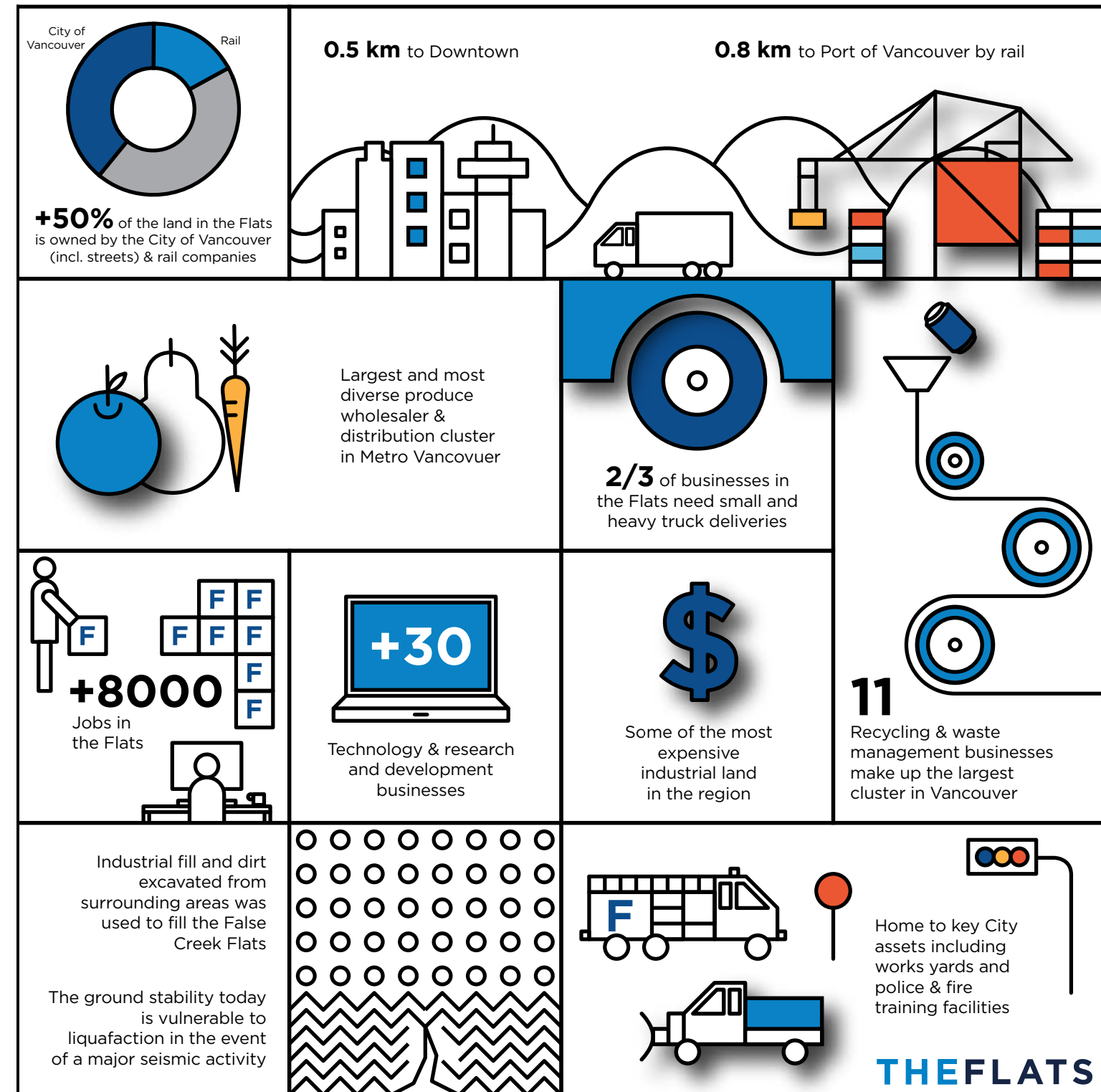
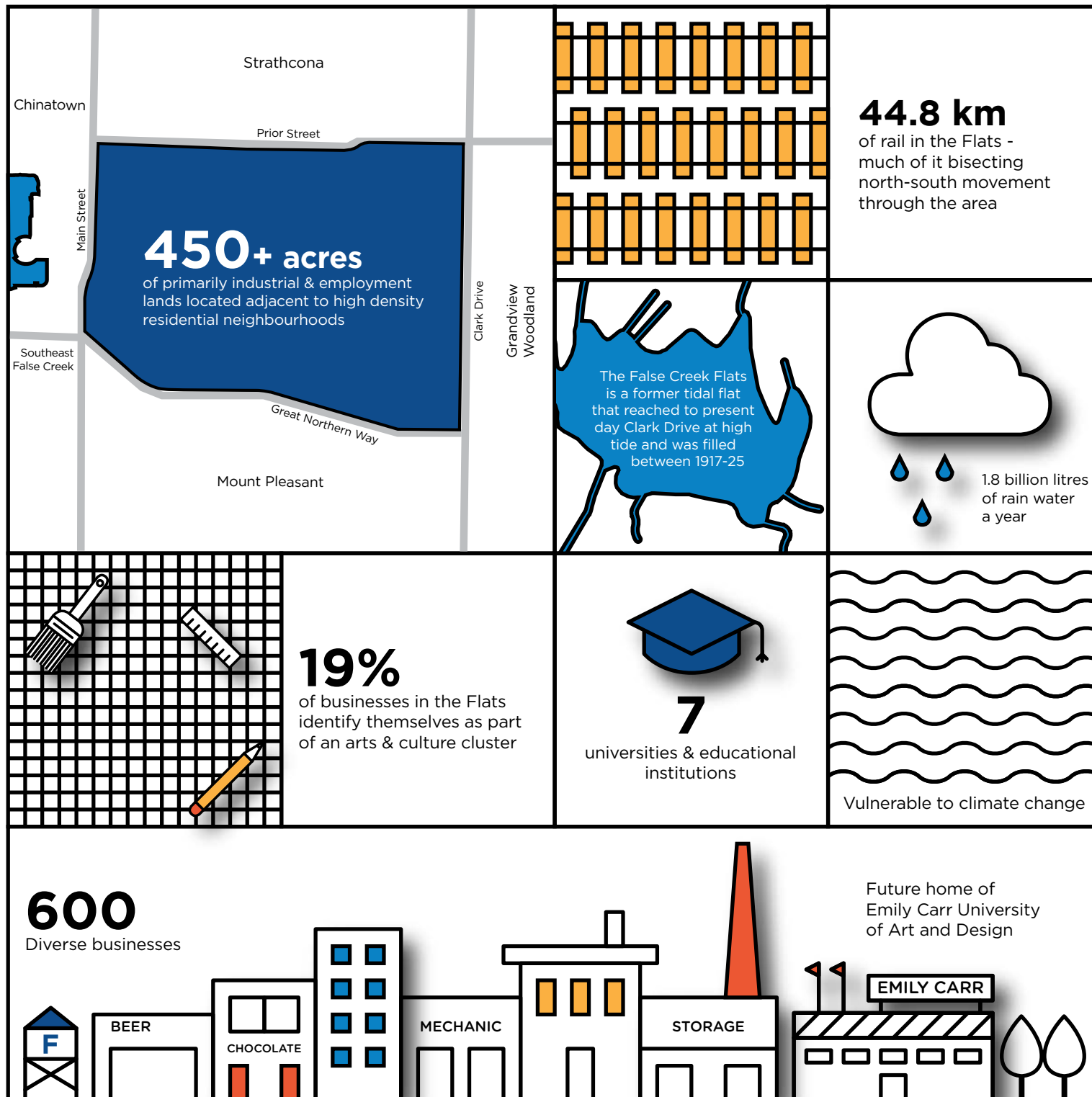
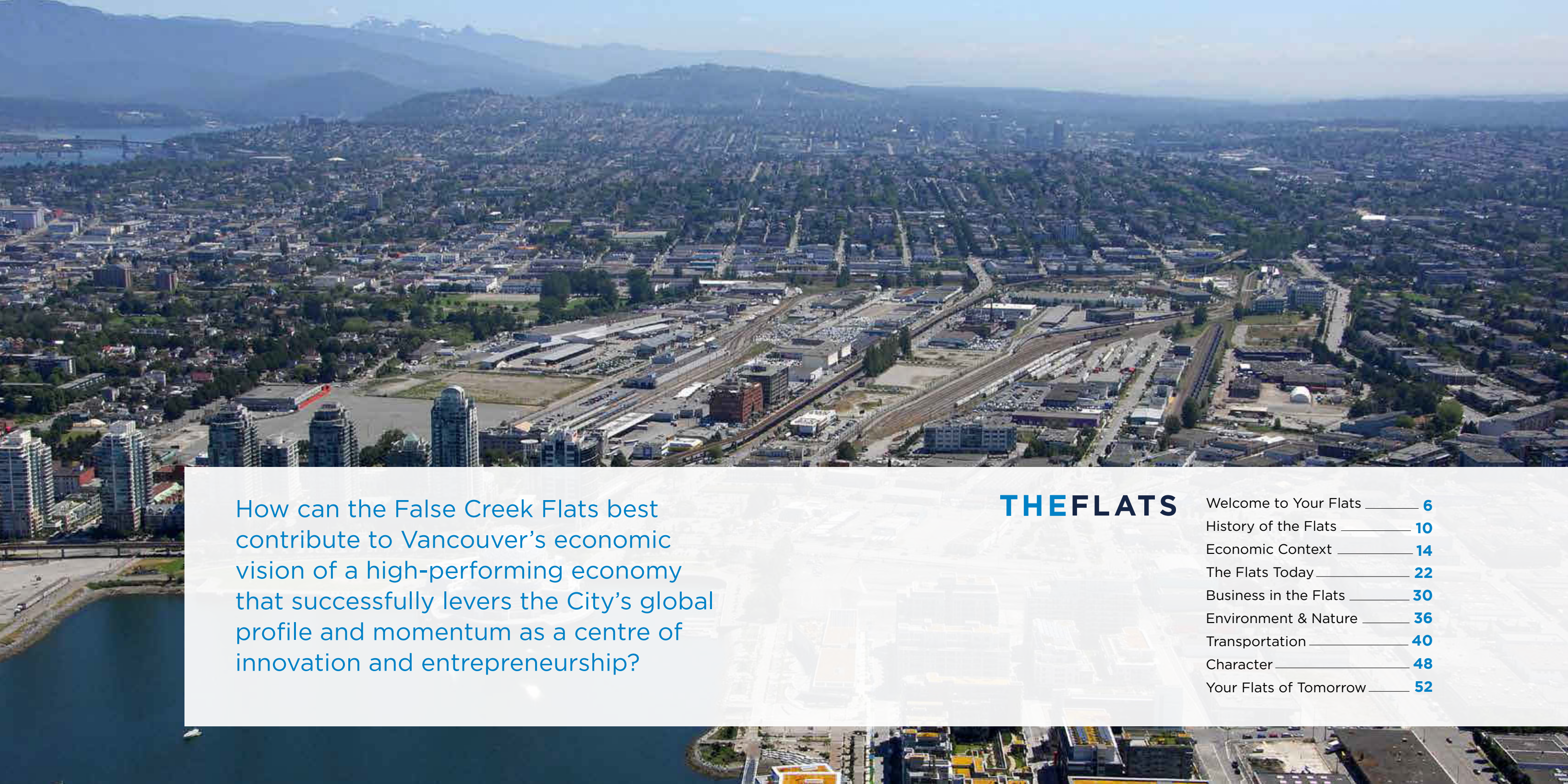


THE FLATS

Area Profile: An Overview of Your False Creek Flats





How can the False Creek Flats best contribute to Vancouver’s economic vision of a high-performing economy that successfully levers the City’s global profile and momentum as a centre of innovation and entrepreneurship?

THE FLATS

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The City of Vancouver is undertaking a planning process to guide the future of the False Creek Flats. Sign up today and help shape the future of this area of our city.

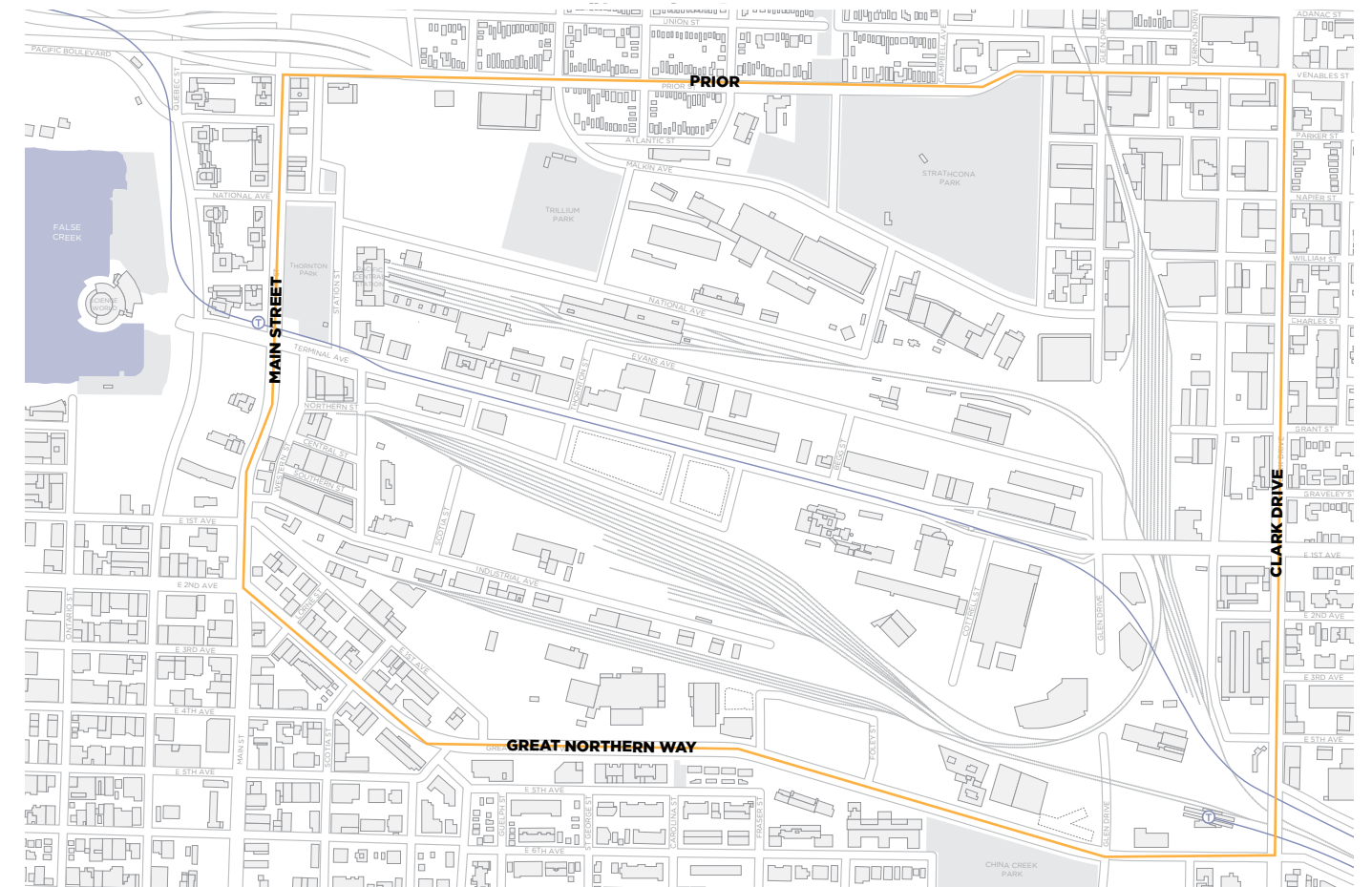


WELCOME TO YOUR FLATS!

