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# Brownfield Redevelopment Strategy

## *City of Langley*

Colliers International Consulting

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PREPARED FOR:

The City of Langley

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# Introduction

The City of Langley's award-winning Downtown Master Plan (DMP) charted a visionary and dramatic new course for the city. It identified the City's downtown area as a unique urban centre with potential to add density in key locations; redevelop strategic pockets; and create vibrant buffer areas between the pedestrian-friendly commercial zone and the City's employment-rich industrial zone. This report – the first of its kind at the local government level in BC – builds on the DMP as well as the Economic Development Strategy to explore the economic realities of brownfield redevelopment in the City of Langley, and positions the city as a partner in the continued redevelopment of the community.

Brownfields are defined as “abandoned, vacant, derelict or underutilized commercial or industrial properties where past actions have resulted in actual or perceived contamination and where there is an active potential for redevelopment”. Municipalities are understandably interested in having these properties improved with a more productive use so as to enjoy greater vitality, employment opportunities, environmental conditions and tax base, but are often frustrated with the slow pace of change and unsure of their role in the redevelopment process. The BC Brownfield Renewal Strategy lists a number of possible benefits of renewing brownfield properties:

- improve local economic growth
- increase local tax revenue from redeveloping vacant & underused properties
- enhance land values surrounding redeveloped brownfields
- replace lost jobs by creating space for new industry on redeveloped brownfields
- be a catalyst for surrounding development, creating a favourable climate for more brownfield redevelopment projects

The last item on the list above is of key interest to the City of Langley which could view the industrial lands along the northern edge of its Downtown area as a barrier to the more full realization of its award winning Downtown Master Plan.

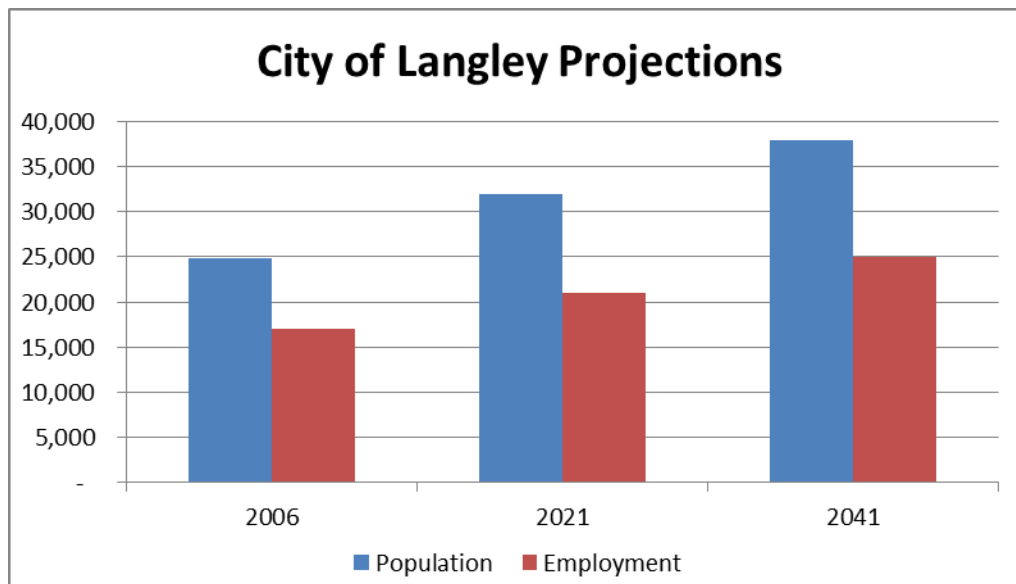
The redevelopment potential of any brownfield site depends on the demand for different types of land, the planning and real estate market status of the area in which the site is located, and the individual characteristics of the site itself. Individual site characteristics related to potential contamination are of particular concern for brownfield sites, making the potential of any particular site impossible to determine without competent environmental assessment. Despite this, there are common elements that make some areas more prime for redevelopment than others and there are tools that can encourage the redevelopment of brownfields more generally. With the right information, these tools can be organized into a comprehensive brownfield redevelopment strategy that is targeted for a specific municipal context.

Even an effective strategy has limits, however, and creating a brownfield redevelopment strategy does not guarantee swift redevelopment of underused or derelict sites. For some brownfield sites, the local economic conditions are such that even generous and energetic municipal support will be unlikely to change their use. This report supports the City of Langley's efforts to encourage the redevelopment of underutilized industrial lands by identifying the barriers involved in their redevelopment and the range of strategies and resources available to the City to effect change on these lands.

# City of Langley Overview

## Population Growth

The Lower Mainland Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) expects significant population growth for the City over the next 30 years. According to the 2011 Canadian Census, the population in the City was 25,081 people. Being designated as a Regional City Centre in the RGS, population growth is encouraged here and is expected to grow to 32,000 by 2021 and 38,000 by 2041. Growth will require further residential and commercial development to support the increase in population. In terms of housing units the RGS estimates that the City of Langley will have to build approximately 6,000 dwelling units by 2041 to support the incoming population. Overall the City of Langley represents approximately 1.2% of the Lower Mainland’s total population and dwelling units, and is anticipated to retain this ratio through to 2041.



## Employment growth

As the population in the City of Langley grows the requirement for employment follows a similar trend. According to the City of Langley, in 2006 the labour force over 15 years old was 12,800 (see following table) while total employment was 17,000. The difference between the labour force and the total employment demonstrates that the City of Langley currently acts as an employment node attracting at least 4,200 people from outside the City (assuming the entire labour force is employed in the City of Langley). The RGS estimates that by 2041 the total employment will continue to rise to 25,000 jobs representing nearly two thirds of the future population. It is likely that the City of Langley will continue to draw from the workforce of neighbouring cities and remain an anchor for employment in the Fraser Valley. It is essential to understand the major industries found here and what land requirements they have to ensure that affordable and sufficient space is allocated to support employment growth through the long term. A breakdown of employment sectors provides further insight for future land designations.

