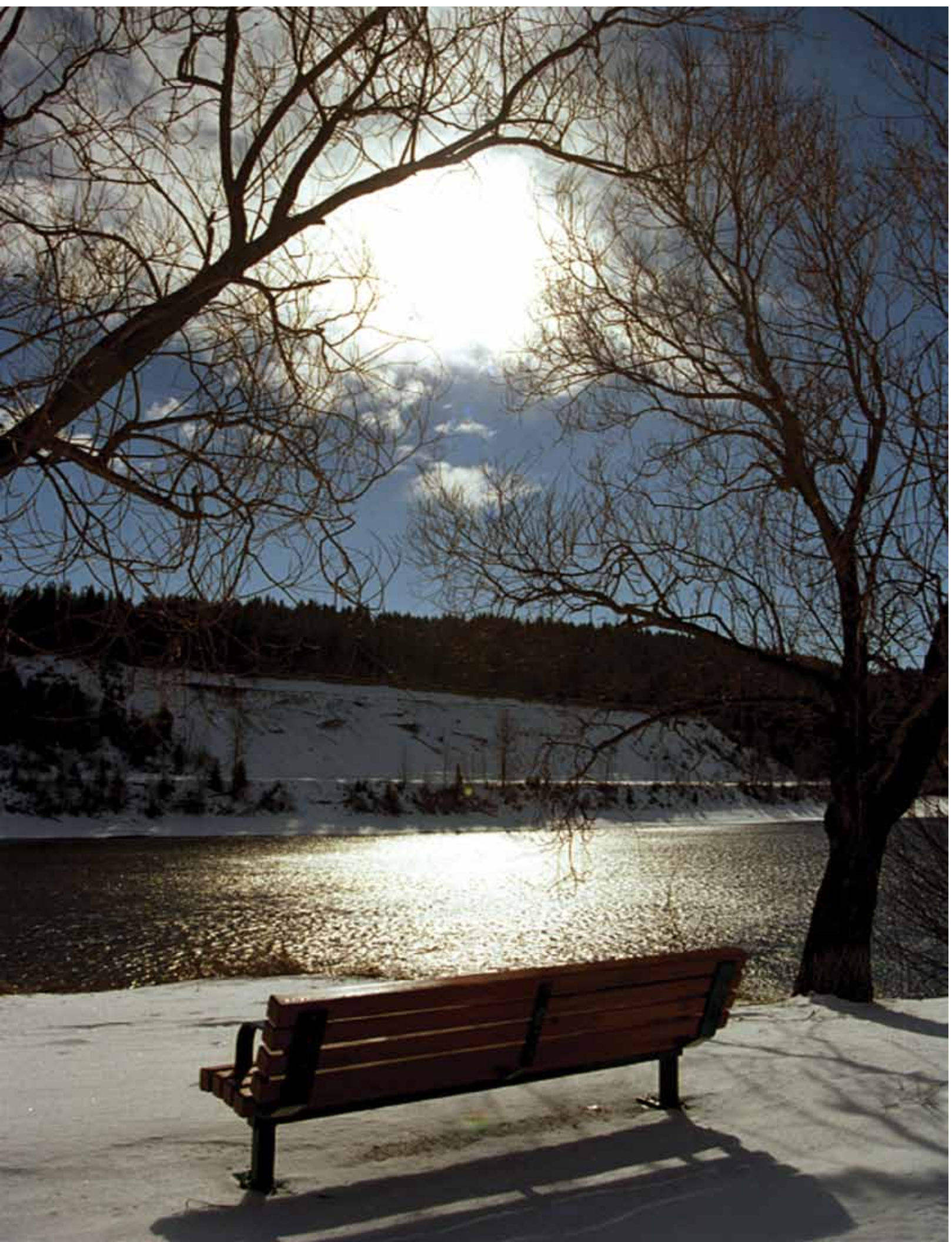


# myPG an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan for Prince George





# Table of Contents

myPG is a two part document

**Part One** is a stand-alone document for the community that outlines the goals and actions in a reader friendly format.

**Part Two** is a strategic community plan containing Keys to Success (how we work towards our goals) and Sustainable Strategies (what we do), *as a separate document* in table format.

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# Vision

## Our Vision of Prince George in 2040

As BC's northern capital, Prince George is a model for sustainable Canadian cities. The local environment is healthy, supporting a robust economy and an enviable quality of life for residents. Everyone has housing they can afford, good food on the table, and a strong, supportive network of friends and co-workers. Built on regional assets, the economy is strong and stable. A vibrant downtown, great community, affordable lifestyle, and spectacular natural setting are Prince George's greatest strengths.

## From Vision to Action

myPG is a process to help Prince George realize a sustainable future. The City is coordinating the first step, development of a long term plan. This plan is:

- Community-wide: the whole community working together to achieve our common goals
- Long term (with short, medium and long term goals) looking 30 to 50 years from now
- Action oriented leading to a immediate and long term action

# Introduction

Prince George has many assets and is working hard to improve its quality of life, maintain a healthy environment, and ensure a prosperous future. Sustainability planning is an opportunity to build on our assets and existing efforts. Key outcomes of the planning process are:

- Improved alignment of the entire community's efforts behind a shared vision of a sustainable future;
- Identification of strategies that cost-effectively achieve many goals at once;
- A foundation for further collaboration and advocacy in the community; and
- A set of projects we can act now and over time.

This "Integrated Community Sustainability Plan" (ICSP) captures the results of extensive public and stakeholder engagement aimed to create a vision of the long-term future of Prince George and to outline what we need to do now to achieve the vision. It is the first step in the long-term "myPG" process of becoming a sustainable community.

## Our strengths

The plan recognizes Prince George's many assets, including:

- A can-do attitude
- A solid regional resource base
- A community with many volunteers and a strong community spirit
- Success in diversifying the economy
- Being located on major transportation routes
- A beautiful environment in and around the city
- Strong leadership across a breadth of organizations
- Natural attributes such as an abundant high quality water supply and vast forest areas
- Being a Northern Regional service centre



## The challenge: global and local issues

At the same time, Prince George faces challenges. On the global scale, Prince George is affected by many factors, such as:

- Climate change (e.g. Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic)
- Limits on fossil fuel resources (e.g. increased home heating and transportation costs)
- Global economic changes (e.g. Asia - Pacific growth)
- A North American consumerism culture
- Pressures on government, business and household finances

To achieve a sustainable future, the Prince George community will need to understand the local implications of these and other trends, and respond strategically.

Prince George faces its own immediate circumstances. These are well-known and include for example:

- Air quality issues
- Social issues
- A downtown in need of revitalization
- A dispersed and costly development pattern
- Modest population growth and an aging population
- Dependence on global markets and resource prices
- Risk of flooding





## The response: Sustainability

Sustainability recognizes that we rely on the environment, so we need to protect and restore it in order to thrive and survive. It recognizes that to thrive means to provide for our human needs and maintain a high quality of life for everyone. It also recognizes that economic development is important in order to achieve these goals.

### ABOUT THE PLAN

The purpose of this plan is to set the community on a sustainable path. It is:

- A first step – to be followed quickly by action
- Built on and complementary to existing and past plans and initiatives
- A foundation for more efficient use of resources by the City, partners, and the community
- Non-jurisdictional, so it is not limited to the City's operations and legal boundaries

### BUILT ON LOCAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The planning process was designed to engage the community in a big way. Conversations on sustainability included the general public, youth, the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation, urban aboriginals, education, business, governments, community organizations and hard-to-reach audiences. It began by asking people about their vision of the future and how to get there. In this phase, 1,907 people contributed answers through a survey or “kitchen table” workbook, laying a strong foundation for a community vision. A series of five workshops

followed in the next phase, involving about 250 stakeholders and technical experts to explore how to achieve the vision, building on community ideas and existing plans, programs and initiatives. Then draft Goals and Actions material was presented for public review, using a mall display, the library, other displays, website, and workbooks.

Over 100 people visited the Pine Centre Mall Open House. As part of the review, 550 workbooks were picked up, 1,200 individuals visited the website, and 74 individuals took the time to complete an extensive questionnaire. Review meetings were held with shareholders such as developers, major land owners and community organizations. Finally, the plan was drafted using all of this information. Implementation will be the next step.

A key myPG strategy is to continue to engage the community significantly in decision-making.





## AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE

It is impossible to predict with certainty what is going to happen even a year or two from now. Developing a long-term plan to become a sustainable community must acknowledge this uncertainty. To do so, a workshop was held to explore a how a range of external forces may affect Prince George.

Described in four reasonably plausible “scenarios”, this exploration provided a backdrop to develop strategies in the context of an uncertain future. These scenarios are summarized below (see Appendix A for more detail):

- **Weathering the storm:** Significant climate change leads to mass migration, disease, and other stresses. However, there is a global effort to adapt to climate change, and North Americans make changes to their standard of living to minimize negative impacts elsewhere.
- **An easy ride:** With few impacts of climate change, developing countries grow and compete for resources. Local cooperation leads to more self-sufficient local economies, with more compact cities, healthier lifestyles, and strong local food systems.
- **Overwhelmed by global shifts:** Developing countries get stronger, and North America loses its prominence, with local regions adopting a fortress mentality and fighting one another for ever more scarce and expensive food, fuel, and other resources.
- **Rising costs, rising conflict:** With few climate impacts, growth of developing countries and an aging population lead to higher energy and health costs, putting pressure on government and household finances. The poor and lower middle class are hardest-hit, and disparity and related conflict rise. (See appendix A)

## FIRST NATION AND URBAN ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

This plan recognizes the Lheidli T’enneh First Nation within whose territory Prince George is located. As a basic principle, the Lheidli T’enneh’s Aboriginal Rights and Title are recognized and respected, as are existing agreements among governments. The plan also acknowledges the importance of the urban Aboriginal community in Prince George and the many Aboriginal organizations in this community.

Much more remains to be done to reflect the visions and needs of the Lheidli T’enneh and urban Aboriginals in this plan, in consultation with them. It is hoped that as a result, relationships between the City, the Regional District, the L’heidli T’enneh, and urban Aboriginals will grow stronger, based on respect and honour of one another’s traditions, culture and knowledge, and through communication, collaboration, and learning.





## A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

The City of Prince George has led the process to date, with contributions and action from many organizations and individuals. We now share a renewed vision of the future, and many people are already contributing (visit [www.myPG.ca](http://www.myPG.ca) to see what is happening).

