



**EXECUTIVE  
SUMMARY**

# Regional Industrial Lands Strategy

## KEY STATS

- Industrial lands comprise **4%** of the region’s land base, and accommodate **27%** of the region’s jobs.
- Industrial land prices in Metro Vancouver are amongst the **highest** in North America.
- Industrial jobs pay **10% higher** than the regional average.
- Business activity on industrial lands generate **30%** of the region’s total Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

## THE CHALLENGE

The Metro Vancouver region is experiencing a critical shortage of industrial land. Continued population and employment growth in a constrained geography have contributed to the challenges facing Metro Vancouver’s industrial land supply. With strong demand for industrial space, many industrial businesses are finding it increasingly difficult to find suitable space to operate in this region.

The main challenges facing Metro Vancouver’s industrial lands are:

1. A Constrained Land Supply
2. Pressures on Industrial Lands
3. Site and Adjacency Issues
4. A Complex Jurisdictional Environment

## VISION

The Regional Industrial Lands Strategy, approved by the Metro Vancouver Board on July 3, 2020, seeks to:

*Ensure sufficient industrial lands to meet the needs of a growing and evolving regional economy to the year 2050.*

## THE RESPONSE

In response to the challenges facing industrial lands and the interests of stakeholders in the region, Metro Vancouver, with the support of the Industrial Lands Strategy Task Force, prepared the Regional Industrial Lands Strategy. The Strategy includes **34 recommendations** with **10 priority actions**, organized around **4 Big Moves**:

### Big Move 1 - Protect Remaining Industrial Lands

Given the ongoing and projected demand for industrial land in the region, it is imperative to protect the region's remaining industrial lands and curb the threats that undermine their use for industrial activities. This means lands for trade-oriented purposes as well as for small, local serving businesses; businesses that are responding to the changing nature of industry as well as more traditional industrial activities.

### Big Move 3 - Bring the Existing Land Supply to Market & Address Site Issues

Certain parts of the vacant industrial land supply suffer from site-specific challenges, such as limited infrastructure support, environmental concerns, and under-sized parcels. Where vacant lands have not come to the market, local municipalities may benefit from the preparation of a bring-to-market strategy. Such a strategy would identify the issues that have prevented the development of the undeveloped or under-developed industrial land, while providing a roadmap to achieve the municipality's economic goals for its remaining industrial lands.

### Big Move 2 - Intensify and Optimize Industrial Lands

Given the region's constrained land base, it is critical to encourage the most efficient use of the remaining land supply for all types of industrial users, to remove barriers to the intensification of industrial land, and investigate opportunities to optimize the location of certain land uses over time.

### Big Move 4 - Ensure a Coordinated Approach

Improved cooperation and data tracking among governments and other agencies and organizations is necessary to ensure effective land management and accurate monitoring into the future. Coordination also guides future alignment of policy responses to issues as they arise across Metro Vancouver and southwestern British Columbia.

