



# Official Community Plan Review

# Background Paper #1 Industrial Land

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# 1. OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN REVIEW

Prince George's current Official Community Plan (OCP) was adopted by Council in September, 2001. The adoption of the document represented an aggressive new direction for managing growth and development in the City. The policy direction embraces many sustainable development principles which were not present previously. The OCP encourages infill and densification and sets targets with respect to ratios of low density to medium density development in new neighbourhood areas. Emphasis is placed on pedestrian friendliness and building complete and inclusive neighbourhoods.

The City has had six years of working with the OCP. Council and staff believe it is generally working very well in helping to achieve many goals and in providing direction on the form and function of development.

Planning policy documents are typically reviewed in five year cycles, with every second review often constituting a major overhaul involving scrapping the existing plan and starting from scratch, significant ongoing public involvement and a task force or steering committee. The last review, which concluded in 2001, was a major overhaul. The OCP review currently underway focuses on a re-evaluation of some of the central tenets of the plan, as well as general updating and housekeeping. It also provides an opportunity to assess how well the policy structure of the OCP helps to achieve Council's vision.

This background paper, which examines the City's industrial land and offers options on how it might be managed from a planning perspective, is the first of four papers being produced as part of the OCP review. A shorter version of this background paper has been prepared for broad public distribution in the form of a discussion paper.

The other papers address:

- Long Term Growth Projections and the Growth Management Program;
- Housing Needs; and
- Commercial Growth.

These are broad policy areas of the OCP. Other areas of the plan will also be reviewed and updated, and such changes are mostly expected to be housekeeping in nature.

As elaborated upon in this paper, the current supply of land designated for light industrial use in Prince George may not be sufficient to accommodate potential demand in the coming years. It is important to Prince George's economic development initiatives that an adequate supply of appropriately located

industrial land is made available. At the same time, the City wants to ensure that air quality, especially within the Bowl area, is not only protected but improved as industrial development proceeds.

This paper examines the key policy considerations affecting industrial land planning in Prince George, the sectors that will influence future industrial development, the demand for industrial land, the supply of land to meet demand, and land use options at the OCP level that the City may consider as part of managing industrial growth and change.

# 2. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The City's decisions about where and how future industrial development is planned will be strongly influenced by a number of over-arching OCP policies. Three of the most important policy areas are economic development, air quality and servicing.

# 2.1 Economic Development

Part of the OCP Vision Statement<sup>1</sup> is that the City of Prince George will fulfill its destiny as BC's "Northern Capital" through:

- The development and enhancement of opportunities for employment, investment and reward.
- The provision of an excellent quality of life.

A number of strategies, principles and policies are set out in support of the City's vision that emphasize the importance of economic development to the community's quality of life and, more specifically, the role of industry as a significant source of opportunity.

The OCP principles for industrial land planning<sup>2</sup> include:

- Provide locations for industrial and employment areas in a manner that minimizes conflict with residential use.
- Encourage a range of employment opportunities, by providing for several smaller service industrial areas. Within specific light industrial areas complementary land uses are to be encouraged to facilitate the development of complete communities.
- Foster major industrial activity in the eastern portions of the city to take advantage of prevailing southwest winds.
- Preserve and protect the economic value of sand and gravel resources from incompatible development in order to allow for eventual extraction.

These principles, which underscore the importance of industry to a healthy local economy, are expected to remain largely unchanged as part of the OCP update.

<sup>2</sup> Chapter 8 of the OCP, page 65.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Chapter 1 of the OCP, pages 3 - 6.

# 2.2 Air Quality

While recognizing the importance of industry to Prince George's economic development, air quality is an equally important consideration and is a major part of the city becoming a more sustainable community.

The City of Prince George began organizing efforts to improve air quality in 1995 when an agreement was reached between the City, Regional District of Fraser Fort George and the Ministry of Environment to coordinate air quality management in the airshed by forming the Prince George Airshed Technical Management Committee.

With public input, the Prince George Air Quality Management Plan (Phase One) was prepared and approved in 1998. The plan recommended forming a multistakeholder committee to implement the plan. The resulting Prince George Air Quality Implementation Committee is supported by a Monitoring Working Group and a Research Working Group, with high level direction provided by the Steering Committee. The Phase One Plan identified measures to improve air quality in the Prince George airshed, in particular, to achieve acceptable levels of fine particulate matter.

A number of the recommendations contained in the Phase One Plan have been completed or are currently being implemented. Examples are an improved winter road abrasives program to reduce spring dust and the creation of Clean Air Bylaw No. 7721, 2005. Recommendations for Phase Two have recently been presented to City Council, many of which are ongoing from Phase One work. Phase Three of the plan will incorporate the results of research currently being conducted.

Due to the perceived lack of improved air quality, public concern has increased and resulted in two additional air quality improvement groups being formed. The Mayor's Task Force on Air Quality has been appointed and, in May 2006, the People's Action Committee for Healthy Air was formed by a group of residents.

The updated OCP must ensure that the city's airshed is considered in deciding upon the appropriate placement of future industrial development.<sup>3</sup>

# 2.3 Servicing

Industrial development places heavy demands on city infrastructure, typically water, sewer and roads. The OCP contains a number of policies that emphasize the careful planning and phasing of infrastructure to ensure that it is available to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Air quality is addressed in Chapter 4 – Environmental Quality of the OCP, pages 21 – 27.

meet growing demand while recognizing that servicing is a major cost item for the City. As noted in the Utilities and Phasing chapter<sup>4</sup> of the OCP:

The basis of phasing is to maximize the use of existing utilities so that significant infrastructure investment is delayed as long as possible, without compromising the growth of the city. The objective is to minimize costs to the city.

The OCP further acknowledges, however, that:

...while phasing can be considered from a purely technical perspective, consideration also needs to be given to maintaining competition and choice in the marketplace, which may favour development in several areas of the city.

These policy considerations have been taken into account in the discussion that follows.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Pages 93 – 102.

# 3. INDUSTRY SECTORS AFFECTING DEMAND

Although the Prince George economy is gradually diversifying, goods-producing and handling activities, many of which are directly or indirectly tied to the natural resource base, continue to account for a substantial share of the community's employment and wealth generation.

Table 1: Prince George Experienced Labour Force by Industry Sector - 2001

Industry Sector		George	ВС
Goods Producing & Handling		_	
Agriculture	190	<1%	2%
Forestry & Logging	1,920	5%	2%
Fishing, Hunting & Trapping	20	<1%	<1%
Mining, Oil & Gas	190	<1%	1%
Utilities	265	<1%	1%
Construction	2,130	5%	6%
Manufacturing (including wood and paper)	4,710	12%	10%
Wholesale Trade	1,415	4%	4%
Transportation & Warehousing	2,515	6%	6%
Subtotal	13,335	34%	32%
Services			
Retail Trade	5,040	13%	12%
Information and Culture	1,035	3%	3%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	1,825	5%	6%
Education	2,885	7%	7%
Health Care & Social Assistance	4,085	10%	10%
Accommodation & Food Services	3,190	8%	8%
Public Administration	2,320	6%	6%
Other	5,940	14%	16%
Subtotal	26,320	66%	68%
TOTAL	39,655	100%	100%

Source: Statistics Canada. Labour force data from the 2006 Census will not be released until March 2008.

As shown in Table 1, just over one-third of Prince George's experienced labour force was working in goods producing and handling sectors of the local economy in 2001. Most notable are the construction, manufacturing, wholesale trade, and transportation & warehousing sectors, which together directly accounted for 27% of Prince George's labour force in 2001 and are the largest consumers of industrial land in the city.

Some elements of the service sectors are also users of industrial land. An example is professional, scientific and technical services, which includes activities such as engineering, surveying, drafting, and laboratory testing. These businesses often seek light industrial locations because many do not require the higher profile and costs typically associated with commercial locations.

Future demand for industrial land is anticipated to come from a wide range of sources, with particularly strong potential in the transportation and distribution and manufacturing sectors, as elaborated upon below.