Achieving the community's vision is everyone's responsibility.

The City will continue to coordinate plan implementation by:

- The City will take action immediately with an update to the Official Community Plan (OCP)
- Local organizations will be invited to formally endorse this plan, and commit to one or more actions. By doing so, they are recognized as "Partners" in the community effort
- Individuals will be invited to contribute, starting with ideas for action in this plan
- Everyone will be encouraged to talk about their accomplishments so that we are all aware of the impacts we can have together

## A LIVING PLAN

This plan will be renewed regularly, timed for maximum efficiency and impact. We will learn along the way, and adjust the plan based on this experience. Monitoring and reporting will inform plan renewal, which will update community priorities for goals and action. As a shared responsibility, plan renewal is expected to involve the City, L'heidl T'enneh First Nation, other governments, partners, youth, business, community organizations and community members.







## Part 1 – Goals

Performance goals are the enduring core of the plan, and describe what the community hopes to achieve in the long term. As the plan is renewed and progress is made, priorities may be adjusted.

We summarized the community submissions into a series of goal statements. Then we ranked them according to the number of community responses.

This part of the plan lists all of the goals. They are organized in three general categories – Social, Environmental, and Economic, and are listed alphabetically .



# Goals Summary

This table lists all of the community goals alphabetically within each sustainability area. The top ten goals as identified by the community are marked with a star (★)

	Goal	Description
Society	Affordable, Accessible Housing	Offer accessible, affordable and safe housing for all, and eliminate homelessness.
	★ Clear Identity and Pride	Have a clear identity that the community can be proud of, with a strong downtown and connection to its rivers and natural surroundings.
	★ Culturally Rich	Have a rich cultural life, with more events, facilities, education, and community involvement in the arts to support economic and social growth.
	★ Equitable Community	People of all backgrounds, ethnicities and income levels can access services that help to meet their needs and improve their quality of life.
	★ Healthy and Active	Be a community that encourages and supports health and wellness.
	★ Safe Community	Create an environment where all citizens feel safe.
	★ Supportive and Engaged	Be a friendly and engaged community with strong social connections.
Environment	★ Clean Air	Enjoy clean air.
	Clean Water	Protect the water supply and waterways, and reduce consumption.
	★ Green City, Green Practices	Be a green city with healthy habitat and forests, and a strong environmental consciousness, led by government and local organizations that demonstrate sustainable practices.
	Green Energy	Be a leader in green energy.
	Reduce Carbon Emissions and Adapt to Climate Change	Reduce carbon emissions and dependence on fossil fuels, and be prepared for climate change
	Reduced Waste	Reduce solid waste production and landfilling.
Economy	★ Diverse Economy	Have a diverse economy to augment our forestry base, responding well to changing global trends, and offering a good local return on investment through a focus on local food, service, green energy, and a knowledge-based resource economy connected to the world.
	Fiscal Responsibility	Carefully budget to ensure effective and responsible use of financial resources.
	International Connections	Have well established international connections and international partners.
	Job Diversity and Accessibility	Have many good jobs to suit the diversity and aspirations of people in Prince George, with programs that support developing the skills and knowledge needed to fill them.
	Sustainable Business	Be a model for northern cities in green and local business, and bioenergy.
	★ Vibrant Economy	Be a centre for vibrant economic growth in Northern BC, attracting newcomers and business and service choice.





# Social Goals



*Through community engagement, this is what we heard.....*

## Affordable, Accessible Housing

*Prince George offers its citizens accessible, affordable and safe housing for all, and has eliminated homelessness.*

### CITY AND PARTNER ACTIONS

These actions complement and build on existing strategies listed at the end of the Social section.

- Develop policy and regulations that support mixed-income developments and communities
- Develop policy and regulations that support accessible housing (eg. Measuring Up the North Program)
- Target new residential development growth to be 80% multi-family and 20% single family over 30 years, supporting the aging population
- Develop initiatives to support energy and healthy building upgrades to low-income and affordable housing
- Provide affordable market rental housing for low-income residents

- Use City-owned land for low-income housing sites
- Provide incentives for affordable housing
- Develop a centralized information and referral service to help people access affordable housing services
- Coordinate strong advocacy within and outside the region for improvements to Provincial and Federal government funding of affordable housing
- Adopt and implement a Housing First approach to secure and sustain housing for marginalized populations

### INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

- Provide a legal secondary suite in your home
- As a landlord, decrease rent for low-income tenants
- Educate yourself about homelessness and support services that assist those who are homeless



## HOW ARE WE DOING TODAY?

A one-day homelessness count in May 2010 found 280 (and May 2008 found 259) homeless people<sup>1</sup>

In 2006 there were 2,760 Prince George households in core housing need, most of whom were renters (2,045 or 74%). Little new private rental housing has been built in Prince George. In fact there has been a net loss of 145 rental units between 2001 and 2006<sup>2</sup>

Today 10% of the population is over age 65, but in 2038, this proportion may rise to 25%. This shift will have consequences for the type of housing demanded in the future, i.e. more accessible housing will be needed.

Source: CMHC. Housing in Canada Online

*“I want a PG where no families are living in poverty, and all children are in safe, healthy living conditions.” (survey respondent)*

## SEEDS OF SUCCESS

There are many housing-related groups and initiatives in Prince George, including for example:

- The Homelessness Intervention Project integrates cross-agency teams to find housing and support services for chronically homeless people through coordinating resources, data, policy and client information.
- The Beyond Homelessness Steering Committee coordinates local actions to address homelessness. They recently facilitated the implementation of the Downtown Clean Team and supported several housing initiatives in the downtown.
- The Aboriginal Business Development Centre offers a Rent Assist Program.

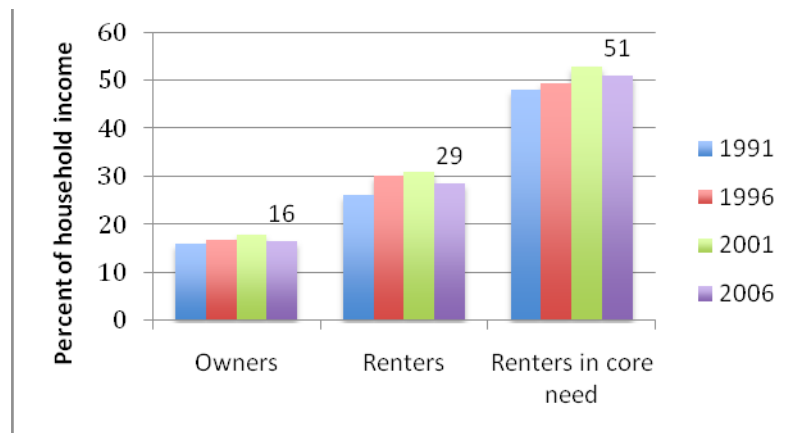
1 Community Partners Addressing Homelessness.

July 2008 and May 2010

2 CMHC Housing in Canada Online

*“Our PG will have affordable seniors housing”*

Share of income spent on shelter in Prince George



Source: BC Statistics Census Profiles





Through community engagement, this is what we heard.....

## Clear Identity and Pride

*Citizens of Prince George share a clear identity that the community can be proud of, with a strong downtown and connection to its rivers and natural surroundings.*

### CITY AND PARTNER ACTIONS

These actions complement and build on existing strategies listed at the end of the Social section.

- Develop an inclusive strategic plan/vision to strengthen community identity and pride
- Target new residential growth to be 80% near downtown and neighbourhood centres to revitalize them
- Refine zoning and development permit guidelines to encourage redevelopment in character with existing neighbourhoods
- Improve roads and public spaces for a more functional and visually attractive city
- Improve and increase trails and green space to enhance connectivity and nature throughout the city
- Develop a trail system that runs between points of historical interest and outlying parks with viewing sites or businesses (e.g. bike/canoe rental) lying between sections of trails

- Draw people to the riverfronts by bringing various public uses close to the rivers
- Encourage and support community-driven events that celebrate culture, place and season
- Create shared community spaces within neighborhoods that encourage people to gather, such as open spaces and community centres

### INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

- Take part in community events or organize one
- Shop, dine and explore the downtown
- Help keep the community clean, reduce waste and don't litter
- Get involved with your community association
- Get to know your neighbours
- Walk, run and cycle around your neighbourhood, enjoying the natural surroundings and amenities
- Support "Talking Proud PG"

## HOW ARE WE DOING TODAY?

Downtown Prince George is in need of revitalization

Public riverfront access is limited or is isolated from community uses

Fort George Park is a particularly well-loved park with good river access

*“If you travelled around, people from other communities would say PG did it right – ... there would be tangible results ... that improve the quality of life of the citizens...a sense that a resource based community can shape its future and address and balance all the pillars not just one.” (workbook group)*



## SEEDS OF SUCCESS

- The Smart Growth on the Ground Downtown Prince George Concept Plan is a detailed vision for the year 2035 of a sustainable and vibrant downtown Prince George. The Concept Plan is a toolkit and resource for everyone who expects to play a role in the realization of this vision
- The Downtown Partnership focuses its revitalization efforts on marketing, redevelopment, safety and cleanliness
- The Trails Master Plan proposes a trail system consisting of a series of connected loops, allowing users to move easily around the city on a trail rather than a road or road edge
- Prince George has a strong Community Association network





*Through community engagement, this is what we heard.....*

## Culturally Rich

*Citizens enjoy a rich cultural life, with more events, facilities, education, and community involvement in the arts to support economic and social development.*

### CITY AND PARTNER ACTIONS

These actions complement and build on existing strategies listed at the end of the Social section.

- Have more cultural celebrations similar to Canada Day at Fort George Park
- Showcase Aboriginal cultural events
- Incorporate Aboriginal culture/traditions into larger events and place names
- Keep existing public cultural facilities and maximize the efficiency of their use
- Inventory both public and private venues for arts and culture events (including sports) and consider all of these in planning for arts and culture facilities over the long term
- Create a new performing arts centre in the downtown
- Identify possible arts/culture initiatives and facilities for growing ethnic minorities
- Protect and enhance heritage assets



### INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

- Explore the galleries and theatres in your community
- Encourage your children and grandchildren to explore various arts media and experiences
- Expand your mind. Learn more about the local culture, about art, about the artistry of nature, about life
- Support arts and culture organizations



## HOW ARE WE DOING TODAY?

Memberships in cultural organizations: 2,000

Annual attendance of Prince George Symphony Orchestra and Theatre Northwest: 22,500

Daily library use: 1475

*“Our PG will be a safe and stable community with no homelessness and have an urban and sophisticated culture, with increased multicultural awareness and appreciation, including more festivals and use of public space.”  
(workbook group)*



## SEEDS OF SUCCESS



- The City is a member of the Creative City Network
- Prince George’s Arts Policy promotes the City as the Northern Arts Capital of BC by supporting the arts, encouraging partnerships, stimulating excellence and providing access for all citizens.
- The Cultural Plan for the Regional District of Fraser - Fort George is focused on building the internal capacity of the culture sector, and advocating for strengthening the human infrastructure.

