



## Planning & Development Priorities

### Council Update

October 17, 2017

**Kaye Krishna**, GM Development, Buildings, & Licensing

**Gil Kelley**, GM Planning, Urban Design, & Sustainability

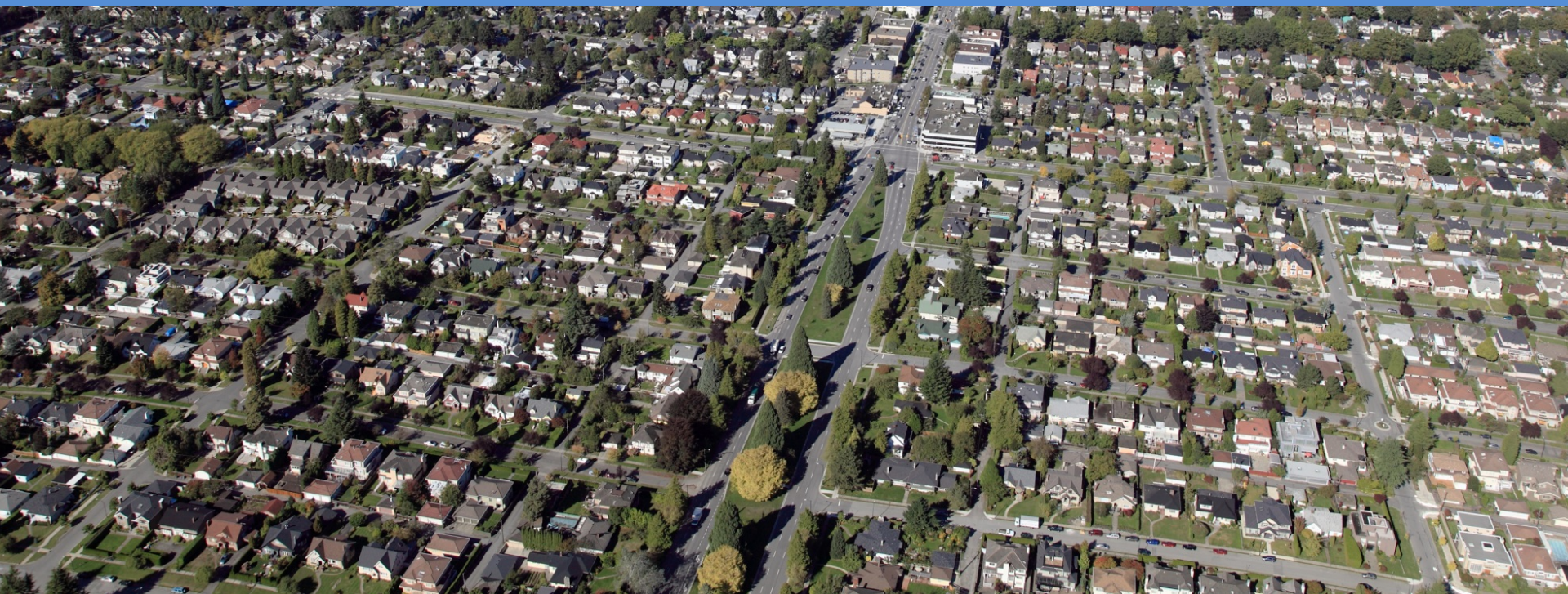


# Planning & Development Update

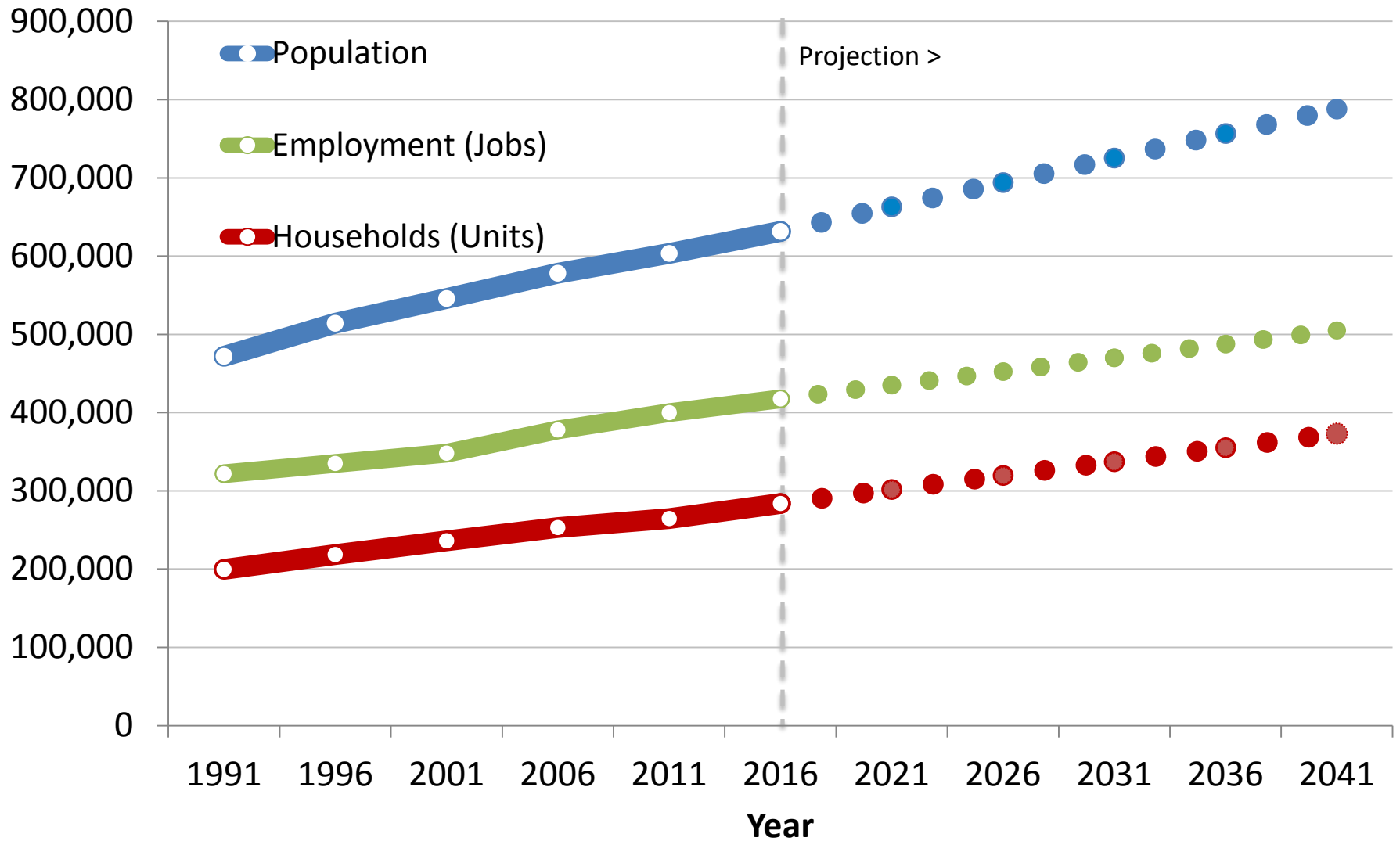




