

**TO:** His Worship Mayor Michael Morden  
and Members of Council  
**FROM:** Chief Administrative Officer  
**SUBJECT:** Town Centre Visioning Public Engagement Process

**MEETING DATE:** March 31, 2020  
**FILE NO:**  
**ATTN:** Workshop

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The Town Centre Area Plan (TCAP) was adopted in 2008 with a vision for creating more density, mixed-uses, and green space, while creating a pedestrian-oriented environment. With this Plan in place, the Town Centre of Maple Ridge has been experiencing a significant amount of redevelopment and change over the past five to ten years. Maple Ridge Council has recognized this growth and change and wants to ensure that the evolution of the Town Centre is positive and leads to greater vibrancy within this core part of the community.

At the September 10, 2019 Workshop, the key features of the TCAP were presented to Council, along with examples of recent development that has proceeded under the Plan. During this Workshop, Council discussed some of the known challenges and opportunities that have both helped and hindered in making the Town Centre an inviting place for all age groups. Through the discussion there was acknowledgment that the Plan remains relevant in supporting Council's aims for this area. However, Council indicated that a visioning process would be timely as a 2020 project. The Planning Department was tasked with undertaking a public process for Town Centre Visioning in the City's 2020 Business Plan. The bylaw to confirm the 2020 Business Plan was adopted at the January 14, 2020 Council meeting. It is not anticipated that the visioning process will lead to significant changes to the Town Centre Area Plan, however, although there is potential that the process may result in identifying where minor changes would and improvements may result.

A project that is proceeding concurrently with the Town Centre Visioning process is the Community Social Safety Initiative (CSSI). The current focus of the CSSI is to undertake actions that will create positive change within the Town Centre. It is hoped that the aligned timing of the CSSI and the Town Centre Visioning process is synergistic and will help generate greater awareness, understanding and engagement. While each of these projects is approaching the Town Centre from a slightly different angle, both are aimed at creating a downtown that is safe, vibrant and welcoming for everyone.

This report outlines the Town Centre Visioning engagement process and the time anticipated for undertaking and completing this work.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That the Town Centre Visioning Public Engagement Process be endorsed.**

## 1.0 BACKGROUND:

An extensive public consultation process for the TCAP commenced in 2003 and included several public workshops and a design charrette. The process was led by Smart Growth on the Ground, which was a collaborative of various agencies that included the Real Estate Foundation, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation, the Province of BC, and the Government of Canada, with a mandate to facilitate the creation of compact and environmentally-friendly urban neighbourhoods. Through the public consultation process, the following 8 guiding principles were developed for the plan:

1. Each neighbourhood is complete;
2. Options to our cars exist;
3. Work in harmony with natural systems;
4. Buildings & infrastructure are greener & smarter;
5. Housing serves many needs;
6. Jobs are close to home;
7. The centre is distinctive & vibrant; and
8. Everyone has a voice.

A Town Centre Concept Plan was developed from all input received and was endorsed by Council in 2005. Once the Concept Plan was endorsed, development applications were able to proceed based on the concept land use designations. The Concept Plan also provided the guide from which Area Plan policies were formed. The Town Centre Area Plan (TCAP) was adopted into the Official Community Plan (OCP) in 2008. See Schedule 1 land use plan in Appendix A and the following link to the complete TCAP maps and policies (Section 10.4) <https://www.mapleridge.ca/316/Official-Community-Plan>

The Area Plan policies are supported by Development Permit (DP) Guidelines that were also adopted into the OCP in 2008. These Guidelines provide guidance for the form and character of new development and also encourage green features be incorporated wherever possible (such as rain gardens, green roofs, green walks, and greenway routes). See link to DP Guidelines (Section 8.11) [https://www.mapleridge.ca/DocumentCenter/View/2420/08\\_OCP-Chapter-8?bidId=](https://www.mapleridge.ca/DocumentCenter/View/2420/08_OCP-Chapter-8?bidId=)

A technical parking study undertaken in 2008 found that reduced parking standards in the areas Central Business District (see link above for CBD map in Figure 2 of Section 10.4) would be appropriate based on the mix of proposed land uses and intensification of development. This change has been reflected in the City's Parking Bylaw. Additionally, Zoning Bylaw amendments were implemented upon adoption of the Area Plan that support specific policies of the Town Centre, such as a 3 storey minimum building height for multi-family and commercial uses and a maximum building height in the Port Haney area. The TCAP continues to be updated as planning approaches evolve, with one recent example being the incorporation of the new triplex, fourplex and courtyard forms into policies within the Area Plan.