<b>INDUSTRY</b>	<b>LABOUR FORCE</b>
Retail trade	1,720
Manufacturing	1,600
Construction	1,205
Health care and social assistance	1,170
Wholesale trade	920
Accommodation and food services	880
Other services	745
Professional, scientific and technical services	740
Educational services	710
Transportation and warehousing	580
Administrative/support/waste management/remediation	430
Finance and insurance	425
Public administration	365
Arts, entertainment and recreation	360
Information and cultural industries	340
Real estate and rental and leasing	195
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	180
Utilities	30
Mining and oil and gas extraction	15
Management of companies and enterprises	0
<b>TOTAL (Age 15+)</b>	<b>12,800</b>

Manufacturing, transportation and warehousing are important sectors of the City of Langley’s employment profile and these sectors rely on industrial lands. While industrial lands have lower employment density than commercial land, the employment generated on these lands often enjoys higher wages. Efforts to redevelop underperforming industrial lands should be cognizant of the role industrial lands play in the local economy. When industrial land is redeveloped for other uses, the cost of land can go up in an area making industrial too expensive to be used for local businesses. Because industrial lands are important for employment, conversion of these lands to non-employment uses such as residential development will have impacts on the City of Langley’s draw as an employment hub.

## Brownfield Lands in the City of Langley

The City of Langley is justifiably proud of its industrial land base and the employment, taxes, and other economic spinoffs that it generates. Large scale industrial development in the City began in the late 1960's with the construction of Langley Bypass and the relocation of the railway to its current alignment. Most of the City's industrial development was coordinated by BC Hydro and formed part of what was then called "Langley Industrial Centre". The original land base for this large contiguous industrial estate has, since the 1980's, been eroded as parcels along Langley Bypass, 200 Street and Fraser Highway have gradually been redeveloped for commercial uses<sup>1</sup>.

According to the Metro Vancouver 2010 Industrial Lands Inventory (dated November 2011), the City of Langley had 210 acres of developed industrial land plus 8 acres of vacant industrial land. That land is in parcel sizes of less than 10 acres. Thirty-one acres are in parcels of less than one acre. The majority (147 acres) of the City's developed industrial supply is comprised of parcels between 1 and 5 acres in size. Langley's vacant industrial lands are predominantly in smaller parcels, with 6 of the 8 vacant acres being comprised of parcels less than one acre in size. The remaining 2 acres are in a single property. In terms of redevelopment potential, larger sites generally represent more opportunity for a developer to re-develop, as the sites can usually be `acquired for a lower cost per acre, they offer greater opportunity for the horizontal mixing of land uses, and they allow for buffer uses between adjacent industrial properties and redevelopment land uses which may not interface well with industrial. Langley's overall smaller industrial parcel sizes make redevelopment more challenging.

The following map from the 2010 study shows the City of Langley's industrial lands in purple. Dark purple parcels are developed, while the light purple ones are considered vacant for the purposes of the study. None of the vacant sites are in the Logan Avenue / Langley Bypass / 203<sup>rd</sup> Street area that would most directly benefit the City's Downtown development efforts.

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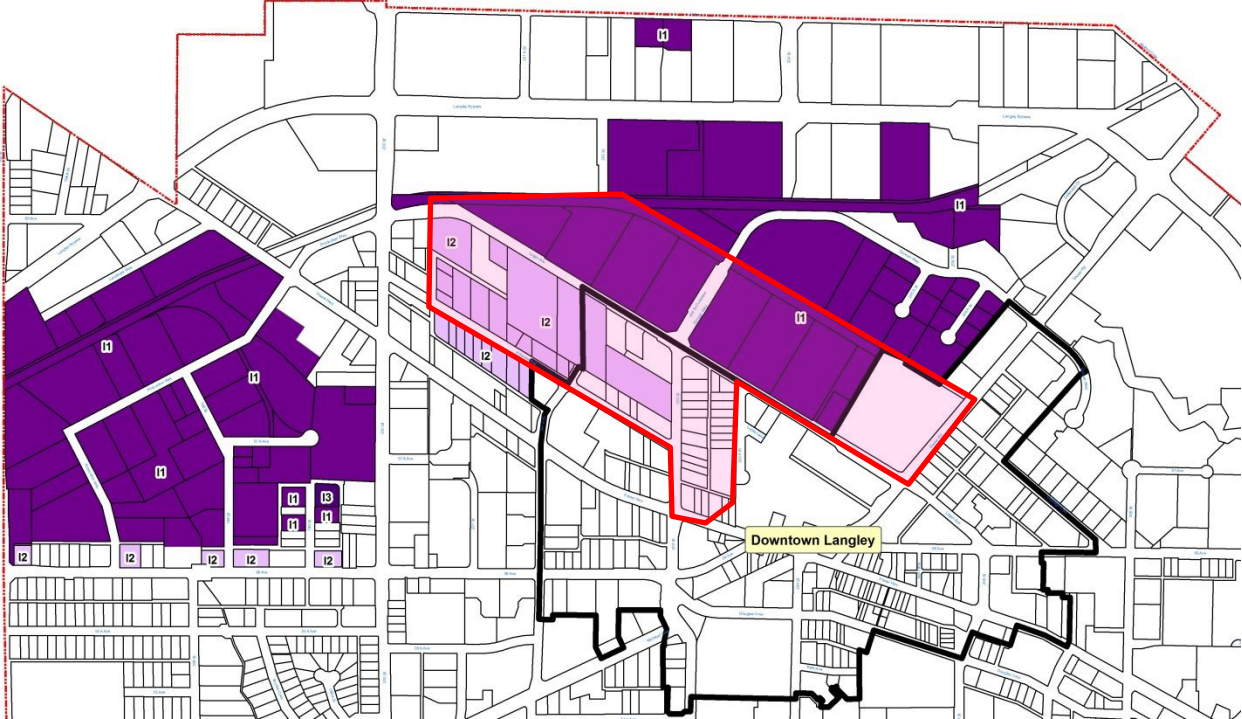
<sup>1</sup> City of Langley Official Community Plan