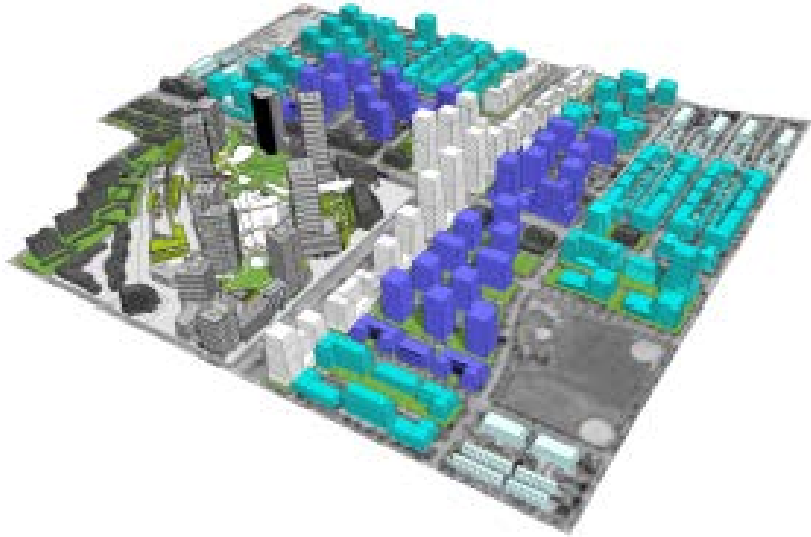
# Current State of Planning & Development



# A Growing City



# Trends and Issues

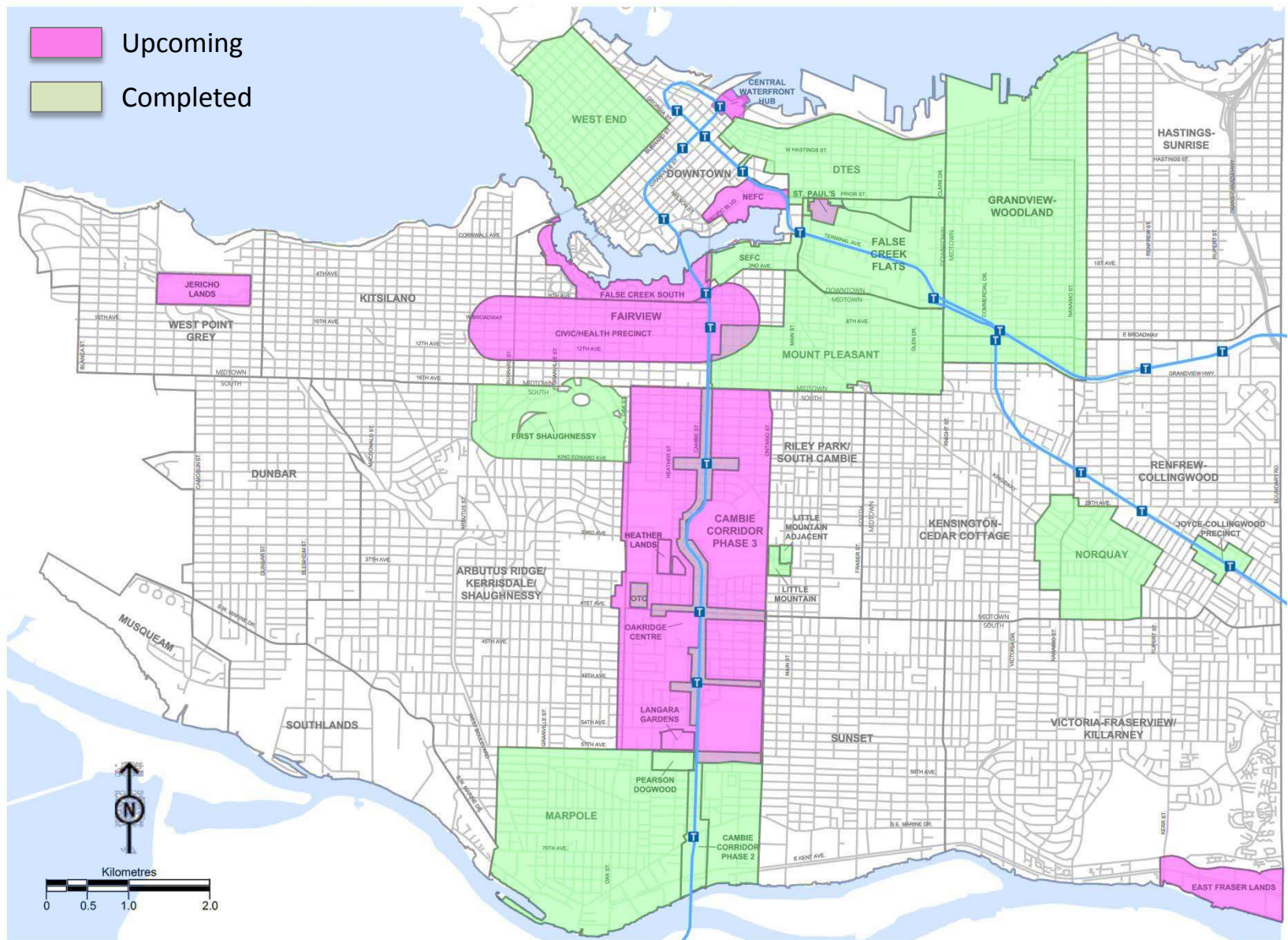


- New Plans Creating New Development Opportunity
- High Pace of Applications & Development Activity