#### 3.1 Forest Products

The forest products industry is currently the largest single user of industrial land in Prince George. There is understandable concern about the financial health of the industry given factors such as the mountain pine beetle kill and growing competition in the wood markets from low-cost producers in other parts of the world (e.g., Russia and South America). As a result, more attention is being focused on diversification into new product lines, such as wood pellets, biofuels and other chemicals. Value-added products for offshore markets including manufactured homes and engineered wood products are also an emerging opportunity.

Although the industry faces challenges, there are no indications at this point that any plant closures will occur in Prince George. Some of the diversification opportunities, if realized, could create demand for industrial land, although likely at a small scale.

It is also possible that, over time, some of the land currently used by the forest industry might become available for other industrial uses through the rationalization of operations and the sale of surplus land to raise cash.

#### 3.2 Mining

The mining industry is small in Prince George in terms of direct employment, but this sector generates significant economic activity in the city through the purchase of a wide range of goods and services by mines located throughout northern BC. This activity is expected to increase in the coming years due to growing exploration and mining development in northern BC, and the base of companies in Prince George that are poised to take advantage of this growth.

In B.C., mining and mineral processing is a \$6-billion industry employing 28,000 people. By the end of the decade, it is expected that new mining projects will have resulted in an additional \$4 billion in investment and the creation of 3,000 new jobs. The value of exploration is expected to exceed \$300 million in the province in 2007, exceeding all previous years.

There are a number of mining projects at various stages in the provincial government's review and approval process that will stimulate economic activity in Prince George if developed. Examples include:

- Terrane Metals' large Mount Milligan gold-copper project approximately 96 miles (155 km) northwest of Prince George, where feasibility studies are expected to be completed by the end of 2007.
- The resurgence of coal mining and exploration in northeast BC in the vicinity of Tumbler Ridge, where Western Canadian Coal has achieved full operation of the Brule and Wolverine Mines and is in a joint-venture to explore the development of the extensive Belcourt-Saxon properties.

Existing businesses in Prince George that support the mining industry are likely to supply some of the demand from these and other mines that are developed in the north. It is also possible that new businesses will locate in the city to serve the mining industry, which could create industrial land demand.

#### 3.3 Oil and Gas

Much of the province's oil and gas industry is currently focussed in the northeast region in the Western Canadian Sedimentary Basin. The direct economic benefits are largely concentrated in that area, as well as spilling over into Alberta. However, a number of Prince George businesses do supply goods and services to the industry despite the distance.

In the more immediate vicinity of Prince George are the large Nechako and Bowser/Sustut Basins and the smaller Quesnel Trough, which are believed to contain substantial oil and gas reserves. The BC Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources is continuing with its resource evaluation of the interior basins. It is expected to be some years out before serious interest is shown in developing these resources, primarily because there are other more lucrative opportunities in the shorter-term for the industry in the Western Canadian Sedimentary Basin.

This sector should continue to be closely watched since it is likely only a matter of time before greater interest is taken in the reserves in the region, as evidenced by the gradual southern movement of exploration into areas like Tumbler Ridge. If an oil and gas industry does develop in the north-central region of the province, Prince George would become the central supply hub and could experience a significant boost in industrial land demand.

#### 3.4 Transportation and Distribution

Prince George has historically been the dominant transportation and distribution centre in the northern half of the province and this is anticipated to be a particularly strong growth sector in the coming years and therefore a potentially major consumer of industrial land.

There are several significant developments underway or in the advanced planning stages that could have spin-off impacts on industrial land demand in Prince George.

The rail industry is currently in a growth phase across North America and this is expected to continue. One of CN Rail's responses as a major participant in this growth has been a corporate re-focus of its rail operations on Prince George for bulk and now containerized goods shipment, including making the city the head office for its Mountain Division. Although CN Rail has a large existing land base and may not directly contribute to industrial land needs, its business development activities could stimulate demand by other existing and new businesses. This has already happened to some extent because of the rail line work done by CN Rail to facilitate new container traffic between Prince George and Prince Rupert.

# 3.4.1 CN Rail Intermodal and Transload Facility

The new Fairview Container Terminal at the Port of Prince Rupert, which is slated for opening in October 2007, has created a significant industrial development opportunity for Prince George. The terminal has a Phase 1 design throughput capacity of 500,000 TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) per year, which would increase to two million TEUs with the Port Authority's expected completion of Phase 2 in 2011. All of these containers will be moving from Prince Rupert through Prince George by rail and, in Phase 1, an estimated 250,000 TEUs will be travelling back empty to Prince Rupert through Prince George by rail.

The CN Rail intermodal and transload facility under construction in Prince George, which will be partly open by October 2007 and fully operational by December 2007 to coincide with the opening of Fairview Container Terminal, will take advantage of low back-haul fees for empty containers by shipping a variety of forest products that are currently not containerized. These products include lumber, woodpulp, newsprint and container board, all of which are manufactured in the Prince George area in large quantities.

The main features of the new CN Rail inter-modal and transload facility, which is being developed on existing CN Rail lands in the Bowl area, include:

- A 7,800 sq. m. (84,000 sq. ft.) warehouse with annual through-put of 400,000 metric tonnes of woodpulp and paper.
- 4 ha (10 acres) of outside storage and annual throughput of up to 25,000 containers.
- The ability to receive railcars (box and centre beam) and trucks in addition to container rail cars.

- A full range of services, including product transfer, inspection, consolidation/deconsolidation, storage, inventory control and transportation.
- An intermodal yard to support transload operations with two 732 m. (2,400 foot) long pad tracks to hold up to 45 intermodal platforms, with one track to set-up and strip empties and the other to generate blocks of loaded containers for pickup.

Depending on demand, this facility could be expanded in the future on the existing footprint at 1st Avenue. An additional train per day could be handled, doubling throughput to 108,000 containers per year, extension of rail sidings between Prince George and Rupert could allow longer unit trains, and the existing 732 m (2,400 foot) long pads at the intermodal yard could be lengthened up to 1,829 m (6,000 ft.) Scenarios that would stimulate growth in demand to utilize this capacity are currently under review with Initiatives Prince George and InterVISTAS Consulting.

# 3.4.2 Prince George Airport Expansion

The Prince George Airport Authority anticipates a decision in the next several months on funding support from senior governments on the proposed \$36 million airport expansion, including a runway extension that will allow large cargo and passenger planes to use the airport.

The most immediate opportunity arising from the expansion is technical stops, including refuelling, for aircraft on transpacific flights. Most of the activity associated with technical stops can, at least initially, be handled on existing airport lands. However, over time, there could be a need for off-site services to handle all the demands of servicing large air cargo planes.

The Airport Authority believes there could be significantly greater opportunities that involve cargo handling. An independent review currently being undertaken of the business case for the airport expansion is addressing the potential commercial and industrial opportunities in detail and is expected to be publicly released within the next several months.

According to the Airport Authority, it has about 405 ha (1,000 acres) of vacant land set aside for future development, including warehousing, distribution and maintenance. The Authority's view is that, if there is significant and growing demand over time for major cargo-related activities that involved warehousing, that it cannot accommodate all this demand on its lands, which have to be primarily maintained for critical aviation services and facilities.

However, the Airport Authority believes that proximity to the airport will be important to attracting many of the potential opportunities tied to expansion and

that an adequate supply of serviced light industrial land must be made available on surrounding undeveloped land within city boundaries.

Another potential opportunity would be trans-shipment, which refers to one aircraft leaving freight at an airport for another aircraft to pick up and move to the final destination. This scenario would require more ground handling (warehousing and trucking) and regional flights. And, yet another opportunity is development of Prince George as an intermodal centre that takes advantage of the full multi-modal capacities in the city - rail, road and air. This would see greater demand for warehousing and would also introduce added value manufacturing possibilities much more greatly - components and packaging).

With each phase of cargo business development, the need for industrial land will increase.

