

Renewing Riverview

Riverview Sub-Committee Report

March 2015

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About the Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce

The Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce is a proactive not-for-profit organization helping promote, connect and educate business across Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, and Port Moody.

As the voice of business in the Tri-Cities, our membership represents a variety of industries, specialties and interests. With nearly 1000 members, our Chamber membership includes our community's biggest employers, small and medium size businesses as well as home-based entrepreneurs, non-profits and more.

We are moving forward with fresh ideas and a genuine sense of excitement for where we are going as an organization. The Chamber strives to have a focus on strong policy that supports local businesses, be a visible and approachable presence in the community and ensure that the value of membership is the best investment businesses can make.

Executive Summary

The Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce Riverview Sub-Committee was created to inform BC Housing during the Renewing Riverview process. The committee created and agreed upon 4 guiding principles for development of the Riverview Lands. The principles reflect the need for maintaining the natural greenspace at Riverview, the desire to maintain the mental health function of the lands, the need for flexible and sustainable planning, and the need for consultation. The committee then examined potential uses on the Riverview land and ranked them based on frequency of their mention during the workshop process. The uses were organized into categories and discussed in committee based on these categories.

The committee's first priority moving forward is to commission an economic impact analysis of the uses outlined in the workshop undertaken by the committee. Understanding the impact that each use could have on the local economy will better guide the committee in advising the Renewing Riverview process the future. At this time, the economic impact analysis has not been completed due to the deadline set by the BC Housing Renewing Riverview Process.

The committee's second priority is to ensure that the guiding principles outlined in this report and submitted to BC Housing are taken into consideration as development occurs on the Riverview Lands. The guiding principles outline a broad approach to making sure that development on the lands is done in a way that ensures maximum benefit to the local community. The committee urges BC Housing and the Provincial Government to use the guiding principles to help make decisions regarding the future development of the lands.

Committee Mandate

The Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce Riverview Sub-Committee is a sub-committee of the Economic Development Committee. The sub-committee is mandated to serve as the economic advisor to BC Housing during the Renewing Riverview process and to make a recommendation to BC Housing on behalf of the Chamber membership, with the approval of the Board of Directors, on the future of the Riverview lands that highlights the economic possibilities and benefits to the community.

Committee Membership

Membership was comprised of respondents to an e-mail distributed to the Chamber membership.

Chair	Dennis Marsden
Vice Chair	Desiree Dupuis
Members-at-Large	Laura Coueffin
	Louisa Franz
	Joan Isac
	Hazel Postma
Ex-Officio Member	John Wolff
Ex-Officio Member	David Munro
Staff	Aaron Robinson

Context

The Riverview Lands are home to a vast history in the Tri-Cities region. As the home to former Riverview Hospital, a vast campus of buildings, streets, parking and other facilities exists on the land. The hospital campus was often described as a “small village” with amenities such as a post office, emergency services, recreational facilities and other community amenities. The hospital was in operation from 1913 to 2012 and, at its peak, served over 4,500 people.

On the site, there are currently 75 buildings ranging from the 100-year-old West Lawn Building to the 5-year-old Cypress Lodge. These buildings range in size from large hospital wings to small cabins. A 2013 building condition assessment of 43 buildings showed that nearly 41 of the buildings assessed were “critical” in their state of disrepair.

Currently, the site is host to three active tertiary-care mental health facilities:

- Connolly Lodge (built in 2001);
- Cottonwood Lodge (built in 2006); and
- Cypress Lodge (built in 2008).

The Forensic Psychiatric Hospital, located in Colony Farm, also runs a number of cottages that are used for rehabilitation for individuals who have come in conflict with the law and are deemed unfit to stand trial or not criminally responsible due to mental illness.

The site also includes one of the largest botanical tree collections in Canada with over 1800 mature trees, some of which are unique to Western Canada and others that are rare species. Other current uses include a BC Ambulance station, a daycare, and warehouse space for non-profit organizations. Riverview is a popular location for the film industry. The site is also host to a cemetery where patients have been buried since 1958.

