

The False Creek Flats has long been home to goods movement and city-serving activities, particularly rail in its central and eastern areas. There are approximately 95 acres of land in the Flats dedicated to rail use, primarily to serve the Port of Vancouver and passenger rail services. Future planning of the False Creek Flats must take into account the growing needs for freight and passenger rail traffic requirements.



The Port anticipates significant growth in goods movement in the next 15-20 years, particularly containerized goods which are expected to double. With rail being twelve times more efficient than trucks in terms of fuel consumption, growth in movement of goods by rail furthers the vision for a more sustainable city.

Rail companies have already responded to considerable growth in demand at the Port but rail capacity limitations are emerging which may constrain future economic growth. One of the challenges faced by rail providers and the Port is to secure backup land for efficient port and rail operations at a price that is affordable. This is a significant challenge as areas urbanize.



The Flats rail yards are also the location of Pacific Central Station and VIA Rail's passenger rail equipment maintenance facility. Pacific Central Station serves the growing passenger rail market for VIA, Amtrak, and Rocky Mountaineer Ralltours. Amtrak currently operates 2 trains per day with plans to expand to 8 trains per day. Rocky Mountaineer Rail Tours have already expanded their operations and are opening a new rail facility near Home Depot.

The current level of 26 passenger trains per week could increase to as much as 70 trains per week. The highest level of activity will likely require the existing Pacific Central Station and VIA Rail yard facilities to expand. This would create a unique opportunity to create a great passenger rail transportation hub.

The Lower Mainland Rail Infrastructure Study (December 2004) recommended that the rail network and operational requirements in the False Creek Flats be more definitively determined. While not all of the remaining industrial lands in the False Creek Flats will be needed for supporting rail or Port needs, it is important nevertheless to carry out detailed planning for rail service requirements before releasing any significant parcels of land to alternative use. In addition, when determining what land uses adjacent to rail are most appropriate, the vibration and noise impacts of a 24 hour, 7 day a week rail operation will need to be seriously considered.



False Creek
the Flats

RAILWAY LANDS



CITY OF VANCOUVER