In addition to lands currently used for industrial purposes, it is also important to consider other possible brownfield areas comprised of quasi-industrial lands or contaminated commercial properties that previously were occupied by industrial uses. Of particular interest to the City of Langley are those brownfield lands in close proximity to the downtown core.

The map below shows the Industrial Zoned properties in the City of Langley. Here the dark purple parcels show industrial zoned sites, while the light purple ones show mixed employment zoned properties. The red boundary on the map shows the area that was considered most likely for brownfield redevelopment opportunities as this area is a gateway zone from the new 204<sup>th</sup> Street overpass, and the area is adjacent to the Downtown core area, which could suggest a steep gradient of density and value. Steep value gradients often represent redevelopment opportunities as a development could somewhat normalize values between the high point and the low points by adding value to the low-value industrial lands.

**Langley Industrial Zoned Property**





The following images are of properties within the City of Langley, on Logan Avenue.



The following images are from around the Lower Mainland, and offer conceptual ideas for redeveloped brownfield sites in The City of Langley.

**Derwent Way, Annacis Island, Delta**



**Henning Dr, Burnaby**



**200<sup>th</sup> Street, Langley Township**



**Harbourside Dr, North Vancouver**



# Barriers to Redevelopment

This section identifies some common challenges that hamper brownfield redevelopment efforts in Canadian municipalities.

## Site Evaluation and Remediation Costs

Even in circumstances where no remediation is required, a brownfield site will still require at least a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (or Stage 1 Preliminary Site Investigation). If a site is determined to be contaminated or if the status cannot be determined the site will require a Phase II ESA (or Stage 2 PSI). An ESA I can cost in the thousands of dollars while an ESA II can cost in the tens of thousands and beyond \$100,000 in certain cases. When the potential return on investment of a site is high, these costs are not usually a major deterrent to development. Also, these costs are small compared to the costs of remediation (Phase III ESA or Detailed Site Investigation) and the cost of delays associated with remediation. Nevertheless, these costs also constitute a deterrent to redevelopment of brownfield sites.

In the City of Langley where the industrial history of sites in the Logan Avenue area is generally well known and traceable, there is a good chance that a Phase 1 will not necessarily trigger a Phase II assessment. In areas where the industry has a longer history, is heavier in nature, or where there is a history of contamination, Phase II assessments can be virtually automatic.

## Time to Remediate Land & Receive Certification

The entire process of redeveloping a brownfield site can take some time, and can include multiple environmental assessments, soil remediation, application for and receipt of a Certificate of Compliance and removal of existing structures. Of these, the most challenging from a property development perspective is the time required for remediation, which can take years, depending on the type and severity of site contamination. These delays are costly, and if a developer were to obtain financing to acquire and remediate a property they will incur interest payments on a property that produces no income in addition to their opportunity costs. On the other hand, if they have a conditional purchase agreement, the prospective developer may not incur carrying costs for the purchase, but the market for the redeveloped use is constantly changing, which introduces additional risk.

## Uncertainty about Site Contamination

Many former industrial sites are not significantly contaminated, but the potential for a site to be contaminated is still a strong deterrent for redevelopment, especially when alternative sites that do not suffer from the same uncertainty are in supply. Redevelopment is most likely to occur on a brownfield site when the site offers some unique advantages that cannot be matched by other, less risky sites. This is the case for such well known examples as North and Southeast False Creek in Vancouver. Likewise, greater certainty that a site is not contaminated or does not require extensive remediation makes it a more likely candidate for redevelopment. However, when comparable greenfield sites are available in a market, many developers do not seriously consider brownfield sites because of the risk associated with them and unfamiliarity with the remediation process.

In the City of Langley, land is not in great supply, and greenfield sites are non-existent. The only opportunity for large scale development in the City's downtown area is through redevelopment.

### Marginal Increase in Land Value

In order to justify the increased exposure to risk and costs associated with brownfield development, the land must increase significantly in value through development. This means that an industrial brownfield site that is intended for long-term industrial use is not going to be remediated because the return on the remediation investment will not justify the expense of site cleanup. Likewise, a marginal increase in land value through rezoning to service commercial or another land use without significantly higher land value may not justify the expense of remediation. Rezoning to a higher value use such as high-density residential may encourage redevelopment depending on the market and site conditions. However, the standard of environmental quality of a site designated for residential use must be higher than that required for industrial or service commercial, potentially increasing remediation costs.

### Relocation Challenges

For industrial sites that are still in use, it is often not worthwhile for the owner to relocate to another site because of remediation and relocation costs. A property owner with a \$1 million industrial property will not spend \$500,000 to remediate his property and sell at market rate for a net return of \$500,000 if they must then spend \$1 million for a suitable site elsewhere. Even in a cheaper industrial land market, any land purchase of over \$500,000 plus the associated costs of improving the new site, moving equipment etc, makes the plan unsound. This means that even marginal uses of land, such as for outside equipment storage, are often better than remediating and selling the land in the eyes of the property owner.