On July 10th, 2014, the Kwikwetlem First Nation laid claim to the land. Elder stories explain that the Kwikwetlem have always occupied Riverview Lands and archaeology confirms continuous occupation of the traditional territory for at least 9,000 years, since the last ice age. The Kwikwetlem currently occupy two reserves opposite the Riverview Lands in Colony Farm.

Guiding Principles

The Committee began its work by trying to incorporate values and principles that had been expressed by the community as important to the future of Riverview and connect them to economic development on the site. After four drafts, the committee agreed that the wording below best captured important values and put them in the context of development.

1 The development and construction of infrastructure on the Riverview lands must not exceed the area of the existing infrastructure footprint.

The future development on Riverview needs to maintain or increase the same ratio of greenspace to infrastructure footprint. This does not preclude increased density from being considered. Any new building footprint must be offset by the conversion of a like sized parcel(s) to greenspace.

2 Maintaining the integrity of the Riverview lands with regards to mental health is an integral component for consideration of economic and commercial development opportunities for the property.

There should be a component of the property that maintains the historical integrity of the land and includes businesses and services that are dedicated to compliment, support, and/or augment health (including mental health) and wellness.

3 The economic and commercial development of the Riverview lands should be shaped by the community values of balance, flexibility and sustainability.

The economic and commercial development at Riverview must be balanced in order to design, build, and foster a holistic community. Infrastructure that is built must be designed based on principles of sustainability, growth, innovation, flexibility, and adaptability.

4 Community stakeholders should be consulted as a partner for economic and commercial development opportunities

As the Riverview lands have a rich history encompassing many parts of the greater Tri-Cities community, diverse community groups should be considered as a partner in the economic and commercial development of Riverview.

Workshop Process

The subcommittee was engaged in a workshop process that was facilitated by subcommittee chair Dennis Marsden. The workshop first identified categories of development. After the categories were decided upon, committee members were asked “What kinds of buildings/businesses/agencies/infrastructure/etc. would be needed to create a holistic community around this category?”

The categories included (alphabetically):

- Cemetery
- Education
- Environment, Heritage & Tourism
- Film
- Government & Support Services
- Health & Wellness
- Housing
- Social Services & Social Enterprise
- Technology

The committee would then spend time discussing what kinds of uses could be compatible with the listed categories. Categories were discussed one at a time.

After the committee had discussed all categories, the number of times a certain use was measured across all categories and graphed. Categories were also scored based on how many different types of uses they each had and ranked based on the diversity of the uses.

Infrastructure

It was assumed that there would be a need for upgraded or increased infrastructure for electricity, water, sewage, telephone/internet and transportation. With a specific look at transportation infrastructure, it was expected that there would be an increase in the number of access points to the land to make it more accessible by bus and car, but also that roads would be upgraded to handle more traffic. There was also discussion of increased transit service to the region to facilitate the envisioned services and uses.

Store Front Retail and Food Services

It was also assumed that any given use on the Riverview lands would provide opportunities for relevant retail and food service opportunities. It was often suggested that with any development on Riverview, there would be opportunity for local retailers, cafes or restaurants to support the community that would be created on Riverview. This was also reflected in the public consultations held by BC Housing’s Renewing Riverview initiative.

Categories

Cemetery

The committee explored the options of maintaining and expanding the current cemetery and burial ground on Riverview. With coming growth in the region and an aging population, it is to be expected that burial services are going to be a necessity in the future. Along with a traditional cemetery, the subcommittee explored the potential for a crematorium as another major use for part of the Riverview lands. Other businesses, like funeral services, catering services, florists and stoneworkers were discussed as supplemental businesses that might benefit from the preservation of the burial grounds.

