

Bring to Market Industrial Land Study for the Albion Industrial Area, Fraser River, Kwantlen First Nation Lands

Recommendation:

That Council receive the Bring to Market Industrial Land Study attached to the report titled “Bring to Market Industrial Land Study for the Albion Industrial Area, Fraser River, Kwantlen First Nation Lands”, dated May 6, 2025, for information.

Report Purpose and Summary Statement:

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the completed *Bring to Market Industrial Land Study* for the Albion Industrial Area, Fraser River, Kwantlen First Nation (KFN) Lands, intended to support new industrial uses and development in the area.

Previous Council Action:

N/A

Strategic Alignment:

Liveable Community; Climate Leadership and Environmental Stewardship; Diversified, Thriving Economy.

Communications:

The final study will be posted on the City of Maple Ridge website, and staff will continue to work with local landowners, businesses, and other parties to facilitate and support the development, redevelopment, and densification of the Albion Industrial Area, Fraser River, KFN industrial Lands.

Bring to Market Industrial Land Study for the Albion Industrial Area, Fraser River, Kwantlen First Nation Lands

BACKGROUND:

Maple Ridge and the Metro Vancouver region contain limited remaining developable industrial areas. The lands that do exist have notable challenges, including infrastructure servicing and transportation access challenges, environmental features, etc.

In 2024, as part of the ongoing implementation of the [Regional Industrial Lands Strategy](#), Metro Vancouver advanced a “bring to market” initiative. Metro Vancouver requested proposals from member municipalities for possible project sites. The City of Maple Ridge, as a joint effort between Economic Development and Community Planning, submitted a proposal for the Albion Industrial Area / Fraser River / Kwantlen First Nation (KFN) Lands and it was selected. Metro Vancouver co-funded a study by contributing \$30,000, with the City contributing \$20,000, along with KFN participating. The total \$50,000 budget was used to hire a consultant team. McElhanney Ltd. and Mullholland Parker Land Economists were contracted to complete the technical work, which was completed in April 2025.

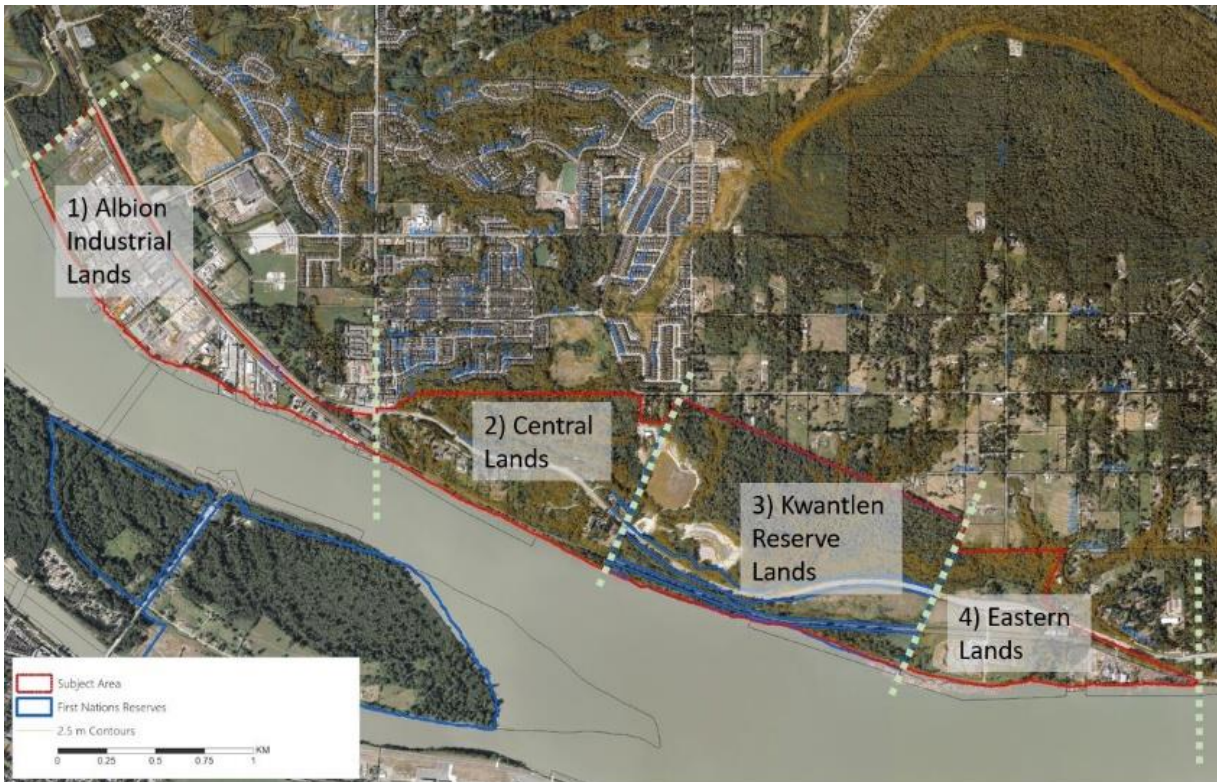
The City, in partnership with Metro Vancouver and KFN, is taking proactive steps to enhance the long-term supply of industrial lands in the community and to guide decisions related to servicing, phasing, and optimal use of the Albion Industrial Area, Fraser River, KFN Lands. To set a strategic framework for investment and development efforts, the Bring to Market Industrial Land Study (Attachment 1) evaluates the planning, servicing, economic, and market conditions of the study area and recommends actions be taken to facilitate additional industrial development and uses in the study area.