# 3.4.3 BCR Properties

BCR Properties is in the process of servicing and packaging for sale approximately 75 net developable hectares (185 acres) of industrial land at the former BCR Industrial Park.

The land will likely be put on the market before the end of 2007 and BCR Properties anticipates that it will be quickly sold, either as one parcel to a single user or in smaller parcels to a number of users. The most likely purchaser or purchasers will be involved in transportation and distribution activities that have a rail component. The site may also be of interest to manufacturers who ship finished product and / or receive material inputs by rail.

# 3.4.4 The Broader Connections and Spin-Off Opportunities

Each of the developments described above that are either underway or well advanced in the planning stage presents not only significant economic benefits on their own but also create opportunities for business spinoffs that could require industrial land.

The Northern BC Intermodal Cargo Opportunity Study, which correctly predicted in 2006 that there was an opportunity for an intermodal container facility in Prince George tied to the Fairview Container Terminal at Prince Rupert, also noted that there was additional potential for the region:

For example, the Prince George Airport runway may be expanded so that the airport can serve transpacific air cargo flights. In this case, it is possible that a freight forwarder, integrator or logistics service provider could be attracted by the combined potential of a major truck/rail intermodal facility directly linked to the closet seaport to Asia, and with intercontinental air cargo capability, develop a major distribution centre in

the Prince George area. If other companies followed this lead company, a cluster of transportation related businesses could develop in Prince George area and along the 16-97 transportation corridors.<sup>5</sup>

It is highly speculative at this point as to when and how such opportunities might be realized given that many of the building blocks are just now being put in place, but it does suggest that Prince George could be moving into a period of significant industrial development tied directly and indirectly to its developing intermodal sector. The issue from an economic development perspective is to ensure that, if and when such opportunities present themselves, there is an appropriate supply of industrial land available to meet demand without lengthy delays that could lead to the opportunities being lost.

# 3.5 General Manufacturing

There are some indications that the Prince George region is becoming better positioned to attract general manufacturing opportunities that are not necessarily tied to the traditional natural resource base or at least add more value to resource processing.

Part of the attraction is linked to the initiatives underway in the city's transportation and distribution sector. However, there are other factors that also enhance Prince George's attractiveness, including relatively low industrial and commercial land prices, a large and diverse labour force, relatively affordable housing (a prerequisite to competing for an increasing tight labour supply), good infrastructure and major post-secondary educational institutions.

In recognition of this opportunity, the Northern Development Initiative Trust has commenced a *Northwest Trade and Manufacturing Corridor Opportunity Study* that will encompass 21 communities, the largest of which is Prince George, along the Highway 16 / CN Rail corridor. The Northern Trust notes that:

With the right policy environment and business attraction strategies, a truly diversified and prosperous economic future for northern and central BC can be linked to the growth of the manufacturing sector...<sup>6</sup>

Examples of the types of opportunities that the study is exploring are as diverse as gold/copper smelting and associated manufacturing, automotive parts from aluminum ingots, distillery products from grain, seafoods, bio-products and biofuels, and value-added wood products.

<sup>6</sup> Northern Development Initiative Trust, *News Release*, July 19, 2007.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> InterVistas Consulting Inc., *Northern BC Intermodal Cargo Opportunity Study,* prepared for The Northern BC Intermodal Container Terminal Steering Committee, November 2006, page v.

The study is also reviewing options such as free trade zones and, of particular importance to Prince George, increasing the land base for development outside municipal airsheds.

Not all of the potential opportunities would be feasible or even desirable for Prince George, particularly if there are significant airshed impacts, but the study should reveal some opportunities that are attractive to the city. In most cases, industrial land supply will be a major factor in where the opportunities are best suited to locate.

# 4. INDUSTRIAL LAND DEMAND TRENDS

The demand for industrial land in Prince George, particularly in the light industry category, is largely driven by overall economic conditions in the region.

# 4.1 Building Permit Activity

Industrial development in Prince George has fluctuated considerably over time, as is evident in Table 2 from the number and value of building permits issued.

Table 2: Prince George Industrial Building Permit Activity

Year	Number of	Construction	% of Total
	Permits Issued	Value (\$)	Construction Value
1990	70	22,254,000	34
1991	41	5,101,000	9
1992	26	3,260,000	2
1993	36	11,588,000	8
1994	37	5,318,000	5
1995	49	13,769,000	15
1996	23	6,075,000	7
1997	34	5,429,000	5
1998	35	2,619,000	5
1999	30	5,397,000	5
2000	11	1,926,000	4
2001	6	115,030	2
2002	13	3,471,360	9
2003	11	1,122,000	2
2004	19	6,340,00	10
2005	18	3,216,000	3
2006	16	4,791,000	5

Source: City of Prince George

Compared to the value of Prince George's residential, commercial and institutional sectors, industrial construction has been relatively small in dollar terms. Nevertheless, it is a major source of new property tax revenue as well as employment for the city.

# 4.2 Vacant Light Industrial Land Sales

The following survey, which was undertaken for the City of Prince George in June 2007, analyzes vacant light industrial land sales within municipal boundaries.

As indicated in Table 3, there were 14 MLA sales in the city from January 2003 to June 2007. The sales had a price range from \$27,642 to \$715,000, with a mean selling price of \$125,717. The range of price per ha / acre was from \$161,412

per ha (\$65,323 per acre) to \$518,113 per ha (\$209,677 per acre), with a mean of \$377,924 per ha (\$136,761 per acre).

Table 3: Light Industrial Land Sales from January 2003 to Present Listed on MLS

Sale #	Address	Area	List Price	Sale Price	Sale Date	Days on Market	Size in Acres	Sale Price Per/Ac	Size in Hectares	List Price Per/Ha
1	677 North Nechako	North Nechako	\$699,000	\$715,000	Jan 07	1460	5.31	\$134,652	2.15	\$332,558
2	4792 Banzer	Hart	\$89,900	\$85,000	Sept 06	43	0.46	\$184,788	0.19	\$456,598
3	5410 Hartway	Hart	\$90,000	\$76,000	May 06	182	0.53	\$143,395	0.21	\$4354,33 2
*4	5092 Continental	BCR	\$260,000	\$230,000	Sept 05	117	1.32	\$174,243	0.53	\$430,553
5	5387 Hartway	Hart	\$35,900	\$35,900	Sept 05	793	0.25	\$143,600	0.10	\$354,836
6	5422 Hartway	Hart	\$44,000	\$40,500	May 05	305	0.62	\$65,323	0.25	\$161,412
7	4952 Banzer	Hart	\$42,000	\$40,000	Sept 04	3	0.44	\$90,378	0.18	\$224,636
8	5030 Hartway	Hart	\$29,000	\$27,642	Jul 04	110	0.26	\$106,315	0.11	\$262,705
9	5130 Continental	BCR	\$114,500	\$97,500	Jun 04	85	0.64	\$152,823	0.26	\$376,441
*10	5092 Continental	BCR	\$114,500	\$97,500	Jun 04	85	0.63	\$154,762	0.25	\$382,417
11	550 Richard Rd	Hart	\$135,000	\$130,000	May 04	9	0.62	\$209,677	0.25	\$518,113
**12	5447-5483 Hartway	Hart	\$181,700	\$125,000	Feb 04	300	1.14	\$109,649	0.46	\$270,943
13	5314 Hartway Dr	Hart	\$35,000	\$30,000	Apr 03	2,065	0.25	\$120,000	0.10	\$296,520
14	5351 Hartway Dr	Hart	\$35,000	\$30,000	Apr 03	105	0.24	\$125,000	0.10	\$308,875

<sup>\*</sup>Indicates a resale

The majority of sales were less than 0.4 ha (1.0 acre) in size and were in the Hart Highway Industrial Corridor.

The properties were on the market from as little as three days to as many as 2,065 days, with the median being 113 days. Typical marketing time would appear to be three to nine months.