### Access to Capital

Because of the risks and the front-loaded costs involved in brownfield redevelopment it can be difficult for a developer to obtain project funding from traditional sources of capital. The capital markets in Canada are much more conservative than in the US where there are many more lenders. In Canada, lenders want more certainty on the process and often dictate specific requirements around site environmental testing, remediation, and so forth, as part of the loan agreement.

# Overview of Government Strategies

Brownfield sites have been a concern of many government bodies across jurisdictions for some time, and a number of governments have performed studies around the issue and created plans to encourage redevelopment. Below are some examples of these initiatives from the federal, provincial and municipal governments in Canada.

## Federal Government

In 2003, the federal government's National Roundtable on the Environment and Economy created a plan called *Cleaning up the Past, Building the Future: A National Brownfield Redevelopment Strategy for Canada*. This document was meant to identify the potential of redeveloping brownfields, the barriers to redevelopment and the strategies that could overcome these barriers. This plan proposes three strategic directions for brownfield redevelopment:

1. Applying strategic public investments to address upfront costs
2. Establishing an effective public policy regime for environmental liability and risk management
3. Building capacity for and community awareness of brownfield redevelopment

Within each of these strategic directions are a suite of specific recommendations that can be applied by different levels of government (including municipal government) to overcome the challenges of redeveloping brownfield sites. This document continues to inform the approaches to brownfield redevelopment taken by provinces and municipalities today.

The federal government has also endowed the Federation of Canadian Municipalities with \$550 million to create the Green Municipal Funds, which provides grants, loans and training to municipalities to support projects that enhance sustainability. Grants can cover up to 50% of eligible project costs to a maximum of \$350,000 while loans can cover 80% of eligible project costs up to \$10 million at 1.5% below the Government of Canada bond rate. Both grants and loans can be stacked against federal and provincial funding.

Sustainable Development Technology Canada (SDTC) is a federally funded foundation that finances and supports the development and demonstration of clean technologies. Leading edge brownfield developments could be considered under this funding. On average the SDTC funds between 33% and 50% of eligible project costs.

## Provincial Government

Recognizing there is likely more than 5,000 brownfield sites in BC alone, the Provincial Government has implemented the Brownfield Renewal Strategy to encourage the redevelopment brownfields through:

- Providing municipalities with educational materials, an information hotline and workshops
- Changing the community charter to allow 10 year tax exemptions for redevelopment projects
- Streamlining the Contaminated Sites Regulations
- Creating a funding program for the early investigation of brownfield sites
- Creation of a more effective public policy regime for liability and risk

- Development of key Crown brownfield sites to lead by example

The main program under the strategy is the annual BC Brownfield Renewal Funding Program which is designed to provide assistance in reducing risk and uncertainties around brownfield sites. The program provides land owners or developers with funding for environmental investigations and related activities where triple bottom line benefits can be achieved. The funding offered is as follows:

**Eligible Activities and Maximum Provincial Contributions  
Under the Brownfield Renewal Funding Program**

Eligible Activities for Funding	Type of Activity	Maximum Provincial Contribution (%) ^	Maximum Provincial Contribution (\$) ^
a. Preliminary Site Investigations (Stage 1 and 2) *	Environmental Investigations	85%	\$40,000
b. Detailed Site Investigations *		70%	\$125,000
c. Analysis and interpretation, including tests, sampling, surveys, data evaluation, risk assessment (human and ecological); d. Evaluation of alternative methods of remediation; e. Preparation of a remediation plan, including a plan for any consequential or associated removal of soil or soil relocation from the site;		50%	\$125,000
f. Investigation and classification of on-site wastes not associated with environmental media (soil, sediments, surface water, groundwater, air/vapour, animals and plants), to determine their status under the Hazardous Waste Regulation and the <i>Environmental Management Act</i> for the purposes of deciding on appropriate management (e.g., asbestos, lead based paint, PCB-containing lamp ballasts, etc.) g. Removal of above ground and underground petroleum or chemical storage tanks; and h. Quality assurance activities such as verification sampling, analysis and monitoring related to items (f) and (g) above.	Other Related Environmental Activities	50%	\$125,000

\*As defined in Chapter 53, section 41 of the BC *Environmental Management Act*

*^Maximum funding provided for each application is based on the lesser of either the maximum dollar amount or the maximum percentage of the activity for which funding is requested.*

**HST for eligible costs will be reimbursed and will not be calculated as part of the awarded amount.**

BC Infrastructure also offers grants of up to \$10,000 for developing “sustainable infrastructure that will improve public health and safety, protect the natural environment and strengthen local and regional economies.” This funding can be applied to brownfield revitalization.

### Municipal Government

Many local governments across Canada have expressed interest in encouraging the redevelopment of their brownfield lands, but most municipalities have not created comprehensive strategies to specify the level and type of municipal involvement in brownfield redevelopment. Most strategic planning for brownfields has been done by Ontario municipalities with a history of manufacturing-based economic activity. Guelph, Windsor, Niagara Falls, Welland and Hamilton all have brownfield redevelopment strategies and the Niagara Region also has prepared a strategy for the municipalities within their jurisdiction. These strategies outline specific commitments to aid in the

redevelopment process, such as grants for site studies, tax assistance, low-cost loans to developers, fee reductions, hiring staff to coordinate and expedite redevelopment proposals, marketing and leadership strategies and monitoring programs.