*“A city valuing creative action and local culture - support of arts and cultural initiatives”  
(workbook group)*





*Through community engagement, this is what we heard.....*

## Equitable Community

*People of all backgrounds, ethnicities and income levels can access services that help to meet their needs and improve their quality of life.*

- Provide a wide range of lifelong educational and social opportunities
- Develop and implement policy related to poverty reduction targets

### CITY AND PARTNER ACTIONS

These actions complement and build on existing strategies listed at the end of the Social section.

- Develop a centralized information and referral service office with a media campaign to help people access services
- Develop a community and social health centre downtown, clustering services together to make them accessible
- Ensure all public engagement activities and communications are accessible (re: literacy, language, and medium)
- In planning capital projects and operations, prioritize access for all ages and abilities
- Coordinate with CNC/UNBC, other institutions and the many exchange programs to develop mutual strategies that help foreign students feel welcome in Prince George

### INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

- Help friends and acquaintances access services they need
- Express your support for services that provide access for all residents
- Support an inclusive workplace when hiring



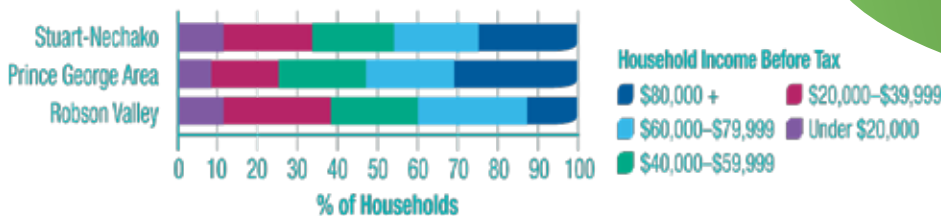
*“A Prince George where we celebrate the different aspects of community” (interviewee)*

## HOW ARE WE DOING TODAY?

A lack of equity is often revealed through high levels of poverty:

According to data from Statistics Canada, 1 in 10 working families in Prince George is considered “low income” and 5% of residents are receiving income assistance, compared to 3% in BC

Proportion of Households by Income Group in the Upper Fraser Region (2005)<sup>1</sup>



Source: Statistics Canada, Semi-Custom Area Profiles (FBC 2008 Regional Snapshot)

- First Nations and youths are particularly at risk groups in Prince George, experiencing higher than average rates of poverty, unemployment, and homelessness
- Women are particularly vulnerable, earning only 56 cents for every dollar that men earn

## SEEDS OF SUCCESS

- The Beyond Homelessness Steering Committee is providing a structure to support an integrated and coordinated response to housing and its related issues. The Committee is also supporting the development of a Downtown Health Centre and a mixed housing development.
- Homelessness Intervention Project
- Stone Soup Initiative
- The Urban Aboriginal Strategy has a goal of improving High School graduation rates for urban Aboriginal youth

*“A place where quality of life is as important as economic interests...” (workbook group)*





*Through community engagement, this is what we heard.....*

## Healthy and Active

*Be a community that encourages and supports health and wellness*

### CITY AND PARTNER ACTIONS

These actions complement and build on existing strategies listed at the end of the Social section.

- Adopt and promote holistic health and well-being
- Provide a wide range of community facilities and programming for youth, families, and seniors
- Convert closed school grounds to alternative uses such as meeting neighbourhood recreational needs
- Continue to maintain and expand the Farmer's Markets and other venues linking local producers with residents
- Provide an "Introduction to Agriculture" program in high schools
- Resolve regulatory barriers that currently make it difficult for restaurants and caterers to donate leftover food
- Create a transit network with frequent, direct, reliable service on key corridors between neighbourhood centres
- Identify and employ incentives to increase use of transit, walking, and cycling

- Shift budgets to prioritize investment in walking, cycling and transit over new investment in vehicle-focused infrastructure
- Foster community engagement and education in the regional food culture
- Support multi-organizational collaboration for sustainable food systems in Northern BC
- Develop and implement policy to ensure a built environment that enables a healthy and active population

### INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

- Eat fresh, local foods
- Get regular physical exercise
- Plant a garden
- Visit a Farmers' Market to purchase locally grown healthy foods
- Encourage others to stay active and eat healthy
- Be informed about what your community has to offer that supports a healthy and active lifestyle
- Use public transit or active transportation whenever possible
- Inform yourself about product ingredients you use every day (shampoo, moisturizer, food, etc.)

## HOW ARE WE DOING TODAY?

There are over 100 sport and recreation clubs in Prince George.

In 2007, Active Communities Prince George found that:

- Prince George residents were less active than the provincial average, with 49% being physically active, compared to 58% in BC.
- Residents also had unhealthy eating habits, often not meeting the Canada Food Guide's recommended daily minimum for fruit and vegetable consumption.



*“Our vision is of a people friendly community where citizens are healthy and happy, served by excellent health, recreation and service facilities.” (workbook group)*

### SEEDS OF SUCCESS

A few examples of existing projects that will take us closer to our goal...

- Prince George recently committed to the ActNow BC goals to increase physical activity and healthy eating by 20% by 2010
- Farmers' Market has secured permanent covered space in the downtown
- Prince George's Active Transportation Plan sets the stage to develop, enhance and implement models of active transportation to promote health, quality of life and economic development, while reducing negative environmental impacts
- As part of a northern cancer control strategy, Prince George will soon have a new Cancer Centre, providing residents in Northern BC with better access to cancer treatment and diagnostic services
- Sustainable childhood obesity prevention through community engagement (SCOPE) is beginning in Prince George
- Many initiatives including Stone Soup, Community Gardens and Healthy Eating Active Living (H.E.A.L.) are focused on ensuring food security in Prince George





*Through community engagement, this is what we heard.....*

## Safe Community

*Create an environment where all citizens feel safe.*

### CITY AND PARTNER ACTIONS

These actions complement and build on existing strategies listed at the end of the Social section.

- Provide opportunities for youth to engage in pro-social activities (Positive involvement with the community, family and schools)
- Support Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)
- Change perceptions of safety downtown by researching both data and perception, and communicating improvements in clear terms
- Consider moving development from areas that are particularly vulnerable to significant floods or other risks
- Continue efforts to mitigate wildfire and flood hazards
- Plan for mitigation of and response to disaster and extreme weather risks
- Continue to advocate for a dangerous goods route outside the downtown
- Mobilize neighbourhoods to enhance local safety

### INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

- Encourage your kids and the youth in your neighbourhood to get involved in pro-social activities
- Get to know your neighbours and support one another with eyes on the street
- Get a CPTED (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design) assessment on your home or business, free from community policing
- Make your home “Fire Smart”

*“A safe community and safe downtown that has managed the pervasive social issues.” (workbook group)*

### HOW ARE WE DOING TODAY?

Declining crime rates in 2007 and the first half of 2008 indicate an improving crime trend may be emerging in the city.

The overall crime rate has been consistently higher than the provincial average.

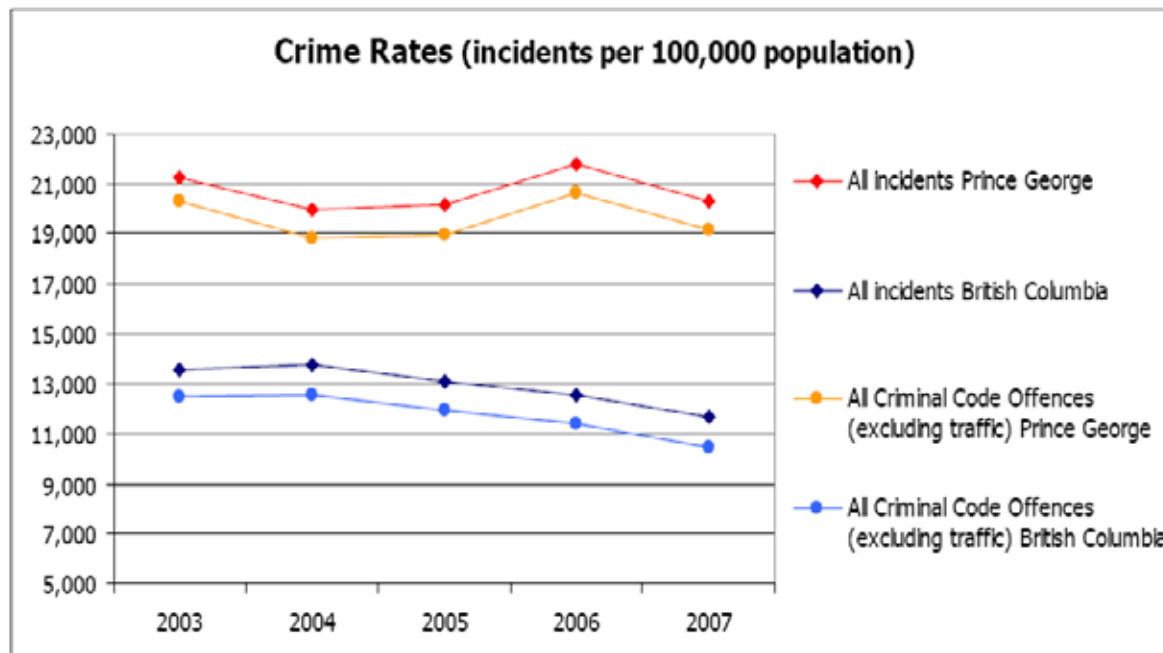
Treated over 1200 hectares of forest in the city to reduce wildfire hazard.