The project explores the issues that have prevented the development of the lands in the study area (Figure 1) and provides recommendations on how to advance industrial development. The study outlines ways to accommodate industrial uses through development, redevelopment, and densification in the short term along with achieving fully serviced uses over time. While the results and recommendations of the study are directly relevant to Maple Ridge, they may also benefit other member jurisdictions in the region with industrial lands that are facing similar issues.

Problem Statement:

The lands in the study area are currently underutilized and face various challenges relating to industrial redevelopment and development. The western lands have older, established industrial uses, with property fragmentation and site contamination, while the eastern lands have low intensity industrial uses and limited infrastructure servicing. Other issues, including transportation accessibility and intersection access from the Lougheed Highway, require

Figure 1. Study Sites



attention. These challenges have prevented the full industrial development of these lands that maximize the potential of economic growth of the area and wider region.

The purpose of the Bring to Market Industrial Land Study is to create a comprehensive development strategy for the subject lands, by documenting the issues and developing an action plan to address them to achieve successful industrial development.

ANALYSIS:

The subject lands are located between 232 Street and 261 Street, south of Lougheed Highway (Highway 7) and extend to the Fraser River. The overall study area is 355 hectares (877 acres), and the potential net development area is approximately 119 hectares (294 acres).

Study Area Attributes:

The study area has the following common attributes, which affect its development potential:

- 1) All of the lands benefit from high demand for industrial land in Maple Ridge and Metro Vancouver, and being located in a rapidly growing region.
- 2) The geography of the study area is challenging, with sites either located within the 200-year flood plain or on sloped sites constrained by creeks, riparian areas, and poor soil conditions.

- 3) Transportation is a key driver of industrial land use and the marketability of sites; the sites are located away from Highway 1 and the Golden Ears Connector, but are very close to Lougheed Highway. However, the Lougheed Highway access points from the site tend to be inconvenient due to constraints in the form of right-in, right-out limitations, CPKC railway grade crossings, and narrow local roads.
- 4) Transit service in the area is limited to the Albion Industrial area; all other sites lack transit services.
- 5) Servicing the sites is a challenge:
 - a) Some sites in the study area are serviced but would need upsizing to meet modern fire flow needs, while other sites, located outside the Fraser Sewerage Area and the Urban Containment Boundary of the Regional Growth Strategy, have no access to sanitary sewers or water mains.
 - b) Preliminary investigations showed limited aquifer supply and would require more wells to meet demand than is practical.
 - c) Developing an independent, on-site sanitary treatment system would require a similar investment to that required to extend traditional municipal servicing into the area.
- 6) Servicing networks for sanitary and water servicing have been getting incrementally closer to the study area sites as the City has grown. Extensions of municipal servicing methods could be completed and cost recovery mechanisms such as area Development Cost Charges (DCCs) could enable the extension of services into the study area.
- 7) There is some misalignment of land use designations between the Official Community Plan and the Regional Growth Strategy.

