



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Metro Vancouver 2020 Regional Industrial Lands Inventory

INVENTORY PURPOSE

The *2020 Regional Industrial Lands Inventory* provides a comprehensive summary of the quantity and quality of industrial lands in the region as of mid-2020. The data: quantifies the limited supply of industrial lands and the amount of land that is developed for industrial and other uses by type of activity; identifies the lands that are vacant; supports industrial lands protection and intensification efforts; and allows opportunity for further analysis of industrial land matters.

The Inventory is updated every 5 years, and the 2020 Inventory builds on the past inventories. The Inventory results also support the implementation of the regional growth strategy and *Regional Industrial Lands Strategy*.

THE IMPORTANCE OF INDUSTRIAL LANDS

Industrial lands are required to support a prosperous and growing regional economy and workforce, as well as local, regional, and national transportation and trade functions. Through protection and intensification, the efficient use of industrial lands in the Metro Vancouver region accommodates both local-servicing businesses and trade-related organizations.

The 2020 Inventory categorizes lands by use and activity, using consistent and clear criteria, into 7 broad land use classifications (with a subset of 30 detailed land uses). The land use classifications are based on the primary use of the site, including normally associated on-site accessory / ancillary uses, such as parking or loading areas. More detailed information can be found in the technical report and maps available on the website.



2020 REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL LANDS INVENTORY RESULTS

Key findings from the 2020 Inventory:

- There continues to be an increasing amount of industrial lands being used for non-industrial purposes, which poses a considerable threat to the industrial land base.
- There are few remaining available large sites for 'trade-oriented' logistics uses, which has impacts on businesses locating in the region and being able to stay and grow in the region.
- Although there was an increase in the total size of the Inventory between 2015 and 2020, many of the lands added are not in locations well served by the transportation / goods movement network.
- Even with these additions, due to the rate of development activity, the amount of vacant industrial land continues to decline.
- There are continuing competing priorities for the limited industrial lands.



Key statistics from the 2020 Inventory:

- The region has 11,502 hectares (28,422 acres) of lands within the Inventory study area; 82% (9,387 ha) are 'Developed' and 18% (2,115 ha) are 'Other / Vacant'.
- Most of the lands in the Inventory are located in the southern and eastern parts of the region: i.e. 22% in Surrey, 15% in Richmond, and 14% in Delta / Tsawwassen First Nation.
- 40% of the lands are categorized as 'Building Intensive Industrial', with a range of industrial uses, along with associated accessory uses.
- 25% of the lands are used for 'Large Scale Infrastructure / Transportation' (utilities, port, airport, rail yards), which are not tracked by the market.
- The Inventory includes lands designated and/or zoned industrial that have stand-alone non-industrial uses including as 'Retail' (4% of the Inventory) and 'Commercial' (4%).

Key changes in Inventory size and absorption between 2015 and 2020:

- 323 ha (798 ac) of land were added while 70 ha (174 ac) were removed. This resulted in a net increase of 252 ha (624 ac) in the Inventory over the five-year period.
- In terms of absorption (vacant lands becoming developed, or vice versa), 507 ha (1,253 ac) went from 'Other / Vacant' to 'Developed' status, while 23 ha (58 ac) of lands went from 'Developed' to 'Other / Vacant' status. This yielded a net absorption of 484 ha (1,196 ac) of lands over the five-year period, for an annual average of 97 ha (239 ac).