INTRODUCTION

The False Creek Flats (figure 1) holds a significant economic position within the city of Vancouver and its region. Comprised of over 450 acres of primarily employment land, located less than a kilometer to both downtown and the port, the Flats are home to roughly 8,000 employees and over 600 businesses in diverse and thriving sectors of the local economy.

While recent years have seen a number of exciting new developments and announcements for the area, it has the potential for a more substantial and thriving economic future within our city. Perceived by most Vancouverites as a blank space in their mental map of our city, the area today lacks the care, linkages and public places that so often define the rest of Vancouver.





PROCESS

Over the next year and a half, the City of Vancouver and the Vancouver Economic Commission will work together with you to develop a plan for this unique economic neighbourhood within our city. The goal of this plan will be to develop a clear but flexible framework that guides change and development in a way that allows the False Creek Flats to flourish as a more productive, sustainable and integrated area of our city with a focus on an innovative green economy. The plan will consider both long-range and short-term ideas that build on the special assets and opportunities in the area while also delivering on the broader objectives established for Vancouver.

This document walks you through the history of the area, its ecological significance, the economic role today, the policy framework that guides growth, and the transportation patterns that have defined development to date in the Flats. Together, this information is intended to provide a starting place for dialogue about the future of the False Creek Flats.

Sign up today at vancouver.ca/falsecreekflats to ensure that you do not miss any opportunities to help us shape the future of your Flats!

WE ARE HERE

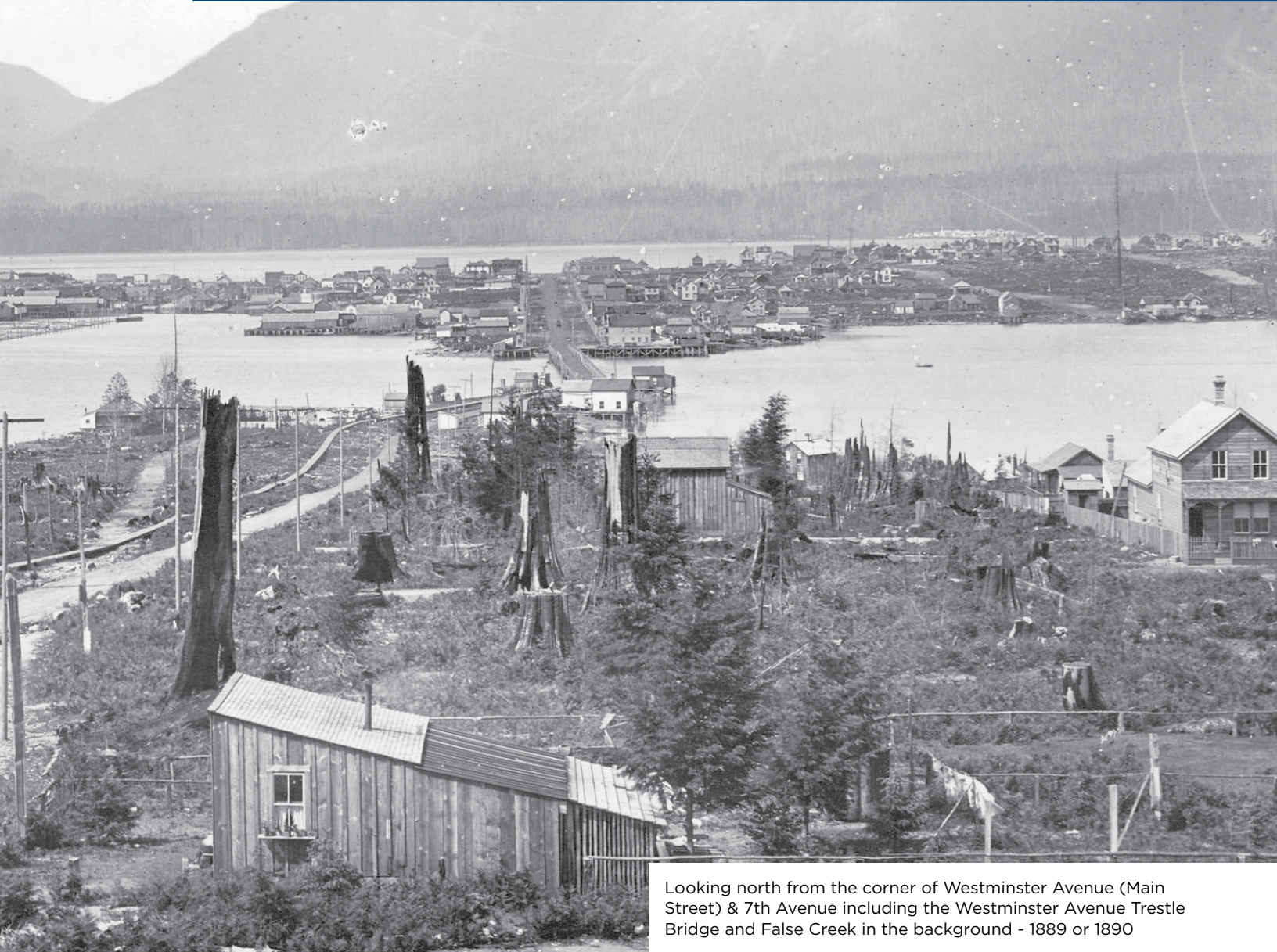


PHASE 01 FRAMEWORK & PRINCIPLES	PHASE 02 EMERGING DIRECTIONS	PHASE 03 DRAFT DIRECTIONS	PHASE 04 FINALIZE PLAN
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The Flats Planning Process
Launch Event - 2015

In 1915, the filling in of the eastern end of False Creek began for the creation of two new rail terminals, setting the stage for the area's industrial future



Looking north from the corner of Westminister Avenue (Main Street) & 7th Avenue including the Westminister Avenue Trestle Bridge and False Creek in the background - 1889 or 1890

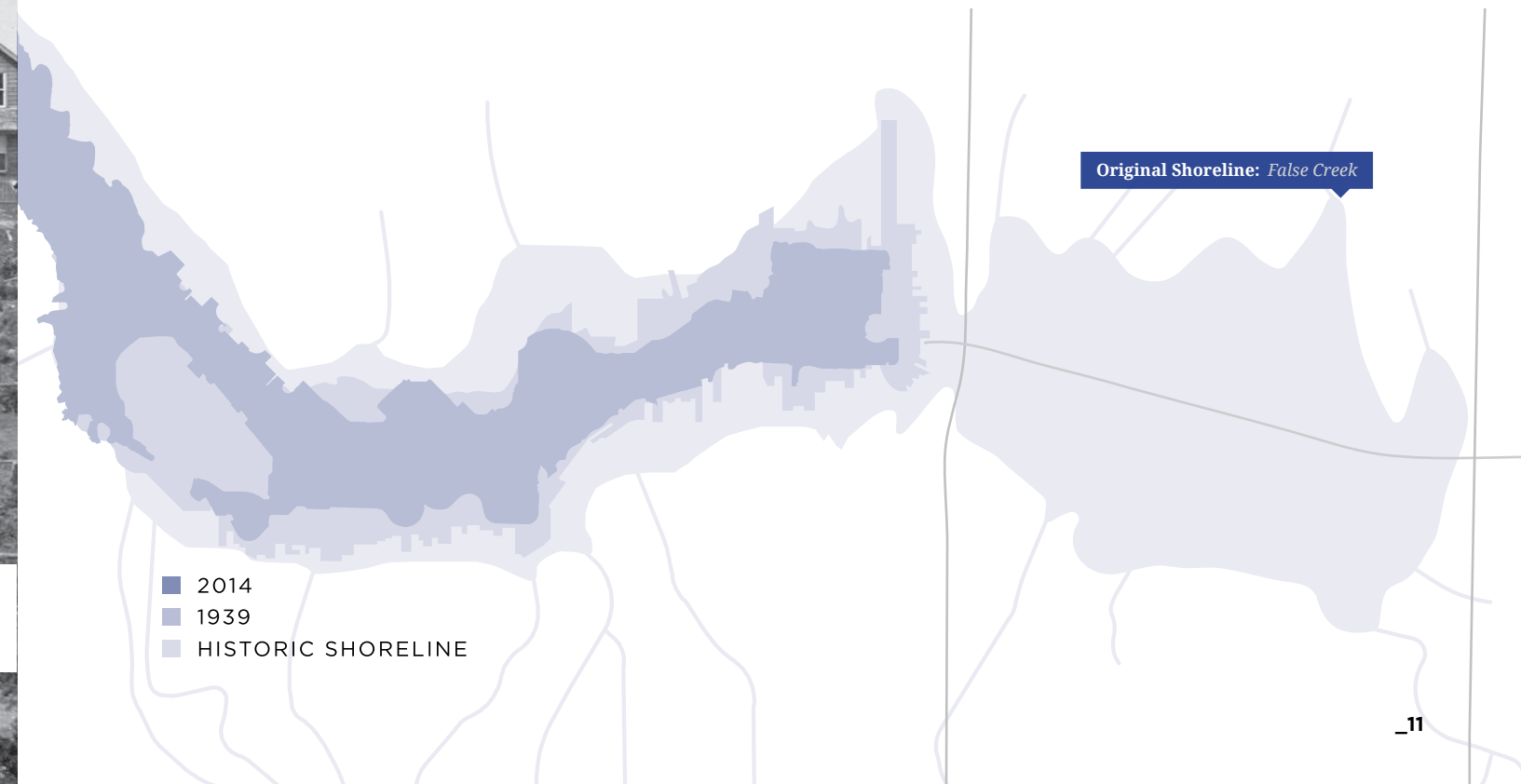
HISTORY OF THE FLATS

WHAT ONCE WAS WATER

An area long defined by transportation and commerce, the present day False Creek Flats was a muddy tidal flat on the eastern end of False Creek until the early 20th century. The rich variation of the natural features, combined with the various streams cutting down the southern boundary of the area, provided diverse and abundant resources for the First Nations people of the area, including some of the largest salmon and trout runs in Vancouver.

As the industrial activity of Vancouver's resource economy filled in the downtown peninsula and the shores of False Creek, the City sought to accommodate further economic expansion and additional rail terminals. In 1913, at the

urging of a number of other rail companies, the City took a plebiscite to the people of Vancouver requesting support to fill the eastern end of False Creek. Following a favourable vote, the filling in of the Flats began in 1915 utilizing a variety of materials from nearby districts including landfill from development projects, scrap lumber and bricks from surrounding mills, and general industrial waste. By 1917, the Flats were completely filled in, and by 1919 both the Great Northern Railway (GNR) and Canadian Northern Railway (later to merge with others to become the federally owned Canadian National) had established their new western terminals in the False Creek Flats, thereby laying the foundation for the area's industrial future.



The haphazard delineation of streets and properties in the False Creek Flats reflects the emphasis on the needs of rail companies operating in the area at the time, and stands in great contrast to the care and rigour that defines much of the early surveying for the rest of Vancouver. While the rail companies moved quickly to establish their new rail yards and distribution networks, it took much longer for the Flats to establish itself as a legitimate alternative to the more central business locations in the City. With the industrial lands in the more urban sites of Gastown and Yaletown nearing capacity, companies who still wanted to operate near the centre of the city began to look towards the larger vacant sites in the Flats to accommodate their spatial needs.

Shortly after the establishment of the Flats, the use and success of railways in North America experienced a period of substantial decline. The trend away from rail and towards the automobile had clearly begun by the early 1930s, prior to explosive growth during the personal automobile era between 1945 and 1964. The remaining years of the 20th century saw continued decline for rail, leading the City to eventually develop a new structure plan and policies to guide the growth in the area that anticipated the removal of all of the east-west freight rail yards.

After years of decline, the last decade has seen a revival of rail as a preferred mode for moving goods and has led to a renewed commitment to the long-term presence of rail in the False Creek Flats. Rail is not only a far more efficient mode of moving goods long distances, it also reduces truck traffic on our streets - every container that moves through the Flats on a train, is one less container on our already congested truck routes. This plan will explore opportunities to achieve the desired connections for rail, while recognizing the long-term presence of rail transportation in the False Creek Flats.