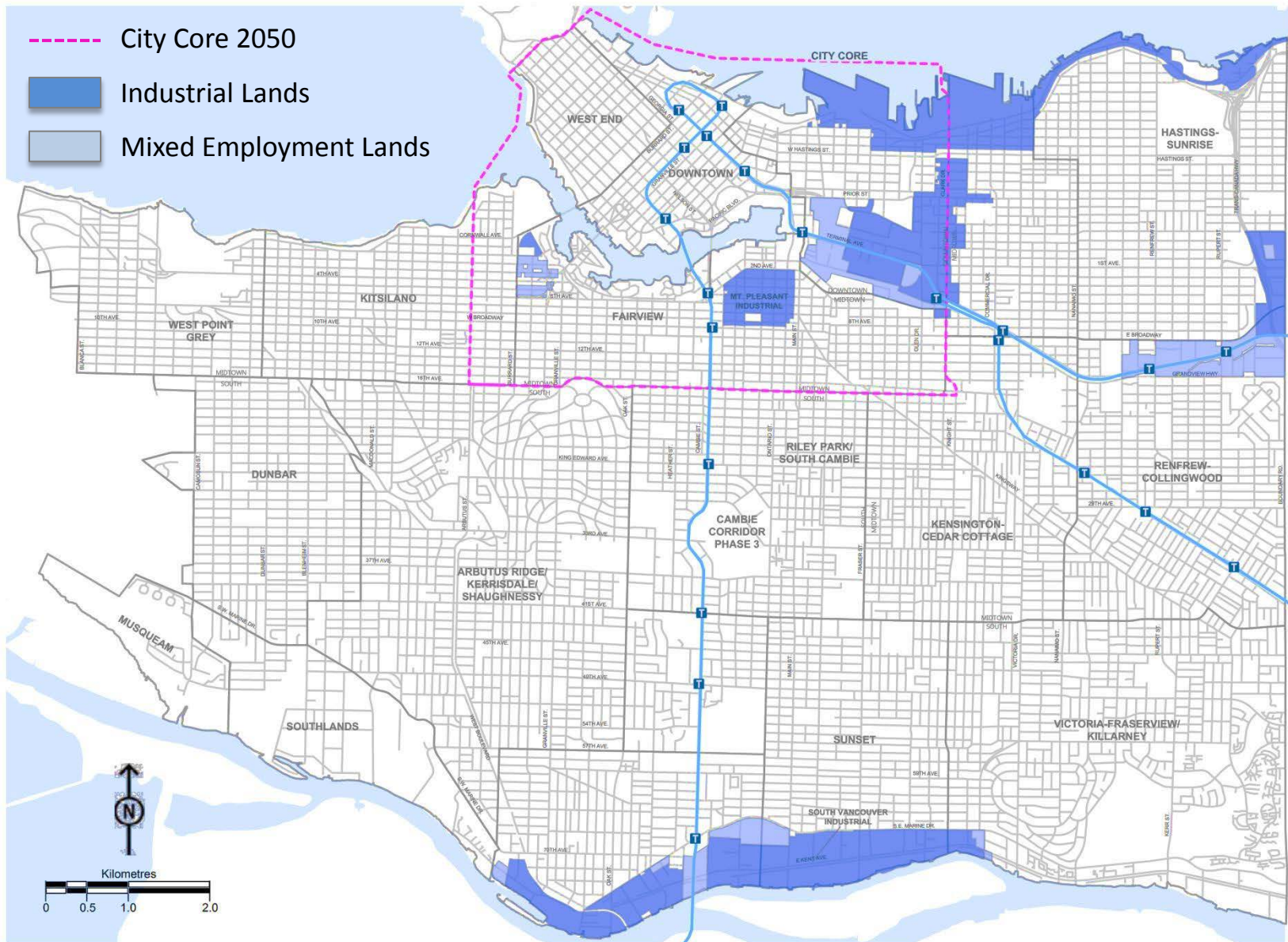
- Housing Affordability & Need for Right Supply
- Need for Infrastructure/ Amenities to Address Growth Needs



# Policy Context for Building Growth: Community Plans



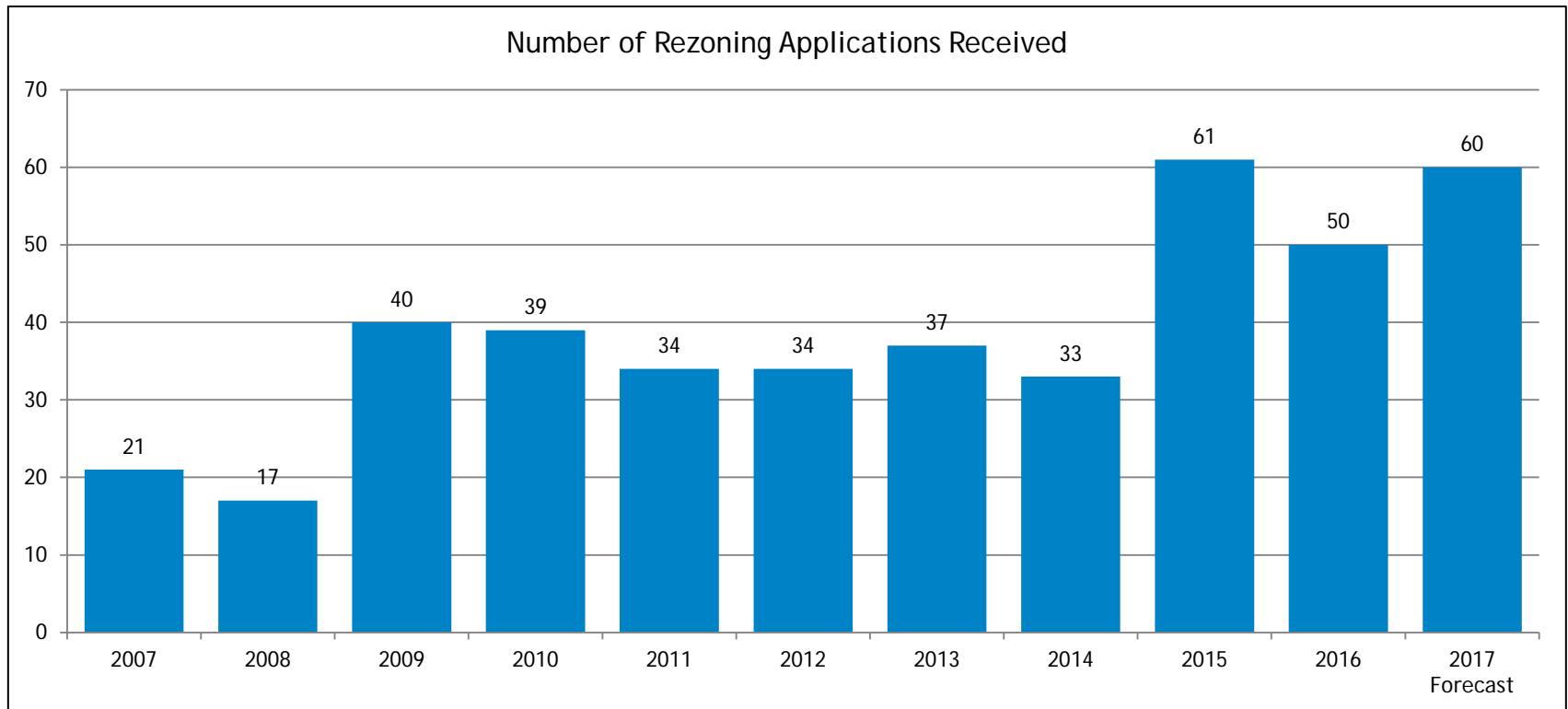
# Policy Context for Building Growth: City Core 2050 & Employment Lands Review



