

QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY PLAN REVIEW AND UPDATE

Information Bulletin

October 2008

*Recent growth and change within the Queensborough community has prompted the City to initiate a review of the **Queensborough Community Plan**. The City will be assisted by the consultant firm of UMA. Through this review, the City will ask local residents, property owners, and business owners to share their vision of what Queensborough should be like in the future – and what needs to happen to get there.*

INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL LANDS

The present day community of Queensborough owes its existence to the early industries that were attracted to the shores of the Fraser River for water dependent activities such as timber processing, shipping and manufacturing. These labour intensive industries provided the draw for workers from across the world to settle within the neighbourhood and surrounding area. In recent years, as traditional industry has evolved many of the industrial sites have been redeveloped into newer forms of industrial, commercial and residential uses reshaping and renewing the Queensborough



Source: Interfor Brochure

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

While the once bustling industrial operations in Queensborough have diminished, the remaining operations and lands are very important to the economies of both the City and region. Industrial lands provide well paying jobs, contribute a higher rate of property tax than residential land uses and support a balanced community with jobs

close to where people live.

Industrial lands include warehousing facilities, wharves, lumber mills and manufacturing facilities, storage yards, repair and rail corridors and rail yards.

Within Queensborough, about 80 hectares (200 acres) are zoned for industry – about a quarter of the entire community.

Almost half of the industrial land supply is provided by two properties - Interfor and Western Forest Products. The Interfor site is currently for sale and the Western Forest Products sites was recently purchased by The Beedie Group. The redevelopment of these sites will greatly influence the future direction of Queensborough.

Remaining industrially zoned lands are made up of a handful of sites that are larger than 2 hectares (5 acres), while the majority are small individual parcels less than half an acre (2000m²) in size.

Queensborough is a strategic location within Metro Vancouver; it is central to the region’s major roads and rail network and is located on the Fraser River. This competitive advantage provided by both location and geography make the land desirable to the industrial development community. However, a lack of investment in infrastructure (water and sewer services) and the conversion of former industrial lands to residential uses have lead property owners to limit their investment in industrial operations and hold their land in anticipation of a possible future increase in land value through, for example, zoning from industrial to residential. On smaller industrial lots, the consolidation of parcels will be required to meet the demand for contemporary industrial projects.

Ten Largest Industrial Zoned Land Owners in Queensborough

Property	Size in Hectares (acres)
1. Interfor	19.7 (48.6)
2. Beedie Queensborough Lands	17.6 (43.6)
3. ICBC	6.2(15.3)
4. Speciality Building Products	4.2 (10.4)
5. Merlin Plastics	3.7 (9.1)
6. Cedar Island Manufacturing	3.3 (8.1)
7. Smurfit	3.2 (8.0)
8. Griff Building Supplies	2.3 (6.4)
9. City of New Westminster	2.0 (4.9)
10. Jawanda Transport	1.6 (4.0)

Source: Industrial Land Strategy (Coriolis, 2008)