Rail dominated Flats - 1956
(Bill Dunnett, Vancouver Sun)

As Vancouver's downtown peninsula transformed into a livable mixed-use neighbourhood many businesses relocated to nearby areas like the Flats



ECONOMIC CONTEXT

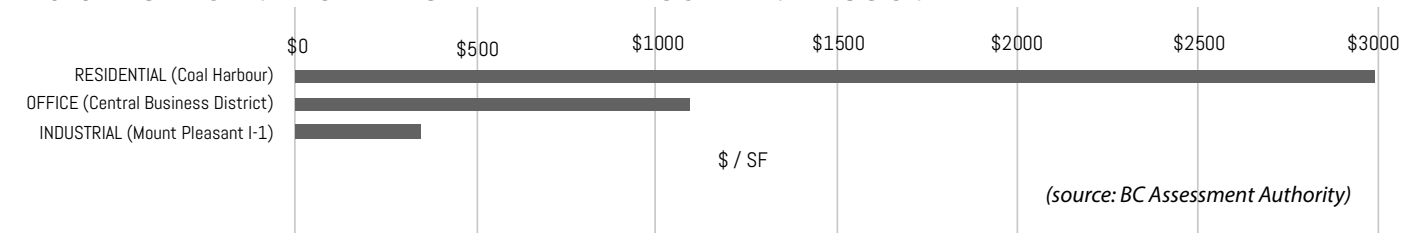
LOSS OF EMPLOYMENT LANDS

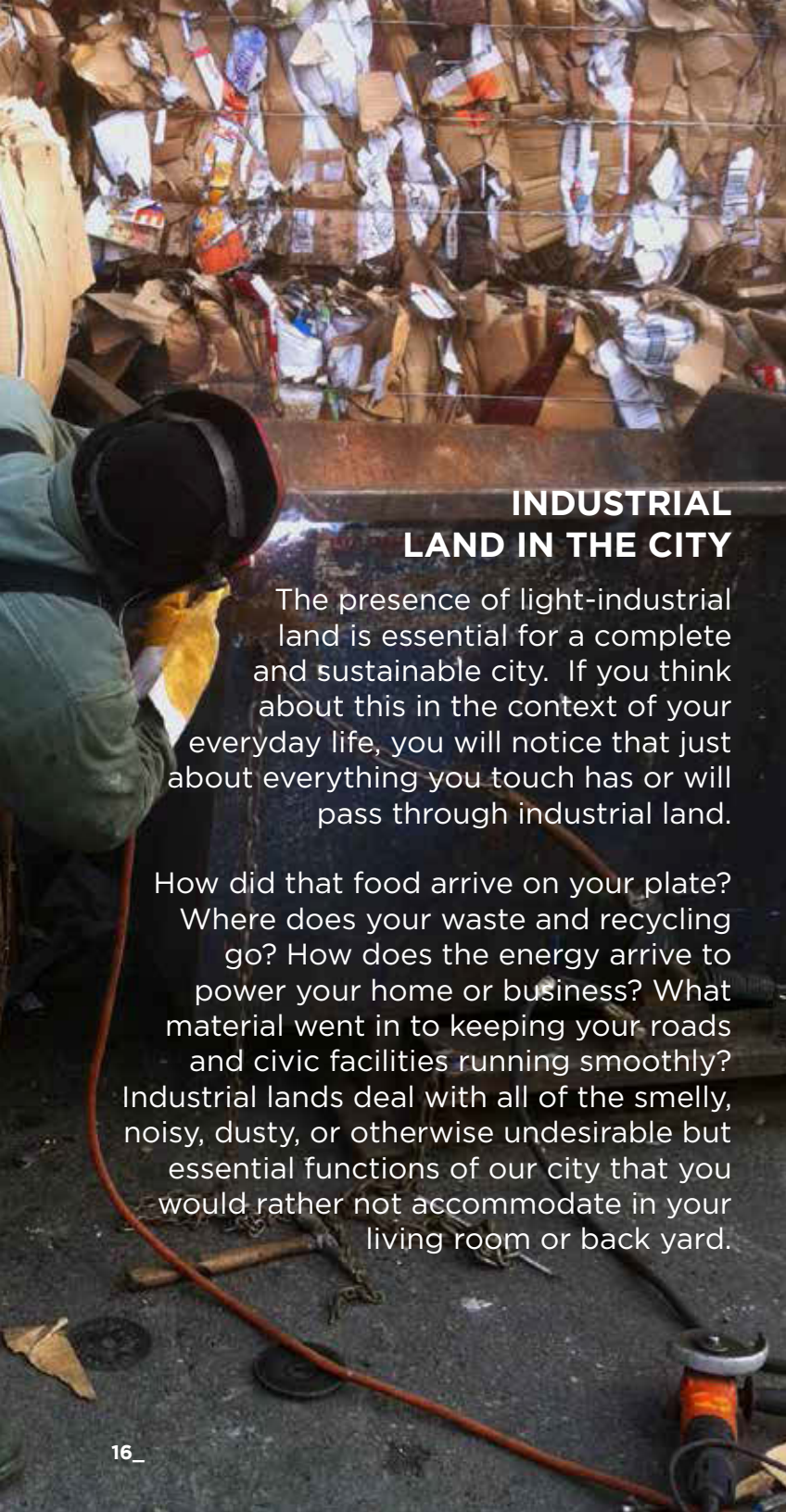
In less than a generation, nearly all of Vancouver's inner-city industrial lands have made way for a highly-livable, widely celebrated, mixed-use residential landscape in and around the city's downtown peninsula. As a result of this remarkable success, the erosion of the industrial and employment land supply and the pressures of speculation have made the remaining available land some of most expensive in North America.

More recently, a number of studies have confirmed the importance of retaining sufficient land for employment activities and the importance of these lands for the future of our city and its economy. As it stands today, only 10% of land in Vancouver prohibits residential development, yet these areas are home to roughly half of all of our jobs. Without strong policy, these lands would quickly disappear as the discrepancy in land values leaves our employment lands worth only a fraction of our residential districts. Exploring the entire spectrum of land values in Vancouver highlights a spread of nearly 100 times the assessed value between the \$35 per square foot in the M2 industrial lands along the Fraser River, as compared to the roughly \$3,000 per square foot in Coal Harbour (a former industrial/rail yard).

While our ability to provide sufficient office capacity is always a concern, the loss of our limited industrial land is arguably more problematic in our pursuit of a complete, healthy, and sustainable city. These lands allow for the operation of 24-hour a day businesses and the creation of noise, light, and smells, which are generally perceived as incompatible with residential areas of the city. But while we need land for these uses, it is important to point out that not all industrial land is the same and it need not accommodate the full spectrum of a region's industrial needs. Throughout Metro Vancouver there are over 28,000 acres of industrial land. When looked at comprehensively, these lands are intended to accommodate all of the present and future industrial and logistics needs of the regional economy. Within these diverse areas, local policy needs to recognize the local competitive advantages, the comparative infrastructure, the regional and international connectivity, as well as the industrial land values to best define the optimum future for the various segments of our region's industrial land base.

2015 HIGHEST VALUE BY GENERALIZED USE IN VANCOUVER



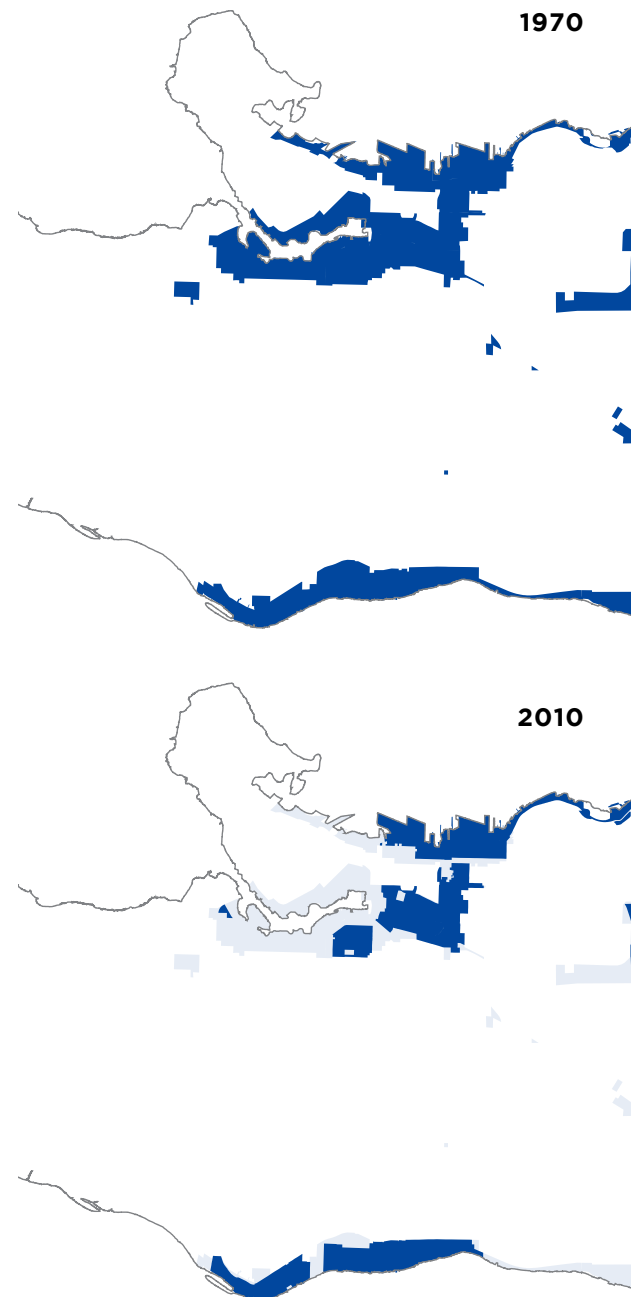


INDUSTRIAL LAND IN THE CITY

The presence of light-industrial land is essential for a complete and sustainable city. If you think about this in the context of your everyday life, you will notice that just about everything you touch has or will pass through industrial land.

How did that food arrive on your plate? Where does your waste and recycling go? How does the energy arrive to power your home or business? What material went in to keeping your roads and civic facilities running smoothly? Industrial lands deal with all of the smelly, noisy, dusty, or otherwise undesirable but essential functions of our city that you would rather not accommodate in your living room or back yard.

INDUSTRIAL LAND IN VANCOUVER



CHANGING NATURE OF THE FLATS

Businesses make location decisions based upon the conditions of the day. For the False Creek Flats, those factors have shifted greatly over the past 100 years since it was first filled in and the Flats sat on the economic periphery of our city. During those early days, the Flats provided a new location with a substantial supply of large swaths of more affordable and readily available land. Low land prices combined with direct connections to the new rail lines and the port created a logical location for warehousing and distribution companies that were looking towards regional and national markets.

Fast-forward one hundred years and the False Creek Flats today sits squarely within our metropolitan core and as such is home to some of the most expensive industrial land in the region (second only to the neighbouring Mount Pleasant industrial district). Technological advances in shipping and logistics have also had a major impact on the locational requirements of businesses. The need to be near the port and have direct access to rail has become far less relevant for new businesses locating in the Flats today. While nearly one in five (19 per cent) older businesses (>10 years) saw being close to the port as essential or important, very few new businesses (<5 years) perceived this proximity as essential or important

(2 per cent). Not surprisingly, the locational factor which appears to be driving demand for land in the Flats today is its proximity to downtown markets, with nearly three-quarters (74 per cent) of new businesses identifying this proximity as essential or important compared to less than half (48 per cent) of businesses that have been at their current location more than 10 years.

While the False Creek Flats remains home to many older businesses which serve the region, the extremely high land values, limited supply of large-scale vacant properties, and recent investments in infrastructure to support logistics industries in other regional locations, make the False Creek Flats less attractive to new distribution and logistics businesses. Instead, it would appear that the False Creek Flats will increasingly become the target of more intensive and local-serving industries. Our challenge through this planning process will be to develop policy that continues to support long-standing businesses, while recognizing the need to create the places, infrastructure and policies to unlock the area's economic, environmental and social potential in our pursuit of a complete and livable city.



New logistics and warehousing businesses often seek out more affordable, readily available spaces with better connections to the regional highway system. While it is unlikely that the Flats will ever again attract these types of land-intensive users, how do we harness the unique competitive advantage of these centrally located industrial lands?



PROXIMITY TO THE PORT

Port Metro Vancouver currently moves \$75 billion worth of goods each year to approximately 160 countries, supporting nearly 20,000 jobs in the region and around 130,000 jobs across Canada. By 2030, it is anticipated that container volumes will increase by 70% for the two terminals located within the City's boundaries. Without viable rail options for moving these goods, additional truck traffic on city streets will be inevitable.

Recognizing the importance of the port for the local, regional and national economies, the federal government has led the charge in the investment of over \$1 billion through the Asia-Pacific Gateway and Corridors Initiative to maximize the economic output of this international gateway. As Canada's premier Asia-Pacific gateway, the Lower Mainland has received two-thirds of this funding (\$667 million) with nearly \$50 million allocated within the South Shore Trade Area along Burrard Inlet for projects including the Powell Street Overpass and Stewart Street Elevated Structure to improve operations and increase mobility.

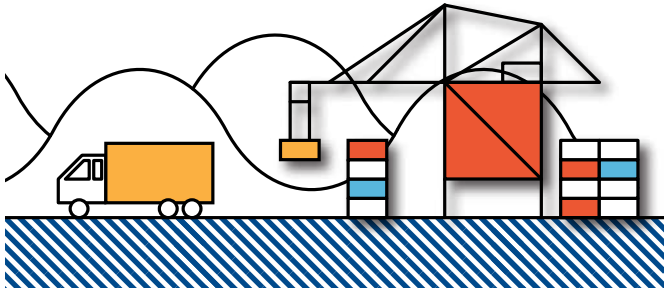
So while proximity to the port is less of a draw for area businesses, the need to address the conflicts between vehicles and rail, to ensure that we maximize the movement of rail, to minimize the impacts on our streets is a major consideration for this plan.