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<sup>\*\*</sup>Indicates a multiple sale

As indicated in Table 4, there were another 23 sales of light industrial land in Prince George that were not made through MLS.

Table 4: Light Industrial Land Sales from January 2003 to Present Not Made Though MLS

	gh MLS							
Sale #	Address	Area	Sale Price	Sale Date	Size in Acres	Sale Price Per/Ac	Size in Hectares	Sale Price Per/Ha
1	1100 Pacific	BCR	\$1,213,000	Apr 06	6.77	\$179,173	2.74	\$442,736
2	1128 Pacific	BCR	\$800,000	Apr 06	5.31	\$150,659	2.15	\$372,279
3	Lot 3 Algoma	Danson	\$90,000	Apr 06	1.31	\$68,702	0.53	\$169,763
4	9064 Milwaukee	Danson	\$245,000	Oct 05	1.98	\$123,737	0.80	\$305,755
5	1055 Eastern	BCR	\$211,200	Oct 05	1.84	\$114,783	0.74	\$283,628
6	1018 & 1024 Eastern	BCR	\$334,000	Sept 05	2.54	\$131,497	1.03	\$324,927
7	1003 Eastern	BCR	\$205,000	Sept 05	1.0	\$205,000	0.40	\$506,555
8	1039-1041 Great	BCR	\$513,000	Sept 05	3.18	\$161,321	1.29	\$398,624
9	1004 Eastern	BCR	\$269,000	Sept 05	2.1	\$128,095	0.85	\$316,523
10	1048 Great	BCR	\$245,000	Sep 05	1.59	\$154,088	0.64	\$380,752
11	1050 Great	BCR	\$293,000	Sept 05	2.06	\$142,233	0.83	\$351,458
12	1078 Eastern	BCR	\$122,000	Sept 05	0.88	\$138,636	0.36	\$342,570
13	4908 Continental	BCR	\$145,000	Sept 05	0.6	\$241,667	0.24	\$597,158
14	1077 Eastern	BCR	\$138,000	Aug 05	0.92	\$150,000	0.37	\$370,650
15	5399 Hartway	Hart	\$40,000	May 05	0.28	\$142,857	0.11	\$353,000
16	9988 Willow Cale Fst Rd	Danson	\$608,000	May 05	30.8	\$19,740	12.46	\$48,778
17	1015 Great	BCR	\$655,000	Mar- 05	5.21	\$125,720	2.11	\$310,654
18	9503 Anzac	Danson	\$130,000	Dec 04	2.0	\$65,000	0.81	\$160,615
19	9288 Rock Island	Danson	\$90,180	Oct 04	1.27	\$71,008	0.51	\$175,460
20	733-743 2 <sup>nd</sup>	East	\$100,000	Sep	0.23	\$434,738	0.09	\$1,074,348

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Sale #	Address	Area	Sale Price	Sale Date	Size in Acres	Sale Price Per/Ac	Size in Hectares	Sale Price Per/Ha
		End		04				
21	5387 Continental	BCR	\$262,500	Jun 04	0.81	\$324,074	0.33	\$800,787
22	5462 Continental	BCR	\$145,000	Jun 04	0.67	\$216,,416	0.27	\$534,769
23	820 Boundary	Danson	\$110,000	Apr 04	1.75	\$62,857	0.71	\$155,320

The prices for the properties ranged from \$40,000 to \$1,213,000, with a mean of \$302,777. The range of price per ha / acre was from \$48,778 per ha (\$19,740 per acre) to \$1,074,348 per ha (\$434,783 per acre), with a mean of \$381,613 per ha (\$154,437 per acre).

The size of the parcels ranged widely from 0.01 ha (0.23 acres) to 12.5 ha (30.8 acres), with the mean being 1.32 ha (3.27 acres). Unlike the MLS sales, most of these sales were concentrated in the Danson and BCR Industrial Parks.

In addition to the MLS and non-MLS sales summarized in Tables 3 and 4, there were sales of City-owned lots in the Danson Industrial Park (Table 5).

There is only one lot remaining from the City's industrial subdivision. With the exception of that lot (1.3 ha / 3.22 acres in size), all 15 of the remaining City lots sold between April 2005 and December 2006. Prior to that, there were no sales of City industrial lots between 1998 and 2004 and 21 sales that occurred from 1990 to 1997.

All of the sales were of parcels of land less than 1.2 ha (3.0 acres) in size and less than \$200,000 in price. The price range was from \$63,000 and \$195,000, with a mean price of \$112,420. The range of price per ha / acre was from \$169,580 per ha (\$68,627 per acre) to \$213,253 per ha (\$86,301 per acre), with a mean of \$194,022 per ha (\$78,519 per acre).

The range in size of the parcels was from 0.3 ha (0.73 acres) to 1.1 ha (2.71 acres), with a mean of 0.59 ha (1.46 acres).

The City is investigating the possibility of subdividing a 10.5 ha (26-acre) parcel slated for Danson Industrial Phase IV.

Table 5: Sales of City-Owned Light Industrial Lots In Danson Industrial Park

Sale #	Address	Sale Price	Sale Date	Size in Acres	Sale Price Per/Ac	Size in Hectares	Sale Price
"		11100	Date	Aores	1 01740	ricotares	Per/Ha
1	9631 Anzac	\$91,000	Dec-06	1.06	\$85,849	0.43	\$212,135
2	9609 Anzac	\$68,000	Dec-06	0.79	\$86,076	0.32	\$212,696
3	9587 Anzac	\$67,000	Dec-06	0.78	\$85,897	0.32	\$212,255
4	9543 Anzac	\$98,000	Jun-06	1.15	\$85,217	0.47	\$210,574
5	9565 Anzac	\$63,000	Jun-06	0.73	\$86,301	0.30	\$213,253
**6	9895 Milwaukee	\$99,500	Jun-06	1.33	\$74,812	0.54	\$184,863
**7	9699 Milwaukee	\$195,000	May-06	2.57	\$75,875	1.04	\$187,490
**8	9757 Milwaukee	\$135,000	May-06	1.73	\$78,035	0.70	\$192,826
*9	9653 Anzac	\$195,000	Apr-06	2.52	\$77,381	1.02	\$191,210
*10	9673 Anzac	\$103,000	Apr-06	1.24	\$83,065	0.50	\$205,255
11	9444 Rock Isl.	\$94,800	Apr-06	1.26	\$75,238	0.51	\$185,915
**12	9883 Milwaukee	\$108,000	Mar-06	1.46	\$73,937	0.59	\$182,788
13	9672 Milwaukee	\$192,000	Dec-05	2.71	\$70,849	1.10	\$175,069
14	9841 Milwaukee	\$105,000	Nov-05	1.53	\$68,627	0.62	\$169,580
15	9888 Milwaukee	\$72,000	Apr-05	1.02	\$70,588	0.41	\$174,425

<sup>\*</sup> These sales involved multiple land purchases however were purchased by one purchaser. Sale #9 was a purchase of eight sites, which were only partially consolidated.

# 4.3 Vacant Light Industrial Land Listings

As shown in Table 6, most of the sites offered for sale through MLS are less than 0.4 ha (one acre) in size, with the largest site being only one hectare (2.57 acres). The range in size for the parcels is from 0.09 ha (0.23 acres) to 1.04 ha (2.57 acres) with a mean of 0.36 ha (0.90 acres).

Table 6: Current MLS Listings of Vacant Light Industrial Land

Sale #	Address	List Price	Listing Date	Size in Acres	List Price Per/Ac	Size in Hectares	List Price Per/Ha
1	9699 Milwaukee	\$385,000	Apr 07	2.57	\$149,805	1.04	\$370,169
2	9713 Milwaukee	\$281,000	Apr 07	1.87	\$150,267	0.76	\$371,311
3	9757 Milwaukee	\$260,000	Apr 07	1.73	\$150,289	0.70	\$371,364
4	9883 Milwaukee	\$225,000	Apr	1.46	\$154,110	0.59	\$380,805

<sup>\*\*</sup> These sales have been re-listed for sale: Sale #6 is re-listed for \$200,000 as of Sept 2006. Sale #7 is re-listed for \$385,000 as of April 2007. Sale #8 is re-listed for \$260,000 as of April 2007. Sale #12 is re-listed for \$225,000 as of April 2007.