# Rezoning Applications

Rezoning inquiries and applications have increased substantially since 2014 to nearly double the historic average. Rezonings are responsible for about 50% of all new development.

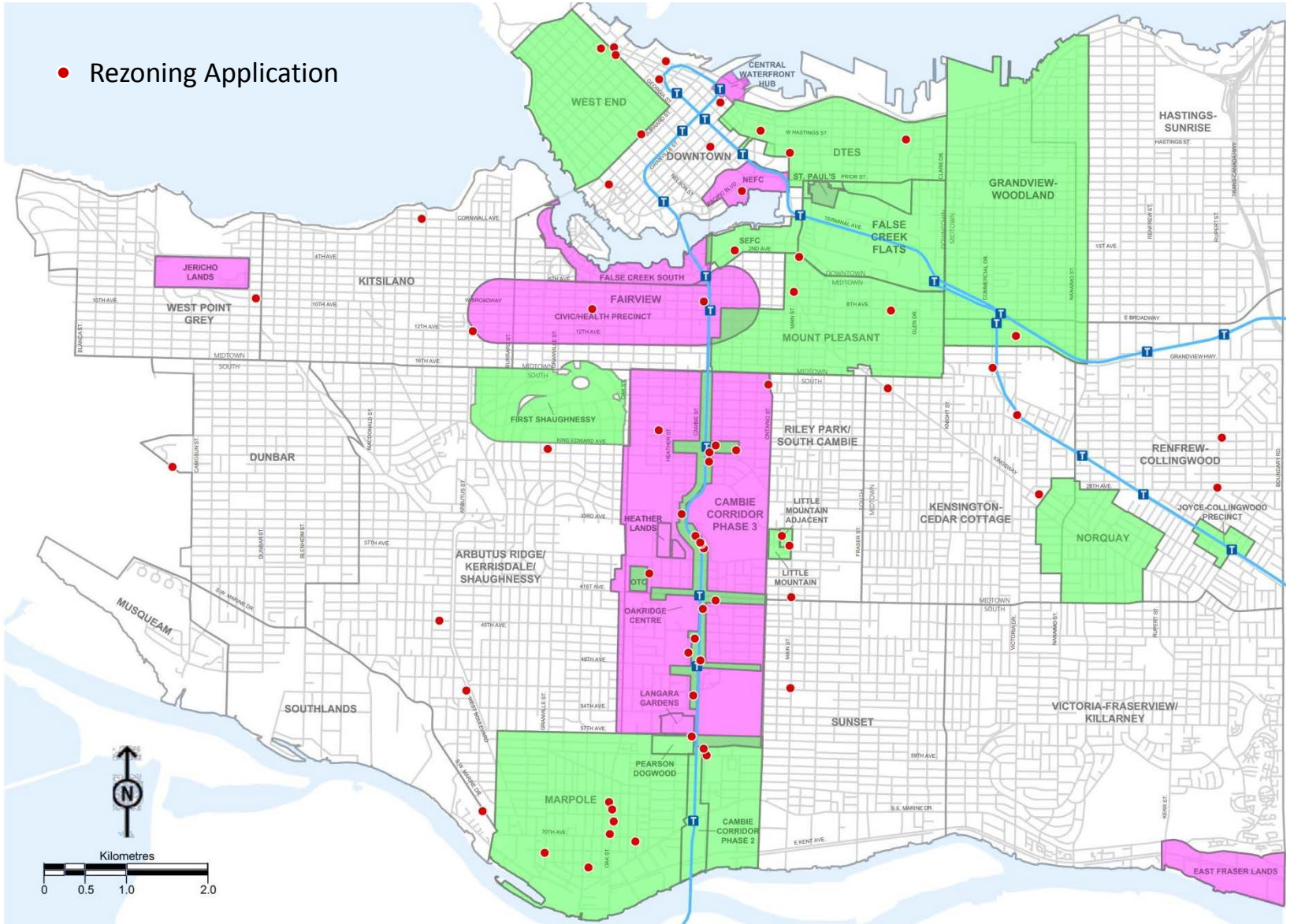
New Community Plans are introducing more pre-zoned areas, but based on the stream of enquiries and new rezoning policies this volume expected to continue and possibly increase.