The False Creek Flats Railway Corridor Study (2008) developed a strategy for corridor grade separation of the Burrard Inlet railway line to improve efficiencies for rail operators as well as enhancing safety for all road users that intersect the rail lines. This study identified that a total of four road-over-rail grade separations are required in order to improve the appeal of the corridor to ensure its ability to be used more heavily for goods movements. Three of these grade separations exist at Terminal Avenue, East Hastings and the recently completed Powell Street Overpass. This plan will investigate the ideal location is for this fourth overpass structure (likely to be located somewhere between Prior Street and National Avenue).

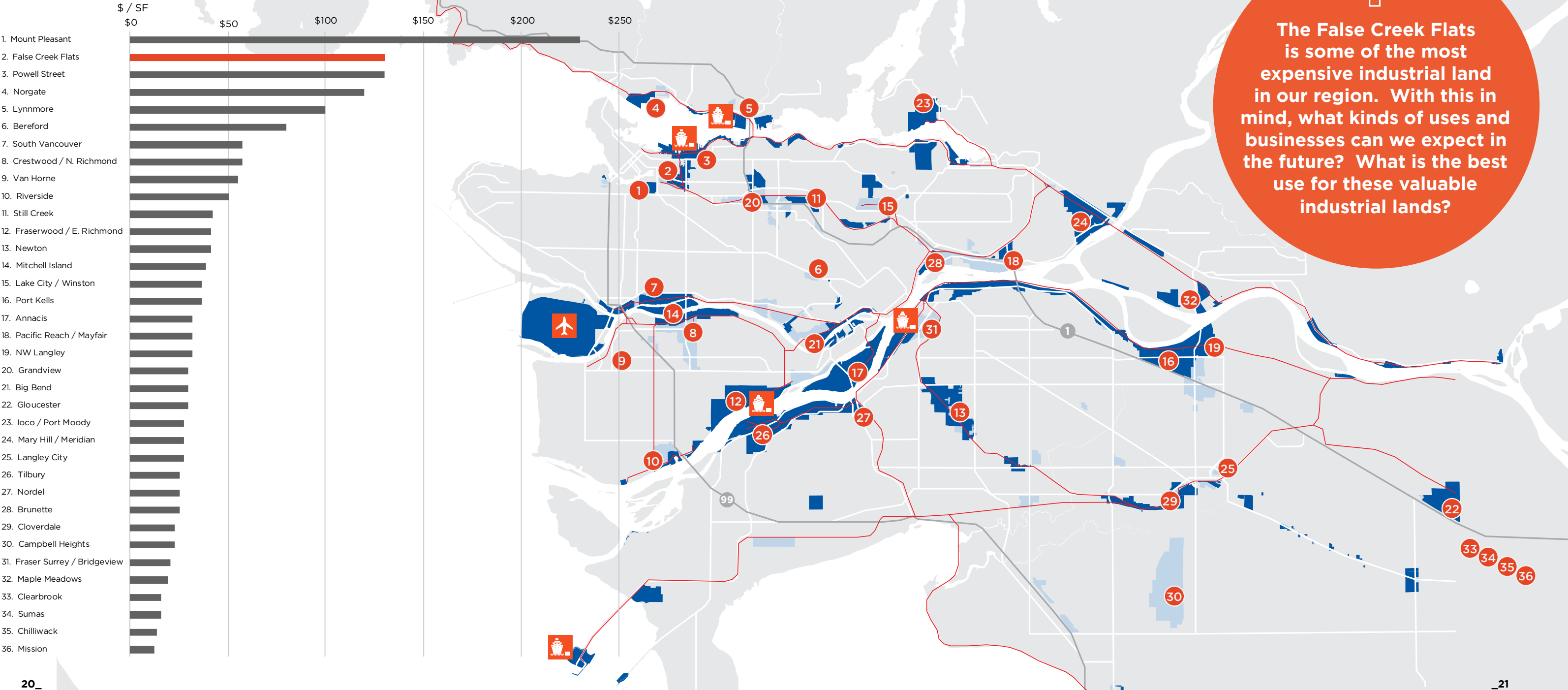


The Burrard Inlet Line, runs north-south through the Flats providing a viable link for Port growth

0.8 km to Port of Vancouver by rail



2014 Metro Vancouver & Fraser Valley Industrial Land Sale Prices (source CBRE)
High range of sale prices by area (per square foot)

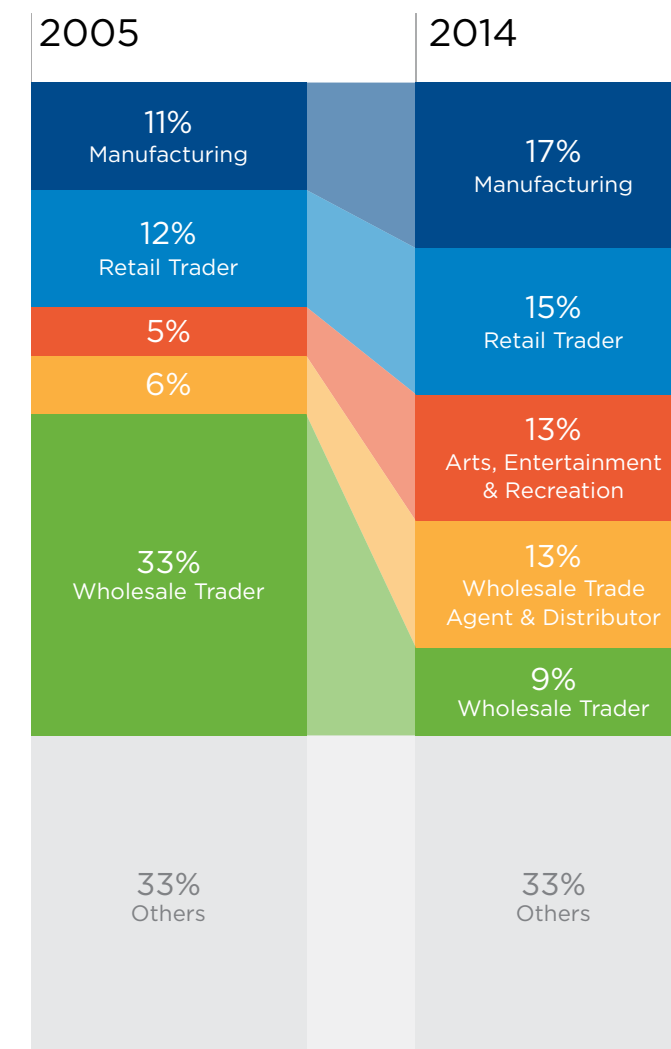


The False Creek Flats is some of the most expensive industrial land in our region. With this in mind, what kinds of uses and businesses can we expect in the future? What is the best use for these valuable industrial lands?

Home to over 600 businesses, the Flats today is a mix of differing employment zones including industrial, institutional and office uses

THE FLATS TODAY

Top 5 Industry Sectors

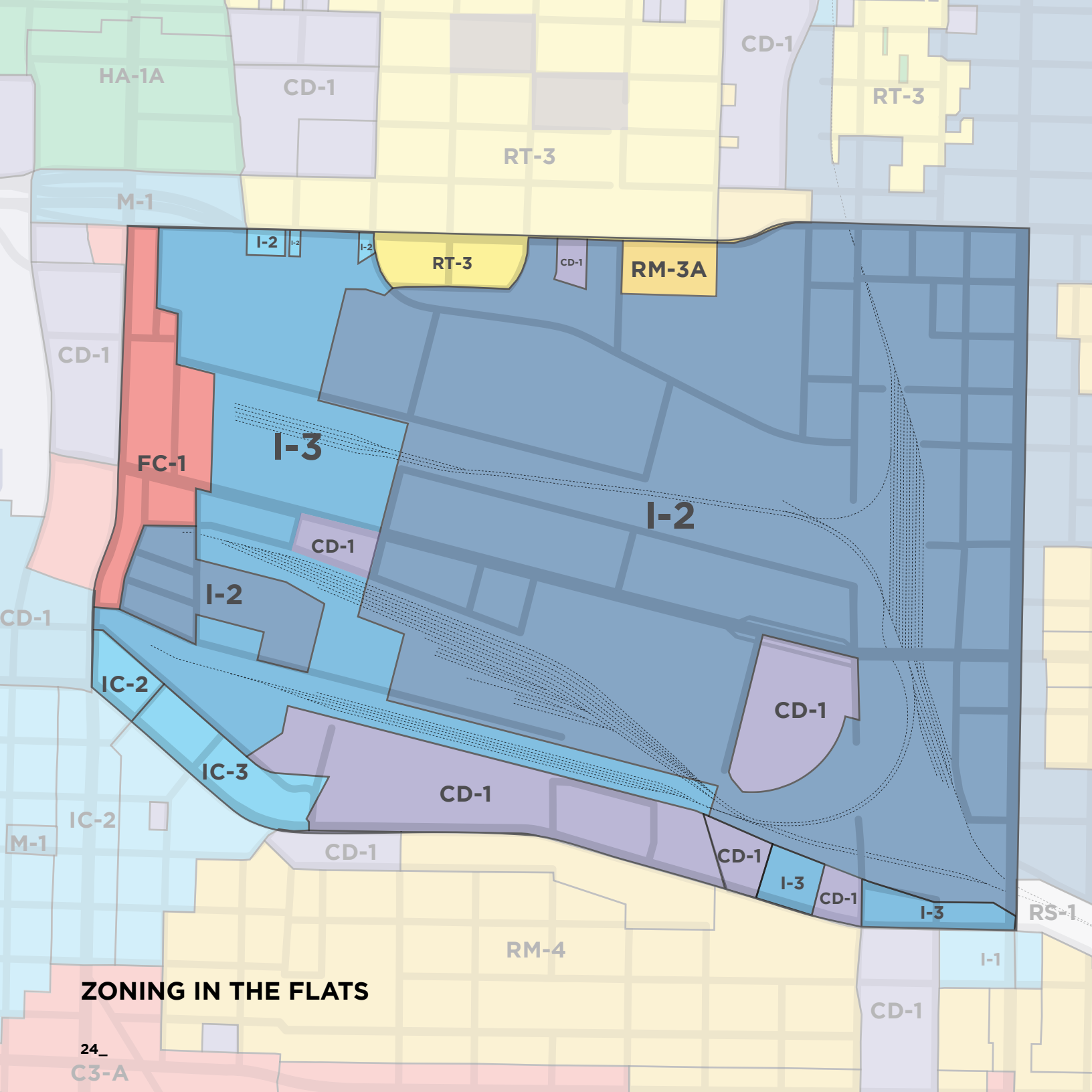


The Flats today is home to over 600 businesses that span a wide variety of sectors from logistics to arts and culture; food to software; and construction to clean technology. A large portion of these operate as suppliers and support industries for front-of-house retail and service businesses located in Vancouver's urban core, benefiting from the area's close proximity to their customers and business network.

The previously dominant wholesaling and warehouse businesses in the area have significantly reduced over the last decade, going from one-third of area businesses in 2005 to only 9% today. While the top five industries remain consistent over the same period, today we see a more even distribution among those industries, with sizable increases in arts, entertainment and recreation; manufacturing; retail traders; and wholesale trade agents.

Not surprisingly, the large reduction in wholesale traders in the Flats since 2005 has corresponded with a shift away from businesses occupying larger spaces over 20,000 square feet (from 18% in 2005 to 10% today) towards an increase in businesses occupying mid-sized spaces between 2,500 - 10,000 square feet (from 19% to 31%).

When we look closer at the businesses in the Flats, distinct characteristics emerge for the two sides of the study area. The types of businesses that occupy the two sides of the Flats are in many ways influenced by regulations, zoning and policy that currently directs the growth in the area.



ZONING IN THE FLATS

1995 INDUSTRIAL LAND STRATEGY

- Preserve Flats for primarily city-serving industrial, transportation and service needs.

1996 CONCEPT PLAN FOR FALSE CREEK FLATS

- Retained city-serving light industrial uses in the eastern Flats (I-2), while introducing high-tech office uses in west I-3 (1999).

2005 METRO CORE JOBS & ECONOMY LAND USE PLAN

- Reconfirmed the need for the False Creek Flats as a jobs and economy area
- Retained I-2 as industrial, while signaling a need to explore intensified employment opportunities near transit

2009 REZONING POLICY FOR ADDITIONAL GENERAL OFFICE

- Following on Metro Core Plan, enabled the conversion of the 'high-tech office' use in the zoning to 'general office' uses.

2011 REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY

- Much of the Flats was protected as either 'industrial' or 'mixed employment' zones, thereby prohibiting the introduction of residential.

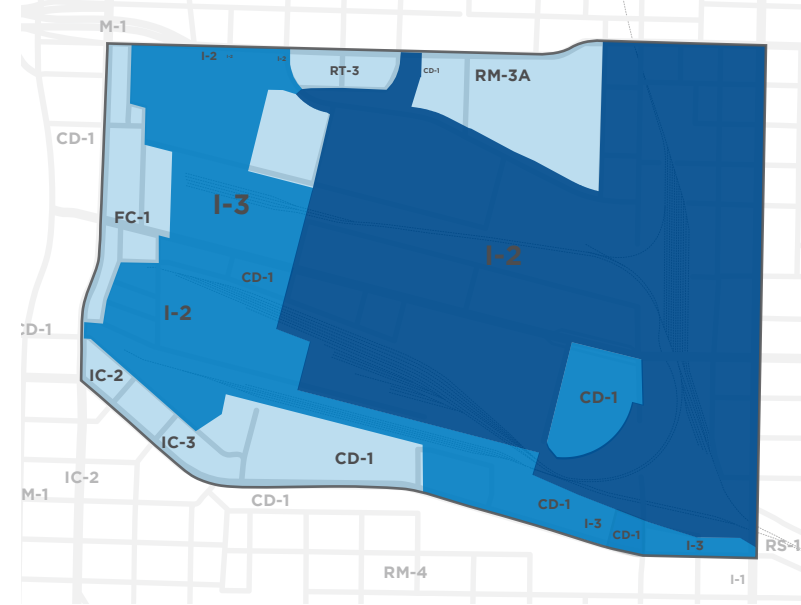
REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY DEFINITIONS

- **'INDUSTRIAL':**
Industrial areas are primarily intended for heavy and light industrial activities, and appropriate accessory uses. Limited commercial uses that support industrial activities are appropriate. Residential uses are not intended.
- **'MIXED EMPLOYMENT':**
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 (FTDAs)... residential uses are not intended in Mixed Employment areas.

