

Part C Objectives & Policies

DRAFT

Prince George has the largest population and employment base in the region and is uniquely positioned with growing transportation links to the world. Prince George is a highly rated investment jurisdiction with competitive taxes, fees and land costs, and a relatively young population, with access to exceptional education and training opportunities. Our community also has an abundant supply of land to accommodate businesses. Finally, our community advocates for regional growth in the forestry, mining, energy, tourism and other sectors that meet standards for environmental, social, and economic returns.

Context, trends and issues

The findings of the Prince George Labour Market Research Report (2008) demonstrate a gap in certain skilled and professional labour sectors and qualify a need for further research and strategic planning for effective recruitment and retention programs in Prince George. This labour gap in certain sectors can be equated to shifting demographics in Prince George, an aging workforce, shifting industry trends – including the downturn in the forestry sector, and differing levels of educational requirements between industries. Demographics Statistical analysis of changing demographics and population characteristics provide initial insight into the current state of the Prince George labour market:

- Estimates for 2007 indicate Prince George has seen a slight increase in population by 0.8%, while B.C.'s population has increased by 1.4%.
- Prince George has a higher birth rate than the provincial average.
- 11.4% of Prince George residents have aboriginal identity compared to a considerable lower 5.58% provincial average.
- Prince George's population is slightly younger compared with the provincial average, with a median age of 37, compared to B.C. where the median age is 40.
- Prince George has a considerably lower rate of immigration compared to the province. Only 9.6% of Prince George residents were born in another country. This is in sharp contrast to the 27.4% of B.C. residents who were born abroad.
- Prince George also has a population with slightly lower educational qualifications. Approximately 25% of the working age population does not have their high school certificates or diplomas compared with the provincial average of 20%.

Integration of the many untapped and underutilized labour pools in Prince George including, women, First Nations, mature workers, students, immigrants, and people with disabilities into the local work force can be an effective strategy for offsetting the current labour shortages. Still, further work is required to successfully identify a strategic plan to train, retrain, or to simply draw each population group into the workforce. Non-local labour pools are also a valuable resource that should be accessed strategically to achieve desired results. Yet, recruitment initiatives and strategies should be complemented by effective planning in terms of retention, which also calls for further research. Source: Initiatives Prince George.

Economic dependencies gauge the reliance of a community or local area on particular industries. While high dependency on one sector can be positive by providing high employment, if that sector is impacted by a downturn, it may leave the community in a vulnerable position. In a 2006 comparison Prince George was considered a less diversified community that was vulnerable to fluctuations in the forestry and wood processing sectors as demonstrated in the following table.

Sector	Prince George*
Forestry	28
Mining, Oil & Gas	2
Fishing	0
Agriculture & Food	1
Tourism	4
High Tech	1
Public Sector	28
Construction	7
Other	14
Transfer Payments	12
Other non-employment income	10

*Percent income dependencies (After-tax income 2006)

Source: BC Stats Economic Dependencies, released March 2009

In 2009, BC Stats predicted a stable overall employment demand for the Cariboo Development Region with significant increases in the mining and management and administrative sectors, but parallel reductions in the forestry, wood and paper products manufacturing. The regional unemployment rate in 2010 was 8.1%, below the 10 year average 8.8%. The average regional population aged 0-64 receiving income assistance in 2010 was 4%. Source: BC Stats Quarterly Report. The construction value in 2010 (\$131 M) remained well above the 10 year average of \$92 M, while the number of building permits issued for housing units (210) was significantly higher than the previous 10 year average (160). Source: City of Prince George.

Objectives

- Objective 5.1.1 Support land use and planning that enhances Prince George as a sustainable, knowledge based, resource economy, connected to the world.
- Objective 5.1.2 Focus on downtown development with the implementation of the policies, plans, programs and projects outlined in the Smart Growth on the Ground Downtown Prince George Concept Plan and Downtown Partnership.
- Objective 5.1.3 Support connectivity of our businesses to the world by improving our transportation (road, rail, and air) and data networks.

- Objective 5.1.4 Encourage the infill and redevelopment of existing employment centres while accommodating the phased development of designated commercial and industrial lands.
- Objective 5.1.5 Support institutions that enhance our knowledge-based economy such as UNBC, CNC, and commercial and trades training opportunities.
- Objective 5.1.6 Support the growth management strategy by matching employment growth with population growth.
- Objective 5.1.7 Work collaboratively with the Government of Canada, Province of BC, LTN, RDFFG and other partner agencies to advance collective economic priorities.

Policies

General

- 5.1.1 Protecting and enhancing transportation networks, transit, service corridors and public utilities (water, sanitary, storm, and other public and private utilities) for the efficient movement of people and materials, as well as the transmission of energy, and communications.
- 5.1.2 Promote revitalization with incentives that stimulate development consistent with the objectives of this Plan.
- 5.1.3 Encourage business competitiveness through the efficient use of resources and energy (e.g. water conservation and GHG emission reductions)

Commercial

- 5.1.4 Limit the expansion of Arterial and Regional Commercial development to designated areas.
- 5.1.5 Incorporate into each neighbourhood commercial and institutional uses to provide a mix of employment opportunities, subject to compatible scale and intensity.
- 5.1.6 Encourage a range of tourist opportunities that promote our authentic arts, culture, and heritage including tourist accommodation facilities such as hotels/motels, campgrounds, and bed & breakfasts.

Downtown

- 5.1.7 Promote a high-density core with mixed use commercial services. Encourage high-density residential, entertainment, government and administrative uses.
- 5.1.8 Protect and enhance active transportation links to the broader community.

- 5.1.9 Re-capture the essence of 'City Beautiful' design by enhancing public spaces downtown.
- 5.1.10 Support the development of a performing arts theater, wood design & innovation centre, fibre optic network, a range of housing options, integrated health centre, downtown education campus, district energy system, as well as local, neighbourhood and regional commercial uses providing an attractive pedestrian-oriented environment.

Industry

- 5.1.11 Enhance the environment (air, water and soil quality) through the strategic location of industry and the application of prudent regulations to reduce harm from industrial discharges and emissions.
- 5.1.12 Encourage eco-industrial projects that link processes, sectors, and buildings to share efficiencies in material, waste and energy production and distribution

Farmland

- 5.1.13 Protect farmland as an economic generator and increase awareness of the importance of local food for our health and well-being.
- 5.1.14 Buffer farmland from urban development to protect farmland capacity and mitigate land use impacts.
- 5.1.15 Protect farmers access to markets and water supply.

Airport

- 5.1.16 Develop and maintain adequate transportation links to support passenger and freight movement.
- 5.1.17 Encourage compatible land uses on lands adjacent to the airport.
- 5.1.18 Support the development vision of the Airport Master Plan by coordinating land use and services.

Business Improvement Associations

- 5.1.19 The City recognizes and supports the role of Business Improvement Areas to support the development, maintenance, and re-development of commercial areas.

Education

- 5.1.20 Collaborate with UNBC and CNC to ensure educational programs meet changing labour force needs and advocate for these institutions roles as research centres for the development of technology, health care, the environment, business and other disciplines.