*“Safer communities with neighbors looking/helping each other out.” (interviewee)*



### SEEDS OF SUCCESS

- The Prolific Offender Management Pilot Project uses increased supervision and timely intervention with a small group of prolific offenders to address the issues that fuel criminal activity
- Communities that Care aims to prevent common youth problems (substance abuse, delinquency, violence, teen pregnancy, school drop-out, and mental health difficulties) and promote positive youth development
- Downtown Clean Team implementation
- Community Policing initiatives



Source: Prince George RCMP, Statistics Canada



*Through community engagement, this is what we heard.....*

## Supportive and Engaged

*Be a friendly and engaged community with strong social connections.*

### CITY AND PARTNER ACTIONS

These actions complement and build on existing strategies listed at the end of the Social section.

- Enable community events to enhance social interaction
- Provide education to all toward building a culture that accepts differences
- Support groups that are mobilizing community members to ensure a sustainable Prince George
- Enhance community volunteer capacity to facilitate civic engagement activities
- Build community association capacity to champion initiatives that provide opportunities for the engagement of all neighborhood members
- Engage in social marketing activities to promote and showcase community diversity
- Actively seek to engage vulnerable/ marginalized people and youth in all planning/ policy development processes

- Continuously test new methods to communicate with and engage residents in community decision making

### INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

- Get involved - Participate in engagement opportunities like myPG
- Welcome newcomers to the City and acquaint them with amenities
- Volunteer with community organizations
- Organize or participate in community events
- Vote in elections
- Get to know your neighbours

*“A place that controls its own destiny, has a vision and a plan to achieve that vision. A good place to live where people want to stay and be part of the community here.”  
(workbook group)*



## HOW ARE WE DOING TODAY?

A high rate of volunteerism indicates a strong community spirit.

In 2004, Prince George had the highest rate of volunteering in BC at 62% (age 15 & older) compared to the provincial average of 45%. Volunteer Prince George reported a trend in the increase in youth volunteering, including young people in both high school and college or university.

However, they also noted a general decrease in core volunteers, with volunteer engagement periods becoming shorter or more episodic.

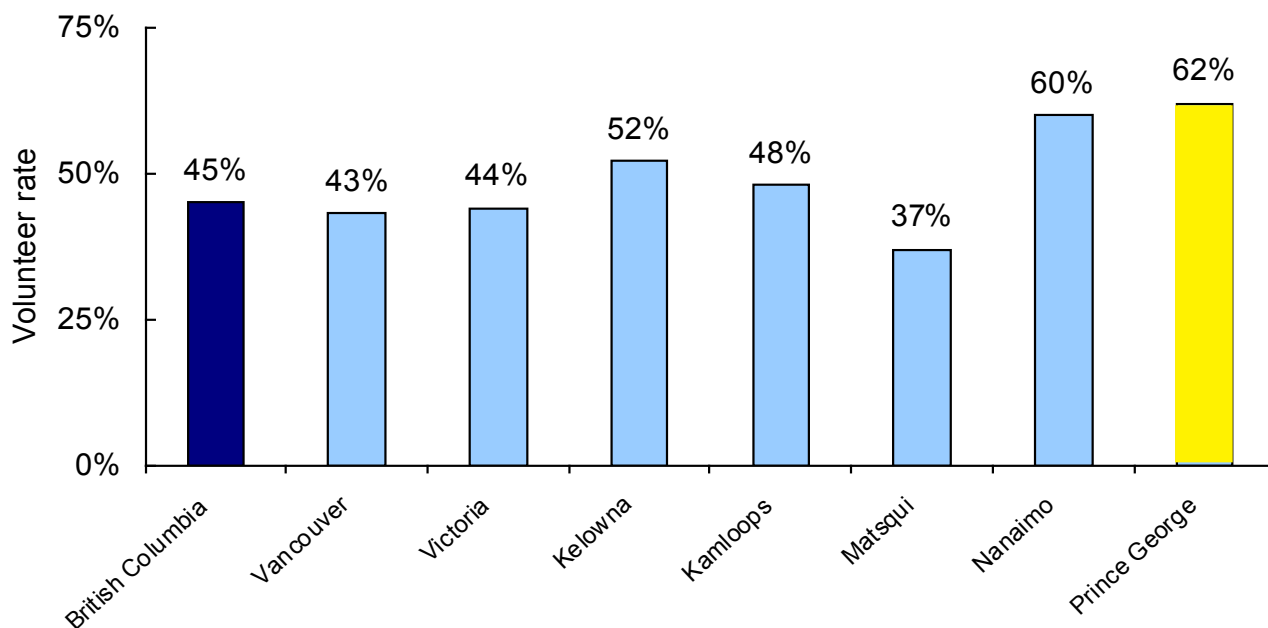
*“Inclusive, integrated, and innovative community encouraging civic and personal responsibility.” (survey respondent)*



### SEEDS OF SUCCESS

- Welcoming and Inclusive Communities and Workplaces Program (WICWP) supports immigrants in realizing their full potential, and supports the community in valuing and celebrating cultural diversity.
- Volunteer Prince George is a one-stop for volunteering, connecting individuals with worthwhile and challenging opportunities to serve their neighbours and community.

## Volunteer Rates in BC



Source: BC Highlights from Canadian Survey of Volunteering, Giving & Participating 2004 – most current survey that broke out statistics by city.





## Existing Social Strategies

The following are some examples of current initiatives underway in Prince George that exhibit many of the approaches of the ICSP.

### **Welcoming and Inclusive Communities and Workplaces Program (WICWP)**

- As the result of a partnership between the Immigration and Multicultural Services Society, Initiatives Prince George, and the Chamber of Commerce, the primary goal of WICWP is to support inclusive, welcoming and vibrant communities where immigrants can realize their full potential, racism is eliminated, and cultural diversity is valued and celebrated. The program funds initiatives that will foster welcoming communities by building capacity at all levels, developing broad, long-term partnerships across sectors and stakeholder groups, and serving as a catalyst for systemic change.

### **Beyond Homelessness Steering Committee**

The Beyond Homelessness Standing Committee was formed by City Council following a delegation to Portland to examine that City's successful Housing First Program. The Committee's mandate is to work closely with others to eliminate homelessness by:

- helping to develop a strong community based vision for safe and affordable housing in the city
- providing a structure to support integrated and coordinated response to housing and its related issues
- developing a unique and "made in Prince George" model that demonstrates innovative and collaborative partnership in moving a community forward
- celebrating and supporting innovation and successful initiatives that are in place, in progress or emerging
- The Committee has facilitated the implementation of the Downtown Clean Team, is supporting the development of a Downtown Health Centre and a mixed housing development

## Homeless Intervention Pilot Project

- The goal of this project is to reduce chronic homelessness. The Homelessness Intervention Project will align several government ministries, health authorities, the non-profit sector and other agencies that address chronic homelessness and establish an immediate integrated homelessness intervention project
- Integrated, cross-agency teams will find housing and support services for chronically homeless people through coordinating resources, data, policy and client information. Initially, the outreach teams will be tasked with two basic goals: to immediately reduce homelessness in these communities and to create a more integrated, synchronized approach to the delivery of services to the homeless
- Over time, the provincial government will put in place a management system with enhanced reporting that will enable communities to maximize and prioritize outreach, housing and support services for the chronically homeless. Through this approach, the communities will be in a better position to address the client population that is the most difficult to house: chronically homeless with severe mental health and addictions complications

## Stone Soup Project

- Stone Soup is a collaborative food security project which involves community agencies, the Native Friendship Centre, and focuses on the “most poor, most food deprived in the city”. It includes an action research project to identify the barriers to accessing healthy and affordable food, and to address issues that would speak to the community at large. Participatory research has led to a Community Food Action Assessment, while a community kitchen has opened in the Friendship Centre’s new lodge as well as kitchen facilities that can be accessed by other community groups

## Communities that Care Program

- Communities That Care (CTC) is a system that helps communities to engage in multi-level, multi-sectoral prevention planning and implement evidence-based programs. The program aims to prevent common youth problems (substance abuse, delinquency, violence, teen pregnancy, school drop-out, and mental health difficulties) and promote positive youth development. The approach has five phases, each accompanied by specific training sessions for community leaders and volunteers. The strategy supports communities in selecting and implementing existing evidence-based programs that fit the risk profile of their community





### **Prolific Offender Management Pilot Project**

- Prince George is the pilot site of the Prolific Offender Management Project. The project brings together resources from enforcement agencies, regional health authorities, housing services, Ministry of Housing and Social Development, Ministry of Children and Family Development and Adult Forensic Psychiatric Services
- The project uses increased supervision and timely intervention with a small group of prolific offenders to address the issues that fuel criminal activity. These interventions can include: referrals to drug treatment programs, seeing mental health professionals on a regular basis, and referrals to job or housing programs

### **Sustainable Childhood Obesity Prevention through Community Engagement (S.C.O.P.E.)**

- A project designed to bring together people in Prince George with a wide range of backgrounds, skills, and knowledge to develop an obesity prevention action plan.

### **Smart Growth on the Ground (SGOG) Downtown Concept Plan**

- Envisions a civic and cultural centre of the city, with major green spaces, a healthy and supportive community, and a reasonably high density mix of people and activities
- Envisions transportation primarily by walking/ cycling/ transit, along green, high-amenity streets and greenways
- Implementation focuses on City policies, regulations, and programs, as well as capital projects





### **Downtown Partnership**

- Revitalization efforts focus on marketing, incentives, safety/cleanliness
- Supports year-round Farmer's Market and Wood Innovation Centre

### **Community Partners Addressing Homelessness (CPAH)**

- CPAH is a network of community partners providing an inclusive forum for coherent research, planning and advocacy. It is dedicated to enhancing the community's capacity to meet the needs of the homeless and those at risk of becoming homeless in Prince George.

### **Prince George City Council's Strategic Plan**

- Related focus areas include a better downtown, and increasing civic pride
- Related priority projects include the Better Downtown Project and civic pride initiatives

### **BC Transit Plan**

- UPass for CNC and UNBC
- New routes connect major destinations (UNBC, CNC, downtown, Pine Centre Mall)
- Goal is for improved frequency to 15 minutes at peaks by 2020

### **Active Transportation Plan**

- Develop, enhance and implement models of active transportation to promote health, quality of life and economic development, while reducing negative environmental impacts

### **Climate Change Adaptation Initiative**

- Examine how climate change affects human health, and how it may lead to the movement of people

### **Participate Prince George Program**

- Provincially supported community initiative to promote positive changes in physical fitness and healthy eating



## Prince George Official Community Plan (OCP)

Provides direction for fostering a sense of community and for the growth and development of the individual through leisure service resources.