ZONING & POLICY

From a zoning perspective, the False Creek Flats covers a broad-spectrum of land-use designations across eight different zoning districts. The better-served, more transit oriented western and southern edges of the area are guided by policy that encourages intensified employment opportunities, while the eastern half has been earmarked for industrial retention. As it sits in regional policy, over half of the area (55 per cent) is identified as industrial, a quarter (25 per cent) mixed-employment (office and industrial), and a fifth (20 per cent) general urban (including some large parks, residential and institutional zoning along the periphery). These policy directions and the area's notable physical barriers, creates two distinct employment areas in the Flats : the generally 'mixed-employment' I-3 western half of the area and the predominately 'industrial' I-2 eastern half.

REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY DESIGNATION



- General Urban
- Mixed Employment
- Industrial

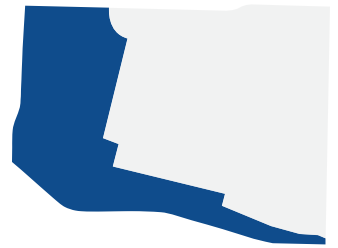
TWO SIDES OF THE FLATS

When looking at the two halves of the Flats, the western half represents a more diversified ‘main business activities’. Nearly half (46 per cent) of eastern Flats business require weekly large truck access for the movement of goods in and out of their operations, compared to a little over one-third (35 per cent) of western Flats businesses. While less reliant on large shipments, the western businesses appear to receive smaller, more frequent deliveries with one-third (32 per cent) seeing more than 50 trucks a week, compared to only 17 per cent of the businesses in the eastern Flats. Large truck access was seen as essential or important to 69 per cent of eastern businesses, compared to only 47 per cent of western business, while proximity to major highways was cited as essential or important to 47 per cent of eastern businesses (compared to 24 per cent in the west). Access to transit and SkyTrain, while important to most businesses in the Flats, was not surprisingly seen as essential or important to more of the businesses in the better-served western side of the Flats (70 per cent compared to 56 per cent). As well, active commuting options and bike-to-work facilities were seen as important or essential to 47 per cent of western businesses, compared to only 28 per cent of businesses in the eastern Flats.

While businesses throughout the area seem to desire industrial characteristics for their buildings and operations, the eastern businesses place more of an emphasis on these, with 60 per cent seeing the presence of loading bays as essential (compared to 30 per cent in the west), and 41% requiring high ceilings (compared to 26 per cent in the west).

The turnover of businesses in the western half of the study area has been a little bit more pronounced. Since the last survey was conducted in 2005, two-thirds of western businesses have moved to their current location, compared to less than half (42 per cent) in the east. While the majority of all goods and services sold by businesses in the Flats are sold locally (53 per cent within Vancouver, and three-quarters within the region), the western Flats businesses are more oriented to customers in both downtown (33 per cent of sales, compared to 22 per cent in the east) and internationally (12 per cent compared to 3 per cent). Being clustered in close proximity to competing businesses is more evident in the eastern Flats, where 30 per cent of business cited this proximity as essential or important, compared to only 8 per cent of businesses in the east.

WESTERN FLATS



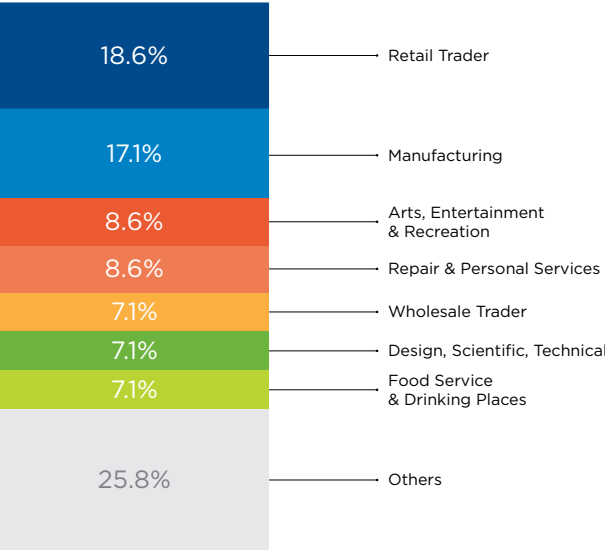
- **Higher turnover** (2/3 of western businesses have been at current location <10 yrs, compared to 42% in east)
- **Sales and services more oriented towards downtown** (33% compared to 22% in the east) **and international** (12% compared to 3%) **clients**
- **Less reliant on large trucks, but more frequent deliveries** (1/3 of businesses receive > 50 trucks/week, compared to only 17% in eastern Flats)
- **Access to transit and SkyTrain seen as essential or important to most** (70% compared to 56% in eastern Flats)
- **Active commuting seen as important or essential to nearly half** (47%, compared to 28% in the eastern Flats)
- **Presence of restaurants and cafes was seen as essential or important to more than half, with over 60% dissatisfied with the current situation.**

EASTERN FLATS



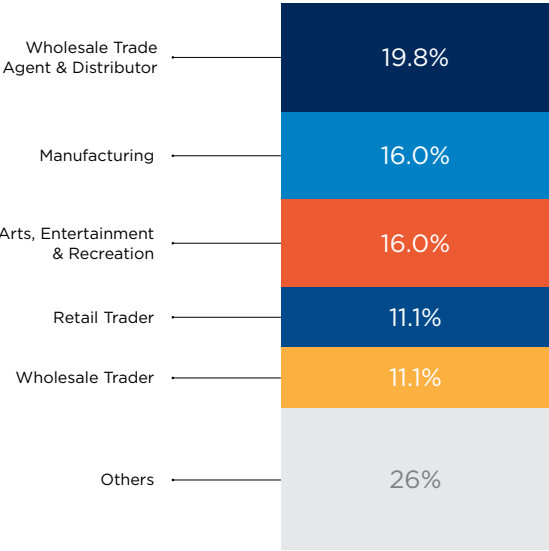
- **Access for large truck is essential or important to most** (69% of eastern businesses, compared to only 47% of western business)
- **Nearly half require weekly access for large trucks** (46% compared to 35% in western Flats)
- **Proximity to major highways cited as essential or important to nearly half** (47% of eastern businesses compared to 24% in the west)
- **More of an emphasis on traditional industrial building criteria:**
 - **Loading bays** (60% consider this essential, compared to 30% in the west)
 - **High Ceilings** (41% requiring high ceilings, compared to 26% in the west).
- **Benefit from proximity to competition** (30% see this clustering as essential or important, compared to only 8% of businesses in the west)

Western Flats



Main Business Activity

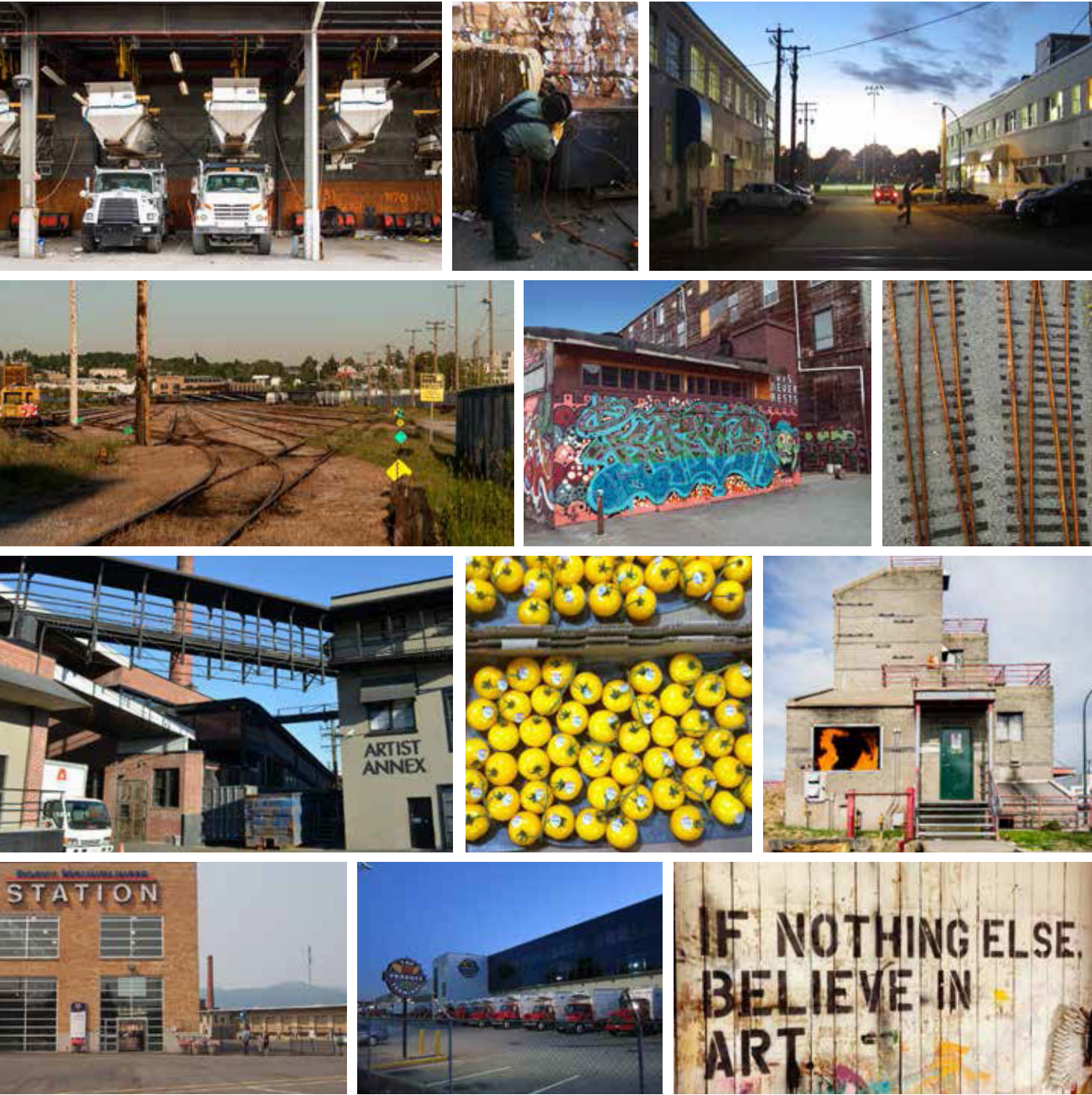
Eastern Flats



Western Flats



Eastern Flats



The False Creek Flats is home to a number of unique business clusters that benefit from their proximity to one another, as well as their customers downtown



BUSINESS IN THE FLATS

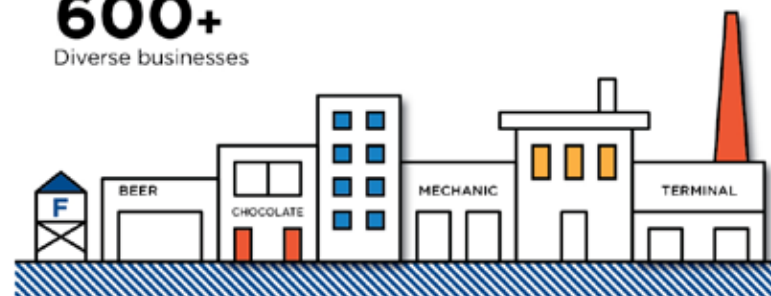
As land values increase, new technologies develop, and the nature of today's businesses evolves, a significant shift is beginning to be felt in the economic landscape of the Flats. Today's businesses are exploring innovative business models aimed at increasing efficiency and reducing waste, developing new products and services for solving both physical and social problems, and exploring innovative approaches to economic development at the grassroots level. Within the Flats, a number of significant economic clusters have emerged in the False Creek Flats, including in arts and culture, manufacturing, food, textiles, and building and construction. Smaller sub-areas show geographic concentrations in other economic sectors including automotive and transportation, clean technology, life science, waste management and digital communications.

BUSINESS CLUSTERS

Clusters form when complementary businesses locate in close proximity to one another. The area today is home to an increasing presence of strong clusters. These neighbouring businesses, with synergistic activities, tend to support one another, forming cohesive geographic and sector-based networks conducive to sharing resources, information, and infrastructures, while providing convenience to customers for a 'one-stop-shop' experience.

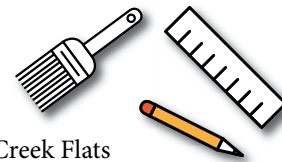
600+

Diverse businesses





ARTS & CULTURE



Nearly one in five businesses in the False Creek Flats identify as being a part of the arts and cultural sector of our economy. Already home to hundreds of artists ranging in scale from painting and photography to large-scale set design and public art creation, the Flats is alive with creativity and the back-of-house spine of our city's cultural economy. Arts production, theatre, dance, opera, new media, set production, festivals, film, design, exhibitions, galleries, special events – are all happening here. Vancouver's arts and cultural community heavily depends on the support services and production spaces that are housed in the Flats.

Art and culture helps our citizens to develop, learn, and participate in the life of our city. It attracts business, workers and tourists and boosts the local and regional economy. How can this plan help to ensure that arts & cultural production can continue to thrive, while looking for new opportunities to further strengthen cultural production in the False Creek Flats?