Municipalities in Canada's rust belt have a number of obvious differences from Langley, suggesting that a brownfield redevelopment strategy cannot be a one-size-fits-all solution. However, the process by which these municipalities have created their individual strategies may be instructive. These brownfield redevelopment strategies have included some of the following:

- The objectives the City wishes to achieve through its strategy
- An inventory, database or review of brownfield sites within the boundaries of the strategy
- Consultation with key stakeholders, staff and the public
- The barriers to redevelopment in the local context
- A suite of policies that are explicitly connected to each of the defined barriers
- An implementation and monitoring plan to evaluate the efficacy of policies
- Insofar as these strategies included financial incentives to redevelop property, they also included information on how programs would be funded, criteria for eligibility, application process, etc.

# Municipal Tools

The market for brownfield land in the City of Langley and the unique circumstances of each brownfield site means that no single strategy will result in a dramatic increase in development pressure in the short term. However, a range of policy options is available from which the City of Langley can create a comprehensive brownfield redevelopment strategy. The effectiveness of each of these will depend on local conditions and their potential will change over time.

## Establish a Municipal Development Role

The City of Langley has a history of successful brownfield redevelopment within its Downtown area, and its stable and pro-development business climate would be conducive to council and staff taking a lead role in the brownfield redevelopment foreseen in the DMP and elsewhere. Projects such as the Cascades Casino/Coast Hotel and Convention Centre, Fraser Crossing Shopping Centre and others were enabled through the City's proactive assembly of properties.

Cities can acquire and redevelop brownfield sites themselves to revitalize an area or create a demonstration or catalyst project. This could also be done with brownfield sites currently held by the City, or through strategic acquisition of key properties. This strategy is costly, so would be advisable primarily if the City were interested in a particular parcel that was to be the centerpiece of a planning initiative. Local governments have a number of advantages over the private sector in brownfield redevelopments:

- Not motivated by profit,
- Cheap financing available through the Municipal Finance Authority,
- Long-term perspective on achieving desired returns,
- Control of zoning, which reduces the risk of the land investment,

The barriers to private sector redevelopment of brownfield sites can be largely mitigated in the case of a municipal development corporation. However, no development is entirely without risk, and in the event of a severely contaminated site the remediation could be expensive regardless of who owns the property.

It is recommended that the City investigate the risks and potential partnerships and benefits that could result from taking a lead role in acquiring, assembling, rezoning, and remediation of brownfield properties.

## Blanket Contamination Risk Assessment

The City of Langley could create an enhanced site inventory by conducting preliminary environmental assessments on all of the properties it deems priority candidates for redevelopment or on all brownfield sites in the City. These assessments could include the following elements:

- Site inspections
- Interviews with past and present owners/managers of the site and adjacent properties
- Review of historical data

- Chain-of-title review
- Review of building and site plans
- Review of the topography, hydrology and geology of the area

A Phase I ESA for a single site usually costs between \$2,000 and \$3,000, although some economies of scale could be realized when reviewing multiple sites simultaneously. The value of conducting preliminary environmental assessments is that it would allow the City to identify the sites that are most likely to redevelop and indicate to any potential developers that these sites are low-risk.

We recommend the City engage an environmental consulting firm to conduct a preliminary environmental assessment of all industrially zoned lands buffering the DMP area. It would then be provided to anyone who requested it for a specific property (for a nominal cost to cover reproduction charges).

### Tax Exemptions

The Provincial Government has provided an avenue for local governments to encourage redevelopment of brownfield sites through the Community Charter Act. Recent changes to the act allow local governments to establish programs to reduce tax on a range of revitalization sites including brownfields. Once the tax program has been adopted by Council, the City must enter an agreement with the property owner outlining the property tax exemptions and the term that the benefits are to be provided. Although heritage sites receive a full exemption from taxes both provincially and municipally, revitalization projects are still subject to the provincial and school taxes. Furthermore, the term of municipal tax exemptions cannot exceed 10 years. This strategy is the most likely to make a significant difference for small time developers and property owners while having a minimal impact on the City's budget.

It is recommended that the City consider tax or fee exemptions that would apply to new development on industrial lands within a prescribed brownfield redevelopment zone. The tax exemptions could apply to the municipal portion of property taxes and could be structured as a tax freeze which renders any improvements property tax free for a set period. The city could also choose to waive development application fees, DCC's, and cultural or amenity charges to improve the economics of redevelopment. The city could also elect to waive all municipal property taxes during the remediation phase, and lobby other levels of government to do the same.

### Prioritize Brownfields in the Planning Process

In addition to the extra risks associated with potential contamination, brownfield redevelopment projects must also go through the same planning process as any other development. After creating a site inventory, the City could commit to expediting the approval process for proposals on these sites, reducing the time from initial investment to project completion for the developer. The effectiveness of this strategy will depend on the City's ability to communicate their new priorities to the development industry and connect with developers who have some experience redeveloping brownfield sites.

The City of Langley already offers the most efficient development approvals process in Metro Vancouver, so while the marginal improvement in timing of an expedited approval process for Brownfield sites might be a matter of days or weeks, the message to the development industry would be strong and positive.



## Detailed Site Inventory

The Canadian municipalities that have created a comprehensive brownfield redevelopment strategy have begun with an inventory of sites that have redevelopment potential and have defined what sites are eligible for municipal assistance through other policies. A site inventory can be used to better understand the potential for a brownfield strategy more generally by revealing geographic distribution of sites, the total area of sites and the current use of those sites. This information can help the City decide the level of priority a redevelopment strategy should take and what potential impact redevelopment could have on the community. A site inventory could include a variety of information types. The Niagara Region's brownfield strategy used the following information for their site inventory:

- General map showing location of all sites
- Aerial photograph of each site showing individual properties
- Site plan showing property, buildings and adjacent land uses
- Name of current owner
- Municipal address
- Site size, frontage and depth
- Existing building types and sizes
- Official Plan designation and zoning
- Land use/site use restrictions, e.g., special zoning/site plan provisions, easements
- Heritage status
- Servicing status (water, sanitary sewer, storm sewer)
- Access to rail and public transit
- Environmental reports/studies or brief history of property use
- Likelihood of property availability/assembly within next 12-24 months
- Redevelopment/reuse potential
- Any previous/current developer interest in the site
- Existing/anticipated community involvement/objection to redevelopment
- Eligibility for area municipal support through incentive programs

## Monitoring

With a completed site inventory, the City could monitor the development of priority sites over time to determine the efficacy of the strategies used and adjust expectations about brownfield redevelopment. The brownfield site inventory should therefore be a living document that is updated whenever new information is made available.