Sale #	Address	List Price	Listing Date	Size in Acres	List Price Per/Ac	Size in Hectares	List Price Per/Ha
			07				
5	4986 Hartway Dr.	\$99,900	Mar 07	0.31	\$322,258	0.13	\$796,300
6	1040-1048 Eastern	\$300,000	Mar 07	0.88	\$340,909	0.36	\$842,386
7	5029 Banzer	\$96,900	Mar 07	0.26	\$372,692	0.11	\$920,923
8	5008 Hartway Dri.	\$98,800	Mar 07	0.26	\$380,000	0.11	\$938,980
9	5053 Banzer Dri.	\$98,900	Mar 07	0.29	\$341,034	0.12	\$842,696
10	4930 Banzer Dr.	\$80,000	Feb 07	0.5	\$160,000	0.20	\$395,360
11	1971 Robertson	\$300,000	Jan 07	0.65	\$461,538	0.26	\$1,140,462
12	733-743 2 <sup>nd</sup> Ave.	\$209,000	Oct 06	0.23	\$908,696	0.09	\$2,245,387
13	9895 Milwaukee	\$200,000	Sep 06	1.33	\$150,376	0.54	\$371,579
14	814-894 5 <sup>th</sup> Ave	\$299,950	Jun 06	0.38	\$789,342	0.15	\$1,950,464
15	640 2 <sup>nd</sup> Ave	\$479,000	May 06	0.76	\$630,263	0.31	\$1,557,380

The listing price range is from \$80,000 to \$479,000 with a mean of \$227,563. The range of price per ha / acre was \$370,169 per ha (\$149,805 per acre) to \$2,245,387 per ha (\$908,696 per acre), with a mean of \$899,704 per ha (\$364,105 per acre).

Most of the current listings are within a light industrial park located on Hartway Drive in the Hart Highway industrial corridor and in the Danson Industrial Park. Three properties are located in the East End area of Downtown and only one listing is in the Carter subdivision.

# 4.4 Demand Summary

As summarized in Table 7, there were 37 sales of MLS and non-MLS lots plus 15 sales of City-owned lots, for a total of 52 vacant light industrial lot sales from January 2003 to June 2007.

Table 7: Summary of Vacant Light Industrial Land Sales

Category	# of Sales	Price Range	Mean Sale Price	Price Per Acre Range	Mean Price Per Ac	Property Size in Acres	Mean Property Size in Acres	Property Size in Hectares	Mean Sale Price/ha
MLS	14	\$27,642 - \$715,000	\$125,717	\$65,323 - \$209,677	\$136,761	0.24 - 5.31	0.91	0.10 - 2.15	\$377,924
Not MLS	23	\$40,000 - \$1,213,000	\$302,777	\$19,740 - \$434,783	\$154,437	0.23 - 30.80	3.27	0.09 - 12.46	\$381,613
City- Owned	15	\$67,000 - \$195,000	\$112,420	\$68,627 - \$86,849	\$78,519	0.73 - 2.71	1.46	0.30 – 1.1	\$194,022

As Table 8 shows, 2005 and 2006 were particularly strong years in terms of lot sales. The majority of the sales recorded in 2005 were on BCR lands. In 2006, a large number of the sales recorded are of City owned properties in the Danson Industrial Subdivision.

Table 8: Summary of Number of Vacant Light Industrial Land Sales by Year

Year	Number of Sales
2007	1
2006	17
2005	20
2004	12
2003	3
2002	15
2001	5
2000	6
1999	3
1998	15
1997	5

Based on the sales data, the overall absorption rate from January 2003 to June 2007 averaged out to 12 sales per year. A more accurate rate would be calculated over the three year period from 2004 to 2007 when the majority of the sales took place. A rate of 15 sales per year occurred during that period.

Demand for vacant lots in Prince George's light industrial areas is expected to continue to increase. There is, however, a limited supply of light industrial properties to meet demand, as elaborated upon in the next section of this paper.

# 5. INDUSTRIAL LAND SUPPLY

Prince George's industrial land supply situation is relatively complex, with some differences between lands designated in the OCP for industrial use and lands actually used for industrial purposes in the city.

# 5.1 OCP Designated Industrial Land

Prince George's OCP has two industrial land designations<sup>7</sup>, defined as follows:

- Major, which is applicable to large industrial areas particularly the pulp mills, significant processing plants and ancillary uses. The designation applies to areas of extensive and "heavy" industrial activity including major processing and manufacturing on sites requiring a minimum of 25 ha (61.8 acres).
- Light, where land is to be developed with full city and water services. This designation is intended to encompass manufacturing, processing, repair, research, distribution, and ancillary offices and sales and storage, where the use is confined mainly to an enclosed structure. This designation may also include food, beverage, and accommodation service establishments, provided such uses are secondary to the industrial nature of the area. These ancillary uses are to be controlled through local zoning.

Map 1 shows the land designated for both major and light industrial use in the city and Table 9 shows the current status of this land.

The OCP designates a total of 2,384 ha (5,890 acres) of land for industrial use in the city, of which 50.3% (1,198 ha / 2,960 acres) is for major industry and 49.7% 1,186 ha (2,931 acres) is for light industry.

As indicated in Table 9, not all of the land designated for industrial use currently has industrial zoning. There is vacant land that has not yet been zoned industrial, some of which has historically been used for other purposes.

Of most interest to this discussion paper is the land designated for light industrial use since this is expected to accommodate most of the anticipated future demand from industry in the city. New heavy industry, on the other hand, is generally encouraged by the City to locate outside the community's airshed, including in some cases on surrounding land in the regional district.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Industrial policies are addressed in Chapter 8 of the OCP, pages 63 - 69.

