies	\$800,000	\$800,000
• Public consultation and area plan and DP Guidelines preparation	\$50,000	\$100,000
• Infrastructure costs to be paid by the City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arterial route to 256th: \$66-\$72 million • Other infrastructure costs: TBD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note that an arterial road into Thornhill (from Lougheed), water and sewer services are needed for industrial development.

It should be noted that because employment is an existing land use in the 256th Industrial Area and the Industrial Reserve and Rural Resource lands have been identified for future employment use, through existing OCP policies, the public consultation process for this area will build upon the land use review and consultation process that was undertaken in 2016/2017 and is anticipated to be less contentious than an employment land use discussion in the Thornhill area.

Additionally, it should be noted that the Planning Department resources are already strained, given the multiple area planning and related projects currently engaged in for 2022.

4.1 Rationale for Expanding 256th Industrial Area Before Thornhill

The reality of an employment future for Thornhill and/or the 256th Industrial Area is that each location will require upfront expenditures to create/improve access and servicing. While further study is needed for each area to determine accurate cost estimates requiring City investment, it is recommended that the next steps be to proceed on expanding the 256th Industrial Area and reserve Thornhill for future employment use. The rationale for this recommendation is as follows:

- To avoid competition between the two areas and unnecessary upfront infrastructure costs;
- Industrial use is already intended as the future for the 256th Industrial Area with land use designations and OCP policies that identify this intent;
- Water service exists in the area and while sewer also exists, it is limited at present;
- Road access exists to the 256th Industrial Area and while a higher capacity route will be needed to support significant growth in the area, the current route is likely sufficient to support increased growth in industrial use for at least the next 10+ years;
- The existing Industrial land use designation in the 256th Industrial Area is largely built-out and development applications have recently been received for the Industrial Reserve and Rural Resource designations;
- It is anticipated that expanding the 256th Industrial Area will contribute over half of the goal for 1,000 more acres (405 ha) of industrial lands identified in the Economic Development Strategy and in a shorter timeframe than proceeding with employment use in Thornhill.

4.2 Proposed Next Steps

The next steps outlined below are for Council consideration to proceed with securing employment futures for both the 256th Industrial Area and for a more long-term employment future in the Thornhill area.

4.2.1 256th Industrial Area (Q3 2022 to Q1 2024)

- Commence background studies by Q3 2022 with anticipated completion by Q3 2023 and quarterly updates to Council for information and input (studies will include review of timing and phasing of extending road route to 256th Street);
- Prepare a website information page on this process to keep the public updated on the work underway;
- Plan to start a public consultation process for redesignation of Industrial Reserve and Rural Resource Lands, that includes development of a Concept Plan, in OCP in Q1 2024;
- Reallocate current budget amount for Thornhill background studies to complete background studies for expanding 256th Street Industrial Area.

4.2.3 Thornhill Employment Lands (Q2 2022 to Q2 2023)

- Bring a report to Council for the redesignation of the Thornhill Urban Reserve to Industrial Reserve, including draft Official Community Plan amending bylaw;
- Prepare an interactive webpage to inform residents and encourage comments on proposed changes to Thornhill land use designation to Industrial Reserve;
- Mailout letter to property owners within Thornhill area on proposed Industrial Reserve land use designation; and
- Once the OCP amending bylaw is adopted, apply to Metro Vancouver (after MV 2050 is adopted) to change regional designation to Industrial.

5.0 STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Implementing strategic plans related to local infrastructure and the economy, including the City's commercial and industrial land base, is a Council priority as established under the Growth pillar of the 2019-2022 City of Maple Ridge Strategic Plan.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

A budget allocation of \$700,000 was approved for the Thornhill background studies in the 2022 Business Plan. However, it is proposed that these funds be reallocated to proceeding with background studies for expanding the 256th Industrial Area.

7.0 INTERDEPARTMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Background studies work for the 256th Industrial Area will involve staff from several departments including Engineering, Parks, Fire, and Finance.

CONCLUSION:

The conclusion of the Urban Systems study, that the next area for employment use expansion be the 256th Industrial Area while retaining the Thornhill area for employment use in the future, does present a prudent approach for consideration. While more exploration through background studies for 256th Industrial Area expansion is needed to fully understand opportunities, constraints, and potential upfront costs to the City, there are already several factors that indicate opening up the area would attract significant industrial businesses for many years to come. Additionally, retaining Thornhill for future employment use is also presented, as this area will provide the City with more than enough land to meet future employment use demand over the long-term.