Since the Area Plan was adopted, the following implementation initiatives have been undertaken to support and encourage growth:

- The Town Centre Investment Incentives Program (ran from 2011 to 2016) – this program kick started multi-family and mixed-use development within the Town Centre.
- Capital investment has been undertaken a few times in engineering and street improvements along 224<sup>th</sup> and Lougheed Highway. The initial project included an upgrade of Memorial Park along 224<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Review of the Town Centre commercial areas through the Commercial/Industrial Strategy – which confirmed we are on the right track with land use and policies.

- New park development – acquisition of park lands has occurred since plan adoption and to date we have a new Nokai Park and the Intergenerational Garden, both are just north of the Central Business District.
- Density-bonus provision for affordable housing (2019).

When the Area Plan was being developed, the neighbourhood was home to over 8,000 people. Since 2005, almost 4,000 new residents have moved to the Town Centre. Today, the population is getting close to 12,000 people with approximately 6,500 dwelling units. When the Town Centre reaches build-out capacity, it is expected to have approximately:

- 22,000 residents;
- 70 to 100 persons per hectare;
- 11,065 units;
- Close to 1 job for every dwelling unit.

Over the past five years, over 67 development projects have been approved and over 64 are currently under application and anticipated for completion within the next two to three years (see Appendix B). Approximately 12 are in the pre-application stage.

An overview of the TCAP and some examples of new development under the Plan was presented at the September 10, 2019 Council Workshop. During the meeting, Council indicated an interest in undertaking a visioning process for the Town Centre, which could provide a vision refresh by identifying opportunities for creating greater vibrancy and potential updates for the Plan. The Planning Department included a Town Centre Visioning process in the 2020 Business Plan and the Business Plan bylaw was adopted at the January 14, 2020 Council meeting.

## **2.0 DISCUSSION:**

Engaging the public through the Town Centre Visioning process will involve a series of stakeholder workshops and one pop-up broad engagement event at the Haney Farmer's Market. Dialogue Planning & Urban Design will be contracted to lead the public engagement component of the process.

### **2.1 Public Engagement Process**

The intent behind the public engagement process is to ensure a broad public engagement opportunity, along with a series of workshops focused on stakeholders within the Town Centre. The following engagement events are proposed for the Town Centre Visioning process:

1. A Scoop for Your Scoop: This broad engagement pop-up activity will be scheduled for a Saturday afternoon Haney Farmer's Market, where a colourful ice cream cart and display boards will invite attendees at the market to share their "scoop" on the future of the Town Centre in exchange for a scoop of ice cream.
2. Community Questionnaire: An online questionnaire will be made available for those who are not able to participate in the above "Scoop" event or the stakeholder workshops discussed below. The questionnaire is intended to reach as many members of the community as possible for input. Paper versions of the questionnaire will also be available at the "Scoop" event and at the City Hall reception and front counter.

### 3. Series of Stakeholder Workshops:

- a. WalkShop: This event aims to engage a range of stakeholders, including local residents, seniors, children, youth, event/festival organizers, culture/arts community, and others. Participants will be asked to take photos and videos while walking through a designated route in the Town Centre. The walk will be followed by a workshop, wherein the participants' observations will be shared and discussed. The outcomes of this workshop will be to understand what currently excites people about the Town Centre, what they see as the challenges, and to identify their big picture aspirations for the future.
- b. Business Community: Because businesses have specific needs and concerns, a business focused workshop will be undertaken. This workshop will likely be held as a breakfast event that includes a short presentation, an interactive mapping exercise, and a final interactive exercise that asks for input on what they would change, from a cultural and economic perspective, to make the Town Centre more successful.

The input received from the public engagement process will be compiled into an outcomes report and presented to Council. The outcomes report will test the findings from the engagement process and determine if these are in alignment with the existing TCAP policies and identify where there are opportunities for improvement. Additionally, this process is intended to help define "what does success mean?" in the ongoing implementation of the Town Centre Area Plan and lead to identifying indicators for measuring success.

Once the outcomes report is received by Council, recommendations for next steps in the process will also be presented for Council's consideration. This would potentially involve drafting policy changes to the TCAP and presenting to the community for their feedback through an open house event.

The public consultation process was initially anticipated to commence in early May and run through June 2020, however, due to the recent restrictions placed on public gatherings, the start date of this process has yet to be determined.