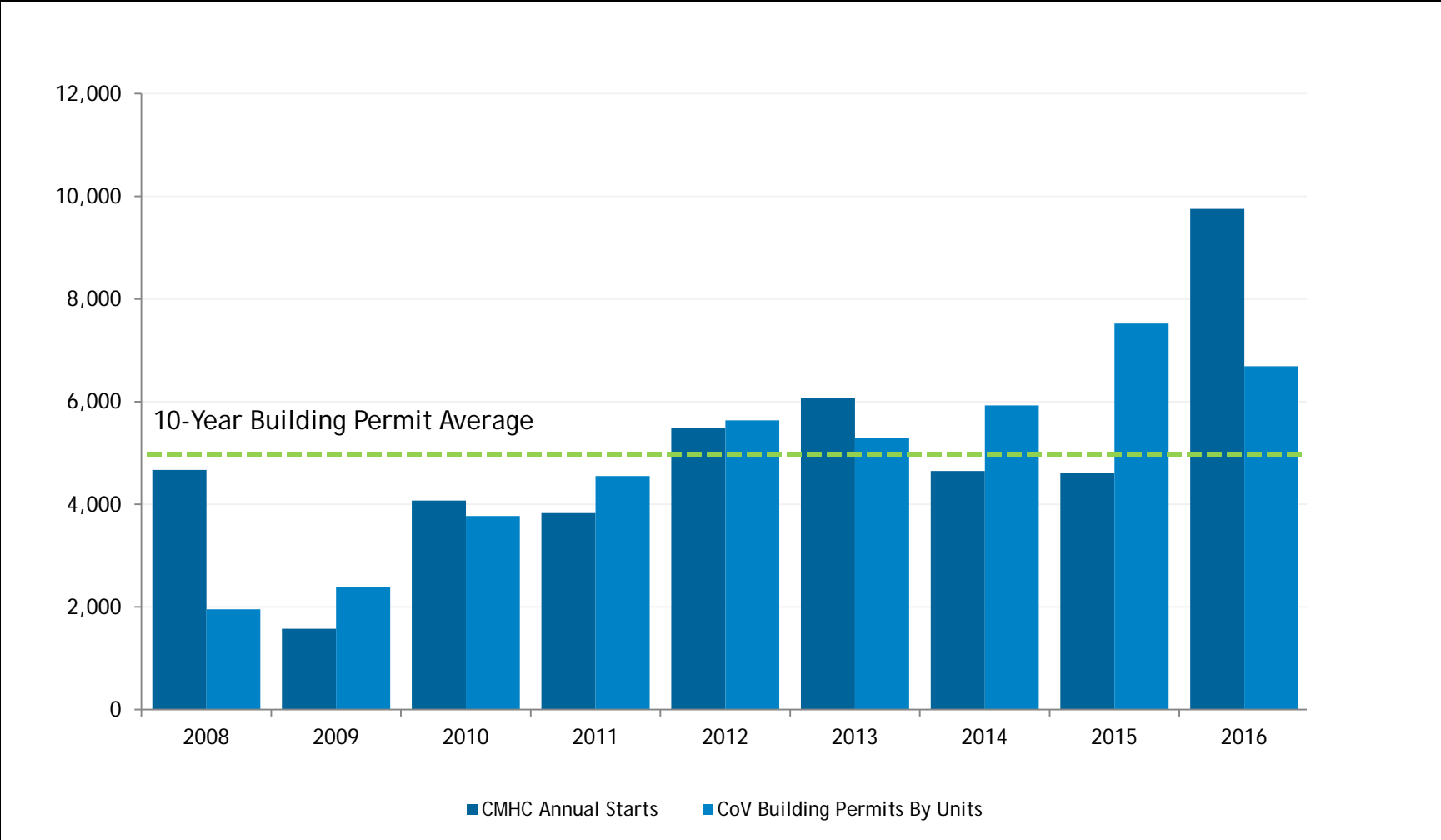


# Rezoning Applications

- Rezoning Application

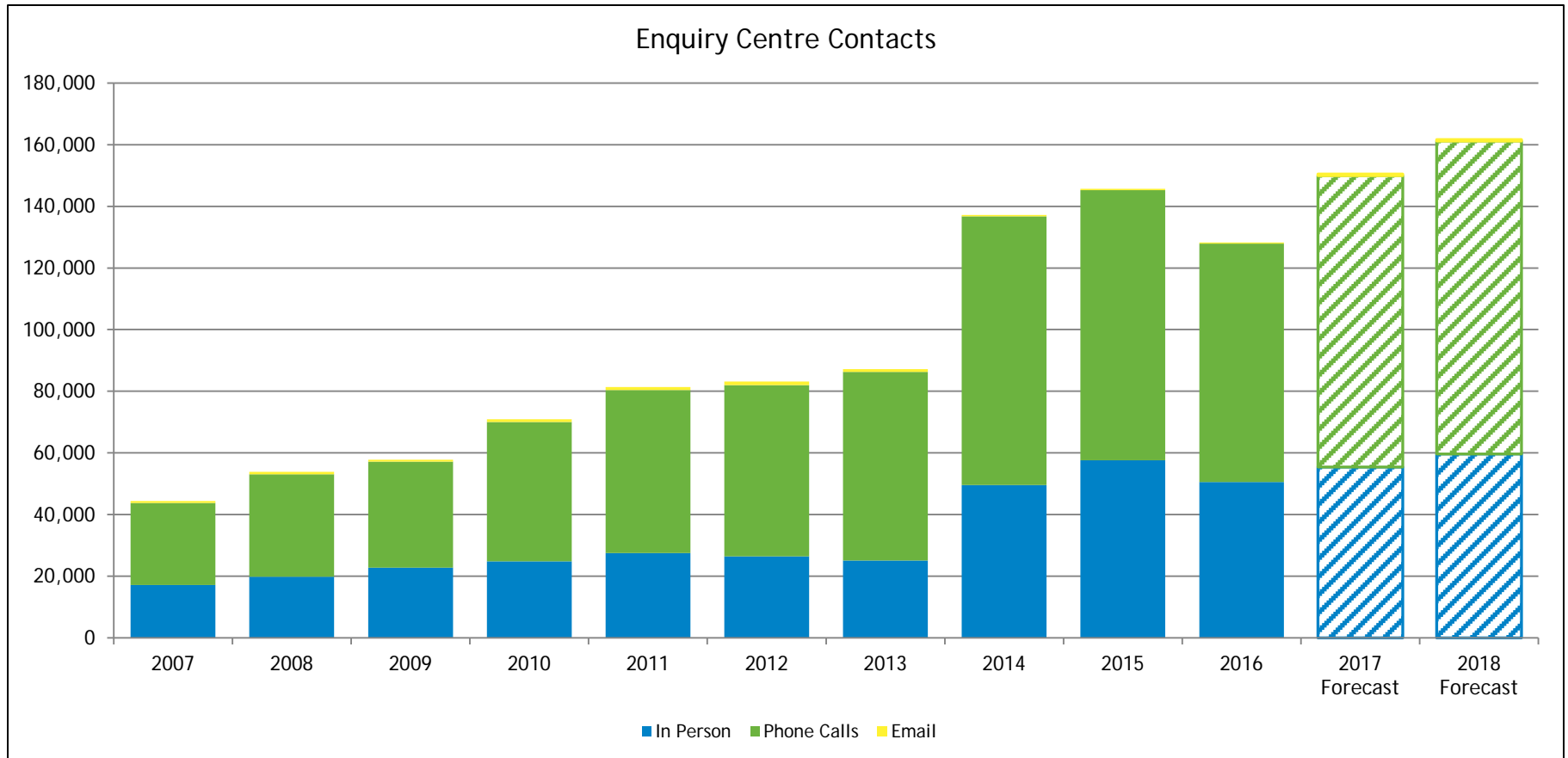


# Annual CMHC Starts & CoV Building Permits



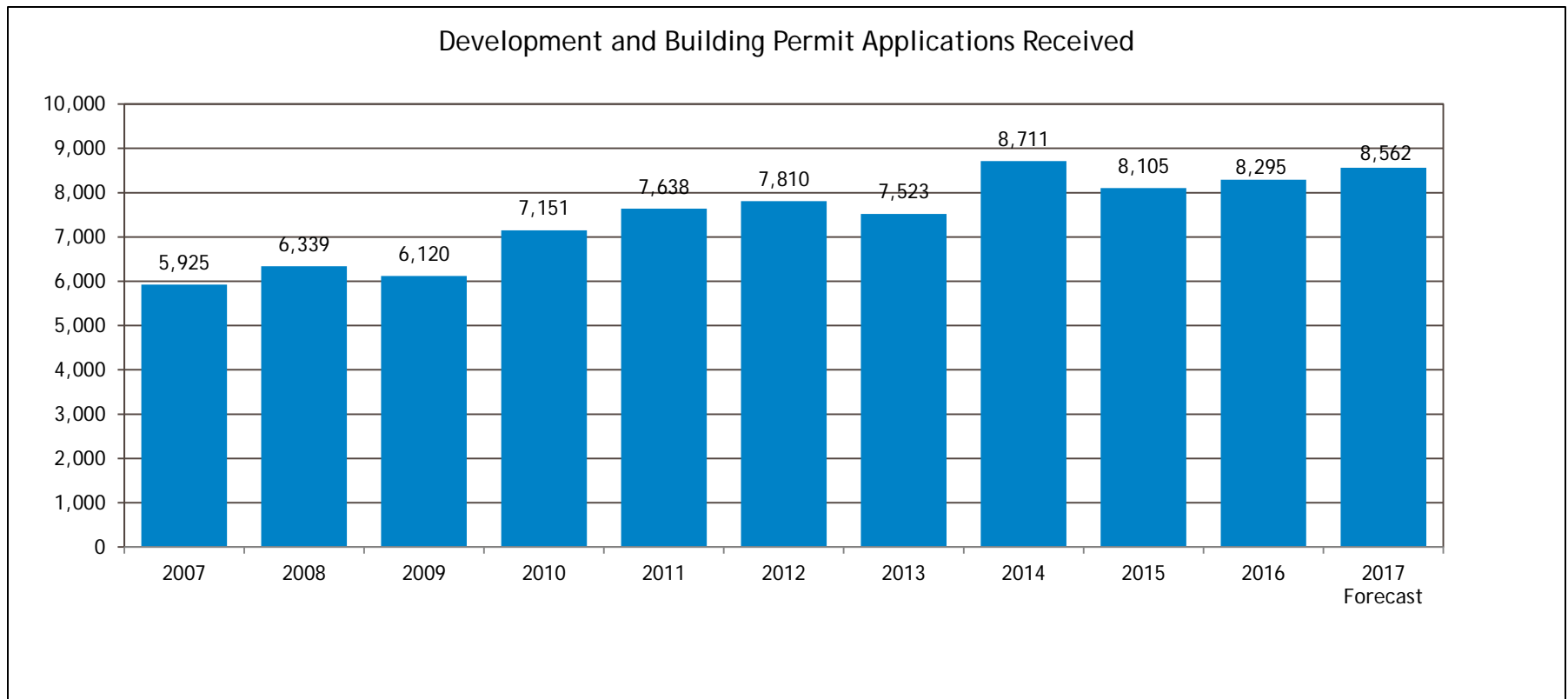
# Services Centre Volumes

Volumes for Services Centre enquiries spiked in 2014, increasing more than 50% in one year. This change aligned with the consolidation of services, but volumes have remained high.