“Original signed by Lisa Zosiak”

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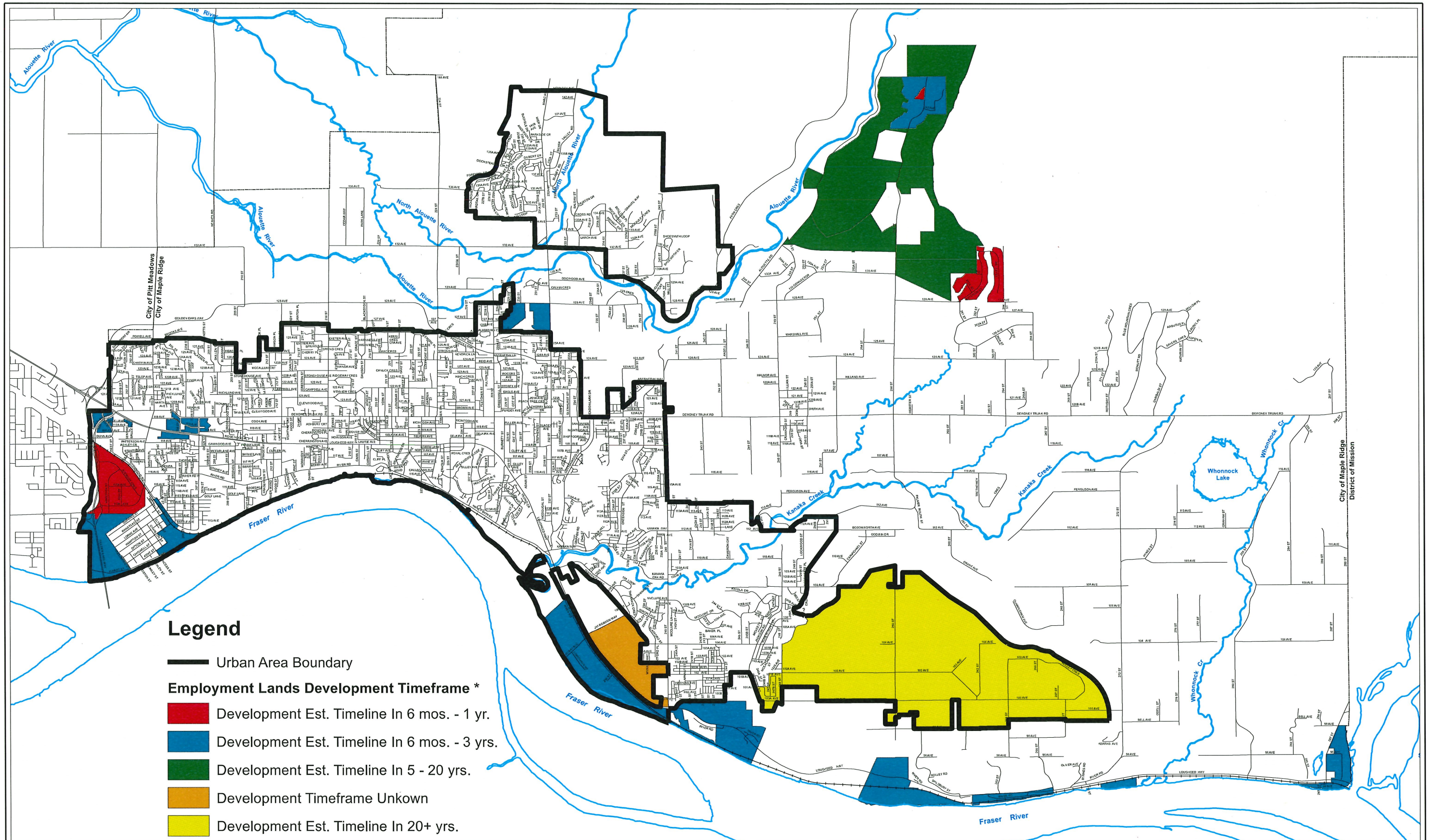
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Approved by: **Christine Carter, M.PL, MCIP, RPP**
GM: Public Works & Development Services

“Original signed by Scott Hartman”

Concurrence: **Scott Hartman**
Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix A: Employment Lands Development Timeframe Map (based on best guess estimates)



*Note: Timeframe estimates are based on land use potential and an assumption (best guess) that once lands are designated for employment use, development interest will occur within a 1-3 year timeframe.



Scale: 1:23,000

The City of Maple Ridge makes no guarantee regarding the accuracy or present status of the information shown on this map.