## Promoting Interim Uses

Some brownfield sites could be redeveloped for interim uses that would allow the site to be used in the near term without (or during) remediation using a license of occupation that considers the potential for liability and future remediation requirements. Through negotiation with property owners and interested parties, a brownfield site could be repurposed as a pocket park, a site for public art, a solar power generating site, or other use that does not compromise the long term remediation and redevelopment potential of the site. These arrangements can reduce maintenance costs for the owner of the site, beautify or activate a site in the city and provide an organization with land to use that would otherwise be unavailable. This is likely only a strategy that can be used

on select sites within the City of Langley and it does not constitute the permanent redevelopment or improvement of a brownfield site, but for certain key sites it can prove useful.

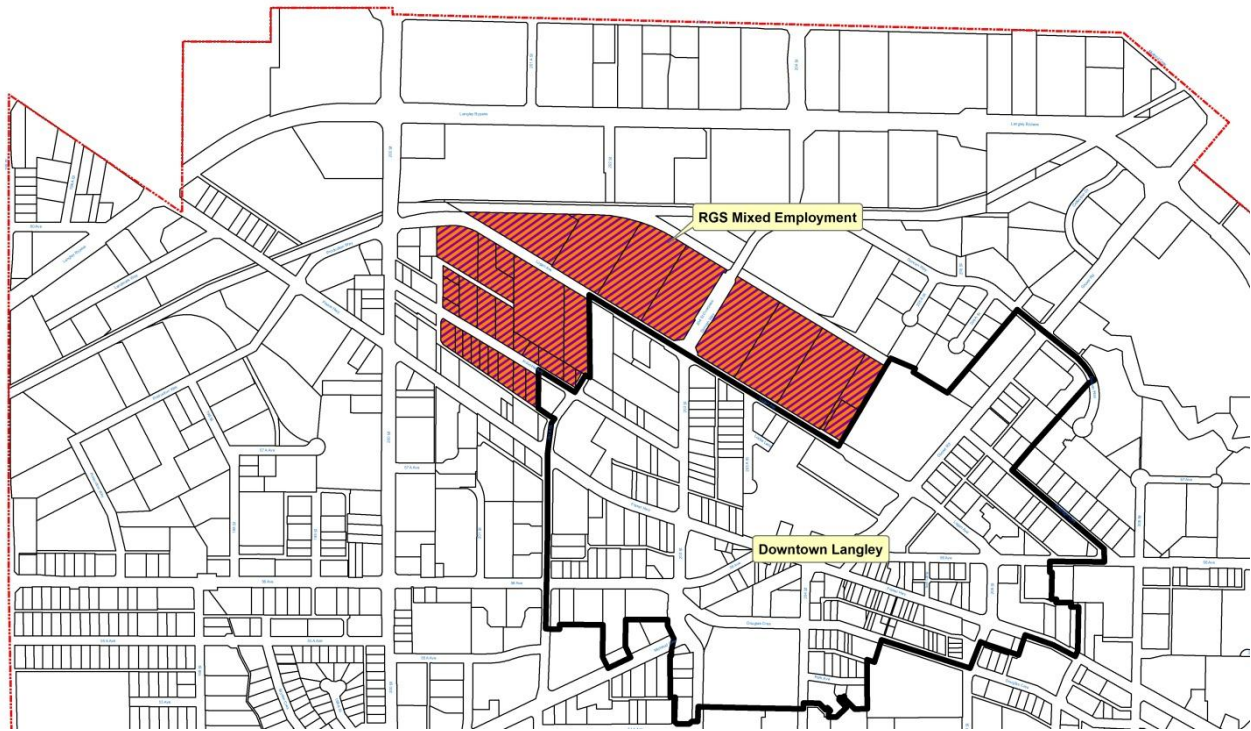
### Rezoning/Zoning Text Amendments

In order for a brownfield site to be redeveloped, the destination use must represent an increase in value over the present use by an amount equal to or greater than the costs and risks associated with redevelopment. For many industrial lands, this is not the case. The City can increase the potential value of a property by rezoning that property to a higher value use, such as commercial or residential, or by amending the text of the zoning bylaw governing industrial uses to allow for higher value uses within the current zone. This strategy depends on the demand for different uses. For example, if demand for commercial space in Langley outstrips supply while the supply for industrial use outpaces demand, then there may be enough change in land value through rezoning or amending the current zoning to justify redevelopment.

It is important to note that the 2003 Industrial Land Use Study evaluates the possibility of changing industrial lands to commercial uses and found that there was not significant demand for this because a) there was sufficient land zoned for commercial uses to meet the demand for commercial land for the next twenty years, and b) the road access to the industrial lands is not the kind favoured for commercial development. As almost ten years has passed, this may need to be reevaluated in the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Mixed-Employment Areas.

Metro Vancouver's new Mixed Employment areas could represent an end use for Langley City's brownfield sites which would not have as burdensome requirements for remediation (relative to residential, for example) if contaminants are found. Mixed Employment areas are intended for industrial, commercial and other employment related uses to help meet the needs of the regional economy. They are intended to continue to support industrial activities, and complement and support the planned function of Urban Centres and Frequent Transit Development Areas. Mixed Employment areas located within Urban Centres and Frequent Transit Development Areas provide locations for a range of employment activities and more intensive forms of commercial development.