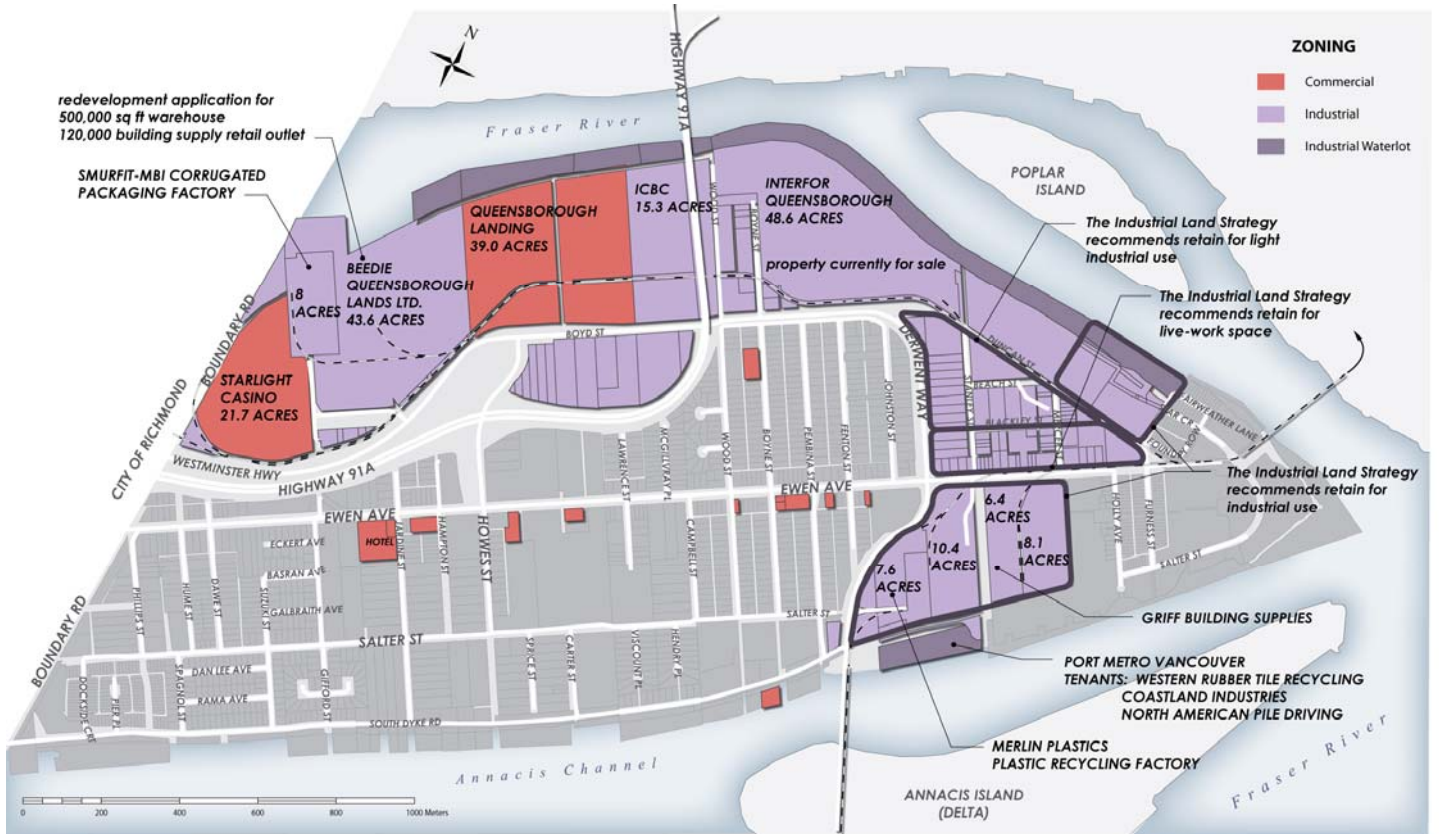


NEW WESTMINSTER INDUSTRIAL LAND STRATEGY

As part of New Westminster’s “Livable City Strategy” the City commissioned an “Industrial Land Strategy” in February 2008. The Industrial Land Strategy inventoried existing industrial lands throughout the city, and provides guidance on better utilization of industrial lands. The Strategy recommends the retention of many of the existing industrial lands in Queensborough and provides

direction on other industrial lands that can be redeveloped into commercial and residential uses. The map outlines the land recommended for industrial use from the Industrial Strategy.

Industrial and Commercial Zoned Lands



THE FUTURE OF INDUSTRIAL LAND IN QUEENSBOROUGH

While traditional industry is in decline, other forms of industrial activity are on the rise. For example, distribution and warehousing activity is expected to become an important driver of the local industrial market. Large parcels of industrially designated land on the waterfront are in short supply in Metro Vancouver. Queensborough, with excellent road, rail and waterfront linkages, is well positioned to take advantage of this trend. The range of parcel sizes from 20 ha to 2000m² will enable a variety of operations to locate in the area. A clear vision for the future use of these lands will help to bring development forward.

Other possible land uses include business parks which can include two to three storey office complexes and a variety of amenity and commercial services to support the tenants. The Industrial Land Strategy recommends a business park as a possible use for the industrial area south of Queensborough Landing.



RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL USES

In recent years, about 60 ha of former industrial land has been converted into commercial uses, such as the Starlight Casino and Queensborough Landing. Both trade on their regional function, capitalizing on the central location within Metro Vancouver. Neither commercial enterprise serves a neighbourhood role and given their location north of Highway 91A are somewhat disconnected and difficult to access from the residential area of Queensborough.

Within Queensborough there are limited commercial services catering to the needs of local residents. There is a restaurant, and local produce store, but little else. Given the population of Queensborough and the adjacent Hamilton community in Richmond, the combined population of 10,000 could potentially support a neighbourhood shopping precinct comprised of a food store, restaurants and personal services.

The existing Plan for Queensborough supports a community commercial gateway at Ewen Avenue and Howes Street. The creation of a commercial centre in a central location could provide an opportunity for local residents to walk, or cycle to local services, and could create a community focal point.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES: THINGS TO THINK ABOUT...

Retention of Industrial Land

The Industrial Strategy prepared for the City advocates the retention of the majority of the industrial lands in Queensborough. What is the future of existing industrial land? Is there still a place for traditional industry in Queensborough?

Industry as Neighbours

Although modern industrial operations are substantially cleaner than their traditional counterparts, they can still have

impacts on surrounding land uses. How can contemporary forms of industrial development become part the neighbourhood?

Shop Locally: Opportunities for Neighbourhood Shopping

What is needed to help create a more complete community? Is there interest in creating a neighbourhood commercial centre that is easily accessible by pedestrians and serves Queensborough?

Competing Interests: Industrial vs. Public Access to the Waterfront

Industrial operations often rely on their waterfront location to provide for the shipping of goods, making safe public access to the waterfront difficult. What is the balance between public access to the waterfront for recreation and the need for industrial activity?

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