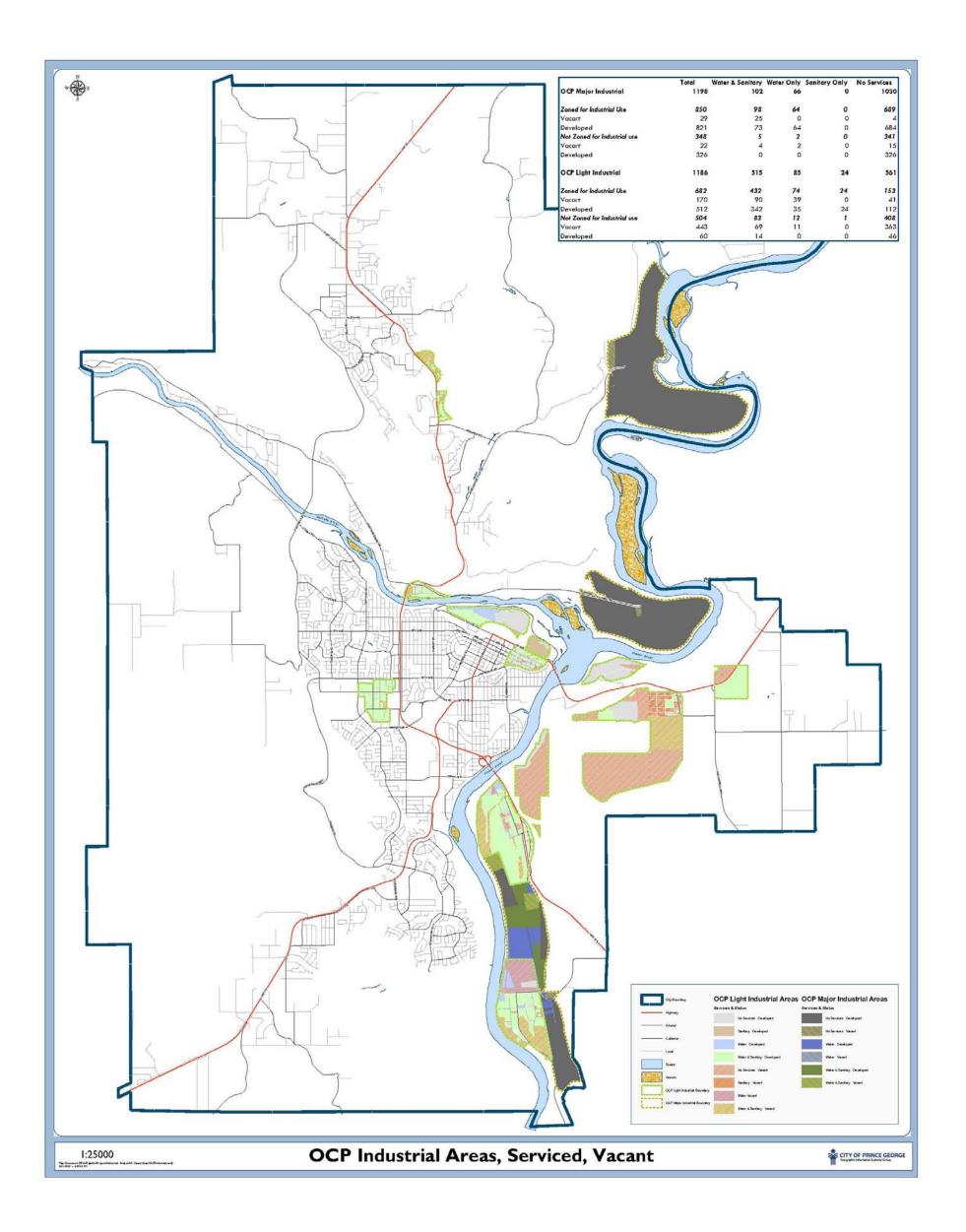


Table 9: Status of OCP Designated for Industrial Land

						Existing	Services			
	То	Total		Water and Sanitary		Water Only		Sanitary Only		lo vices
	(ha)	(ac)	(ha)	(ac)	(ha)	(ac)	(ha)	(ac)	(ha)	(ac)
Land Designated as Major Industrial in the OCP	1,198	2,960	102	252	66	163	0	0	1,030	2,545
Land Zoned for Industrial Use	850	2,100	98	242	64	158	0	0	689	1,703
Vacant *	29	72	25	62	0	0	0	0	4	10
Developed	821	2,029	73	180	64	158	0	0	684	1,690
Land Not Zoned for Industrial Use	348	860	5	12	2	5	0	0	341	843
Vacant (not zoned) *	22	54	4	10	2	5	0	0	15	37
Developed (not zoned) **	326	806	0	0	0	0	0	0	326	806
Land Designated as Light Industrial in the OCP	1,186	2,931	515	1,273	85	210	24	59	561	1,386
Land Zoned for Industrial Use	682	1,685	432	1,067	74	183	24	59	153	378
Vacant *	170	420	90	222	39	96	0	0	41	101
Developed	512	1,265	342	845	35	86	24	59	112	277
Land Not Zoned for Industrial Use	504	1,245	83	205	12	30	1	2	408	1,008
Vacant (not zoned) *	443	1,095	69	170	11	27	0	0	363	897
Developed (not zoned) **	60	148	14	35	0	0	0	0	46	114

<sup>\*</sup> Land that has no existing industrial improvements.

Source: City of Prince George

There are an estimated 170 ha (420 acres) of land that are designated and zoned for light industrial use in the OCP that are currently vacant, of which only 53% (90 ha / 222 acres) has full services (water and sanitary sewer). In other words, Prince George has a relatively constrained supply of land readily available for light industrial development in areas where the OCP wants light industrial development to occur.

Prince George does have a significant amount of vacant land that is designated for light industrial use that is not zoned (443 ha / 1,095 acres), but the vast majority (82%) has no servicing. Most of this land must therefore be considered as medium to long-term supply, but not available for industries seeking vacant land in the shorter-term.

It should be noted the figures in Table 9 do not include the 405 ha (1,000 acres) of vacant land at the Prince George Airport that the Airport Authority estimates are available for certain forms of light industrial development. The City has limited control over land use at the airport and cannot designate areas within the airport property for specific uses in the OCP.

<sup>\*\*</sup> Land developed for industrial purposes that is in essence "legal non-conforming."

As noted earlier, most of the airport's vacant land is expected to be developed over time for aviation-related uses and cannot be relied upon by the City as a secure source of supply for general light industrial development.

#### 5.2 Zoned Industrial Land

It is important to understand that the distinction between land designated for light industry in the OCP and land currently zoned for light industry in the city since there is a major difference. The OCP designates land for future development, whereas the Zoning By-law zones land for current or immediate use.

Map 2 shows the zoned industrial areas in Prince George and Table 10 summarizes their status.

Table 10: Status of Zoned Industrial Land

			Existing Services							
	Total		Water and Sanitary		Water Only		Sanitary Only		No Services	
	(ha)	(ac)	(ha)	(ac)	(ha)	(ac)	(ha)	(ac)	(ha)	(ac)
Land Zoned Major Industrial	1277*	3155	120	297	128	316	15	37	1014	2506
Vacant	125	309	42	104	38	94	0	0	46	114
Developed	1152	2847	78	193	90	222	15	37	968	2392
Land Zoned Light Industrial	923**	2280	512	1265	23	57	37	91	351	867
Vacant	153	378	96	237	5	12	0	0	52	128
Developed	769	1900	416	1028	18	44	36	89	299	739

<sup>\*</sup> More land is zoned for Major Industrial than designated for Major Industrial in the OCP.