Principals include:

- Acquire and develop park and open spaces in locations which enhance the overall livability and build upon the valued environmental and cultural resources of the community
- Link park and open spaces through greenway corridors and trail development
- Provide public access to the riverfront areas
- Acquire and develop lands for parks and open spaces that provide a balanced distribution of 'active' and 'passive' recreation throughout the community
- Develop and maintain parks & open spaces in a manner to create a 'beautiful' and pleasing urban environment
- Provide opportunities for all residents to participate and be exposed to recreational and cultural programs and services
- Support partnerships with private recreational and cultural services and ensure that residents and organizations have opportunities to provide recreational and cultural services to the community
- Recognize the value of our heritage, both built and natural, and work to preserve, conserve and promote awareness of this resource
- Increase awareness of our region for both visitors and residents





# Environment Goals



*Through community engagement, this is what we heard.....*

## Clean Air

*Citizens enjoy clean air.*

### CITY AND PARTNER ACTIONS

These actions complement and build on existing strategies listed at the end of the Environmental section.

- Continue to coordinate air quality management through a multi-stakeholder model
- Continue to work with senior government and industry, and advocate for improvements to regulations, incentives, and other mechanisms that will support improvements in air quality
- Continue to develop a zero net-cost Air Care program
- Reduce industrial air pollution permit levels
- Increase fines for emissions to a level high enough to encourage change in the near term
- Dedicate money to enforce air quality-related bylaws effectively
- Develop a successful education and awareness campaign to have a greater understanding and commitment by all sectors in PG to do their part to reduce emissions
- Partner with major employers on new high-profile Transportation Demand Management programs

- Encourage the use of less polluting locomotives within the PG airshed
- Use smaller, more efficient fleet vehicles

### INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

- Bike, walk or take transit when possible
- Don't idle - Improve fuel efficiency and reduce air pollution by turning your engine off when possible
- Retrofit or replace your fireplace and wood stove, and take advantage of rebates through the wood stove exchange program
- Get to know the Clean Air Bylaw and follow it
- Use a smaller, more efficient personal vehicle
- Buy local food to reduce emissions from transporting food

*“Improve the air quality. Nobody would willingly live where the air quality will shorten their life.” (workbook group)*





## HOW ARE WE DOING TODAY?

Since 2004 there has been a 20% drop in the annual average concentration of fine particulate matter (PM 2.5) and a 75% drop in the number of days PM 2.5 exceeded the Canada-Wide Standard. However, the larger PM 10 has seen little reduction<sup>1</sup>.

Since 1992 Total Reduced Sulphur (TRS) – the ‘rotten egg’ smell, has dropped from an annual average of 5.9 ug/m<sup>3</sup> to 1.9 ug/m<sup>3</sup>, and there were fewer days in which TRS was worse than provincial objectives.

*“A community with clean air throughout the city, through the utilization of green space, clean industry, less traffic and more active transportation.”  
(survey respondent)*



## SEEDS OF SUCCESS

- Prince George Air Improvement Roundtable (PGAIR) brings together government, industry, business, health, community groups, not-for-profit organizations, academics and residents to implement the air quality management plans
- Mayor’s Task Force on Air Quality Improvement’s recommendations
- The City’s Active Transportation Plan sets the stage to develop, enhance and implement models of active transportation to promote health, quality of life and economic development, while reducing negative environmental impacts
- Initiatives in the City’s Greenhouse Gas Management Plan can help to improve air quality.
- Grassroots organizations in Prince George work to improve air quality and raise the profile of air quality issues

<sup>1</sup> BC Ministry of Environment. 2006 Annual Air Quality Report for Prince George (March 2008).





*Through community engagement, this is what we heard.....*

## Clean Water

*Waterways and the water supply are protected and consumption is reduced.*

### CITY AND PARTNER ACTIONS

These actions complement and build on existing strategies listed at the end of the Environmental section.

- Continue to protect water supplies from over use, potential contamination, and to treat wastewater adequately
- Improve management of storm runoff and its impacts on waterways
- Identify and implement methods to reduce leaching and runoff from snow dumps and landfills
- Educate people about our per capita water consumption compared to other industrialized countries
- Charge more for water and charge based on water consumption

### INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

- Use less water and buy water-saving appliances and fixtures
- Don't pollute water with garbage, soap, motor oil, paint or pesticides
- Use biodegradable or septic-safe household products
- Plant drought resistant native species in your garden to reduce watering needs

*“Healthy environment with land, water and air managed from a watershed perspective”  
(workbook group)*

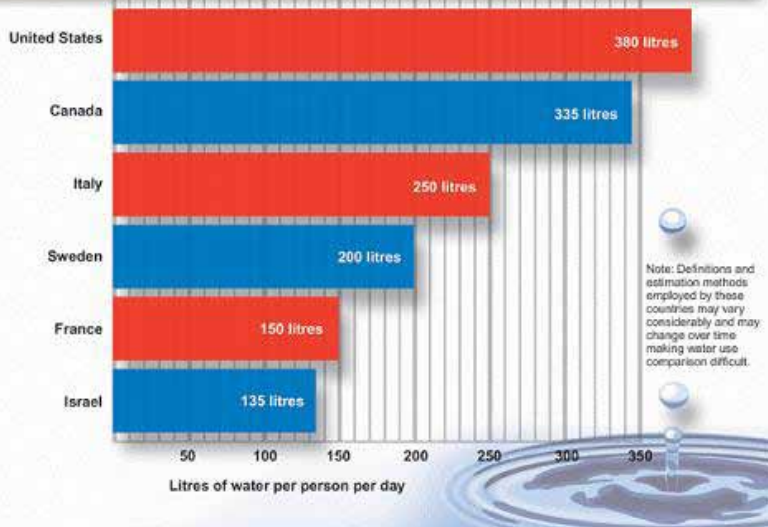
## HOW ARE WE DOING TODAY?

The most significant sources of water contamination in the Fraser River north of Hope were pulp and paper mills and other industry<sup>1</sup>. As pulp mills have adopted alternative processes, water quality has improved dramatically<sup>2</sup>.

Studies show that quality fish habitats are being degraded by human impacts including land development run off, agriculture, forestry, and recreation, all of which have led to loss of riparian habitat and poor water quality. Nechako White Sturgeon are at critical levels and may not recover if actions are not initiated now.

Prince George currently uses water at above average per capita rates, and these have risen slightly over the last 10 years. Prince George's per capita residential water use is about 450 L/day.

**Average daily domestic water use (per capita)**



1 Oriordan, J. & D. Fast. 1997. Water Quality Assessment and Objectives for the Fraser River from Moose Lake to Hope. Ministry of Environment

2 Ibid

## SEEDS OF SUCCESS

- The Prince George Water Quality Conservation Plan recommends a variety of water conserving initiatives
- Water meters have been installed in some Prince George homes voluntarily. These residents pay based on consumption
- All new home construction requires the installation of a water meter
- The climate change adaptation initiative identifies many actions to help preserve Prince George's high quality water supply

Domestic water use in countries around the world. Source: Environment Canada.





*Through community engagement, this is what we heard.....*

## Green City, Green Practices

*Prince George is a green city with healthy habitat and forests, and a strong environmental consciousness, led by government and local organizations that demonstrate sustainable practices.*

### CITY AND PARTNER ACTIONS

These actions complement and build on existing strategies listed at the end of the Environmental section.

- Protect valuable agricultural, environmentally sensitive, and hazardous lands from development
- Develop a signature mixed-use green building downtown, incorporating a service centre with information about sustainable business and living in PG
- Create neighborhood-by-neighborhood competitions for performance (e.g. most energy saved in a month)
- Leverage strong corporate greening initiatives (e.g. City E3 Fleet, UNBC Green University) to inform cost-saving private-sector initiatives
- Encourage infill development, adaptive re-use of buildings and brownfield and re-development

- Provide incentives for green buildings, redevelopment and readaptive uses
- Consider pooling capital funding among large institutions to support major building retrofits
- Promote green products and strategies at Home Shows
- Educate developers and builders about financial mechanisms to transfer higher capital costs of green features to purchasers

*(Note: “Green”, used above to mean less energy use, less impact on the environment in production and produces less waste)*

### INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

- Be aware of your ecological footprint
- Help your children learn about and appreciate local ecology
- Avoid using pesticides
- Spend more time at a local park
- Do not dump your yard waste in greenbelts

*“A place with a better attitude towards the environment, the rivers, the land, and the people that are here. A place that cares” (workbook group)*

### **HOW ARE WE DOING TODAY?**

In Prince George, the public owns quite a bit of land, including public parks and other open spaces, and the community forest.

*“Healthy local ecosystems and preserved local resources”  
(survey respondent)*

### **SEEDS OF SUCCESS**



- The Community Forest Management Plan manages for safety, wildfire hazard reduction, forest health and biodiversity
- Ominica Beetle Action Coalition (OBAC) Agricultural Strategy fosters a healthy agriculture sector utilizing our productive agricultural land
- As part of Trees for Tomorrow, over 6,000 trees were planted in city parks, playgrounds and greenbelts





*Through community engagement, this is what we heard.....*

## Green Energy

*Prince George is a leader in green energy.*

### CITY AND PARTNER ACTIONS

These actions complement and build on existing strategies listed at the end of the Environmental section.

- Through growth, target densities that are high enough to support district energy and other desired facilities/amenities
- Investigate the potential for District Energy Systems, especially in mixed-use locations
- Investigate all renewable energy options, including wind, solar, biomass and geothermal
- Accelerate implementation of energy efficiency and renewable energy initiatives in order to be prepared before energy prices rise significantly
- Retrofit existing facilities to capture and re-use “waste” energy
- Develop a centralized information and referral service office with media campaign to support production and use of green energy (possibly with public library facilities)

### INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

- Invest in local green technology companies
- Install a renewable energy system such as a solar hot water heater
- Support pilot bio-energy and other alternative energy plants
- Upgrade your home’s energy efficiency, reduce your energy consumption

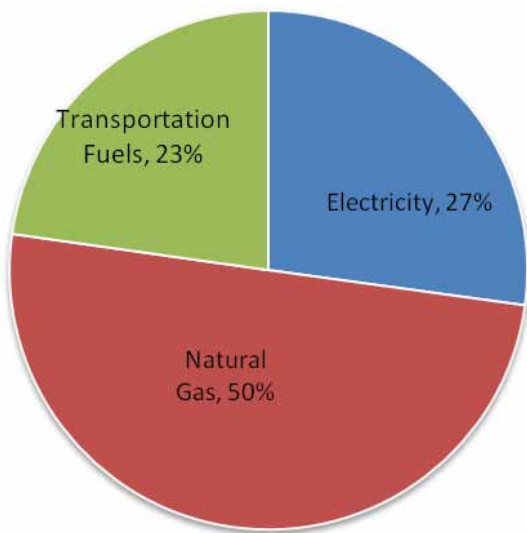
*“Energy! Create a utility” (survey respondent)*

### HOW ARE WE DOING TODAY?

Of the electricity used in Prince George, 90% is generated from hydro-power facilities—a clean source of renewable energy. However, electricity accounts for only 27% of energy use in the City. The other 73% is natural gas for heating, diesel and gasoline for vehicles.

