



4.7 COMMERCIAL

There is strong competition among Metro Vancouver communities to attract and retain commercial development opportunities. These opportunities include retail and service commercial businesses such as food and beverage establishments, entertainment venues, personal and professional services, and health care services (e.g., medical and dental).

A 2006 study undertaken for the City estimated that the retail and service commercial floor space per capita in the City was about 35 sq. ft. (based on a retail and service commercial inventory of about 600,000 sq. ft.). This was lower than the regional average of 41 sq. ft. per capita and suggests that consumer spending dollars are flowing out to nearby retail concentrations in Maple Ridge, Coquitlam and Port Coquitlam. With the completion of the Golden Ears Bridge, there is the possibility of further leakage out to commercial centres south of the Fraser River, notably Langley and Surrey. However, the new bridge will also create opportunities for Pitt Meadows businesses to tap into new markets and draw more money into the community from elsewhere.

Commercial activity is important to Pitt Meadows for a number of reasons. In addition to creating business and employment opportunities, it allows residents to satisfy more of their shopping needs locally, thereby reducing the time and cost associated with travelling to other communities. These are important considerations in making Pitt Meadows a more complete community.

While the City wishes to attract and retain commercial development opportunities, there are certain constraints that factor into where commercial land uses are permitted and the form they take. Most importantly, Pitt Meadows has a relatively small urban area that must accommodate a balance of land uses, of which commercial is only one.



There is also a need to balance commercial development along the Lougheed Highway corridor, which is where most of the recent market interest has been (not only in Pitt Meadows but Maple Ridge and Port Coquitlam as well), with the City’s desire to create a vibrant and active Town Centre on Harris Road that includes a commercial component. Certain types of commercial services are best suited to a high profile, high traffic corridor such as the Lougheed Highway, but other commercial activities can better function in a town centre environment.

4.7.1 General Commercial Development

The City wishes to increase the amount of commercial development in Pitt Meadows, with different types of commercial activities concentrated in different areas of the community.

Policies

- a) Existing commercial areas are to be preserved rather than converted to other uses, except where mixed commercial/residential developments are proposed;
- b) A wide range of commercial businesses is encouraged, but a distinction should be maintained between the types of retail and services that are permitted in established commercial areas:
 - Commercial uses which serve regional population and require greater parking considerations are encouraged to locate in Highway Commercial areas adjacent to Lougheed Highway and major arterial roads;
 - Small retail, office, medical, professional and personal service uses are encouraged to locate in Town Centre Commercial areas with increased residential densities and close to public transit;
 - Commercial uses that serve a local or neighbourhood population are encouraged to locate in Community Commercial areas.
- c) Parking areas should not dominate development sites and should provide safe and attractive pedestrian connections to buildings.



4.7.2 The Town Centre

Pitt Meadows' Town Centre serves as the community's "Main Street", providing commercial uses that primarily play a local-serving role. To help support these commercial uses, medium to high density residential development is encouraged in the Town Centre, including mixed use developments with residential over ground floor retail and office uses. The Town Centre commercial uses are envisioned to be primarily sited along the frontage of properties to create a continuous street wall flanking Harris Road, helping to facilitate a pedestrian and bicycle-friendly, environment and attractive alternative to the conventional shopping mall and "big box" retail shopping formats. The City envisions Meadowvale shopping centre as embodying a village concept, with both commercial and residential uses.

Policies

- a) Town Centre should be zoned to provide local shopping, health care, professional offices, administrative, financial, cultural and community services for Pitt Meadows;
- b) Development projects in the Town Centre commercial area that front onto Harris Road will be required to commit a share of total developable area to commercial uses located on the ground floor, with access points orientated toward Harris Road. The proportion of developable area required for commercial uses will be determined on a project-specific basis taking into consideration lot size and configuration, location on Harris Road, types of commercial uses being proposed and other factors;
- c) To improve pedestrian movement and visual aspects of the Town Centre streetscape for residents and visitors, future commercial uses are encouraged to develop adjacent to the front lot line, with parking located at the rear lots or, in some cases, below grade. Other desirable design aspects include canopies and awnings over sidewalks;
- d) On-street parking is encouraged in the Town Centre commercial area where appropriate.

4.7.3 Lougheed Highway Corridor

Only limited areas of the Lougheed Highway corridor are available for commercial development, with significant areas either within the Agricultural Land Reserve or designated for industrial use and, to a lesser degree, residential use.



The City considers the area east of Harris Road on the north side of the Lougheed Highway that is designated for commercial use as suited to highway-oriented retail and service commercial uses, including automotive, accommodation, food service and hospitality uses. Given its high profile location, high-quality development is expected in terms of both buildings and landscaping. Building and parking placement will be particularly critical in site planning.

Developments that push buildings to the back and parking to the front, or that present a continuous wall of large box-like buildings along the Lougheed Highway are not supported. Rather, a mix of building sizes, forms and placements is envisioned.

The existing commercial development west of Harris Road on the south side of the Lougheed Highway, commonly referred to as Meadowvale, may be nearing the point where at least partial redevelopment may make economic sense. The area is envisioned to retain a strong commercial component if this occurs, but the City will encourage mixed local commercial and residential uses on part of the site, as shown in Schedule 3A.



HERITAGE MUSEUM ON HARRIS ROAD

Policies

- a) Developers of commercial areas adjacent to the Lougheed Highway will be required to provide a comprehensively-designed parking and traffic flow plan prior to rezoning of properties;
- b) The City encourages limiting vehicular access points along the Lougheed Highway between Harris Road and Meadow Gardens Way and supports consolidation of ownership and comprehensive development of the lands to achieve this objective;
- c) The City encourages the development of the North Lougheed Commercial Area in a comprehensively planned manner that will provide a consistently high quality of building and landscape design and that recognizes the present and anticipated future needs of retailers and related commercial uses;
- d) The City supports adjustments to the ALR-excluded lands to allow appropriate commercial development along the north side of the Lougheed Highway providing that the adjustment is accompanied by community benefit.



4.7.4 Waterfront Commercial

There are three areas of existing and / or potential commercial waterfront development in Pitt Meadows: South Bonson Waterfront Village and the airport, both on the Fraser River, and the Pitt Meadows Marina at the meeting of the Alouette and Pitt Rivers.

The City encourages a limited amount of waterfront commercial development for the enjoyment of both residents and visitors to the community.

Policies

- a) The primary features of the South Bonson Waterfront Village will be a pedestrian-orientated main street, village square, a waterfront park with pedestrian trail, a public amenity building, community pier and eating and drinking establishments;
- b) The principal commercial uses in the South Bonson Waterfront Village shall be retail and personal services intended to meet the needs of neighbourhood residents as well as to attract tourists and users from other areas;
- c) The City supports a small waterfront commercial node at the Pitt Meadows Airport, subject to any environmental approvals required from other agencies and approval of a Development Permit;
- d) The Pitt Meadows Marina property is designated for tourist commercial use. Off-site improvements for access and services are required.