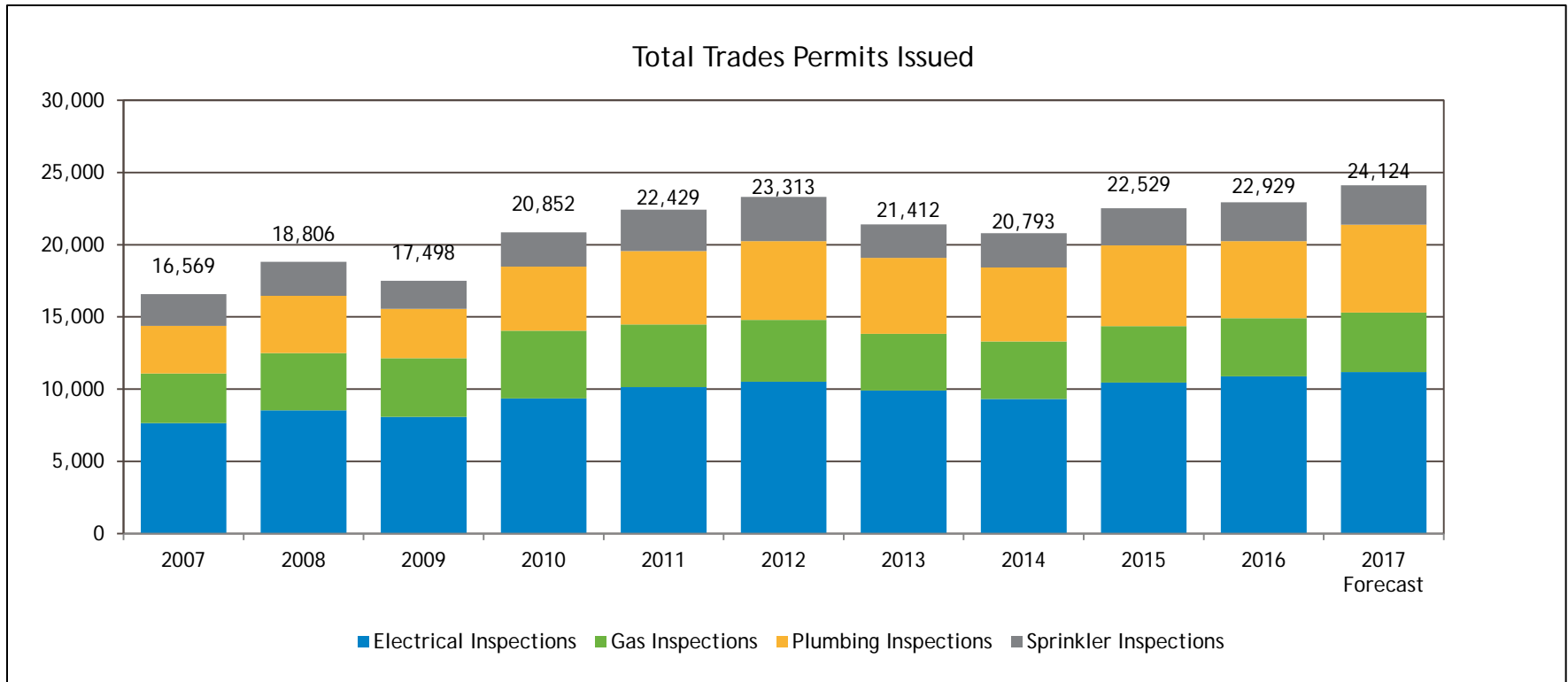
# Development & Building Permit Volumes

Development and Building permits have surged in Vancouver over the past four years. 2017 is projected to be the highest year on record next to 2014, with over 8,500 incoming permit applications.



# Trades Permit Volumes

While Trades Permit volumes have not exhibited the same four-year trend, there has been a steady upward trend since 2014, with a net increase of 16% in four years.



# Volume: Resource Changes

Over the past 9 years, permit-driven work volumes have increased an average of 24% while development-related staff only increased 6%.

Service Group	2008 - 2016 % Change	
	Volume	FTEs
Enquiry Centre	31%	1%
Housing Review Branch	31%	52%
Development Review Branch	31%	11%
Project Facilitation Group	31%	5%
Building Review Branch	31%	14%
Building Inspectors	6%	0%
Electrical Inspectors	28%	-13%
Plumbing & Gas Inspectors	17%	-6%
By-Law Admin*	11%	-10%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>6%</b>

# Key Take-Aways

- The pace of growth in Vancouver has not slowed - Rezoning, development & building applications and trades permits are at all-time highs
- Municipalities across the region have experienced significant impacts to development times due to demand - Industry is also struggling to keep up
- Current planning processes paired with ongoing demand indicate that development will continue to increase
- Planning and development policy changes have made Vancouver all the more desirable, but have added to the complexity of application processing
- We cannot simply keep up by finding efficiencies and making process changes. We need to pursue system and transformational changes and to resource to meet the demand.



# Priorities & Actions





## Guiding Principles

- Culture of partnership & collaboration
- Risk-based, priority-driven methods
- Quality, effective service delivery
- Goal-based and data-driven decision-making

## Key Goals

- Simplify rules and establish standards
- Reconcile competing objectives
- Accelerate reviews and streamline decisions
- Empower staff and professionals

## Policy and Planning

1. Prepare area plans with “pre-zoning”
2. Review system for development charges
3. Regulatory review & regular updates
4. Clarify advisory committee mandates

## Process and Service Delivery

5. Process and customer service improvement
6. Pilot: prioritized process for affordable housing
7. Pilot: streamlined low-density housing
8. Enhanced technology, data and reporting

## Staff and Industry Capacity

9. Staff training and capacity-building
10. Industry development and support

# 1. Prepare area plans with “pre-zoning”

**Goals:** Increase the number of area plans/pre-zonings to reduce the volume of site re-zonings and enable more as-of-right development in line with current planning goals

## Recent Actions

- Adopted plans and zoning with district schedules for:
  - Mount Pleasant Digital District
  - Railtown
  - False Creek Flats

## Next Steps

- Bring forward plans and zoning for
  - Cambie Phase 3/ Marpole Town Centre
  - Joyce Street Corridor
  - North East False Creek

## 2. Review system for development charges

**Goals:** Evaluate current methodologies and challenges with development charges and propose revisions based on current requirements and goals

### Recent Actions

- Completed comprehensive update to the City-wide DCL (last updated 2003)
- Updated growth forecast, capital program and costs, DCL allocations and DCL rates
- Scoped a comprehensive update to the City-wide CAC Policy

### Next Steps

- Develop a tracking program for Transportations and Utilities DCL projects
- Complete CAC update in 2 phases over the next 6-7 months
- Establish inclusionary/CAC policy for market rental projects and non-residential projects
- Review target CACs for the following areas and/or projects: Cambie Corridor, Marpole, Little Mountain Adjacent

## 3. Regulatory updates & review

**Goals:** Simplify/eliminate unnecessary complexity; Reconcile competing objectives; Accelerate application reviews; Align vision with policies & regulations

### Recent Actions

- Approved changes to RT Zones Mt. Pleasant and Grandview-Woodland for infill
- Character home zoning review complete – zoning changes to RS districts to incent retention and encourage infill
- Approved new temporary modular housing regulations and guidelines
- Heritage transfer policy update
- Relaxations for Certified Passive House and Encroachment By-law amendments for solar shading
- New Sign By-law and Fee Schedule adopted
- Implemented VBBL change management approach

## 3. Regulatory updates & review, cont'd.

**Goals:** Simplify/eliminate unnecessary complexity; Reconcile competing objectives; Accelerate application reviews; Align vision with policies & regulations

### Next Steps

- Hire Regulatory Review Project Manager
- Develop engagement process, investigate best practices, and create policy inventory for Regulatory review project
- Explore density bonus for rental city-wide
- Review accessible path of travel and adaptability requirements
- Update wall thickness relaxations
- Renew Heritage Density Bank approach
- Launch phase 2 of the Sign By-law review (3<sup>rd</sup> party advertising/billboards)
- Develop a strategy for eliminating residential parking requirements in key areas downtown through offset measures and incentives

## 4. Clarify advisory committee mandates

**Goals:** Update mandate and role of development advisory committees in coordination with regulatory review

### Recent Actions

- Refreshed roles, expectations, and Terms of Reference with Urban Design Panel and staff
- Held initial meetings with Historic Area Planning Committees – Chinatown, Gastown

### Next Steps

- Update Terms of Reference for all groups by Q32018
- Review composition of membership representation

## 5. Process & customer service

**Goals:** Become a best-in-class service provider; Implement rolling incremental changes to gradually improve near-term customer expectations and experience; Use technology to enable service delivery and improve transparency

### Recent Actions

- Revised Service Centre handouts, signage, and web content
- Review of best practices of other Canadian development service centres
- Conducted customer service survey

### Next Steps

- Launch cross-department process improvement and integration projects
- Implement changes to improve morning queues, including time limits and separated queues
- Embed experts and floating supervisors to address issues quickly
- Implement near-term recommendations from best practices and customer surveys
- Scope 'customer-led' service design project



## 5. Process & customer service, cont'd.

The Commercial Renovation Centre has responded to 700 enquiries since it was launched in February.