*“Bio-energy as an entrepreneurship base” (workbook group)*

## Energy Use in Prince George



Adapted from: Environ 2009. Memorandum to the City of Prince George, June 12, 2009.

### SEEDS OF SUCCESS

- To displace natural gas for heating, the City has investigated solar hot water and District Energy Systems
- UNBC is currently installing a biomass energy system
- The City installed Canada’s first electricity producing microturbines from sewage digester gas at the City’s Wastewater Treatment Plant. The project converts methane into power and heat, reducing energy costs and greenhouse gas emissions
- The largest use of local renewable energy in Prince George is in the form of pulping residue and wood waste used to power the operations of pulp plants and mills, and wood to heat homes
- The Omenica Beetle Action Committee proposes ‘Leadership by Example’ alternative energy programs and initiatives at federal, provincial, and local government levels





*Through community engagement, this is what we heard.....*

## Reduce Carbon Emissions and Adapt for Climate Change

*Prince George has reduced carbon emissions and dependence on fossil fuels, and is prepared for climate change.*

### CITY AND PARTNER ACTIONS

These actions complement and build on existing strategies listed at the end of the Environmental section.

- Continue to invest in climate mitigation and adaptation strategy development and implementation
- Work with local industry and senior government resources to identify cost-effective ways of reducing carbon emissions
- Target new residential development to be 80% near downtown and neighbourhood centres, encourage infill development and redevelopment
- Create a transit network with frequent, direct, reliable service on key corridors between neighbourhood centres
- Provide carpooling incentives
- Develop clear communication about local climate impacts and engage the community on ways to address them
- Develop a local carbon offset trade market to support local offset projects

- Develop a 'climate change theatre program' for schools/support the "Climate Showdown" school program
- Promote the sale and use of more efficient private vehicles
- Continue to plan for and implement actions to minimize flooding, forest fires and other climate related impacts

### INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

- Ride your bike, walk, carpool or take transit to work and school
- Purchase carbon offsets when you fly
- Video/teleconference rather than travel
- Retrofit your home or office for energy efficiency
- Turn down the heat, and/or use less hot water (e.g. wash clothes in cold water)
- Buy local foods & products

*"More use of public transit - less cars on the road" (survey respondent)*





## HOW ARE WE DOING TODAY?

Prince George produced an estimated 900,000 tonnes of greenhouse gases in 2007, about 12.3 tonnes per capita, just under the Provincial average of 14.4. In Prince George, the main contributors are natural gas used for space and water heating and industrial operations, and gasoline and diesel for transportation.

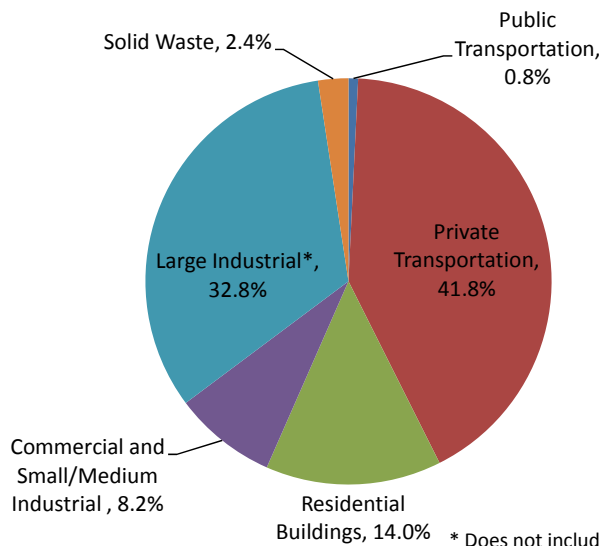
*“Higher density, pedestrian focused, well-defined neighbourhoods”  
(workbook group)*



## SEEDS OF SUCCESS

- Prince George’s Energy and Greenhouse Gas Management Plan envisions community reductions of 2% below 2002 emissions by 2012
- The New Home Energy Efficiency Rebate Program provides builder incentives of \$3600 to achieve Energuide 80, \$5000 for 81 and \$7500 for 87
- Prince George’s anti-idling program and transit services increases contributed to its 2008 BC Green Cities award for leadership and innovation in sustainability
- City of Prince George sponsoring “Bike to Work Week” for a second year

City of Prince George, 2007 GHG Emissions



Source: 2007 Community Energy and Emissions Inventory, updated May 27, 2010





*Through community engagement, this is what we heard.....*

## Reduced Waste

*Prince George has reduced solid waste production and landfilling.*

### CITY AND PARTNER ACTIONS

These actions complement and build on existing strategies listed at the end of the Environmental section.

- Implement a curbside recycling program
- Ensure regulations, fines and enforcement are in place to minimize dumping garbage in the city and region.
- Implement and enforce materials landfill bans as alternative disposal options become available
- Extend product stewardship programs and integrate them with municipal solid waste systems
- Ban plastic grocery bags and provide alternatives (e.g. myPG grocery bag to all households)
- Advocate for a shift to more durable consumer products
- support REAPS with their classroom education programs

- Develop curriculum that supports and explains conservation, building on the success of recycling education
- Encourage a stronger culture of sharing, i.e. informal “freecycling”

### INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

- Compost your yard waste in the backyard
- Use fewer disposable products, buy products with less or no packaging
- First Reduce and Reuse then Recycle
- Give unwanted items to charity thrift stores, hold a garage sale with your neighbours
- Support local businesses that practice waste reduction
- Do not dump yard waste in the greenbelts
- Recycle as much of your waste as you can

## HOW ARE WE DOING TODAY?

The Regional District of Fraser-Fort George (RDFFG) provides waste reduction programs, central composting and recycling drop off locations. The overall recycling rate for municipal waste in the Regional District was 21% (Draft RDFFG Solid Waste Management Plan), far lower than that in many other jurisdictions.

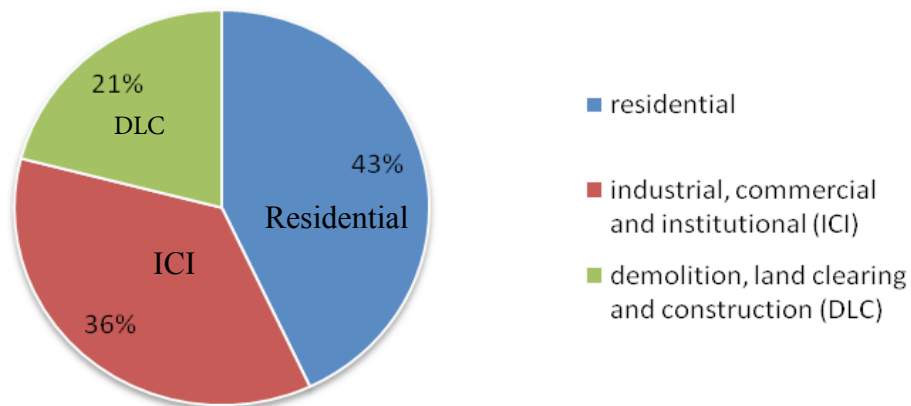
*“A clean & environmentally conscious community serious about recycling & composting”*  
(workbook group)



### SEEDS OF SUCCESS

- The draft RDFFG Solid Waste Management Plan proposes a diversion target of 53% by 2014, a substantial improvement but still below rates achieved in leading cities of over 70%.
- Consideration of a curbside recycling program is underway.
- Product Care is a not-for-profit industry-sponsored association that manages product stewardship programs for household hazardous and special waste (paint, flammable liquids, pesticides and gasoline).

Waste Generation by Sector in Prince George





## Existing Environmental Strategies

The following are highlights of existing strategies closely related to all environmental goals:

### BUILDINGS & ENERGY

#### Buildings - Energy Incentive Pilot Program

- Home Energy Labeling Pilot Project: \$150 rebate to home sellers for energy audit run by the City of Prince George, BC Northern Real Estate Board, Canadian Home Builders Association and Hometech Energy
- New Home Energy Efficiency Rebate Pilot: \$3500 to \$7500 to reach Built Green with Energuide 80 to 82

#### BC Hydro pilot community project (with Environ)

- Energy and GHG reduction opportunities and savings for small/medium businesses

#### Clean Air Bylaw

- New wood stove installations must meet Canadian or USA Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) emissions standards; exchange program in last year of provincial funding
- No open burning anywhere in the city

#### Energy and Greenhouse Gas Management Plan

- Proposes a broad set of energy and greenhouse gas reduction strategies across community and corporate sectors

#### District Energy System

- Corporate Strategic Plan – 2010: funding, environmental assessment, target implementation in 2011.