## **2.2 Town Centre Branding and Public Engagement Notifications**

Planning will work with the Communications Department on creating a Town Centre Visioning brand and webpage for sharing information with the public. This will also likely include a kick-off video that can be posted on YouTube. Broad community advertising of the process will include:

- Newspaper advertisements;
- Posters in high community traffic areas, such as the Leisure Centre, the ACT, City Hall, library, Seniors' Centre, Greg Moore Youth Centre, and distributed to Committees of Council; and
- The City's FaceBook page and on twitter.

Invites to the workshops will be targeted to specific stakeholder groups, as discussed above, with emails and/or letters addressed to each invitee.

### **2.3 Interdepartmental Collaboration**

Renewing the Vision for the Town Centre will involve several City departments in supporting and participating in the public engagement process. Additionally, the Town Centre Visioning process is anticipated to provide opportunities for combining and supporting synergies with the work that is underway on the Community Social Safety Initiative, in which many City departments are already engaged. An initial interdepartmental meeting for the Town Centre Visioning process has already occurred with the following departments and further meetings to obtain input and expertise are also anticipated:

- Economic Development;
- Engineering;
- Development and Environmental Planning;
- Culture & Recreation;
- Fire;
- Bylaws;
- Parks; and
- Communications.

It is anticipated that staff from each of these departments will be involved in participating in at least one, but likely more, of the stakeholder workshops and also provide input into the preparation of the community questionnaire.

### **3.0 STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT**

The Town Centre Visioning process is intended to engage broad participation within the community in identifying and sharing their aspirations for the Town Centre's future. This project objective, along with discussions that will take place regarding safety, vibrancy, inclusivity, and encouraging an ongoing community dialogue align with the following goals of Council's Strategic Plan:

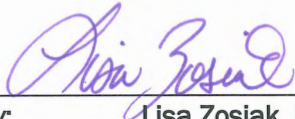
- Community Safety;
- Growth;
- Community Pride & Spirit; and
- Natural Environment (Green Infrastructure).

### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

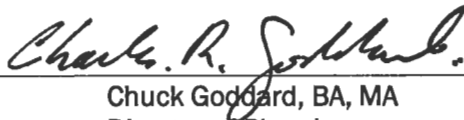
The Town Centre Visioning process is included in the City's 2020 Financial Plan and the bylaw to enact this plan was adopted at the January 14, 2020 Council meeting.

**CONCLUSION:**

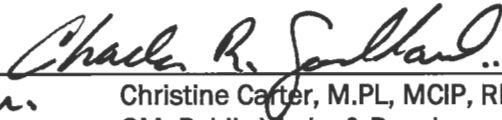
The Town Centre Area Plan was adopted in 2008 and established a vision for creating a pedestrian-oriented, compact, and high-density downtown for the community. While the goals of this remain relevant today, a refresh is timely. Through this process, the community will be invited to revisit and refine the original vision to ensure that as the Town Centre continues to grow, it is growing in the right direction. Commencement of this project is coinciding with some positive work currently underway in the Town Centre on the Community Social Safety Initiative (CSSI) and it is anticipated that synergies between these two projects will help support awareness and engagement in both.



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Director of Planning



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GM: Public Works & Development Services



