

LAND DEVELOPMENT WORKBOOK

Development Feasibility

For Landholders Starting to Envision Developing Their Lands

Congrats on starting this exciting process! I look forward to navigating this experience with you.

Whether you've recently acquired new property, or you're been sitting on land for generations—deciding how to leverage your land to create lasting wealth and a legacy is no small feat.

With this workbook, you've taken an important first step. The series of questions in this guide are designed to help you consider future opportunities for developing your lands in a way that...

- Realizes your ultimate vision (don't worry—if you don't have a clear vision yet, I'll help you get there)
- Honours your deepest-held values, so you can feel good about what your development has contributed to the local community.
- Optimizes the value of your lands, so you can thoughtfully leverage your development project for long-term wealth and success.

Over the next several pages, I'm going to walk you through the variables you need to consider and the conversations you need to have to get clarity around your vision and plan for your lands—all based on the vision-centered process I've used in my work for more than 25 years.

BACKGROUND

Many landowners have dreams of one day developing their lands—and yet, most wind up feeling “stuck at the starting line.” If you’ve ever asked yourself...

- Where would we even begin the process of developing my land?
- Is it worth the hassle, or should I just sell?
- What are my options for building on this property?
- What permits and permissions would I even need to get started?
- What will our stakeholders think about the decision to develop?
- How much does a process like this cost, and what are my financing options?
- How long does it take to go from idea to fully-realized project?
- What consultants, contractors, or officials do I need to hire to get this underway?
- How can I make sure I’m adding the most possible value to this land, in a way that aligns with my values AND my financial goals?

...You’re in the right place.

The truth of the matter is that developing your land doesn’t start with phone calls to a bank for financing or visits to your local government office.

It starts with a VISION—a sense of where your legacy is headed, and a clear idea for how this land can contribute to that legacy.

This guide is dedicated to helping you clarify that vision... because when you’re clear on what matters to you and your loved ones in terms of legacy, values, and multigenerational prosperity, you can make decisions about your development from a place of confidence and intentionality.

ABOUT THIS WORKBOOK

This workbook will help you to:

- I. Clarify your vision for developing your land, including beginning to understand what's possible for your property.
- II. Understand risks and opportunities associated with the lands that you own.
- III. Plan your next steps and lead conversations with stakeholders.

This is a robust workbook and your work in completing it will help you to assess where you are in the process. If there are sections where you do not know the answer, simply note that.

After you've completed the workbook, you can set up a [complimentary clarity call](#) with me, Tegan Smith of Channel Consulting, to discuss next steps.

BODY OF WORKBOOK

I. Your Vision

Every property requires different considerations.

- Has your group had discussions about your vision for your land?
- Has there ever been talk of a "big dream" for your land?
- Is there a "do nothing" option?
- Have you talked about what you would hope to achieve with land development?
- Have you talked about what you would value most about developing the land?
- Are the stakeholders aware of the scope of the land assets?
- Have those that are involved in setting the vision been on the land before?
- Do you require a facilitator to begin the conversation about what to do with your land?

II. Understand Risks & Opportunities

Describe Your Land

This section is to document what you know about your land, based on any work that you've done previously.

1. Owner Information

- a. Name:
- b. Address:
- c. Phone Number:
- d. Website (if applicable):

2. Property Information

- a. Address of Property in Question:
- b. Property Site Area (in acres):
- c. Short description of buildings and activities currently on site (5-12 words):
- d. Short description of land use in the surrounding area (5-7 words):
- e. List of encumbrances on the land title, if any (available from BC Assessment):

3. Current Vision & Values

- a. Do you currently have a vision for a development project?
- b. Who has been involved in putting this vision together?
- c. Does it align to your values? Yes No
- d. What don't you like about this vision?
- e. What might others find fun or interesting about your vision?
- f. What do you still hope to achieve?
- g. When you think about your vision and values for developing this land, what still seems out of sync?
- h. Who do you still need to engage in this conversation?
- i. How advanced is your vision?
- j. Right now, what types of uses do you have in mind?