TECHNOLOGY, EDUCATION & INNOVATION

There are over 30 businesses in the Flats dedicated to developing innovative new products, services, or technologies, including businesses in the digital entertainment, life sciences, and clean technology sectors. These have the capacity to contribute to the future of the Flats not only through the development of new technologies, products, and services for improving our environments and our lives, but also through attracting similarly innovative businesses to an area of increasing intellectual capital.

With human capital and creativity driving innovation in the new economy, the False Creek Flats is well positioned to help spur future economic growth. There are currently eight different educational institutions in the area today, including the country's first Master of Digital Media program, a joint degree between four major institutions: BCIT, UBC, Emily Carr, and SFU. These schools are joined by a number of informal mentorship programs, including the Purple Thistle

Centre for Youth Arts & Activism, the Street Art Mentorship Society, and eatART and together are providing training for a broad spectrum of employees to help fuel economic growth throughout a variety of sectors of the economy.

HEALTH

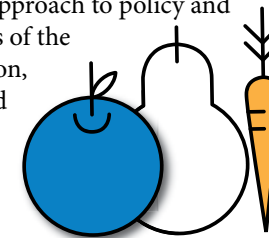
High-quality, accessible and inclusive health, social and community services are an important part of a healthy city for all. How can the relocation of St. Paul's Hospital to the False Creek Flats foster a state-of-the-art hub of innovative health services and an integrated neighbourhood-approach to the development of the hospital facilities and their operations?

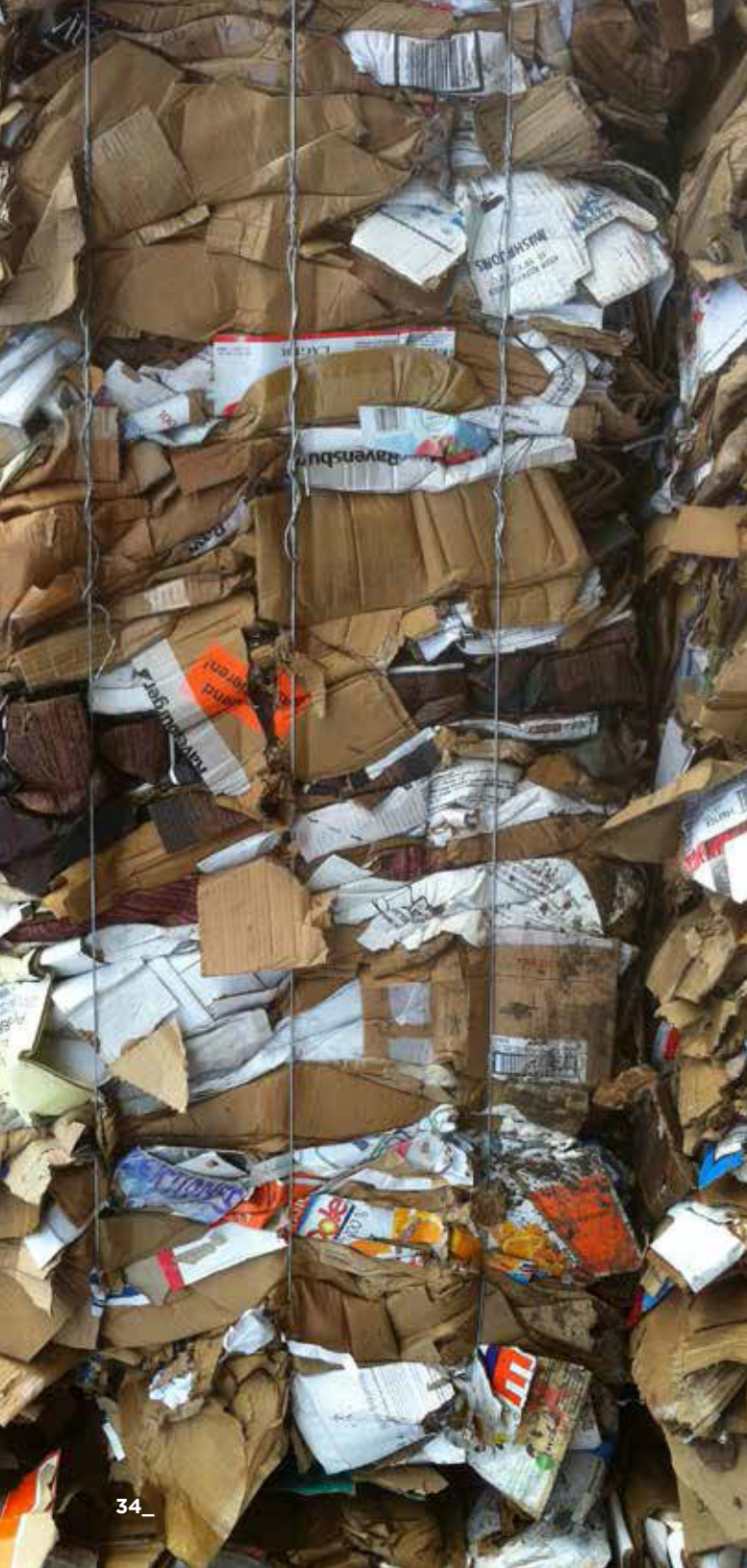
The new hospital can be a place for people to connect and collaborate with local organizations, service providers, social entrepreneurs, and other groups to bring greater social connections to the Flats and the surrounding neighbourhoods. Connected to this are the anticipated spin-off benefits for life science technologies and the development of innovative solutions to the health problems of the day. A number of existing health science businesses operate in the Flats today, with potential to easily connect to the Vancouver General Hospital campus with a future Broadway subway line.

FOOD

False Creek Flats is home to a number of individuals, non-profit organizations, and businesses that play a vital role in enhancing all aspects of the food system from seed to waste. By maximizing space for a range of uses, this area continues to evolve and become increasingly important for the city.

This results in a number of enhanced benefits in the Flats and beyond such as strengthening community connectedness, capacity-building, local economic development, and increased access to healthy food throughout the city. Vancouver takes a food system approach to policy and planning that involves all aspects of the food system, including production, processing and distribution, food access, and waste management.

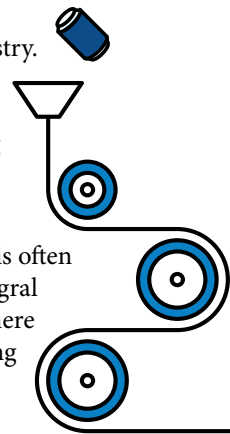




WASTE MANAGEMENT

The Greenest City Action Plan targets a reduction in solid waste going to the landfill by 50% from 2008. Achieving this target requires industrial land. As one of the last remaining industrial areas in the city, the Flats is an important location for potential upcycling, reuse, repair and recycling businesses. Light House, a local non-profit organization committed to advancing sustainability in the built environment, conducted a zero waste workshop with area businesses in July 2014. This dialogue spurred an unexpected conversation about the changing nature of the recycling industry. Rather than simply acting as waste ‘haulers,’ a number of Vancouver’s privately owned and operated waste collection businesses are moving into the space of becoming ‘zero waste solution providers.’

This process of keeping materials in circulation is often referred to as the circular economy and it is integral to eliminating waste from our landfills. Today there are 26 businesses in the Flats already contributing in a major way to Vancouver’s circular economy through the reuse, repair, resale, and recycling of materials.



‘BACK-OF-HOUSE’ CIVIC FACILITIES

The City of Vancouver is the largest land owner in the False Creek Flats. Including the roadways, parks, work yards, facilities and other properties, the City owns roughly 40% of the land in the Flats. These holdings include the National and Evans Work Yards, the Vancouver Fire and Rescue Training Centre, the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) Canine Unit, the VPD’s Tactical Training Facility and Evidence Lockup, the Animal Control Shelter, Fire Hall #1 and heavy-vehicle maintenance facility, as well as the City’s vehicle impound lot. All totaled, the City of Vancouver has 52.2 acres of institutional and other properties, 100 acres of streets, and 32.8 acres of parkland, making up a total of 185 acres.



With a history of industrial uses, on land that was filled in for rail, the Flats lacks a number of the environmental attributes so often celebrated elsewhere in Vancouver



Shoreline area of False Creek Flats - Pre-Fill, approx. 1904

ENVIRONMENT & NATURE

ENVIRONMENT & NATURE

While it has been nearly 100 years since the False Creek Flats were filled in, its history as a tidal flat and terminus for a number of local streams continues to register on the landscape. It's an area susceptible to ponding of rainwater during heavy rainstorms. Current climate science indicates that Vancouver is likely to see drier, hotter summers, more intense weather events involving wind, rain and snow, and the gradual rise of sea levels. Global climate changes create a number of challenges to be addressed through the planning for the future of this area. Without intervention, sea-level rise could inundate the False Creek Flats area at high tide by 2050 and beyond.

While the gradual shifts in sea-level rise is something that we can plan for and address over a number of years, an earthquake could happen at any moment. The False Creek Flats, as an area built almost entirely on filled soil, is vulnerable to the risks of liquefaction caused by a major seismic event. Addressing these challenges will be a key consideration for planning the Flats and the future of its infrastructure.





DISTRICT ENERGY

Heating and cooling of buildings is one of the highest contributors to Vancouver's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (approx. 55%). The Greenest City Action Plan seeks to reduce city-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 33% over 2007 levels by 2020 and neighbourhood energy systems (NES) are targeted to deliver 11% of this reduction. A neighbourhood energy system is a more efficient approach to deliver heating energy to buildings than traditional means. It eliminates the need for a boiler or furnace in individual buildings, thereby providing higher operating efficiencies and supporting better pollution control. One local example of a neighbourhood energy system is the sewage heat recovery system in Southeast False Creek operated by the City of Vancouver. By connecting buildings together to share a renewable heat source, this system produces 60% less GHG emissions than conventional systems. There are currently plans in to expand the SEFC system to include the Great Northern Way Campus and adjacent lands in the southern end of the False Creek Flats.

One of the highest priority action items of the Greenest City Action Plan is to convert existing fossil-fuel based steam systems to renewable energy sources. The False Creek Flats, as a well-positioned industrial area, is one potential location for a renewable energy centre. Such a facility could significantly reduce carbon pollution for the more than 200 buildings currently receiving service from the central heat steam system. Not only could a new facility provide clean energy to new developments downtown, but if located in the False Creek Flats, it could provide additional benefits for local businesses, as well as clients in Northeast False Creek, Chinatown and the Downtown Eastside.



TRANSPORTATION

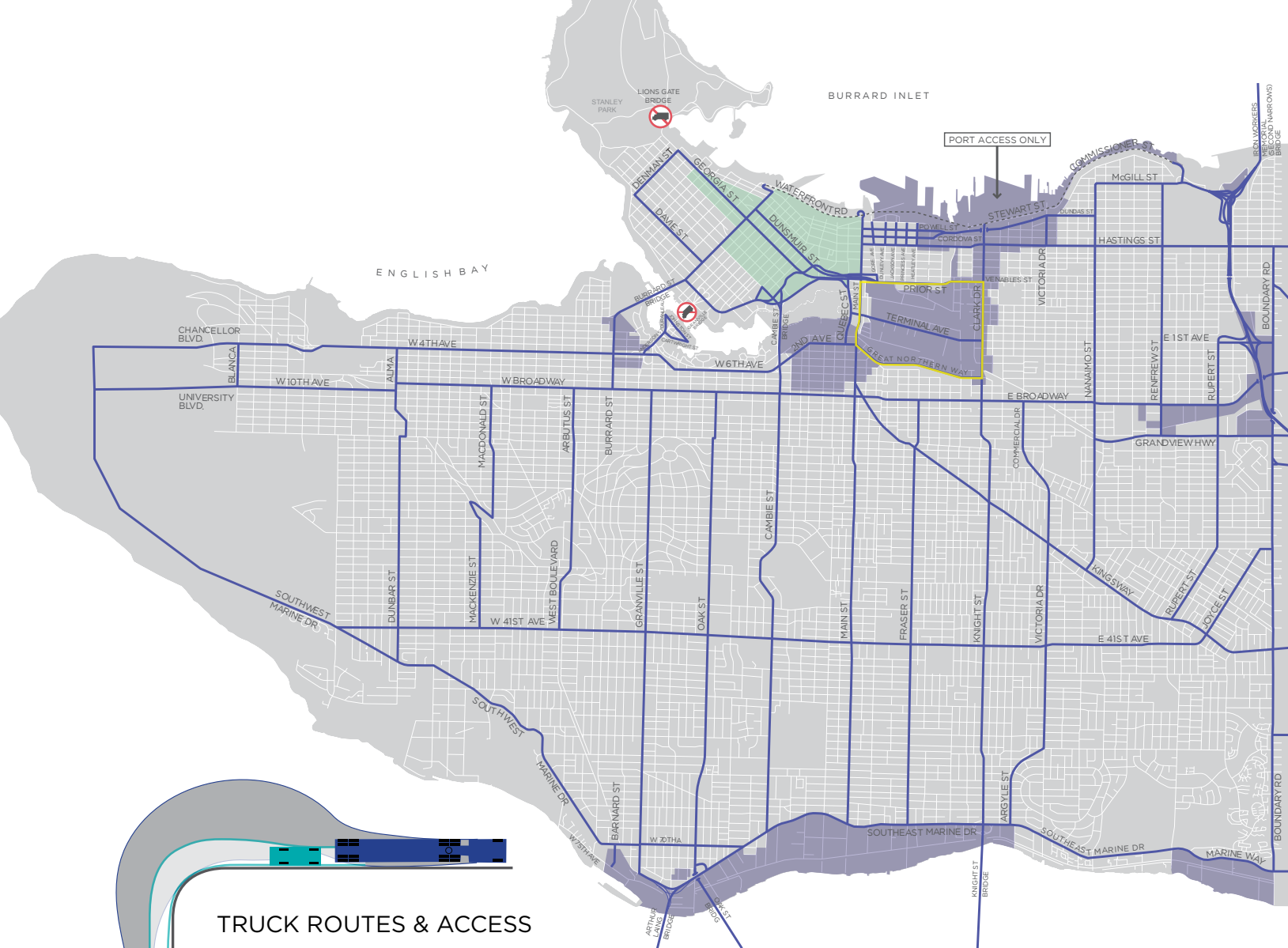
TRANSPORTATION

With a history rooted in transportation, nearly one-fifth of the 450 acres that makes up the False Creek Flats is covered by freight and passenger rail yards and infrastructure. Served by two rapid transit lines, passenger rail, and coach transportation services, the Flats often acts as the gateway to Vancouver for both people and goods. Yet despite this, active modes and localized connection in the Flats are severely challenged by the barrier of the various rail yards. So while essential for the growth and expansion of the federal economy, the rail lines today divide communities and eliminate connections.