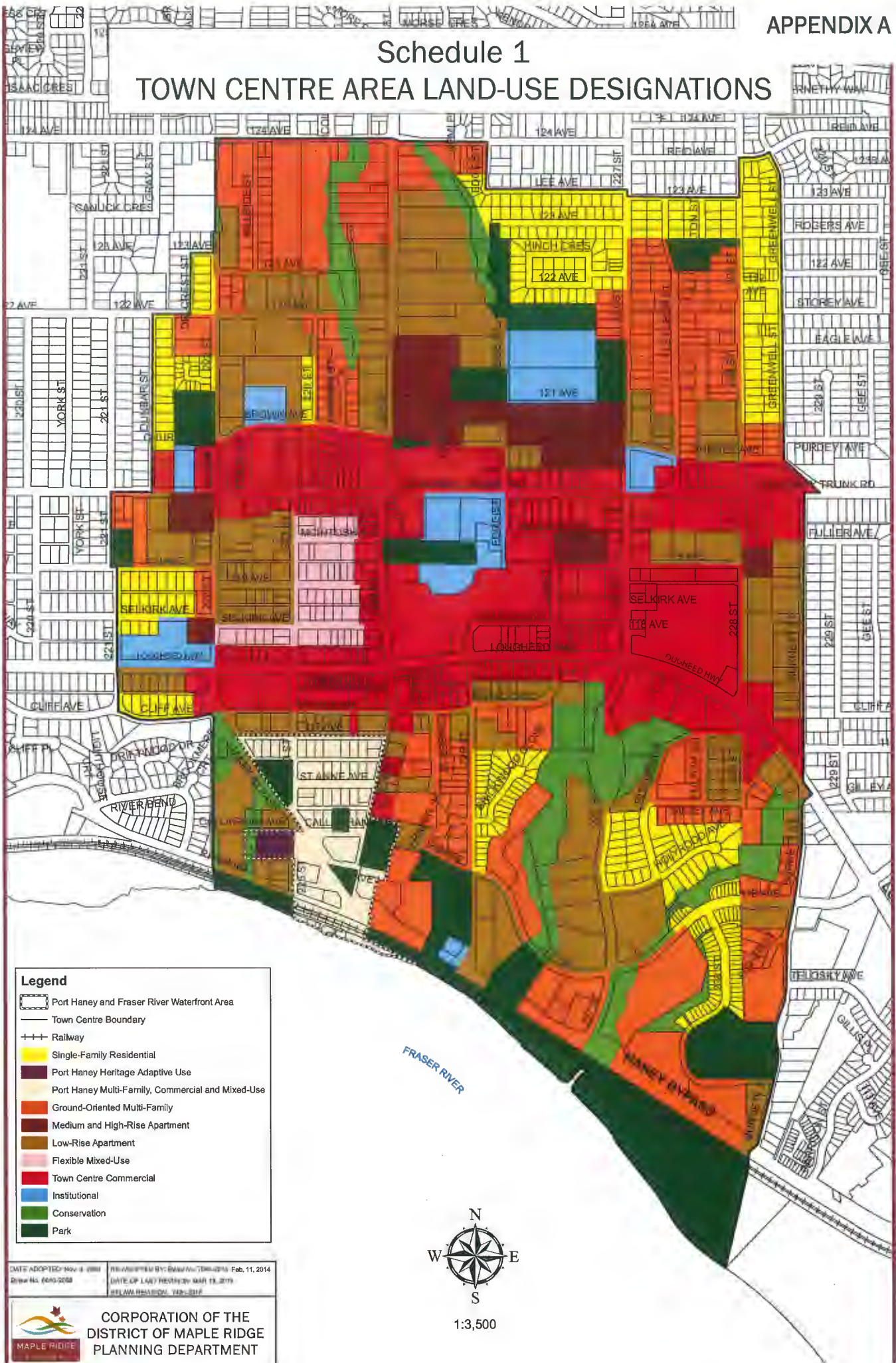
Concurrence: Al Horsman  
Chief Administrative Officer

The following appendices are attached hereto:

- Appendix A: Town Centre Area Plan – Schedule 1
- Appendix B: Town Centre Development Activity – past 5 years



# Schedule 1 TOWN CENTRE AREA LAND-USE DESIGNATIONS



**Legend**

- Port Haney and Fraser River Waterfront Area
- Town Centre Boundary
- Railway
- Single-Family Residential
- Port Haney Heritage Adaptive Use
- Port Haney Multi-Family, Commercial and Mixed-Use
- Ground-Oriented Multi-Family
- Medium and High-Rise Apartment
- Low-Rise Apartment
- Flexible Mixed-Use
- Town Centre Commercial
- Institutional
- Conservation
- Park

CMTF ADOPTED Nov 8, 2008  
 Draw No. 6840-2008  
 REVISITED BY: ERM/NOV/13/04/2014 Feb. 11, 2014  
 DATE OF LAST REVISION: MAR 19, 2019  
 2019 AM REVISION: 228-2019