Potential Uses

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| • Office Space | • Crematorium | • Preservation of current cemetery |
| • Catering Services | • Funeral Homes | • Expansion of current cemetery |
| • Chapel | • Historical Monument | • Stone Masons |

Education

The discussion around education at Riverview revolved mainly around the expansion of a post-secondary campus, specifically existing institutions such as Douglas College, Simon Fraser University or the University of British Columbia. In keeping with the first guiding principle, it was thought that a post-secondary institution with an established health sciences, nursing, or mental health program provide the best opportunity for a new campus dedicated to teach health & wellness or facilitating research for health & wellness. This option is one of the committee’s preferred developments at Riverview. With a high job creation rate and the community-building qualities of post-secondary institutions, the expansion of a post-secondary institution on to the Riverview lands would be an invaluable asset to the Tri-Cities region, and further to the Metro Vancouver region. The committee also discussed the opportunity for private medical research facilities to partner with post-secondary institutions. The committee also acknowledged that post-secondary institutions often require housing for students. Complimentary housing (rental or student housing) should be looked at as an opportunity as well.

Potential Uses

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|---|
| • Office Space | • Library | • Mental Health Worker Practicum Programs |
| • Nursing School | • Rental Housing | • Douglas College Campus Expansion |
| • Medical Research Facilities | • Student Housing | • Metro Vancouver Parks Programming |

Environment, Heritage & Tourism

Preserving the environment and heritage at Riverview was a recurring theme throughout discussions in the committee. Preserving the amount of green space and the rare collection of diverse species of trees is important to preserving the integrity of the land and can benefit the local economy. Creating educational or recreational programming around an arboretum or botanical garden in conjunction with a stewardship program for the lands could create a draw into the Tri-Cities similar to VanDusen Botanical Gardens in Vancouver or the UBC Botanical Gardens in the University Endowment Lands. This kind of investment opens up opportunities for events, both private and public, which come with their own economic benefits. Complimentary to an arboretum or botanical garden, a hotel on Riverview would fill a void in the Tri-Cities. With three hotels in Coquitlam along North Road and one on Lougheed Highway in Port Coquitlam, there is a shortage of hospitality services in the heart of the Tri-Cities. The committee believes that there could be a unique opportunity to create a tourist attraction that preserves and maintains the natural treasures at Riverview and create a tourism driver for the region. Other considerations were given to museums, artist studios, and a library.

Potential Uses

- Hotel
- Arboretum
- Museum
- Library
- Artist Studios
- Botanical Gardens
- Park
- Maintenance of Existing Grounds/Buildings

Film

Riverview is often chosen as a site for feature films and television shows due to its early 1900s style buildings and sometimes “creepy” aesthetic. Following the recent history in the film industry, the committee explored how Riverview could be integrated as a prime source for filming productions. The committee discussed creating a film studio out of the Crease Building, which currently serves as a popular location for filming and often contains many studios inside. To support a film studio, development on the Riverview lands could include office space for animation and post-production studios or set building workshops. Of course, for the guaranteed success of Riverview as a prime location, many of the current buildings and lands would need to be maintained in their current state as it adds to the appeal of the location. The committee also discussed that having a hotel on the grounds would complement the uses related to the film industry.

Potential Uses

- Agency Offices
- Fitness facilities
- Film Studio
- Animation Studios
- Hotel
- Post-Production Studios
- Maintenance of Existing Grounds/Buildings

Government & Support Services

Government offices and services on Riverview would be one of the largest job creators for the lands, providing significant economic benefit to the community as well paying jobs that are located centrally in the Tri-Cities. Creating a government office campus amid the natural environment of Riverview would support further high quality commercial office development as the government services serve as preferred anchor tenants for commercial developments. If government offices serve as anchor tenants for commercial development, there will be an increase of office space for local business to locate to and grow. Government call centres, especially a HealthLink BC call centre would be a high priority as a complimentary government service in a commercial development at Riverview due to its integration of government services and health and wellness.

The committee also included government-run support services on Riverview as an option. Fraser Health locating offices or services such as addiction transition, rehabilitation or recovery facilities would also meet the guiding principles, promoting health and wellness as per the history at Riverview. With these uses, it makes sense for other support services like BC Ambulance or non-profit organizations that provide complimentary services like a food bank, therapeutic services, or respite to be incorporated into planning.