- k. Do you have a vision for the specific or ratios on height, sq ft of development, use and FAR by use?
- l. Are there phases to this?
- m. Is there a desired date from when you'd be in construction and when you'd open?
- n. How committed are you to this plan?
- o. What other parameters do you still need to consider, based on what you know now?
- p. Are there any changes that you might make to your vision considering factors like market conditions, funding, construction costs, interest rates, etc.?
- q. Have you talked to neighbours, indigenous groups, permitting authorities, elected officials and/or others about your ambitious?
- r. What do stakeholders think about your vision?
- s. Have you engaged in studies or design work?
- t. Have you ever developed a financial model for this vision?
- u. Is there anything else to know about your current vision and what it will take to make it a reality?

4. Area Details

- a. Is the site in an urban area or rural area?
- b. Municipality?
- c. Regional District?
- d. Is there a highway nearby and if so, what is the name of the nearest intersection/interchange?
- e. What is the name of the nearest watercourse or creek (if any)?
- f. Is this street a bike route? Yes No
- g. Is this street a transit route? Yes No
- h. Nearest town or village centre, per Official Community Plan?
- i. Nearest school?
- j. Nearest park?
- k. Trail systems?
- l. What else is important to know about where your land is situated?

5. Land Assembly (if applicable)

- a. Is there a possible land assembly to add to the site?
- b. If 'yes', what is the land assembly address?
- c. For the land assembly, what buildings and activities are currently on site (5-12 words):

- d. Land Assembly Site Area (in acres):

LAND USE PERMITTING

To achieve your vision, you will need to work with complex land use policy. Land use policy is a key constraint that will impact the costs and timelines for your land development project. Having early information about policy will help you to be effective in developing solutions that address regulations.

A list of land use regulations that could be triggered is available on [Channel's website](#).

Municipal Policy

Official Community Plan

1. Is your project located within a local municipality?
2. What does the Official Community Plan (OCP) say is the municipality's long-term vision for your site?
3. Is your current vision consistent with the OCP? Yes No
4. If not, will your proposal require an OCP amendment? Yes No
5. If an OCP amendment is required, will a Regional Growth strategy amendment also be required?
6. What is the process and estimated timeline for the municipality to consider an OCP amendment? Is it possible that this be done concurrent with the zoning proposal?
7. What is the process and estimated timeline for Metro Vancouver to consider a Regional Growth Strategy amendment? How would that impact the timing of the OCP amendment and zoning proposal?

Area Plan/Neighbourhood Plan

1. Is there an area plan/neighbourhood plan that will impact this site?
2. If so, what does the area plan/neighbourhood plan say is the municipality's long-term vision for your site?
3. Is your current vision consistent with the area plan/neighbourhood plan?
4. If not, will your proposal require an amendment to the area plan/neighbourhood plan?
5. If an area plan/neighbourhood plan amendment is required, will an OCP amendment or Regional Growth strategy amendment also be required?
6. What is the process and estimated timeline for the municipality to consider a plan amendment? Is it possible that this be done concurrent with the zoning proposal?

Zoning

1. What is the current zoning on this site?
2. Does your proposed project require a rezoning?
3. If so, are there comparable rezonings that have recently been approved or denied by the municipal Council (e.g., similar project, along the same corridor, in the same neighbourhood, etc.)?
4. If so, what is the zoning that you would likely be seeking, considering comparable applications as well as what is included in the OCP and area plan/neighbourhood plan?
5. What is the process and estimated timeline for the municipality to consider a zoning proposal?
 - a. What is the preliminary application process?
 - b. What is the full application process?
 - c. How are community amenity contributions calculated?
 - d. Can a Development Permit be reviewed by staff concurrent with the zoning application?
6. Is there a servicing strategy (storm water, sanitary, and roads) that addresses this site?
7. What are all of the off-site servicing requirements that are anticipated at this site?
8. What fees are payable to the City with rezoning?
 - a. What are the City review fees?
 - b. What will the municipality require by way of public art, community amenity contributions (CACs) and other amenity contributions?