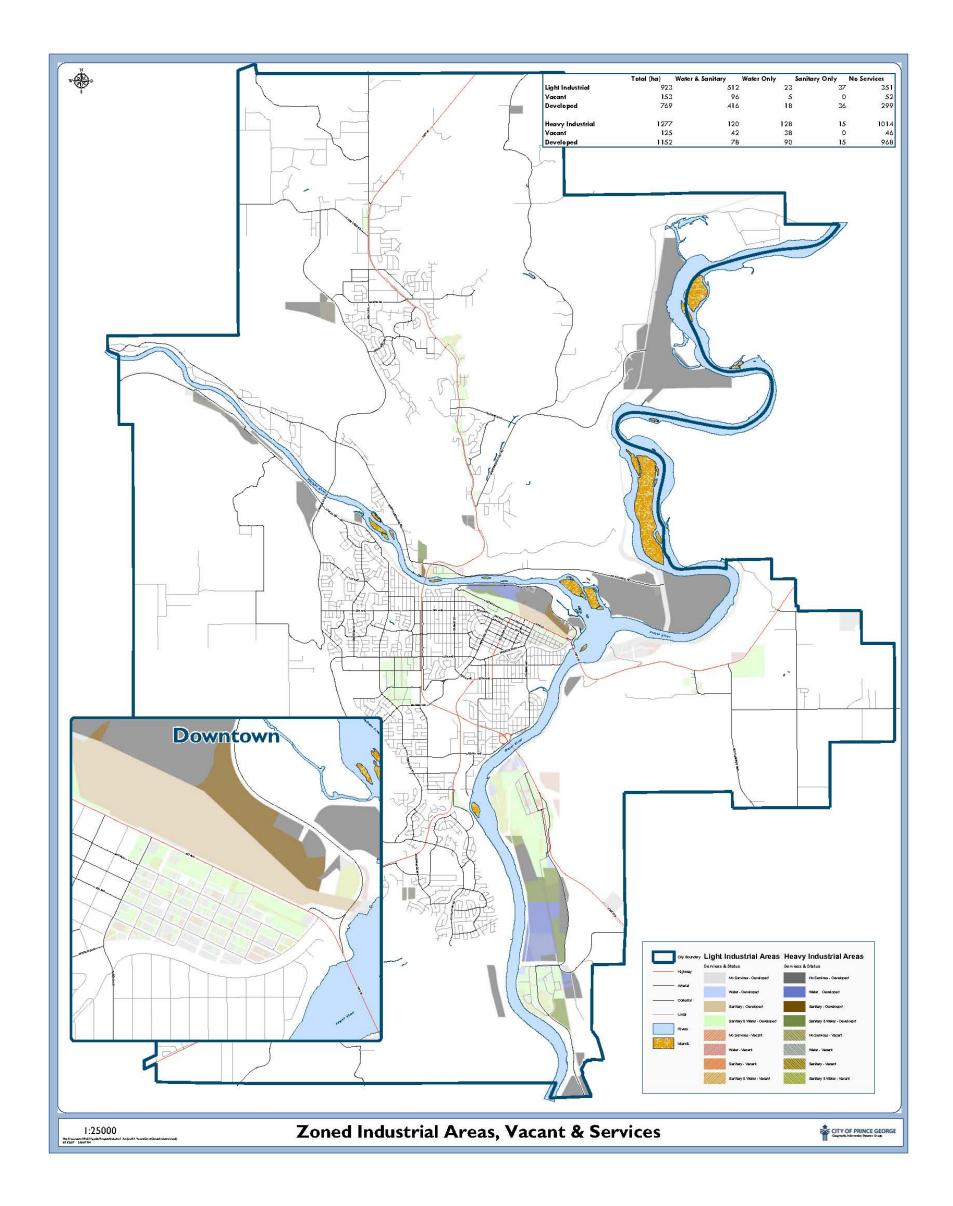
Source: City of Prince George

There are 923 ha (2,280 acres) zoned for light industrial use in the city, of which 17% (153 ha / 378 acres) is vacant. However, only 63% of the vacant land is fully serviced and some is in areas the OCP has designated for non-industrial uses.

#### 5.3 Under-Utilized Industrial Land

Although there is limited readily available OCP-designated land for light industrial development in the city, there are a number of under-utilized parcels that will redevelop over time as land prices rise due to constrained supply. Examples include properties currently used for predominantly outdoor storage of materials and equipment, properties with older buildings that have reached the end of their economic life and properties with low building site coverage.

<sup>\*\*</sup> More land is designated for Light Industrial than is zoned for Light Industrial.



According to the BC Assessment records, 44 light industrial properties have site coverage of less than 5% and an additional 30 properties have site coverage of less than 10%.

However, the redevelopment of many of these under-utilized properties will be a slow process for a number of reasons, including owners with no motivation to sell, difficulties in land assembly, unattractive adjacent uses that limit market appeal, and, in some cases, site contamination that will require costly remediation. These under-utilized lands should therefore not be relied upon as a major source of new light industrial land supply in the short-term.

# **5.4 Potential New Industrial Land Supply**

There is continuing demand for vacant light industrial sites, but little supply is currently available. As shown in Table 11, there were 15 listings on MLS plus one City-owned lot for sale, for a total of 16 lots as of June 2007.

Table 11: Current MLS Listings of Vacant Light Industrial Land

Year Listed	Number of Properties				
2007	11				
2006	4				
2005	1				

Of the current listings, seven are in the Danson / BCR Industrial areas, five are located in the Hart Highway industrial area, three in the Queensway East area, one in the Carter area and one on the highway.

The City-owned lot is from prior to 2005 and has a slightly unusual shape which has added to its length on the market.

The Carter Light area has only three vacant parcels and are larger sites for this area, ranging between 0.71 ha (1.75 acres) and 1.42 ha (3.50 acres) in size.

The Queensway East area has approximately 340 parcels of land with an area of about 19 ha (47 acres). It contains mainly older warehouse buildings that have out lived their economic life. Current OCP policy for Queensway East suggests that the area be fostered for redevelopment as a high quality business park due to its proximity to the downtown and because it is already fully serviced. Doing so will require floodproofing since most of the area is in the floodplain.

It is not clear that the market will support a high quality business park in the Queensway East area in at least the shorter-term due to more attractive opportunities elsewhere in the city. However, it still remains one of the most logical potential long-term uses of the area as it redevelops and current OCP policy is proposed to remain unchanged.

Another area that has some potential for redevelopment is the area just across from the new John Hart Bridge. It is a small industrial area that contains older light industrial warehouses. Future expansion or redevelopment of the area may be a consideration.

As noted earlier, however, land assembly and other issues are likely to limit the rate of redevelopment of areas such as these.

The Carter Light area is still considered the most desirable service light industrial area, but also has the least available lots. Improved properties in this area are in demand, but the market value for properties in this area is also noticeably higher than in the BCR or Danson Industrial Parks, as well as the Hart Highway industrial corridor.

Prince George's limited supply of readily developable OCP-designated light industrial land may affect the city's economic development opportunities, particularly those that may rise from some of the transportation and distribution-related initiatives that are underway or planned. The options for creating new supply are limited in light of competing demand from commercial and residential development.

The City must also ensure that new light industrial development is appropriately separated from other uses, especially major residential areas (current and planned), which further limits the options.

And, of particular importance, new industrial development should be located where the impacts on the city's airshed, particularly in the Bowl area, are minimized. This isn't a matter of just the impact on air quality from the industrial businesses themselves through production or similar activities but also the effects of truck traffic. If, as many believe, much of Prince George's future light industrial development lies in the transportation and distribution sectors, vehicle emissions could be a significant contributor to air quality and should be part of the equation in deciding where new light industrial land is designated.

The OCP already recognizes the potential for new light industrial development on land adjacent to the airport, which is one of the few relatively large accessible areas available for greenfield industrial development in Prince George (Map 2).

This has approximately 348 ha (860 acres) of vacant land that are already designated for light industrial use. Much of this area can be developed in the shorter-term with relatively modest infrastructure investment, the majority of which would be borne by the developer(s). It should be noted, however, that there are constraints to developing some portions of this area in the short term due to current parcel configurations, topography and ownership.

Another 685 ha (1,693 acres) currently designated for agricultural use west of the airport are proposed by the property owners to be removed from the Agricultural

Land Reserve and eventually re-designated and zoned for light industrial use. If made available, this area would satisfy the anticipated light industrial land demand in Prince George for many years. It would have the added benefit of directing much of the city's future industrial development away from the Bowl airshed along with a large amount of truck traffic.

However, the cost of fully servicing these lands is substantial, with a very preliminary estimate based on recent infrastructure projects in Prince George putting the cost at roughly \$36 million (2007 dollars). This includes building a bypass route through the area to industrial road standards (with street lighting) connecting Highways 97 and 16, along with sewer and water trunk lines.

Another potential source of light industrial land supply, albeit longer-term, may be the redesignation of certain areas currently in heavy industry use that may be vacated.

# 6. PLANNING OPTIONS

Prince George has a growing shortage of readily available zoned and serviced light industrial land. Although there is a relatively large amount of vacant land designated for light industrial development in the OCP, much of it will require infrastructure investments to develop. There is mounting concern that, unless more supply is brought on-stream in the short-term, prices will rise and economic development opportunities will be affected.

While there is general consensus in the real estate and economic development communities that demand will continue to increase, there is far less certainty about how much land will be required, for what specific light industrial uses and over what time frame. The challenge for the City is to make sure that an adequate supply of light industrial land is made available in appropriate locations without large capital outlays for infrastructure that may ultimately prove not to be needed for years. For example, there remains uncertainty over the exact timing of the proposed airport expansion and, most importantly, the magnitude and timing of the spin-off light industrial activity that may result. A carefully phased approach is therefore needed for bringing more light industrial land on-stream.

The options and other policy consideration that follow are intended as points of discussion as part of the OCP public consultation process. There may well be other suggestions arise from that process that the City should consider in updating its industrial planning policies.