Potential Uses

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Government Offices | • Call Centres | • Health Authority Offices |
| • Government Health Services | • HealthLink BC Call Centre | • Long-Term/Supportive Care |
| • Transition Facilities | • Geriatric Care Facilities | • BC Ambulance dispatch |

Health & Wellness

Health & Wellness was the category that had the highest number of uses listed by the committee. At the top of the list was the creation of a Centre of Excellence for Mental Health—essentially renewing the true spirit of Riverview with its original intended uses—treatment of people with mental health issues. The committee explored the idea of engaging a private clinic that specializes in the treatment of mental health and addictions, like a Betty Ford clinic, to be a component of the Centre of Excellence. With the Centre of Excellence model, a private clinic, public services, post-secondary training and medical research would be complementary uses that would focus on determining best practices for mental health and addictions treatment. As specified in the Guiding Principles, development for the purpose of health & wellness is a priority for the committee as health & wellness related employment generally constitutes social benefit, profile, and high quality jobs for the local community.

With a specific look at mental health and addictions services, the policy paper submitted to the British Columbia Chamber of Commerce by the Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce points out that an efficient and effective mental health service is important for the local, regional and provincial economy. Riverview presents an opportunity to invest in our mental health system to reduce the negative consequences of underservice in the mental health system.

Potential Uses

- Clinics
- Nursing School
- Geriatric Care
- Rental Housing
- Hotel
- Private Clinics
- Specialty Medicine Offices
- Post-Secondary Practicums
- Assisted Living Developments
- Medical Research Facilities
- Laboratories/Lab Services
- Medical Research Library
- Mental Health Services
- Private Addictions Rehabilitation Facility
- Long-Term/Supportive Care
- Health Authority Offices
- Patient Family Housing

Housing

The committee overwhelmingly believes that housing alone is not an option for Riverview. It is the general view of the committee that turning the Riverview lands as a whole into a housing development would be a shortsighted decision providing very few sustainable economic benefits to the community. However, the committee did acknowledge that there is a place for specific kinds of housing that can complement other potential developments on the Riverview Lands. For example, building housing for doctors, nurses, or patient families near a health & wellness development will help to create a whole community. The committee also explored the idea of transition housing for people in mental health and addictions treatment which would fit with the Centre of Excellence model mentioned above. If there is development of a post-secondary institution, student and purpose-built rental housing would make sense to augment the programs and services offered. There is also a need in the community for geriatric care and seniors housing as our population ages. Building assisted-living facilities on Riverview will provide an opportunity for seniors who are unable to live independently to remain close to their families in the Tri-Cities. Ultimately, if there is to be any housing development at Riverview, the resulting developments should be mixed-market to help offset the shortage of rental housing in the Tri-Cities and mid to high density projects to accommodate the expected growth in our region.

Potential Uses

- Transition Housing
- Hotel
- Rental Housing
- Co-Op Housing
- Long-Term/Supportive Care
- Geriatric Care
- Patient Family Housing
- Mental Health & Addictions Facility
- Assisted Living Developments
- Mixed-Market Housing

Social Services & Social Enterprise

The committee sees great potential for social services and social enterprise on the Riverview Lands. Social services could include those provided by non-profits such as SHARE Family & Community Services, the New View Society, Tri-City Transitions, etc. As land values increase, it will be increasingly difficult for non-profits in our community to afford land to perform their functions. Dedicating space to non-profit community partners and their programs would augment most health and wellness functions of future development on Riverview considering that many of our community's non-profits deal with at-risk populations.

There is an opportunity on Riverview for space to develop new businesses and to use new business opportunities to rehabilitate people transitioning from mental health and addictions programs. Creating space for programs that empower marginalized and at-risk populations through skills-training and business development marry the values of health and wellness and the business development goals of the Chamber.

Potential Uses

- Non-Profit Space
- Transition housing
- Centre of Excellence for Social Enterprise
- Transition services

Technology

Accelerators and incubators in the Metro Vancouver region are being recognized for growing successful, progressive businesses and supporting local entrepreneurs. As a result, Metro Vancouver has seen the rise of successful hi-tech industries in various sectors such as social media, animation, and software development. There is an opportunity for the Tri-Cities to take advantage of this accelerator and incubator model as the Tri-Cities retains suburban neighbourhoods that are conducive to raising a family at prices that are less expensive than Vancouver. Entrepreneurs trying to balance life and work would benefit from space designed to help promote their entrepreneurial spirit.