The Flats is one of the last remaining remnants of inner-industrial zones within the city that serves the downtown and Port districts while also accommodating back-of-house city services. While rail is a more efficient method of transporting goods long-haul (more than 300 kilometres), short freight movements by truck to and from the Flats are still necessary. Considerations including efficient loading/unloading operations, truck staging, parking and adequate truck movement space will be explored through the review of the existing Flats road network. Some of the defined truck routes accessing the Flats are also some of the city's busiest roads. Congestion has a direct and negative financial impact to businesses due to travel time delays. This plan will look at ways to reduce congestion on the surrounding road network to more efficiently move goods within, to and from the Flats.



False Creek Flats Rail Footprint



TRUCK ROUTES & ACCESS

With the False Creek Flats providing an industrial back-of-house function to our city, we need to ensure efficient movement of goods. As such, street designs that may be desirable in other residential districts in Vancouver may not be appropriate. The map above highlights the city's truck routes in and out of the area.

Clark Drive - Facing North from > Great Northern Way Intersection



1982: The original test tracks for the Skytrain system ran down the middle of the Flats along Terminal Avenue



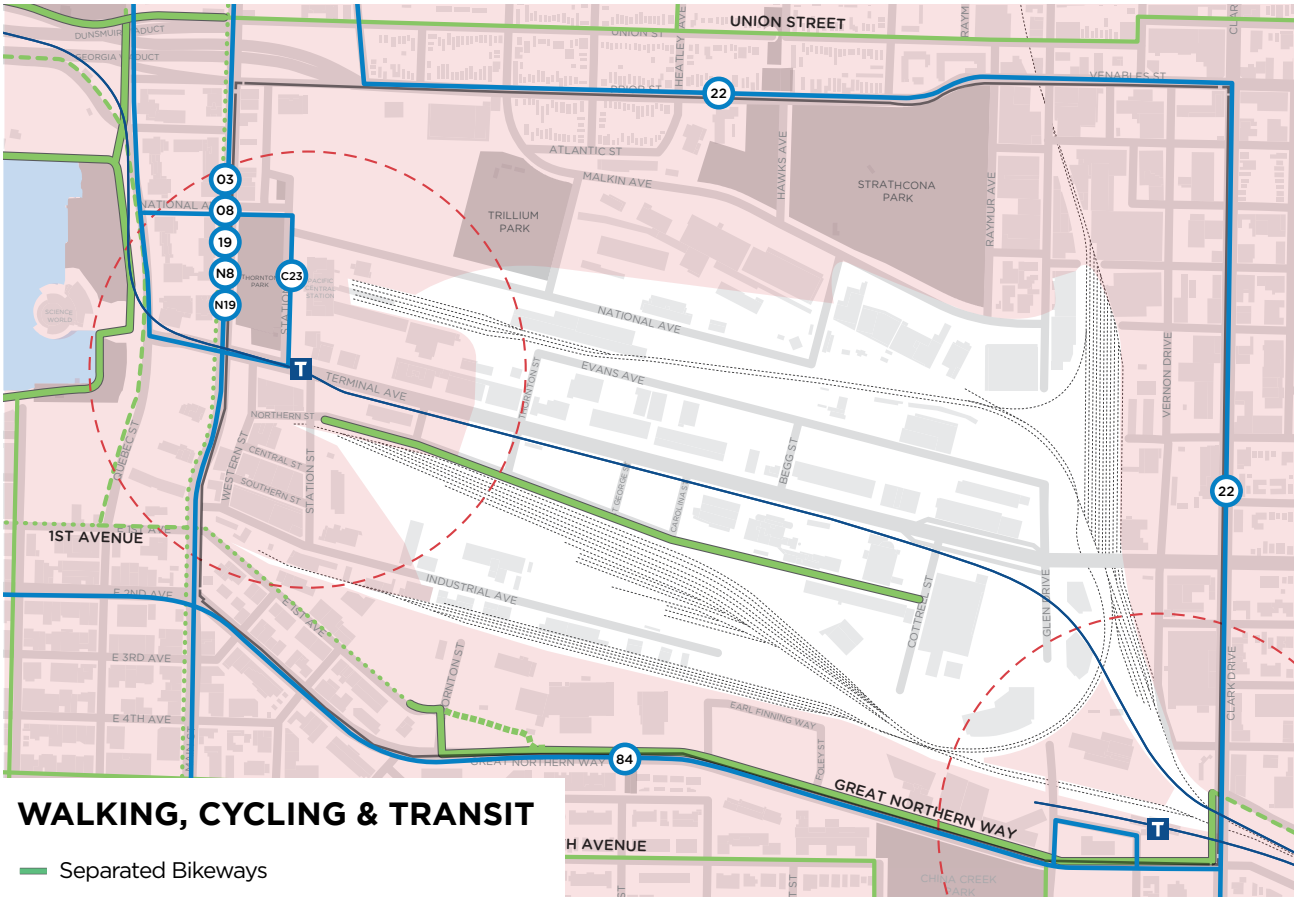
TRANSIT

The Expo Line, the original track for the region’s SkyTrain system, connects eastern communities to downtown through the middle of the Flats above Terminal Avenue. Future proposals under consideration would link VCC-Clark station along the southern portion of the Flats west to UBC along Broadway.

There are a number of passenger bus companies operating transport services from Pacific Central Station. These provide local, regional and international connections for residents and tourists. The local bus services to the area

are currently restricted to the western portion along Main Street except for certain services early in the morning for the convenience of workers. This has implications regarding dependency on vehicles rather than service provided by buses.

Passenger trains operate national and international services from the railway station at Pacific Central Station. Train and carriage maintenance is carried out in the area east of the station. Rocky Mountaineer operates a separate station in southeastern corner of the Flats.



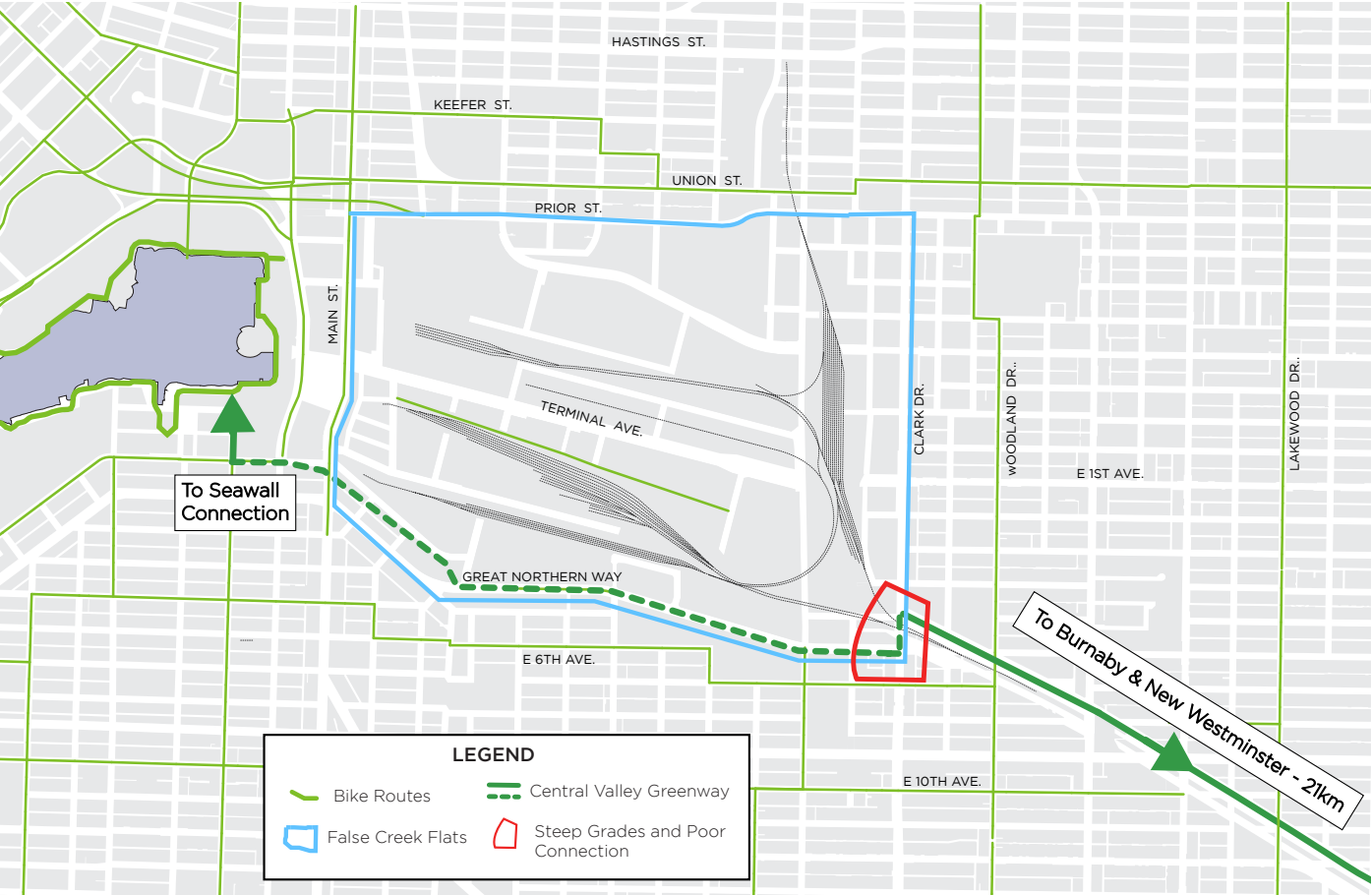
WALKING, CYCLING & TRANSIT

- Separated Bikeways
- - Local Street Bikeways
- ... Painted Bikeways
- . . Shared Use Lanes

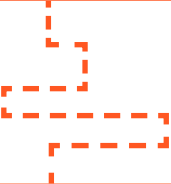
CYCLING

Several well-used separated bikeways and local street bikeways pass along the edges of the False Creek Flats including Union Street Bikeway and the Central Valley Greenway along Great Northern Way. While these routes provide direct east-west passage for cyclists and pedestrians along the perimeter of the Flats, there are no direct north-south connections. This makes it difficult for employees to access businesses located in core areas of the Flats, and creates inefficient routing for those moving through or around the area.

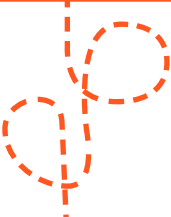
How can this plan help to create better connections for pedestrians and cyclists and ensure sustainable movement through the Flats?



Improved connectivity will be a key challenge for this plan. To emphasize this issue, ask yourself:



How easy is it to catch public transit and walk to the Rocky Mountaineer Station (Cottrell Street)?



Also, how could a student from the Emily Carr campus on Great Northern Way cycle to Strathcona Park?

< The rail presents challenges for cycling and pedestrian connectivity, and limits potential catchments of transit investment in the area

The character and fabric of the False Creek Flats
present tremendous potential to establish a unique
and interesting place in Vancouver



CHARACTER

PUBLIC REALM & CHARACTER

The image of the False Creek Flats continues to be defined by the area's unique geography, industrial development and the presence and barrier of rail. For many people in Vancouver, the Flats represent a 450-acre hole in their mental map of our city, largely devoid of the amenities and places available in other areas of our inner city. Yet despite this, there are a number of unique places, interesting spaces, historic materials and buildings that contain tremendous potential. These elements, if harnessed through this plan, have the potential for creating celebrated public spaces in our city.

These elements of the False Creek Flats have many of the requisite characteristics that attract the more mobile employee of the new economy. This plan will attempt to leverage these unique features, in an effort to establish the places and spaces required to support a thriving economic district within our city. These features include the geometries and historic lines that are traced throughout the district; the presence and interaction of the rail yards; a handful of significant historic buildings; some stunning views; as well as an intimate proximity to a number of rapidly transforming and intensifying residential districts.

How do we define and deliver unique public places and spaces that build off of these distinctive features and connect to the vast network of parks and public spaces that surround the False Creek Flats?

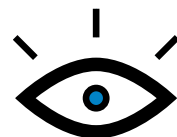
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AREA VIEWS

As a low-lying area, with a number of rail yards, and an escarpment on two sides, the False Creek Flats is home to some amazing views.

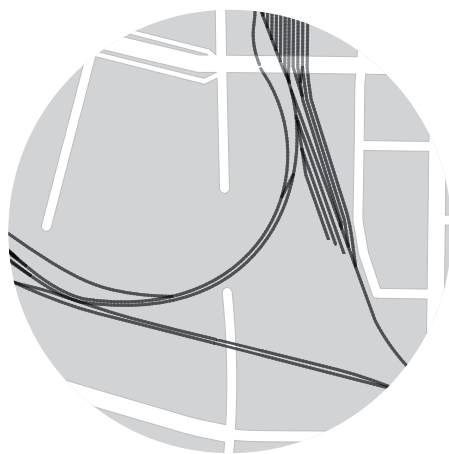


UNIQUE GRID

With rail optimization taken care of first, roads and parcels then filled in the Flats. The result is a series of unique geometries which hold great opportunity to create interesting views and unexpected places in our city.