Development Permit

1. Does your project require a development permit (DP)? Yes No
2. If so, what does the area plan/neighbourhood plan say is the municipality's long-term vision for your site?
 - Design
 - Streamside protection
 - Landscape
 - What else?
3. What is the process and estimated timeline for the municipality to consider a DP application of this nature?
4. What fees are payable to the City with DP?

Building Permit

1. What building permit (BP) regulations are applicable for this site?
2. Are there any specific green building requirements that apply only to projects with rezonings?
3. What is the process and estimated timeline for the municipality to consider a BP application of this nature?
4. What fees are payable to the City with BP?
 - e. What are the City fees?
 - f. What municipal and regional development cost charges/levies (DCCs/DCLs) are payable at the time of the BP?

Other Municipal Policy

1. Will the land development plan be reviewed against any other guidelines, such as?
 - View cones?
 - Streetscape design guidelines?
 - Housing policy?
 - Heritage policy?
 - Any other relevant policy?

Provincial Policy

Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)

1. Is the site located with the ALR? Yes No
2. Is this use permitted under the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) regulation? Yes No
3. If yes, what are the steps that need to be followed to obtain ALC approvals?
4. What steps will you need to take with the municipality to get their endorsement?
5. What is the process and estimated timeline for the ALC and municipality to consider an application of this nature?
6. What fees are payable to the City and ALC with the application?

Ministry of Environment (MOE)

1. Does the site have a previous history with a commercial use? Yes No
2. If yes, has a site assessment been completed by a QEP? Yes No
3. Is the site contaminated? Yes No
4. Given the knowns/unknowns about contamination, what is the process and estimated timeline for the MOE to consider an application for Certificate of Compliance on a site of this nature?
5. Are there any fees payable to MOE? Yes No

Riparian Area Regulation (RAPR) and Water Sustainability Act (WSA)

1. Is the site within 30 metres of a creek or stream? Yes No
2. If yes, has a QEP provided you with an opinion on anticipated regulations that will be triggered, as well as the likely related setback and/or offsetting requirements?
3. Given the knowns/unknowns about FLNRORD requirements, what is the process and estimated timeline to consider an application for WSA and/or RAPR on a site of this nature?
4. What sort of indigenous engagement may be involved?
5. What are the fees payable to FLNRORD?

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI)

1. Is the site within 800 metres of a controlled access freeway? Yes No
2. If yes, has a transportation consultant provided an opinion on whether any upgrades to provincial highway infrastructure may be required as part of this project?
3. What is the approval process and estimated timeline for MOTI to consider an application of this nature?
4. What are the fees payable to MOTI?

Other Provincial Policy

BC Utilities Commission Act – What permissions that you may need for utility companies such as Fortis BC, BC Hydro, etc.?

Are there natural resources on your site? What is the process for confirming appropriate permits for timber cruise, mining, etc.?

BCEAA – The Environmental Assessment Act provides a mechanism for reviewing major projects to assess their potential impacts. British Columbia's environmental assessment process is important to ensure that major projects meet the goals of environmental, economic, and social sustainability. The assessment process also ensures that the issues and concerns of the public, First Nations, communities, and government agencies are considered.

Federal Policy

Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)

1. Does the project have the potential to impact fish or fish habitat? Yes No
2. If yes, has a QEP provided an opinion on how the federal regulation may impact your plans?
3. Given the knowns/unknowns about DFO review requirements, what is the process and estimated timeline for DFO to consider an application on a site of this nature?
4. What sort of indigenous engagement may be involved?
5. What are the fees payable to DFO?