Sub-Areas:

The study area was analyzed as four sub-areas, given the unique attributes of the different properties. Each of the sub-areas has its own unique sets of opportunities and challenges that could inform the scope, scale, and form of development capacity. The four main sub-areas are described as follows (from west to east):

- The Albion Industrial Lands present strong land use opportunities due to its excellent transportation access by highway, rail, and water, including a potential for short sea shipping. However, challenges include varying landowner interests, environmental considerations such as wetlands and flooding, and high upfront infrastructure costs that may deter redevelopment.
- The Central Lands offer strong opportunities due to its natural extension from an existing industrial area. Greenfield development allows for flexible infrastructure planning, with strong transportation access by highway, rail, and water, including potential for a short sea shipping facility. However, challenges include varying landowner interests, perceived remoteness, potential rail access / crossing constraints, adjacent land requirements from CPKC Rail, and the need for easements if crossing agreements are unavailable.

- The Kwantlen Reserve Lands offer the potential opportunity to re-contour the land during ongoing site filling, minimal municipal and regional regulatory constraints, and the potential to integrate complimentary uses, parks, and environmental protections and riparian area setbacks from the creeks. The site may also attract 'dry industrial' uses (i.e., not connected to municipal water and sewer services) if servicing remains limited. However, securing funding for infrastructure, through possible infrastructure funding from federal or provincial government sources, obtaining a servicing agreement with the City or Metro Vancouver, and arranging highway access with the Ministry of Transportation and Transit (MOTT) present challenges.
- The Eastern Lands include one large property currently under review for rezoning to industrial and the potential for rail spur and short sea / river shipping and barging functions. The site offers a strong potential for improved transportation access to Highway 7, the CPKC railway, and the Fraser River. Some challenges include securing infrastructure funding, addressing land adjacency requirements from CPKC, and the need for area planning to attract investors.

Servicing Analysis and Cost Estimates:

The largest constraints for the study area are the absence of water and sanitary sewer servicing. The area is located outside of the Urban Containment Boundary of the Regional Growth Strategy and the Fraser Sewerage Area. The sites presently obtain water from wells on site and use on-site sanitary treatment approaches. Storm water is generally managed on site. The Lougheed Highway and CPKC railway are constraining features to the development of any future servicing corridor for water or sanitary sewer lines.

The study included a high-level assessment of servicing strategies for the study area. Cost estimates for servicing strategies use "Class D" ($\pm 50\%$) planning-level unit rates, with results presented in the study. Note that a significant amount of the cost is for site preparation, rather than infrastructure extension, as the soil conditions in the area are poor and would require filling and other works to develop.

From a cost and ease of servicing perspective, certain sites will be easier to bring to market than others. For example, the western Albion Industrial Area sites are already serviced, and upgrades to these water and sanitary sewer systems are well known. Given the concerns about the ability to meet water demands through water wells, and the need for additional investigations which may or may not provide positive outcomes, it appears that the extension of services (generally from west to east) could offer the greatest certainty to meet servicing demands. What remains to be better understood is flood construction level and the necessary flood control improvements, and what implications they may have on development in the area.

Site Development Financial Viability:

The study included creating draft development scenarios of hypothetical future uses in the near term and longer term for each site. The short-listed development scenarios are shown in Table 1, recognizing that not all are necessarily financially feasible. Servicing and site preparation costs, which inform the viability of uses, ranges from approximately \$4 million to \$14 million per

acre. In some cases, interim or temporary uses, such as dry industrial uses, may be appropriate until the full infrastructure servicing is provided to the lands.

The Study includes much more information about the servicing costs for each sub-area and specific development forms tested.

Table 1. Development Scenarios

	Albion Industrial Lands			Central Lands		KFN	Eastern Lands	
Site	1A	1B	2	3	4	5A	6	7
Open storage				X	X	X	X	X
Generic industrial (25% site coverage)	X	X	X	X		X		X
Generic industrial (40% site coverage)	X		X	X		X		
Film studio					X			
Marine industry			X					
Short sea shipping		X	X				X	
Aggregate processing		X			X		X	
Concrete plant		X	X				X	

Study Recommendations:

The Bring to Market Industrial Land Study presents the following recommendations, organized as infrastructure servicing and planning policy topics.