WESTERN BLOCKS
East of Main.
Between Terminal &
Great Northern Way



GLEN AVENUE DIVIDE
West of Clark.
Between Terminal &
Great Northern Way



NORTH-EAST BLOCKS
South of Venables.
West of Clark

EXISTING MATERIAL

Industrial materials registers throughout the landscape and contribute to a specific character for the Flats.



As we embark on this planning process, we invite you to help us shape the future of the False Creek Flats!

YOUR FLATS OF TOMORROW!

WHAT MIGHT THE FUTURE HOLD?

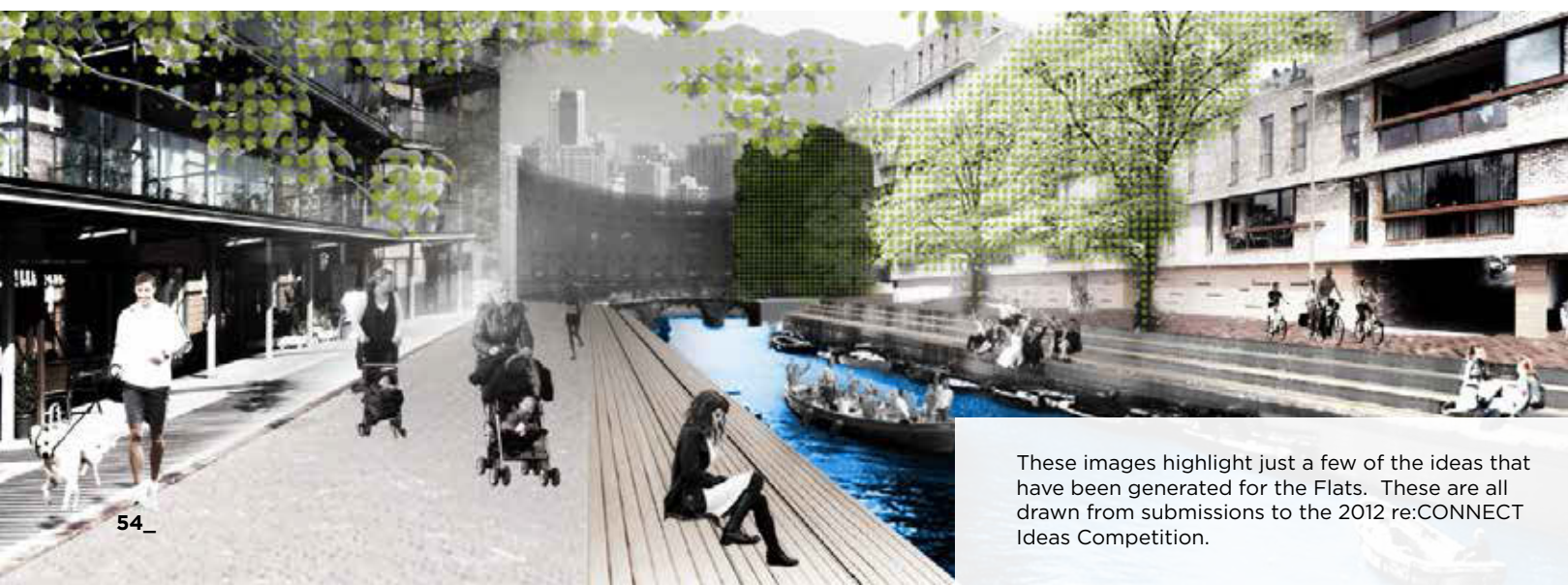
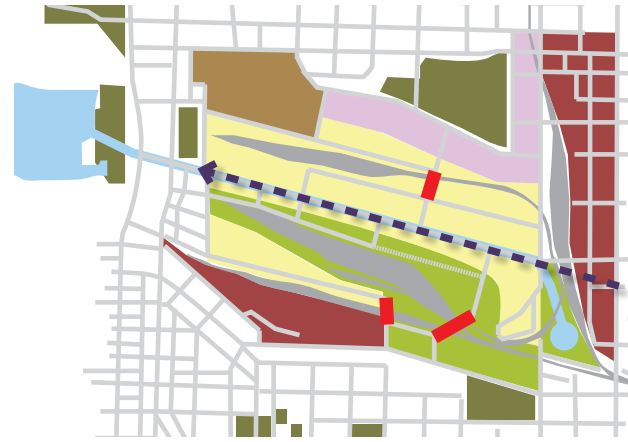
What kinds of policies do we need to unlock the true economic potential of this area? How do we ensure that we continue to have the light-industrial services and places so essential to supporting livability in our city?

How do we create a clear but flexible framework that guides change and development in a way that allows the False Creek Flats to flourish as a more productive, sustainable and integrated area of our city with a focus on an innovative green economy? The Greenest City 2020 Action Plan put forward the goal of transforming the Flats into the “greenest place to work in the world” - a place that showcases green innovations, features green buildings and infrastructure, supports sustainability-related industries, and attracts green capital and business. But a successful False Creek Flats will be more than just green; it will be an area that thinks holistically about its economic, social, and environmental systems. It will help support the broader goal of creating a healthy and equitable city for all.

Sign up today at vancouver.ca/falsecreekflats and help us shape the future of the False Creek Flats!

HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF THE FALSE CREEK FLATS!

The Flats, standing as a comparatively underdeveloped region, stands in contrast to much of the rest of the Vancouver, and as a result has inspired many individuals and classrooms to develop new visions for the future. The following pages provide you room for making notes, sketching ideas, identifying places on the map that you cherish, and perhaps places for this process to focus on. Please help us by documenting your ideas for improvement and either bring them along to a future event or take a photo and share them on Twitter or Instagram with #FalseCreekFlats and help us shape the future of the False Creek Flats!



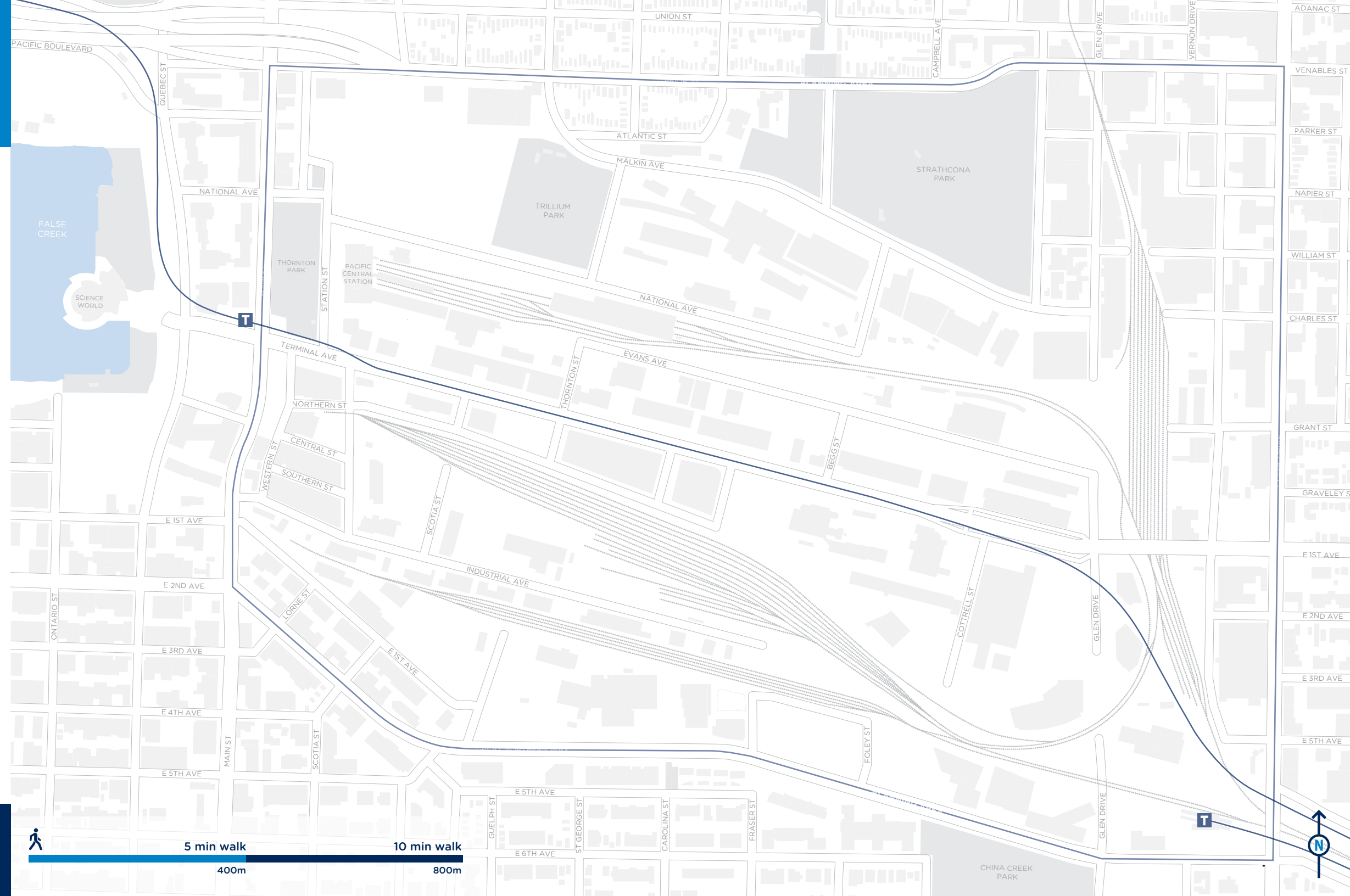
These images highlight just a few of the ideas that have been generated for the Flats. These are all drawn from submissions to the 2012 re:CONNECT Ideas Competition.



Area Map

This map is a place for you to document your ideas for the False Creek Flats. Record your favourite places, spaces, and areas for improvement and bring it along to any one of our events or take a photo and share it with #FalseCreekFlats, and help shape the future of the False Creek Flats.

Share your thoughts with
#falsecreekflats



NOTES & IDEAS

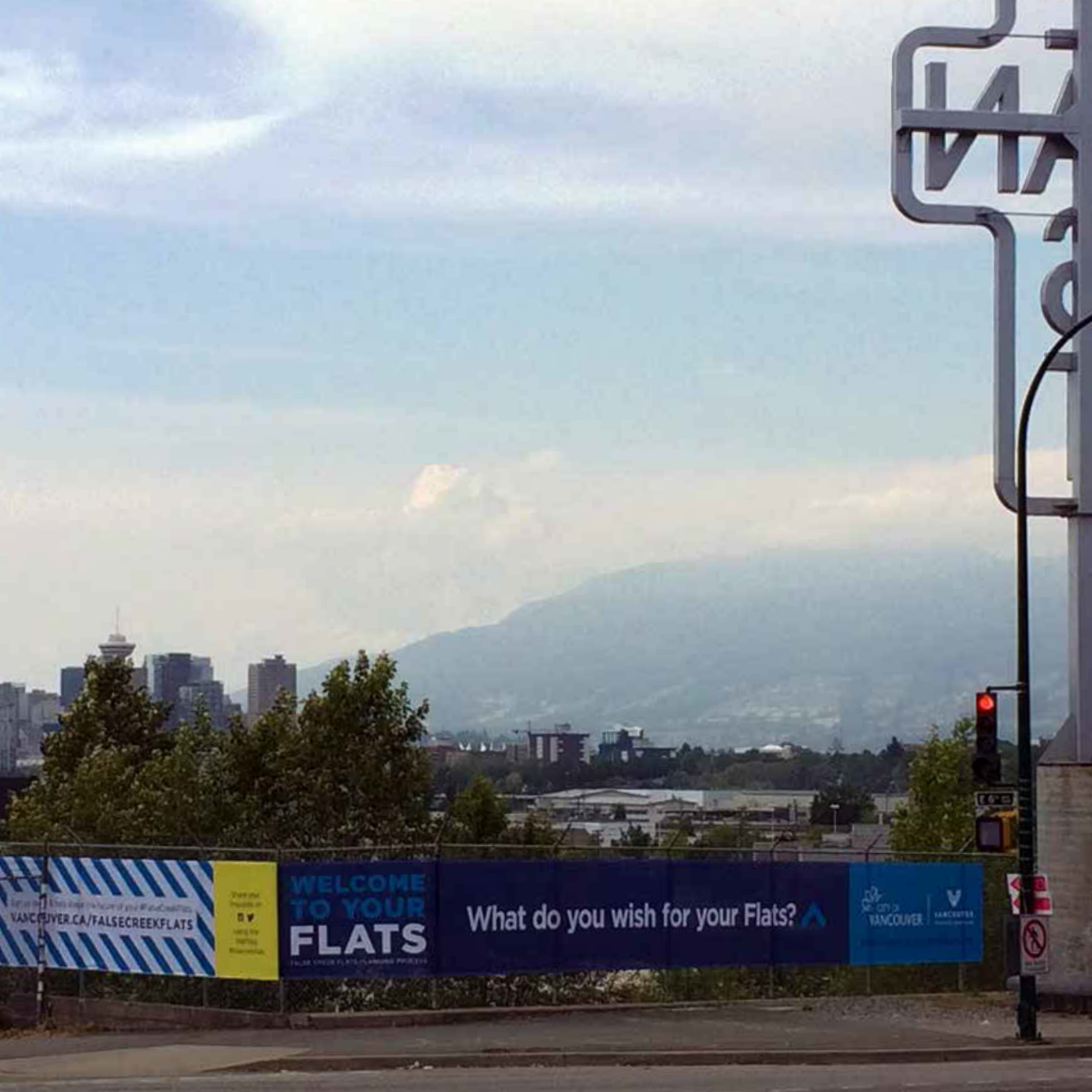
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Share your thoughts with [#falsecreekflats](#)

NOTES & IDEAS

[illegible][illegible]

Share your thoughts with [#falsecreekflats](#)



THE FLATS



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