Species at Risk Act (SARA)

1. Does the development plan have the potential to impact Species at Risk? Yes No
2. If yes, has a QEP provided an opinion on how the federal regulation may impact your plans?
3. Given the knowns/unknowns about SARA review requirements, what is the process and estimated timeline for the appropriate agency to consider an application on a site of this nature?
4. Can the SARA review be done in conjunction with a DFO process? Yes No
5. What are the fees payable for the SARA review?

Other Federal Policy

Impact Assessment Act IAA – Federal projects or projects on lands within federal jurisdiction are reviewed under the federal IAA. Impact assessments help us understand the possible impacts of these types of projects before they start. Assessments identify the best ways to avoid or reduce a project’s negative impacts. They may also find ways to enhance the positive aspects of a project. Their goal is to inform decision-makers about project impacts and ensure the protection of people and the environment.

Port of Vancouver – Project and Environmental Review (PER)– If your project is located within the jurisdiction of the Port of Vancouver (also known as the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority), then it will be reviewed under the port’s permitting process. The municipality and other government agencies may be engaged as stakeholders in the review process.

Other Important Considerations

Market Conditions

1. Have you conducted a market study and do you have information that there will be a market for the development plan that you are envisioning? Yes No

Financing & Construction

1. Do you know what it will cost to fully evaluate development feasibility?
2. Do you have funding for the design/permitting phase of the project? Yes No
3. Do you have funding to build your project? Yes No
4. Do you have any information about whether your project will qualify for financing?

5. Is there any component of your project that could be pre-sold? Yes No

6. Have you had any discussions with potential partners? Yes No

Other Considerations

1. Do you have an idea of how long it will take to get through the permitting process, considering all of the permits that are required?
2. Do you have an idea of what studies need to be completed as part of the permitting process (e.g. Environmental, Traffic/Parking, Servicing, etc)? Do you have an idea of costs and timelines involved in completing these studies? Do you have an idea about whether the studies can be completed in phases?
3. What other “soft costs” (e.g. legal fees, studies, consultant assistance, etc) need to be factored in?

Summary of Risks & Opportunities

For each land use regulation that may impact the development of your land, please assess:

1. What is your level of confidence in how this regulation may impact your development vision?
2. What is the key trigger(s) that would result in this regulation impacting your vision?
3. What consultant or other resource may need to help verify this?
4. What technical questions will the project team need to monitor?
5. What are the cost risks and potential mitigations?
6. How does this impact the timelines and key milestones?

LAND USE REGULATION	DECISION-MAKER	NATURE OF THE RISK OR OPPORTUNITY	LEVEL (H, M, L)	RESOURCE TO HELP	KEY QUESTIONS

Plan The Next Steps & Lead Conversations

With the background information in the table above, you're now ready to consider the sequence of actions that you will take to make sure that you fully understand the pathway to achieve your land development vision..

What questions need to be answered first? What questions need to be answered by a subject matter consultant, via a technical report vs what information is available on the municipal website?

What are your key messages?

How will you navigate the development process*?

STEPS	ISSUE	NATURE OF THE ISSUE	RESOURCE TO HELP	REGULATIONS	KEY QUESTION
ex	Streamside setback	Site area	QEP	DP streamside protection, WSA, RAPR, DFO, SARA	What is the likely impact on site area of the streamside setback?
ex	Streamside setback	Timeline for review	QEP	DP streamside protection, WSA, RAPR, DFO, SARA	What is the likely timeline for review by municipal, provincial, and federal teams?

*Most landowners, family offices, investment committees, Boards, and capital committees improve their level of confidence in these assumptions by working with a development consultant.

Notes



Thank you

Congrats! You've completed your development feasibility workbook.

At this point, you might be wondering: how can we further solidify our vision and get the project underway?

If you want expert support from a seasoned development consultant—or if you just have a few more questions about the process—I'd love to speak with you.

Click [here](#) to set up your complimentary clarity call with me, Tegan Smith.

To your successful project,

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