In addition, other uses including office space, post-secondary institutions or research facilities would also compliment a technological vision of the Riverview lands.

The committee also explored the possibility of tech manufacturing. With many new technologies being produced using environmentally friendly methods, Riverview presents an opportunity to link technological innovation in manufacturing with the environment.

Potential Uses

- Call Centres
- Commercial Office Space
- Conference/Convention Centres
- Medical Research
- Post-Secondary Campus
- Tech Incubators/Accelerators
- Tech Research
- Hi-Tech Manufacturing
- Technology Campus (e.g. Electronic Arts)

Scoring

After the workshop-stage of deliberation, the committee then scored and narrowed down and grouped the potential uses.

The scores were calculated based on how many times a use was mentioned across categories and then again based on how many uses were discussed in each category.

This method allowed the committee to track what ideas were constantly recurring throughout the workshop process and which uses transcended categories, meaning they would be more versatile uses.

The significant flaw in this scoring method, however, is that it does not denote importance of a given use or category. For example, medical research facilities received a total score of 4. But discussions in committee suggest that because of the high quality jobs involved with research and the potential partnerships with post-secondary institutions, medical research firms and facilities were considered a prime opportunity for Riverview. Another example is the category of technology. The concept of a technology campus, similar to the Electronic Arts campus in Burnaby or the Google Campus in Silicon Valley, California merited another preferred option for the Riverview Lands as those campuses often require the maintenance of the existing green space while bringing in a large employer in a thriving industry.

The next page includes the final scoring matrix, but it does not reflect the priorities of the committee—only the frequency with which these uses were discussed and under which circumstances.

Renewing Riverview

Scoring Matrix

Use	Health & Wellness	Gov't Support Services	Housing	Technology	Education	Enviro/Heritage/Tourism	Social Services/Enterprise	Cemetery	Film	Score
Office/Retail/Private Business	9	7		2	1	2		4	4	29
Non-Profit		3					8			11
Housing	1		7		1					9
Post Secondary Campus	1	1		1	5					8
Mental Health & Addict.	5	1	1							7
Supportive Housing	2	1	1							4
Medical Research	2			1	1					4
Call Centres		2		1						3
Fitness Facilities	1			1					1	3
Geriatric Care	1	1	1							3
Hotel			1			1			1	3
Library	1				1	1				3
Emergency Services	1	1								2
Health Authorities	1	1								2
Existing Buildings						1			1	2
Manufacturing				1					1	2
Park					1	1				2
Arboretum						2				2
Centre for Social Enterprise				1			1			2
Artist Studios						1				1
Chapel								1		1
Conference Centres				1						1
Crematorium								1		1
Historical Monument								1		1
Museum						1				1
Preservation of Cemetery								1		1
Renewable Energy				1						1
SCORE	25	18	11	10	10	10	9	8	8	109

Committee Priorities

1. Economic Impact Analysis

The committee's first priority, now that there has been a high level discussion of what the potential development of the Riverview lands could look like, is to undertake an economic impact analysis of the potential uses to determine which of the uses will create the most economic benefit to the community. Understanding the impact that each use could have on the local economy will better guide the committee in advising the Renewing Riverview process. Any development that happens on Riverview should present the greatest economic benefit in the immediate, short and long terms, but should also balance the needs of the community with regards to the preservation of the unique natural environment and history at Riverview.

2. Consideration of Guiding Principles

The committee's next priority is to ensure that the guiding principles outlined in this report and submitted to BC Housing are taken into consideration as development occurs on the Riverview Lands. The guiding principles outline a broad approach to making sure that development on the lands is done in a way that ensures maximum benefit to the local community. The committee urges BC Housing and the Provincial Government to use the guiding principles to help make decisions regarding the future development of the lands.