#### Current energy projects

- UNBC Biomass Gasification project; BCR plant (wood waste to hydro), Alterna biomass energy project, Canfor co-gen

## **Smart Growth on the Ground (SGOG) Downtown Prince George Concept Plan**

- High-performance, adaptable buildings with vegetated exteriors
- Catalyst downtown energy system(s)
- Clean and renewable energy sources
- Re-purposing of buildings

## **Current green building projects**

- Hospital addition, Duchess Park Secondary, College of New Caledonia building, Gateway Seniors' Home and Friendship Lodge

## **Prince George Official Community Plan (OCP)**

- The City dedicates its support to the British Columbia Climate Action Charter by achieving carbon neutrality in City corporate operations by 2012
- By 2012, reduce corporate greenhouse gas emissions by 10% and community greenhouse gas emissions by 2%, compared with 2002 levels
- Develop a well designed built environment, protecting the natural environment through the encouragement of green building practices and design
- Act as a resource to the community by promoting energy efficiency and awareness

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **Regional Solid Waste Management Plan (updated 2008)**

- Drop off depots for recycling

By 2012

- Curbside recycling, disposal bans on cardboard, recyclable paper, metal, motor oil
- An extensive promotion and education campaign
- A diversion rate of 35% will be achieved

By 2015

- A diversion rate of 50% will be achieved

## **Prince George City Council's Strategic Plan**

- 2010 - develop solid waste reduction plan in partnership with RDFFG (including curbside evaluation), with 2011 implementation

## **City of Prince George Water Conservation Plan**

- Metering for Industrial, Commercial, Institutional (ICI), multifamily with volume pricing
- Volunteer residential single family metering was started
- Sprinkling restrictions

## **Wastewater Treatment Plant**

- Energy recovery from biogas; centrifuge upgrade
- Biosolids: had been going to farms, discussion about other options
- Some stream and outfall sampling

## **Asset management: Corporate Strategic Plan**

- 2010 - complete infrastructure asset inventory

## **Smart Growth on the Ground (SGOG) Downtown Prince George Concept Plan**

- Green streets including stormwater management
- Winter city design for public realm

## **Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw**

- Addresses stormwater infrastructure for new land development: being updated
- Watershed drainage plans being completed in next several years

## **Climate Change Adaptation Strategy**

- Considers climate change in infrastructure management and planning



## Prince George Official Community Plan (OCP)

- Overall phasing plan for future development considers: capacity of existing infrastructure, cost, proximity to treatment center, topography, access to transportation network, and current system deficiencies
- Encourages sequential development
- Encourages higher density and infill development where vacant lands and redevelopment opportunities exist, and where established services and infrastructure foster the potential for new housing

## OPEN SPACE

### Prince George Official Community Plan (OCP)

- Protect agricultural lands, environmentally sensitive areas, and key wildlife habitat,
- Avoid natural hazards including the floodplain and steep slopes
- Provide public access and viewpoints to rivers, smaller watercourses, lakes and wetlands
- Protect riparian areas, groundwater, and wildfire interface
- Provide parks and open spaces with different uses and sizes
- Create a complete network of trails

### Wildfire Mitigation Strategy

- Strategies: Safety, Protection, Preparedness, Prevention, Interagency Co-operation and Policy, Education
- Require “FireSmart” development at interface
- Prioritize fuel reduction to reduce wildfire risk

### Community Forest Management Plan

- Manage for safety, fire hazard reduction, forest health and biodiversity
- Manage for all values
- Provide recreation trails and maintain visual quality

- Chip debris to minimize air quality impacts
- Increase stand composition of deciduous trees

### Parks & Open Space Master Plan

- Acquire parks to meet local needs, mitigate floods, and provide greenway links
- Prioritize district-scale parks
- Encourage design that is multi-use, multi-purpose and safe
- Sell parks that do not support community goals, use funds to support parks priorities

### City of Prince George stream protection strategies

- Require developments within 50m of fish-bearing streams to leave buffers, minimize stormwater runoff and avoid contamination and erosion
- Collaborate with senior levels of government to ensure all regulations are addressed in development

### Watershed drainage plans

- Manage stormwater to minimize pollution,



erosion, and other disruptions to habitat and water quality

## **Flood Risk Evaluation and Control**

### **Options – Phase 1 Report Plan**

- Update floodplain mapping
- Limit development in the floodplain

### **Food system workshop (Jan 2010)**

- Consider encouraging backyard and local agriculture
- Consider non-timber forest products (food, others)

### **Smart Growth on the Ground (SGOG)**

#### **Downtown Prince George Concept Plan**

- Connect to the river with a waterway and park
- Create public space with Farmer's Market
- Temporary uses of underutilized and vacant lots (Community Gardens)

### **Trails Master Plan**

- Create critical links with new trails
- City to lead trail development with citizen assistance

### **Ominica Beetle Action Coalition (OBAC)**

#### **Agricultural Strategy**

- Better protection of existing productive agricultural land







# **Economic Goals**





*Through community engagement, this is what we heard.....*

## Diverse Economy

*A diverse economy augments our forestry base, responds well to changing global trends, and offers a good local return on investment through a focus on local food, service, green energy, and a knowledge-based resource economy connected to the world.*

### CITY/INITIATIVES PRINCE GEORGE<sup>1</sup> AND PARTNER ACTIONS

These actions complement and build on existing strategies listed at the end of the Economic section.

- Collaborate with UNBC, CNC and other educational institutions to maintain or enhance their role as centres for technology development, research and development, and global connectivity
- Use post-secondary resources to their fullest capacity, by strengthening partnerships with industry (e.g. UNBC Industry Liaison Office) and government
- Build on the success of existing initiatives (e.g. Northern Bio-Energy Partnership, Bio-energy conference) to expand the bio-energy sector

- Continue to support the responsible and sustainable development of our resource industries as our economic base
- Continue to expand information technology, health, and transportation and logistics sectors
- Extend or adapt the Omineca Beetle Action Coalition (OBAC) Agricultural Strategic Plan to set up multi-organizational collaboration for a sustainable food system in Northern BC
- Encourage Community-Supported Agriculture (CSAs) and other farmer to consumer links (e.g. build on Farm-to-School program)
- Support and promote all forms of tourism (sports, eco, etc.)

### INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

- Buy locally produced food
- Support local businesses

<sup>1</sup> The City of Prince George is the sole shareholder of Initiatives Prince George Development Corporation, and has delegated responsibility to its Board of Directors for economic development services planning and implementation for the City of Prince George

*“Connecting science and research with industry and community within a collaborative governance model.” (workbook group)*

## HOW ARE WE DOING TODAY?

Prince George’s economy is moderately diverse, and becoming more diverse, while becoming less dependent on the forestry sector<sup>1</sup>.

Between 2002 and 2008 there was an 80% increase in employment in the professional, scientific and technical services sector<sup>2</sup>.

A number of possible economic growth catalyst projects proposed for the next decade may influence Prince George. These include: Pine Pass improvements, Cariboo Connector 4-laning, Hwy 16 improvements; Site C (\$6.6 Billion project); Fairview Phase II in Prince Rupert (more container shipping and demand aggregation in Prince George CN Intermodal); Mining activity for which Prince George will be the supply and service hub (Terrane Metals Mt. Milligan, Prosperity, Endako, Red Chris and others); Northwest Power Line, Rio Tinto Alcan (\$2.5 B Modernization in Kitimat and Prince George will provide portion of supply and services); expansion of gas servicing in the Peace Region (with the completion of safety and technical improvements from Prince George to Dawson Creek); significant growth of dimension lumber exports into the Chinese market (China now accounts for 17 percent of our exports); health and education services growth (potential to continue to grow Prince George as a health care hub for the North and as a University/College town for the North) 10 percent of our population are post-secondary students and there is room for domestic and international students; possibility of the Enbridge pipeline; airport build out over medium term; and light manufacturing and logistics industry growth.<sup>3</sup>

*“We are a knowledge-based resource economy connected to the world. That knowledge is extended to health care, education and services. We have the capacity to use the potential in renewable energy and other environmental practices (even in the mining industry) to create our own definition of sustainability.”*  
*(survey respondent)*

### SEEDS OF SUCCESS

- 
- Initiatives Prince George is pursuing expansion of the community’s transportation and logistics, and bio-energy sectors
  - The Innovation Resource Centre works to commercialize innovative technology developed in the region
  - UNBC’s Industry Liaison Office works to commercialize research-related products developed at the university

1 BC Stats. 2009. “BC Local Area Economic Dependencies: 2006.

2 Fraser Basin Council. 2008. “A Picture of Our Region: Upper Fraser Sustainability Snapshot.”

3 Initiatives Prince George

*“A more diversified economy not reliant on resources but is more knowledge-based.”*

*(workbook group)*





Through community engagement, this is what we heard.....

## Fiscal Responsibility

*Prince George carefully budgets to ensure effective and responsible use of financial resources.*

### CITY/INITIATIVES PRINCE GEORGE AND PARTNER ACTIONS

These actions complement and build on existing strategies listed at the end of the Economic section.

- Engage the public in discussing service levels and choices in priority-setting
- Prioritize projects and programs that achieve many goals at once
- Target new residential development to be 80% near downtown and neighbourhood centres
- Begin a dialogue between City and developers on costs of infrastructure and services

- Develop a long term, sustainable funding and management model for physical infrastructure
- Adopt full-cost and/or “triple-bottom-line” accounting to reflect real costs and benefits
- Investigate the factors driving rising recreation and fire protection costs, and develop strategies to reduce these costs

### INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

- Take a household budgeting course for your personal financial planning needs
- Teach your kids how to manage their money
- Participate in budget and priority setting discussions
- Save to own your own home

## HOW ARE WE DOING TODAY?

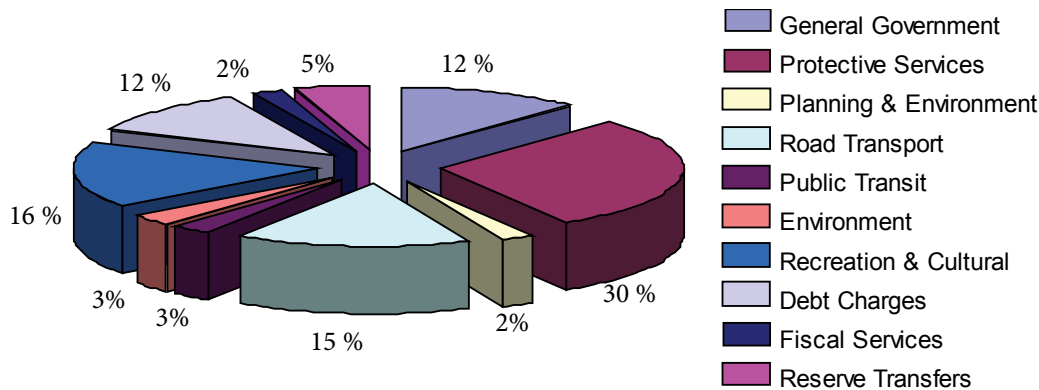
Provincial budgets are under pressure from rising health costs which now make up just under 50% of total spending<sup>1</sup> and rising faster than any other part of the budget<sup>2</sup>. As a result, less money is available for other priorities such as education, social services, and municipal needs

A recent (2010) KPMG competitive alternatives study placed Prince George as #1 out of 13 Pacific Northwest USA and Canada locations for overall cost competitiveness on 26 factors

Household debt-to-income ratios are now at a record level of 145% in Canada<sup>3</sup>

While the population has fallen, the City is faced with competing demands for expanded and enhanced services. The bulk of City services are paid for from the City's General Fund, the breakdown is shown here

The City's 2010 budget (general fund)



## SEEDS OF SUCCESS



- The City is improving financial planning for maintenance and replacement of infrastructure and facilities through an Asset Management system. The program will make the City's infrastructure services more cost-effective.
- The City is beginning a Sustainable Financing Policy Initiative to improve its financial management and planning.