## Mixed Employment Map



### Redevelopment Workshop

Finally, there is a role for the City to play in the process of brownfield redevelopment whereby the City convenes a workshop to advance the understanding and the implementation of brownfield redevelopment in The City of Langley. The workshop would be attended by key staff from planning and engineering, members of council, industrial land owners, land developers, environmental consultants, commercial real estate brokers, BCEIA, and Ministry of Environment representatives. This workshop would start with a tour of the City, and would then follow with a presentation from planning staff about their long-term vision for employment lands. A facilitated discussion would then lead through the key elements of this report and would be intended to identify specific opportunities for achieving the City's goals on key sites.

# Appendix 1

## Redevelopment in the City of Langley – SWOT Analysis

### Strengths

- Low residential and business property tax rates
- Unique pedestrian-oriented Downtown core area
- High quality of life and community cohesiveness
- Low DCC rates
- Fast and flexible development approvals process
- Knowledgeable and professional staff
- Pro-development council
- The City of Langley's business community is expanding, with Cactus Club and new luxury auto dealerships opening soon.

### Weaknesses

- Small inventory of developable sites
- Absentee / overseas land owners can make property assemblies difficult or time consuming
- Aging municipal infrastructure can require upgrading to accommodate higher densities
- Perceived weakness of demand for redeveloped properties
- Unstable deep soil conditions make very high density developments more expensive than in other areas.
- Perceived safety or stigma associated with downtown area.
- Limited opportunity to attract residential investors thus development targeted at end users

### Opportunities

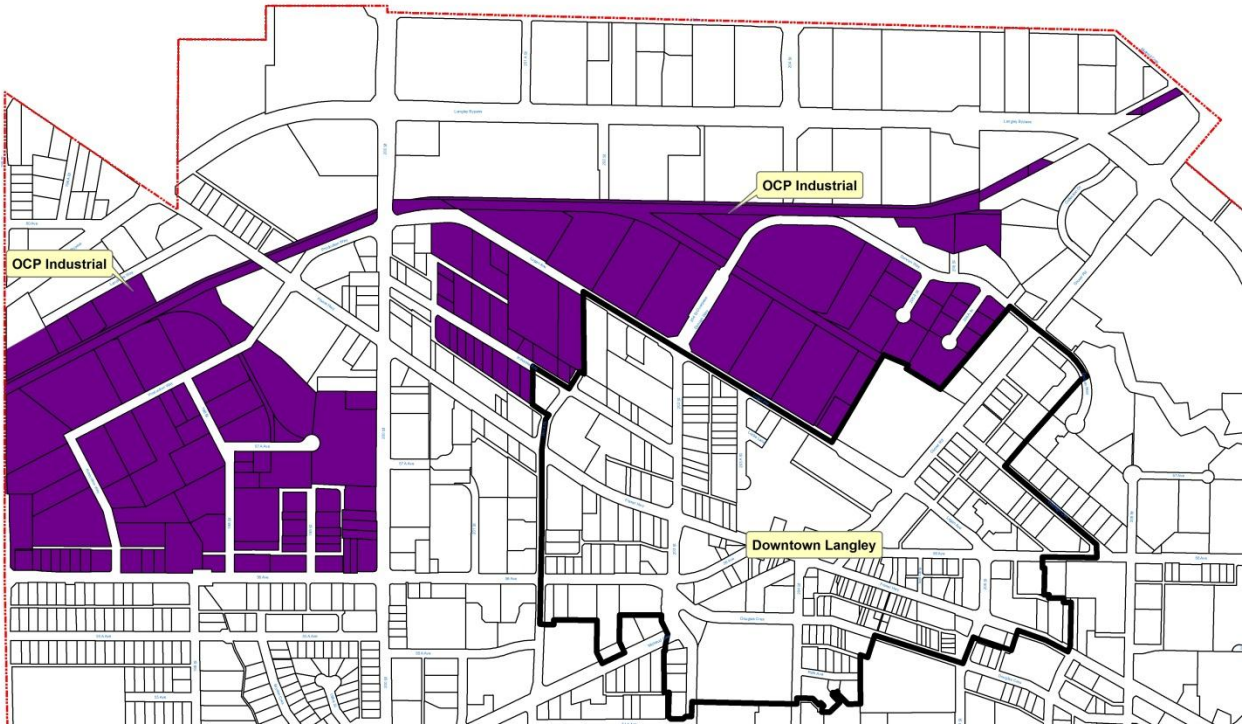
- City takes an active role in assembling properties in order to remove time/uncertainty/difficulty of assembling land.
- Renewed/emerging emphasis on local neighbourhood character and quality of life in residential property marketing.
- Relatively under-utilized sites near the downtown core.
- Get behind move for light rail connection to Surrey