We will expand and improve commercial renovation efforts over the next year.



In September, we hosted over 50 residents and homebuilders for an 'RT Enquiry Night.'

Goal: to help explain the impacts and design option associated with the recent RT zoning changes.

The event was well-received and we will host more evening training and engagement sessions.

# 6. Pilot: prioritized process for affordable housing

## Pilot Objectives:

- Increase delivery of non-market (NM) affordable housing
- Reduce the planning and permitting times for affordable housing projects
- Test new governance, processes, and tools; scale successes to other development streams
- Enhance relationships and capacity with non-profits, private and public agencies that deliver NM housing

## Pilot Prioritization Criteria

CRITERIA	WEIGHT
1. Affordability	25%
2. Size	25%
3. Project Readiness	25%
4. Zero Emissions Building (ZEB)	10%
5. Urban Indigenous	10%
6. Social Housing Renewals	5%
	100%

**Key Target: Enable ~2,000 units of housing over 2 year pilot program (approximately 20 projects)**

## 6. Pilot: prioritized process for affordable housing, cont'd.

### Recent Actions

- Defined pilot approach, governance, and roles
- Established criteria to prioritize projects
- Defined process to prioritize and expedite – with aim of completing expedited projects in ~40 weeks
- Drafted tools and templates to test, including project trackers and legal templates
- Soft launch – 9 projects WIP, initial project times reduced by 16 weeks
- Launched governance structure

### Next Steps

- Hire dedicated staff
- Validate priority criteria
- Invite developers to participate
- Add expedited modular housing to scope

## 7. Pilot: streamline low-density housing

**Goals:** Significantly reduce permit issuance timelines; take more risk-based approach and simplify processes; improve and align customer service and support.

### **Recent Actions**

- Implemented Single Point of Contacts (SPOC) and 'call-backs' to projects
- Multiple industry engagement sessions
- Created detailed operational metrics
- Changed landscape review process
- Fast-tracking single story laneways
- Simplifying review process for simple developments
- Dispositioned back-log of >30 week applications
- Launched 'nexus lane' pilot project

## 7. Pilot: streamline low-density housing, cont'd.

**Goals:** Significantly reduce permit issuance timelines; take more risk-based approach and simplify processes; improve and align customer service and support.

### Next Steps

- Implement Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and Customer Return Times (CRTs)
- Improve issue resolutions via pre-planned meetings and escalation process
- Eliminate landscape backlog
- Evaluate opportunities to concurrently process demolition, salvage and abatement, and building permits
- Engage industry on 'nexus' lane pilot
- Explore ways to expedite all laneways

## 7. Pilot: streamline low-density housing, cont'd.

### Key Findings

- 30% of all in-process permits are with applicants at any given time
- Staff processing times are dependent upon the applicant turnaround times for follow up information or adjustments
- Newer applications are higher quality and moving faster, but there remains a need to improve
- Current staffing structures create challenges with staff stability and retention

### Key Impacts

- Increasing throughput
  - Work-In Progress (outstanding) applications reduced by 11% since June
  - As of September: 2201 permits in, 2414 permits out – a 110% rate of issuance
- Landscape process changes have had an impact:
  - Median issuance times before changes: 35 weeks
  - Median issuance times after changes: 20 weeks
- Single-story laneways moving quickly – some permits issued in a week

## 8. Enhanced technology, data and reporting

**Goals:** Use technology to drive process improvements and integration; create metrics to increase transparency, drive decisions, and measure outcomes; expand online services and reporting for customers

### Recent Actions

- Established new Business:IT government model
- Hiring development process, technology, and metrics team
- Created cross-department POSSE prioritization and planning committee
- Established new priority metrics and tracking; monthly CMO reviews

### Next Steps

- Create POSSE executive dashboard
- Define and implement phase 2 of development metrics
- Scope and implement new system functionality: urban forestry, mobile devices, ePlan submissions

# 9. Staff training and capacity-building

**Goals:** Establish strong, sustainable mechanisms to build and grow cross-department capacity and expertise in a complex environment with increasing demand

## Recent Actions

- Strategically over-hired in high need priority areas: low density, affordable
- Many new leaders promoted from within, growing capacity across teams
- Hired experienced, dedicated training manager
- Launched supervisor 'walk-about' and real-time coaching
- Introduced shifts in customer orientation and approach

## Next Steps

- Increase staff levels to meet volume and complexity demands
- Empower staff; evaluate and revise decision-making
- Establish CoV-specific training: onboarding, job-shadowing, and 'a house in a day'
- Coordinate with local universities to expand development-related curricula
- Launch industry and CoV 'lunch and learns'



# 10. Industry development & support

**Goals:** Engage with Industry to build relationships, increase dialog, and strengthen capacity through workshops, training, and other COV-led processes.

## Recent Actions

- Held various industry engagement workshops: Small Homebuilders, Development Advisory Group, UDI Liaison meetings
- Drafted partner engagement plan

## Next Steps

- Hold additional engagement sessions to explore priority projects, including nexus lane workshop and CP program workshop with AIBC and APEG
- Link Housing Vancouver engagement findings to Planning and Development priorities
- Review and improve bulletin and guidelines scoping and publishing processes
- Implement CoV Policy Implementation Committee
- Explore issues resolution and escalation process

# Summary & Next Steps

## Summary

- Over the course of the last 6 months, the City has taken significant steps to improve its Planning and Development processes
- While there is much more to do, we've made a lot of foundational progress and have had an impact in a number of areas
- Feedback from industry groups has been key to informing our work and strengthening relationships
- Despite dedicated efforts, we need to invest more resources in planning and development capacity to catch-up with explosive growth and to prepare for future increases
- We're committed to pursuing systemic changes to shift culture and reduce planning and development times

Thank You

# Revised Action Plan

## Policy and Planning

1. Prepare area plans with “pre-zoning”
2. Review system for development charges
3. Conduct regulatory review & implement updates
4. Clarify advisory committee roles & mandates

## Process and Service Delivery

5. Implement customer service improvements
6. **Enable affordable housing production priorities**
7. **Improve low-density housing development**
8. **Review commercial renovation processes**

## Organization and Industry Capacity

9. Enhance technology, data and reporting
10. Train and build capacity across development-related staff
11. Engage and support development industry