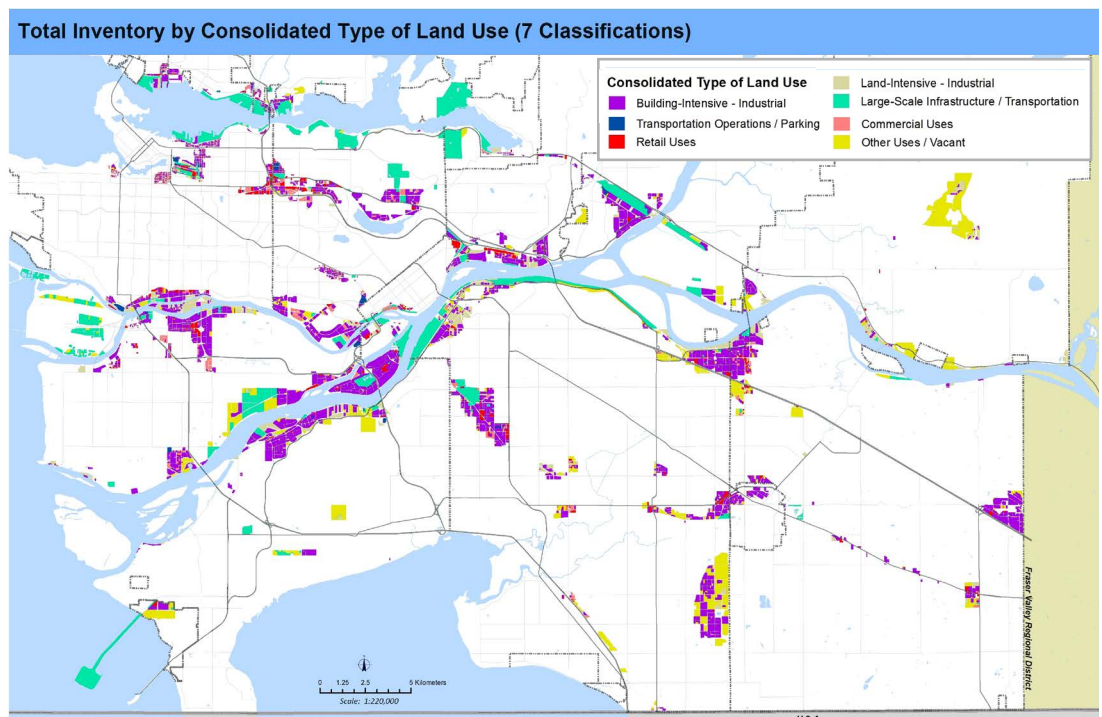


2020 REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL LANDS INVENTORY RESULTS

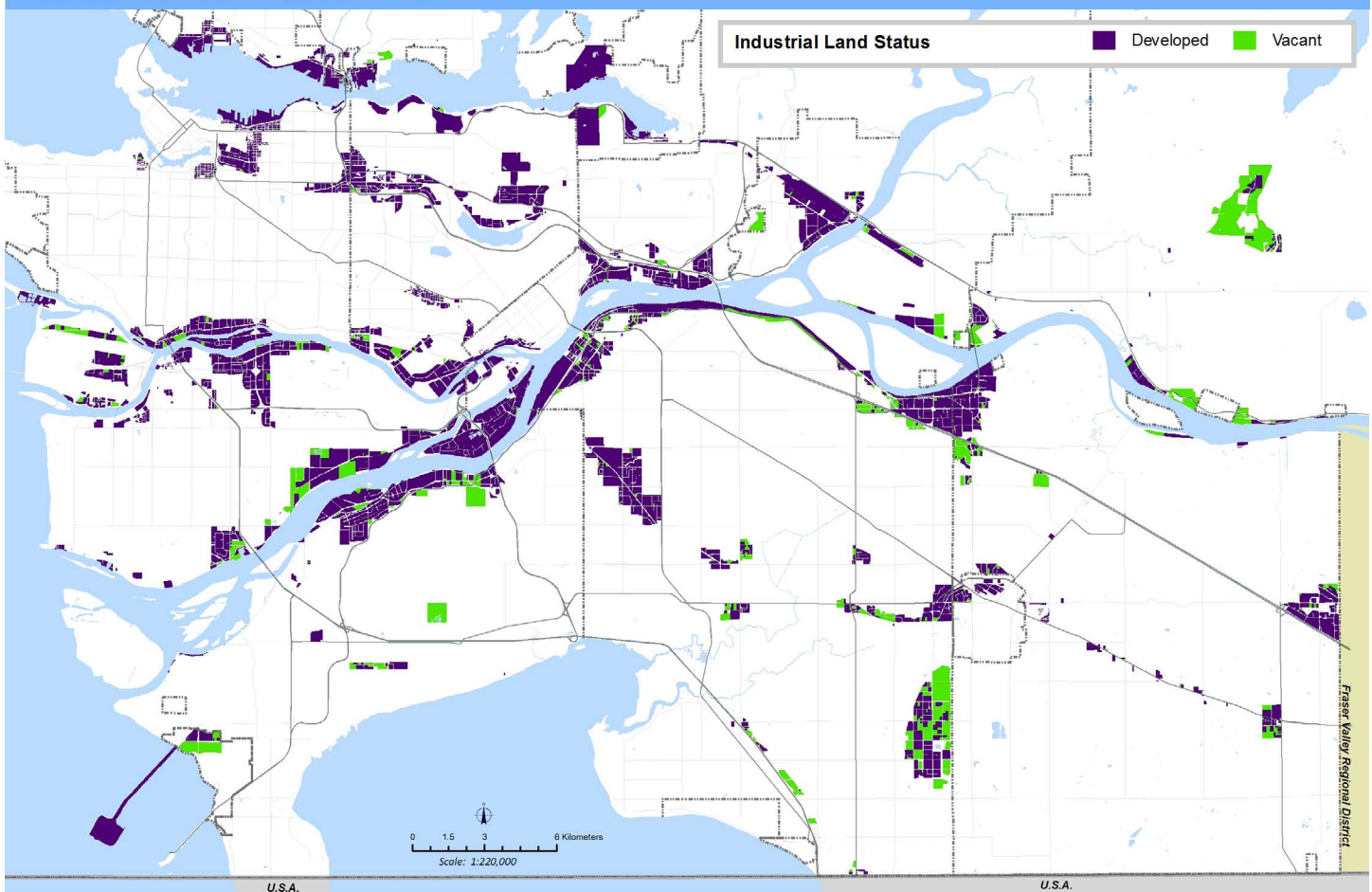
The findings further profiled in the report include:

- **Qualitative attributes of lands matter** - The Inventory comprises lands used and intended for industrial uses. The Inventory includes traditional and new types of industrial activities, quasi-industrial functions, and non-industrial uses on the lands, which have different user needs. The quality of lands, such as attributes like size, location, and site features, are as important as quantity.
- **Lands added / removed in this update have different locational and site attributes** - Lands were removed from the Inventory due to a number of reasons, but mostly municipal policy changes. Much of the lands added to the Inventory were in locations not well served relative to the major transportation networks / goods movement corridors nor have other key attributes desired by the market, whereas some of the lands removed had good accessibility.
- **Few available large sites for 'trade-oriented' logistics uses** - There are few vacant sites available for 'trade-oriented' logistics users, namely large sites with minimal constraints and close to transportation infrastructure.
- **Increasing amounts of industrial lands are used for non-industrial purposes** - Some industrial lands are re-designated and removed from the Inventory as per municipal plans, while other lands with flexible industrial designations are rezoned to allow for non-industrial uses. Some of these other types of uses support industrial activities, while others may threaten industrial areas, such as commercial and retail uses beyond those accessory or supporting industrial uses.

- **Continued competing priorities for limited lands** - The regional growth strategy and the *Regional Industrial Lands Strategy* include industrial and other long range regional planning goals. Because of these multiple objectives, at both the regional and local levels, there are in some cases competing or even conflicting policy priorities.
- **Most, but not all, industrial lands are secured for long-term protection** - Municipal policies (land use designations and zoning) and regional land use designations secure the long-term industrial use of industrial lands. Lands that do not have this policy protection are more likely to convert and redevelop to other uses, particularly lands located in Urban Centres.
- **More industrial land intensification is expected over time** - Most of the developed lands are substantially used, with limited immediate opportunity for redevelopment and intensification, noting that some industrial uses are land-intensive and some are building-intensive. Nevertheless, as these lands redevelop, there will be potential to densify and intensify.
- **The industrial land absorption rate declined due to limited raw land supply** - Although recorded development / absorption activity is a reflection of industrial demand, it is in fact limited by the amount of land supply, so it is not a true measure of total demand.



Total Inventory by Developed and Vacant



NEXT STEPS

The 2020 Inventory will inform regional and municipal planning processes and policy work, as well as inform infrastructure investments by agencies and private sector business decisions.

As part of the ongoing implementation of the *Regional Industrial Lands Strategy* and with the release of the *2020 Regional Industrial Lands Inventory*, Metro Vancouver will pursue opportunities to engage with stakeholders to advance industrial land matters across the region. This includes promoting the results of the 2020 Inventory to member jurisdictions, industrial developers, and other agencies and stakeholders to encourage more intensive industrial development while encouraging the protection of the industrial use of the limited land supply.

Additionally Metro Vancouver will use the 2020 Inventory as a resource to: further explore industrial land demand, document market readiness and redevelopment / intensification potential, undertake a regional land use assessment, and support other regional and local planning initiatives. Metro Vancouver will update the Inventory every 5 years.

Successfully achieving the vision of the *Regional Industrial Lands Strategy* will require the continued close collaboration and partnership with many stakeholders, and a long-term shared commitment by Metro Vancouver and its member jurisdictions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

metrovancover.org

(search 'Regional Industrial Lands Inventory')



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