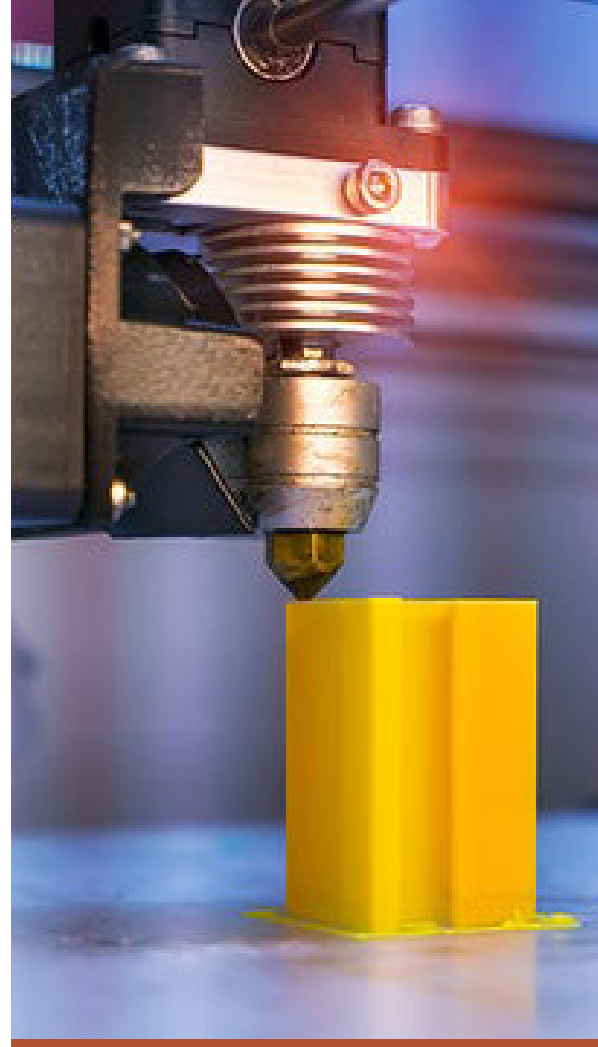


## PRIORITY ACTIONS

The Strategy's 10 priority actions for early implementation are:

- 1. Define 'Trade-Oriented' Lands** – These large sites associated with the transportation of goods to and through the region serve a national function and are crucial to the economy. A clear, consistent and collaboratively-developed definition will support their protection.
- 2. Undertake a Regional Land Use Assessment** – Proactively, in collaboration with municipalities, identify the 'best' locations for different types of land uses based on a set of criteria.
- 3. Strengthen Regional Policy** – In *Metro 2040*, the regional growth strategy, explore stronger policy measures such as higher voting thresholds to amend the regional Industrial land use designation.
- 4. Seek Greater Consistency in Local Government Zoning Definitions and Permitted Uses** – Collectively develop consistent definitions for permitted industrial uses on Industrial lands and seek implementation through municipal plans and bylaws.
- 5. Facilitate the Intensification / Densification of Industrial Forms Where Possible** – Promote multi-level industrial buildings or other development forms, by removing regulatory barriers like zoning height and density limits to encourage a more efficient use of the limited land supply; also consider mixed-use on Mixed Employment lands near rapid transit stations.
- 6. Prepare Bring-to-Market Strategies for Vacant or Under-Developed Industrial Lands** – Proactively address issues preventing the development of vacant or under-utilized industrial lands, which may have unique site challenges, such as servicing limitations, soil qualities, and ownership assembly.
- 7. Ensure Transportation Connectivity** – Critical for industrial businesses, work together to coordinate investment in the transportation network, implement the Regional Goods Movement Strategy, enhance the regional truck route network, and promote efficient container drayage and transit for industrial workers.
- 8. Coordinate Strategies for Economic Growth and Investment** – Profile the importance of industrial lands for the economy, and link with municipal economic development objectives and the Metro Vancouver Regional Economic Prosperity Service, to attract investment to the region.
- 9. Improve Data and Monitoring** – Update the Metro Vancouver Regional Industrial Lands Inventory to have a better shared understanding of the current land uses and supply, and conduct a Regional Employment Survey.
- 10. Develop a Framework for Coordination** – For cross-boundary economic and land use planning matters, work with the adjacent regional districts and the Province to advance coordinated infrastructure investments, land use planning, and economic development.

Taken together, the actions in the Regional Industrial Lands Strategy will help to ensure Metro Vancouver's industrial lands continue to provide an attractive and viable location for industrial businesses to locate, grow and prosper, while supporting the broader economy and community.





## INDUSTRIAL LANDS - FUNCTION AND DEFINITION

Industrial lands are crucial to supporting a prosperous and sustainable economy, and have important linkages with employment, transportation, and taxation matters in this region. Many activities on industrial lands provide for the day-to-day needs of Metro Vancouver's residents and businesses, and contribute to a diversified regional economy.

'Industrial' represents a wide spectrum of uses and intensities, ranging from large distribution and transportation lands, warehouses, manufacturing and processing facilities, to small local-serving production and suppliers, as well as new, emerging technology-driven businesses with integrated work spaces, which all need different types of accommodations and locations to support their operations. Many regional jobs and businesses are also connected to national / international trade through the port and airport, which require industrial lands for the handling of goods.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Metro Vancouver would like to thank all participants who contributed to the development of the Regional Industrial Lands Strategy.

The Industrial Lands Strategy Task Force provided core input, direction and guidance. Representatives included:

**Appointed elected officials from Metro Vancouver**  
**BC Ministry of Jobs, Trade and Technology**  
**Port of Vancouver**  
**TransLink**  
**BC Chamber of Commerce**  
**Agricultural Land Commission**  
**Urban Development Institute**  
**Beedie Group**  
**Value Property Group**

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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