## Threats

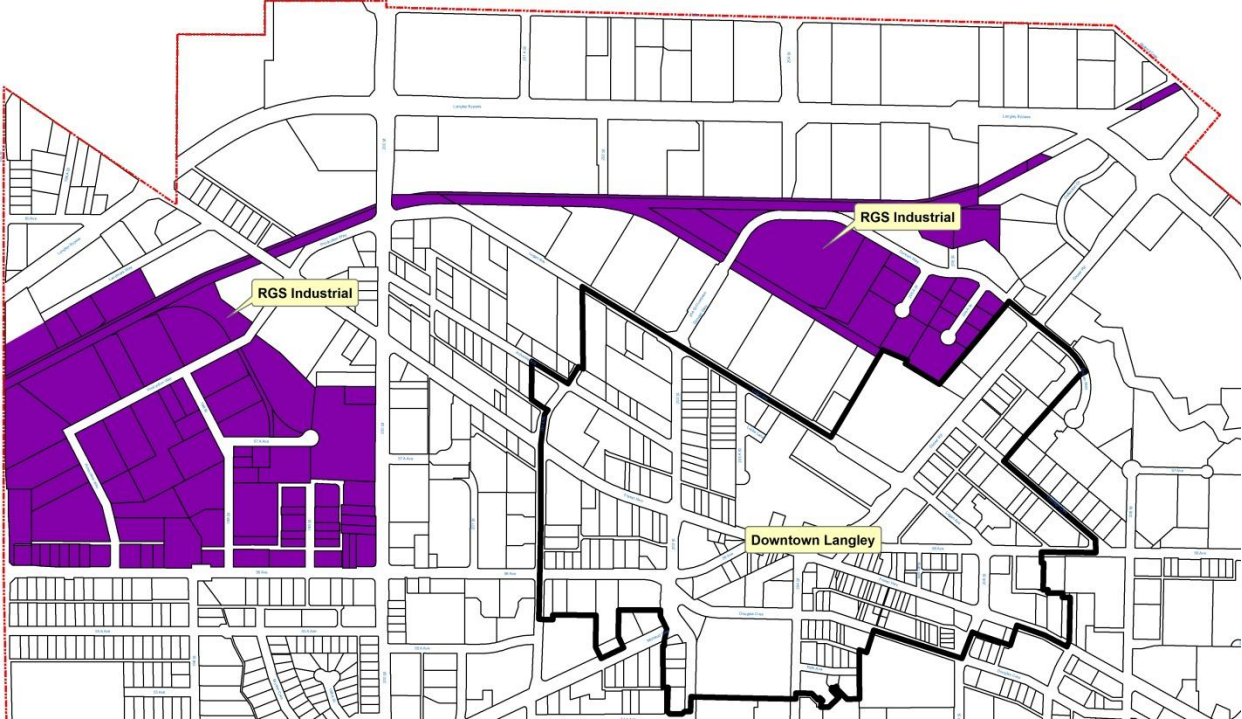
- Increasing focus of development community on Skytrain station areas
- Other Transit improvements to north and Port Mann Bridge tolling could result in North of Fraser municipalities growing at City's expense.
- Proposed Surrey Casino would further reduce Langley City's casino revenues which have already been severely affected by online gambling and expose the lack of entertainment options.
- Higher costs of redevelopment in the City relative to other parts of the region

# Appendix 2 - Maps

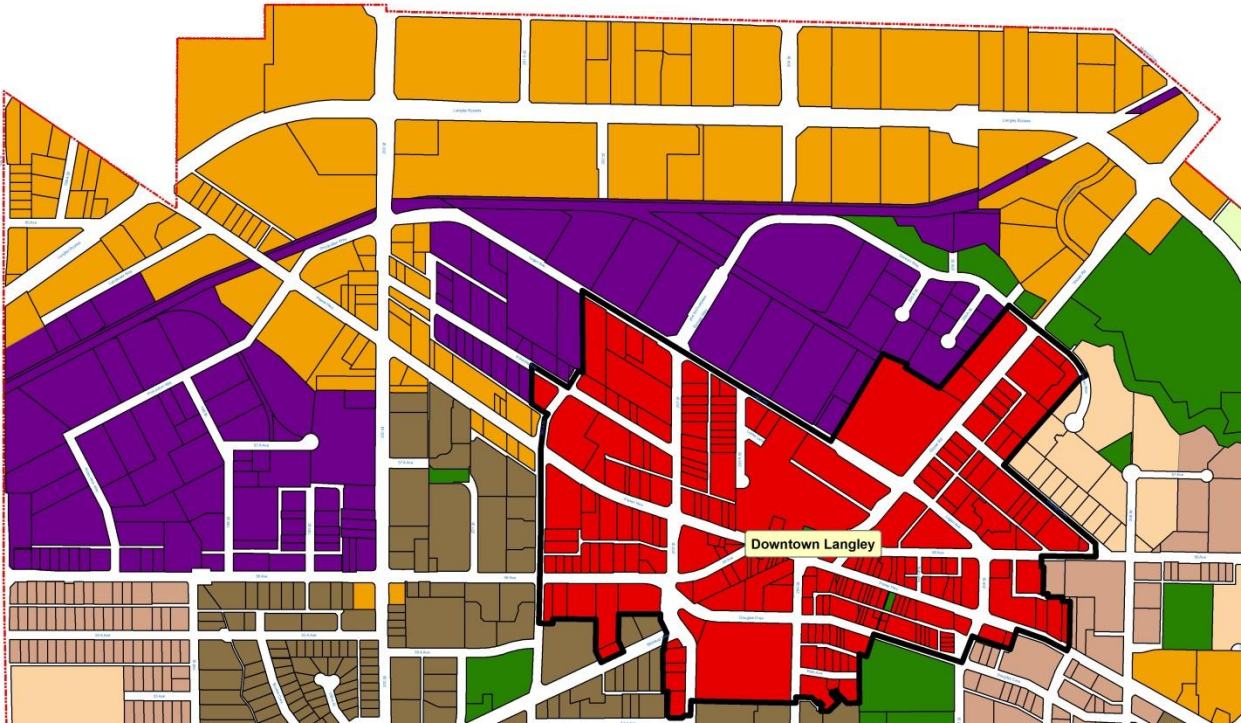
Langley OCP Industrial Property Map



Langley RGS Industrial Property Map



Langley OCP Map





Langley Zoning Map