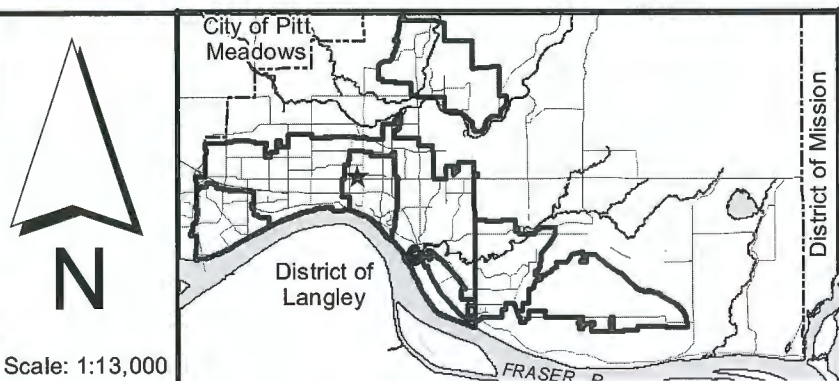
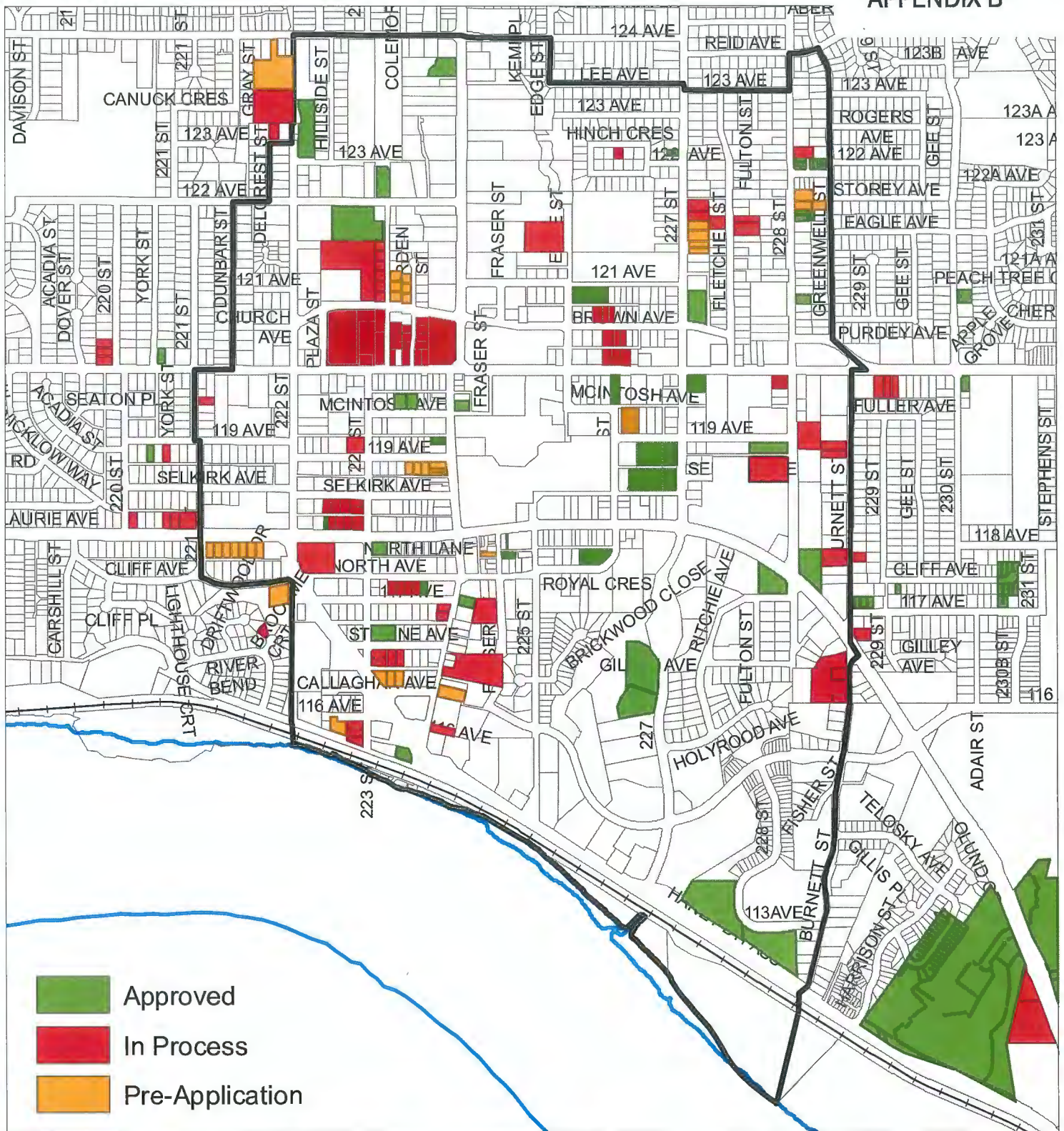


CORPORATION OF THE  
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 PLANNING DEPARTMENT



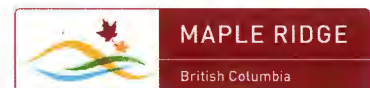
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### Active and Approved Rezoning & Development Permits

PLANNING DEPARTMENT



[mapleridge.ca](http://mapleridge.ca)