Recommendations to address the known servicing and infrastructure matters:

- 1) To account for the challenges posed by the flood plain, establish flood construction levels of sites and undertake further soil condition investigation and analysis to inform how sites can be developed.
- 2) Transportation improvements can make accessing certain sites in the study area more convenient, overcoming the constraints that make these sites difficult to access. Engage MOTT and CPKC Rail to assess the feasibility of improvements designed to increase convenience for industrial users and to address safety concerns.
- 3) The level of transit service in the Albion Industrial area has been mentioned by employers as a limiting factor in accessing available labour, therefore exploring service level improvements with TransLink could benefit employers' ability to attract and retain staffing.
- 4) Improve the servicing of the area by water main looping and work with Metro Vancouver to assess the implications of policy changes to enable an extension of existing water and sanitary servicing to support industrial development.
- 5) Devise cost-sharing plans for allocating shared infrastructure costs within the study area, such as an area-specific municipal DCC to fund servicing extensions.

Recommendations for advancing industrial development, redevelopment, and densification on the sites:

- 6) The City and Metro Vancouver further discuss the potential for policy and planning for servicing extensions that could enable industrial expansion. This could include advocacy for amendments to the Fraser Sewerage Area and the Greater Vancouver Water District boundary, and studies that would support these amendments.
- 7) The City and Metro Vancouver explore aligning land use designations in the Official Community Plan and the Regional Growth Strategy. Advance an amendment application to update the Regional Growth Strategy land use designations for all areas in the OCP currently identified as industrial. This could be supported through the preparation of a local area plan.
- 8) The City introduce a new type of dry industrial zoning for sites, to permit a wider variety of interim uses so that sites can be productively used until they become more fully serviced.
- 9) KFN leads discussion with members about the potential for changes to their land use plan, shifting from commercial development to industrial development.
- 10) The City to enter into discussion with CPKC Rail on crossings improvements and options for some of the sites.
- 11) The City advocate and enter into discussions with MOTT about Highway 7 access improvements for all sites and what studies they would require to consider improvements (as well as TransLink about area transit service), such as:
 - Access improvements including signalization enhancements to Highway 7 / Lougheed Highway at River Road / Tamarack Lane and at 240 Street.
 - Highway access to KFN lands.
 - Highway access improvements for select sites via a single consolidated access point and an internal local road.
 - Right-in / right-out highway access improvements for other sites in the study area.
- 12) Complete the necessary studies to establish flood construction level for sites in the floodplain, as well as geo-technical assessment of the area.
- 13) Leverage the City's intergovernmental relationships and identify potential grant and funding sources that could establish partnerships to advance recommendations and future studies referenced in the report. This could include matching grants and stacking grants to attract funding and to cover servicing and other costs.
- 14) Consider marketing the sites for the uses most likely to find market interest and ensure that land use designations, zoning, and servicing are in place to enable rapid review and permitting approvals of industrial uses.

Strategic Alignment:

Facilitating and advancing the industrial development of the Albion Area, Fraser River, KFN Lands supports objectives in the Official Community Plan and the Economic Development Strategy in terms of providing space for business growth, economic opportunities, and local

employment, and aligns with a number of priorities within the 2023-2026 City of Maple Ridge Council Strategic Plan, including: Liveable Community, Climate Leadership and Environmental Stewardship, and Diversified, Thriving Economy.

The initiative is also supportive of regional and provincial interests relating to protecting, creating, and utilizing industrial lands to support economic development and employment growth.

NEXT STEPS:

The Bring to Market Industrial Land Study identifies a series of findings and recommendations. The City will need to continue to work with partners and other parties to address these items to attract industrial investment in the area. Staff will explore opportunities to advance the study's recommendations.

In terms of other industrial lands in Maple Ridge, the City is also working on the North 256 Street Industrial Lands Area Plan.

CONCLUSION:

In support of industrial development in the Albion Area, Fraser River, and KFN Lands, the Bring to Market Industrial Land Study identifies the challenges and provides recommendations on how to advance the development of the area and is being presented for information.

"Eric Aderneck"

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Manager

Attachment: (A) Bring to Market Industrial Land Study

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Bring to Market Industrial Albion Area Fraser River KFN Lands.docx
Attachments:	- Industrial Bring to Market Land Study - April 23, 2025 Final Report.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Apr 29, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

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