

## OPEN LETTER From HousingReset ([HousingReset.ca](https://HousingReset.ca))

January 20, 2026

Dear City of Vancouver Mayor and Council,

### **Re: Rezoning at 320-360 West Second Avenue: Housing Proposal on Industrial Land in the Mount Pleasant Industrial Area**

We, the undersigned, are Metro Vancouver region-based urbanists, urban planners, architects, and UBC/SFU academics, most with decades of experience, some with a background in development, seeking to broaden the search for enduring housing solutions.

We are writing to express our grave concerns about a rezoning before Council at the January 22, 2026 Public Hearing. We strongly support City staff who are not recommending approval of this development. See staff [report](#) here.

The rezoning is for a 25-storey market rental housing development, with 3 storeys of industrial space. This spot rezoning flies in the face of decades of industrial land protection and stewardship of the precious jobs and services provided by the City's industrial lands. We advocate for the right kind of housing in the right place, and this is simply a speculative land grab taking advantage of lower priced industrial land.

Approval of this development could drive up land and rent prices and force businesses out of a location that they have chosen because of affordability and to be close to customers and employees. While modern industry is much cleaner and less dangerous than traditional industrial processes, operational difficulties could occur for existing and future businesses, due to incompatibility of residential and industrial uses.

We understand that this is the first in a number of housing developments on industrial land that Council has asked staff to fast track in their last few months of office.

The origin of this Council direction is a motion put forward by Mayor Sim at the last meeting of the summer on July 23, 2025, titled [Realizing the Full Potential of Exceptional Lands in Vancouver](#). The preamble to this damaging motion states:

*The Province of British Columbia's Transit-Oriented Areas (TOA) legislation requires local governments to increase housing density around SkyTrain and major transit corridors, increasing the necessity for a policy review of industrial lands near rapid transit.*

This statement in the Mayor's motion is simply false. The Provincial TOA policy clearly states that the policy does not apply to industrial lands. The Canada Line stations at

Broadway and Olympic Village have served the Mount Pleasant Industrial Area and surrounding neighbourhoods since 2009. During that time the Mount Pleasant Industrial Area has continued to thrive and now is home to 13,000 jobs and hundreds of businesses providing services for the rest of the City, ranging from repair workshops to high technology innovative industry. The Mount Pleasant Industrial Area is one of the City's vital production, distribution, service, and repair districts and has the highest density of employment of any industrial area in the region.

The Mayor's motion requests staff to begin processing rezoning applications in industrial areas immediately. It also directs staff to report back on the future role, planning considerations and policy implications of five industrial areas, including examining the potential for additional housing sites. Council gave staff a deadline of October 31, 2025 for this report, which was impossible to achieve.

This rezoning request for a January 22, 2026 Council decision has been fast-tracked and comes before staff have had a chance to study the five industrial areas. As a consequence, Council and the public have no information to help understand why decades of industrial land protection should be reversed for this "exceptional" application. Staff are requesting Council to give them the chance to do this important work before making decisions on any spot rezoning applications.

A report from the City Manager to Mayor and Council dated December 17, 2025 outlines staff's proposed work program for completing the tasks requested by Council. [Memo Realizing the Full Potential of Exceptional Sites in Vancouver](#) Staff suggest a phased program with most of this work to be completed in 2027.

Mayor and Council continue to use the housing crisis and lack of housing supply as their rationale, despite the fact that as of October 31, 2025, there were [78,300 housing units](#) in the pipeline at the City, and a 2.7% City rental vacancy rate (CMHC).

Industrial lands in the City comprise only 6% of the City's land base. If Council is interested in exploring a yet untested formula of combining industrial and residential space in the same building, then they are welcome to take their experiment somewhere else in the 94% of the City that is not reserved for industrial activity.

**Signed:** (In alphabetical order below)

**Lance Berelowitz**, AA Dipl RPP MCIP, Principal Urban Forum Associates.

**Patrick Condon**, Professor Emeritus UBC School of Landscape and Architecture, author Broken City. Former head city planner.

**Christina DeMarco**, Urban and Regional Planner, former lead planner for the Metro Vancouver Regional Growth Strategy

**Frank Ducote**, Principal, Frank Ducote Urban Design, former Senior Urban Designer, City of Vancouver

**Michael Geller**, FCIP, RPP, MLAI, Ret Architect AIBC, urban planner, real estate consultant, developer and Adjunct Professor, SFU.

**Barbara Gordon**, Retired Architect AIBC and retired Director of Capital Planning, UBC

**Penny Gurstein**, PhD, MCIP (ret.) Professor Emeritus and Former Director, School of Community and Regional Planning, Co-Director, Housing Research Collaborative, UBC

**Scot Hein**, Retired Architect MAIBC/Former COV and UBC Senior Urban Designer and Development Planner/Adjunct Professor Urban Design UBC/SFU Faculty Continuing Studies/Founding Board Member Urbanarium/Board Member Small Housing BC/Housing Advocate

**Norman Hotson**, Retired Architect AIBC, FRAIC, RCA, Hon PIBC

**Sandy James**, former City of Vancouver City Planner, Managing Director Walk Metro Vancouver

**David Ley**, OC, FRSC, PhD, Urban Geographer, Professor Emeritus UBC, Order of Canada

**Mike Mangan**, Barrister & Solicitor (Ret.), who worked with the real estate industry for many years, authored *The Condominium Manual* and taught at UBC for 25 years.

**Sean McEwen**, Architect, AIBC, FRAIC. Affordable housing advocate

**Graham McGarva**, FRAIC, Retired Architect AIBC, M.A.

**Elizabeth Murphy**, private sector project manager, and senior property development officer, formerly with the City of Vancouver's housing and properties department, BC Housing and BC Buildings Corp

**Brian Palmquist**, Award winning architect and author, AIBC MRAIC BEP CP LEED AP

**Tom Phipps**, Retired Senior Planner City of Vancouver (33 years)

**Mary Pynenburg** MRAIC (Retired) MCIP (Retired) Former Director of Planning City of New Westminster, Former Director of Planning and Development City of Kelowna, former Director of Design / Development CP Hotels

**Robert Renger**, BES, MCP; Consultant City Planner; Former Senior Development Planner and City's lead for UniverCity at SFU, City of Burnaby

**Ralph Segal**, MAIBC (ret.) Former Chief Urban Designer / Development Planner, City of Vancouver

**Erick Villagomez**, Lecturer UBC School of Community and Regional Planning, Principal, Mētis Design | Build, Editor-in-Chief, Spacing Vancouver

**Arny Wise**, B. Comm., M.Sc., RPP, MCIP (ret), urban planner/ retired developer (President, Synergy Develop., VP Development, Goldfan Holdings), Board of Directors Toronto Economic Development Corporation (1990-1999)

**Andy Yan**, FCIP, RPP, GISP Director, City Program, Lifelong Learning and Associate Professor of Professional Practice, Urban Studies Program, Simon Fraser University