# 6.1 Options for Creating More Light Industrial Land Supply

# Option 1: Short-Term (Map 3)

This option identifies the existing undeveloped and unzoned land base designated for light industrial development in the OCP. As discussed in this paper, 443 ha (1,095 acres) of land is currently designated in the OCP for light industrial development that has not yet been zoned or developed for industrial purposes. Most of this land is located west of the airport.

It is felt that this land base will be sufficient to meet short-term demand, although some of this land is encumbered by current subdivision configuration, ownership not conducive to development by private interests and topographical constraints. Short-term is considered to be approximately 5 years.

# Option 2: Medium-Term (Map4)

This option is intended to identify a land base for future light industrial development to meet anticipated demand over a medium-term time frame of 5 to 15 years.

This option involves the addition of 250 ha (618 acres) to 300 ha (741 acres) of land to the light industrial land base. This land would be designated for light industrial development on the Future Land Use Map in the OCP. Situated west of the airport, this would facilitate the growth of a critical mass of light industrial development in this area, enabling the establishment of complimentary land uses on a phased basis.

# Option 3: Long-Term (Map 5)

This option is set out to designate the required amount of land for light industrial development for a 25-year time horizon. This is the same timeframe established for the designation of land for urban residential development and for which growth projections are established for the City.

This option would involve the designation of the 685 ha (1,693 acre) land assembly for light industrial development which is currently under consideration for removal from the Agricultural Land Reserve pursuant to applications from two separate proponents.

Options 2 and 3 would necessitate a comprehensive phasing plan, as well as detailed planning of land use and servicing.

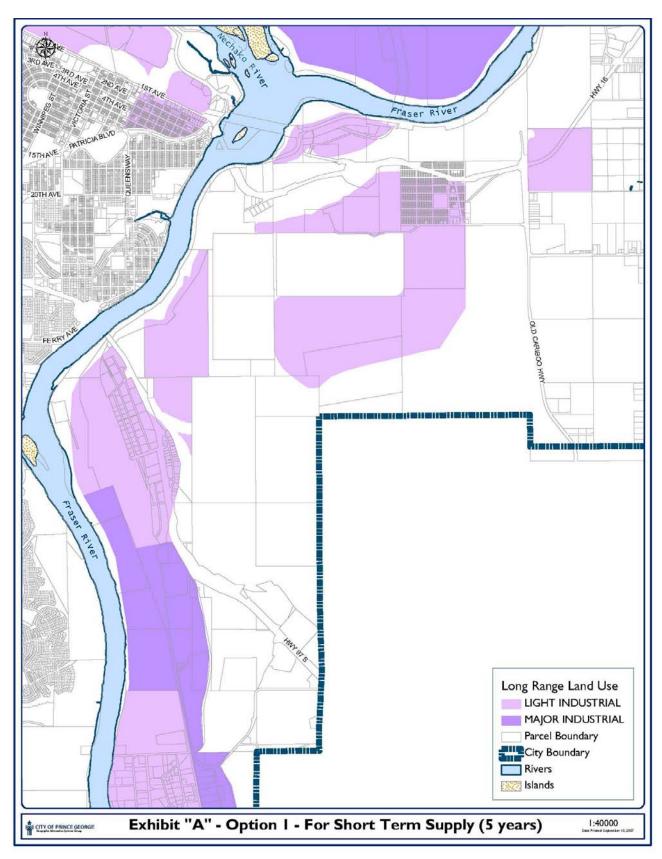
# 6.2 Stronger Emphasis on Air Quality

Given the considerable public concern over the city's air quality, particularly in the Bowl area, consideration should be given to a stronger policy stand in the OCP on the relationship between industrial development and air quality. This might include, for example, a statement that the City strongly encourages existing industry to reduce its air emissions and that, where it has the ability to do so, the City will not permit new industrial development, whether heavy or light, if it will adversely affect the city's airshed as a result of point source emissions. Industry that impacts on air quality should continue to be encouraged to locate outside the airshed.

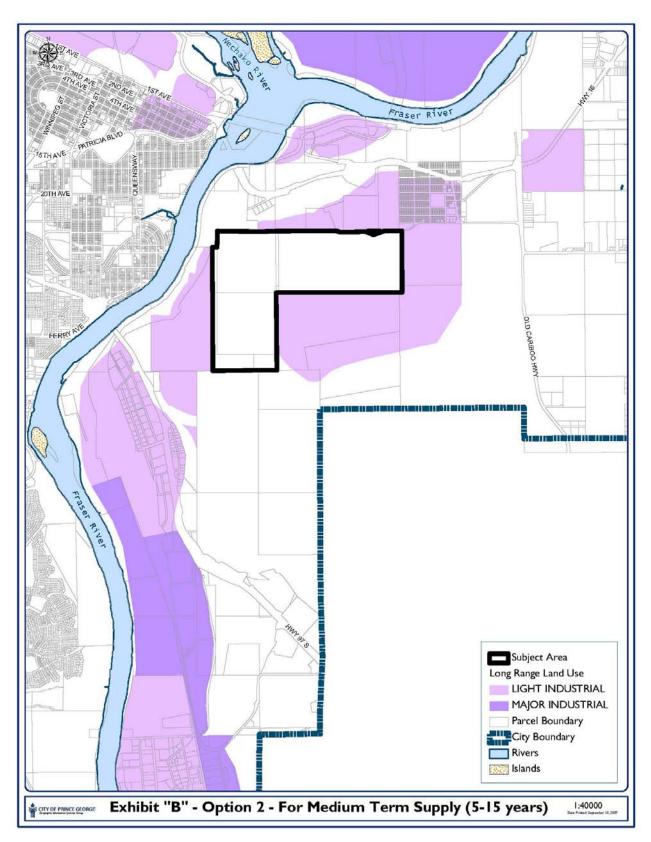
This is particularly important if the City is to succeed with promoting densification and infill of the Bowl area, and in attracting more residential development to Downtown as part of revitalizing the area.

# **6.3 Redefining Major and Light Industry**

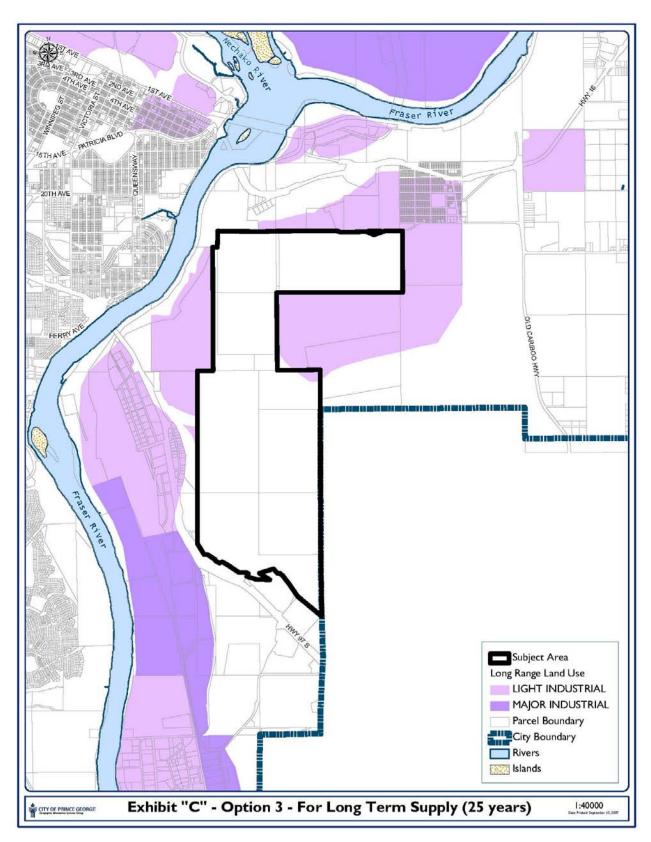
Consideration is being given to amending the current definitions of major and light industry in the OCP. For example, parcel size might be removed as one of the factors in how major industry is defined, with a focus instead on use and impacts on the community, such as air quality and traffic.



MAP 3



MAP 4



**MAP 5**