*“Honesty and accountability to taxpayers” (survey respondent)*

1 Presentation by BC Ministry of Finance to the BC Association of School Business Officials, November 2009  
 2 BC Budget 2010 Highlights, [www.budget.gov.bc.ca](http://www.budget.gov.bc.ca), accessed May 4, 2010  
 3 The Current State of Canadian Family Finances 2009 Report, Vanier Institute, February 2010





*Through community engagement, this is what we heard.....*

## International Connections

*Prince George has well established international connections and international partners.*

### CITY/INITIATIVES PRINCE GEORGE AND PARTNER ACTIONS

These actions complement and build on existing strategies listed at the end of the Economic Section.

- Continue to market Prince George internationally to potential employers and employees
- Expand communications infrastructure
- Continue to pursue Prince George's role as a transportation hub
- Collaborate with UNBC, CNC and other educational institutions to maintain or enhance their role as centres for technology development, research and development, and global connectivity

*“Prince George will be a major transportation hub from North America to the Asia Pacific.” (workbook group)*

#### INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

- Support international exchange students, or become one
- Promote Prince George when you travel
- Be welcoming to visitors



## HOW ARE WE DOING TODAY?

Prince George is situated at a key location within a multi-modal transportation network, and is served by road, air, rail and navigable waters to export markets

The City is developing an International Linkages Strategy which recognizes that policy regarding international relationships is multi-dimensional, and may be developed, with partners and stakeholders, in a manner that considers aspects of culture, economy, and environment.

The City has entered into an agreement with the Province of British Columbia regarding twinning with a local government in the Asia Pacific region, and is pursuing the establishment of a twin city relationship with Jiangmen, a city in Guangdong province in China's Pearl River Delta.

## SEEDS OF SUCCESS

- PG Advanced Networks is a city task force promoting the expansion of the municipal fiber-optic network to allow traffic from the private sector
- IPG, PG Airport Authority and CN Rail are developing a logistics park near the expanded airport to increase traffic of large cargo aircrafts and create an inland container port. Boundary Road is being developed in coordination with this initiative.
- Local secondary and post secondary schools host many international exchange students



*“Central City for Airport, Rail and Highway Transportation.”  
(survey respondent)*





*Through community engagement, this is what we heard.....*

## Job Diversity and Accessibility

*There is a variety of good jobs suiting the diverse skills and aspirations of people in Prince George, with programs that support developing the skills and knowledge needed to fill them.*

### CITY/INITIATIVES PRINCE GEORGE AND PARTNER ACTIONS

These actions complement and build on existing strategies listed at the end of the Economic section.

- Continue to provide job training and retraining services
- Align labour programs to economic opportunities – (re)train locals and attract required skills from elsewhere as needed
- Support the Urban Aboriginal Economic Development Strategy
- Explore ways to retain graduates in Prince George as a key resource to the labour market
- Ramp up education programs at local institutions (CNC, UNBC) that relate to “green” subject matter and other local economic opportunities

#### INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

- Stay informed and update your skills to suit new job markets
- Be a life-long learner



## HOW ARE WE DOING TODAY?

Prince George's employment rate is one of the highest in the province, and has remained consistently above the provincial average. Prince George has seen a modest 1.2% average annual growth in employment in the past five years (2004-2008), yet Prince George businesses report that considerable skills gaps exist in key occupations<sup>1</sup>.

*“Diversification of employment opportunities for all skill and interest areas.” (workbook group)*



## SEEDS OF SUCCESS



- The Chamber of Commerce and IPG's Recruitment and Retention Program, have begun to address the changing nature of labour and the need to develop and attract a work force that will capitalize on future opportunities. The Life in Perfect Balance program promotes the lifestyle and amenity benefits to living in Prince George to prospective employees/residents.
- The Federal Government has committed funding for a new trades and technical education centre at the College of New Caledonia.
- Prince George Nechako Aboriginal Education and Training Association (PGNAETA's) Employment Gateway provides training to aboriginals, and works with business to increase the amount and quality of aboriginal employment.

*“Job opportunities from graduation to retirement.” (survey respondent)*

<sup>1</sup> Initiatives Prince George & Prince George Chamber of Commerce. 2008. "Prince George Community Labour Market Analysis: Initial Findings."





*Through community engagement, this is what we heard.....*

## Sustainable Business

*Prince George is a model for Northern cities in green and local business, and bio-energy.*

### CITY/INITIATIVES PRINCE GEORGE AND PARTNER ACTIONS

These actions complement and build on existing strategies listed at the end of the Economic section.

- Leverage successful public sector initiatives as examples to drive changes in private sector practice
- Encourage and support “sustainable business operations” such as: green, ethical purchasing policies; green fleets; green product development; and energy retrofits for local businesses
- Develop mechanisms to create and support eco-industrial networking partnerships
- Establish a pilot eco-network hub (i.e. Eco-Industrial Network) through a collaboration of businesses for whom sharing inputs and outputs can minimize waste and reduce costs

### INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

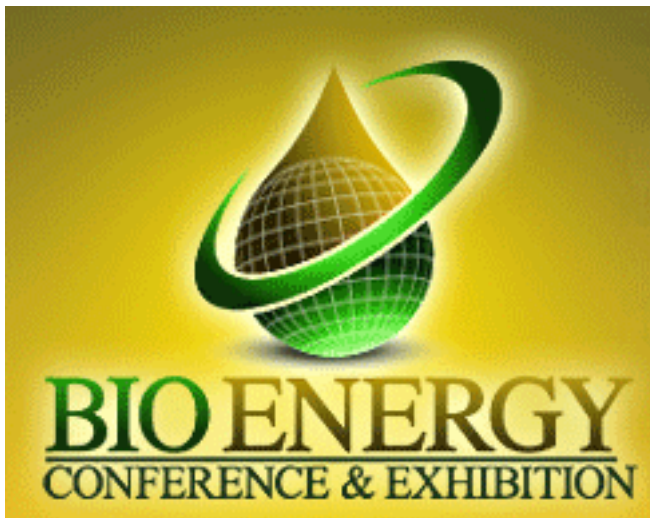
- Support local businesses and purchase products that are made or grown in the region
- Support businesses that practice sustainable behaviour
- Encourage your school or business to adopt a sustainable procurement policy
- Encourage better waste management in your workplace

## HOW ARE WE DOING TODAY?

The green sector is rapidly expanding in the Prince George area with significant potential in:

- bio-energy
- sustainable forestry
- research, and
- responsible mining<sup>1</sup>.

PG is becoming known as a global centre for bio-energy, through its bi-annual Bio-Energy Conference and related bio-energy initiatives in the community.



<sup>1</sup> Meyer Norris Penney LLP. 2008. "16-97 Alliance Cluster Initiative."

### SEEDS OF SUCCESS



- The Province will fund the first phase of a Bio-Energy Centre at the UNBC and a Wood Products Design and Innovation Centre affiliated with UNBC
- The Innovation Resource Centre delivers a cluster development initiative to assist firms in the "Clean Technology" sector to expand
- The Tl'azt'en Nation and UNBC established the John Prince Research Forest, a 13,000-hectare working forest and living laboratory, to promote interdisciplinary research and provide education and employment opportunities
- UNBC's Bio-Energy System and Green Campus Initiatives are examples of a local organization working hard to reduce environmental impacts and financial costs of its operations
- The proposed District Energy System to heat downtown buildings with bio-energy (bio-mass) heat

*"A model for sustainable development and resource utilization. Innovative secondary industries that capitalize on local resources (e.g. processing and manufacturing)." (survey respondent)*





*Through community engagement, this is what we heard.....*

## Vibrant Economy

*Prince George is a centre for vibrant economic growth in Northern BC, attracting newcomers and expanding business and service choice.*

### CITY/INITIATIVES PRINCE GEORGE AND PARTNER ACTIONS

These actions complement and build on existing strategies listed at the end of the Economic section.

- Develop a clearer understanding of the assets and natural resources that support the regional economy. Create a realistic long-term vision for the size of the economy and community
- Identify the “top 10” missed regional economic opportunities
- Define sustainable resource development clearly to provide direction to regional industry and manage local resources for the benefit of the community
- Collaborate with other communities in the region to support regional prosperity
- In neighbourhood centres, link provision of District Energy to provision of new fibre technology in order to create an attractive competitive advantage for new and retained businesses

- Streamline approvals processes (local, provincial, federal) for proposals that are aligned with the community vision
- Continue to promote Prince George’s strengths, assets, and vision widely
- Coordinate and “stack” incentives and partnerships between all levels of government and industry

### INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

- Promote PG to your business networks
- Shop locally
- Buy locally produced products

## HOW ARE WE DOING TODAY?

Prince George's economy, as measured by population, number of jobs, business development and expansion has grown at a slower rate than elsewhere in the province.

Despite relatively slow or no population growth, the transformation of the traditional forest industry, along with growth in other sectors including transportation, education, health care and other knowledge-based service industries, has created a more diverse and stable economy.

Average incomes and employment rates are consistently above the provincial average while the cost of housing is below the provincial average.

*“Prince George be the hub of the north that it should be”  
(workbook group)*



## SEEDS OF SUCCESS

- Community Futures offers services in business counseling, training, funding and risk financing to support small and medium-sized businesses
- Initiatives Prince George is focused on growing the Prince George economy through attraction and retention of business and labour, tourism marketing, and other programs
- Northern Development Initiative Trust and many other organizations contribute substantially to economic development
- Prince George Aboriginal Business Association develops partnerships between First Nations, business and communities

*“Vibrant downtown with business, housing and one-stop shop for social services, satellite university campus.”  
(workbook group)*





## Existing Economic Strategies

The following are highlights of the existing economic strategies closely related to the economic performance goals:

### GENERAL

Broad economic development initiatives underway include the following:

#### **Logistics – driven by Initiatives Prince George (IPG)**

- Air cargo – increase traffic of large aircraft landing at the PG Airport, develop a logistics park around the airport (joint with PG Airport Authority) Containers – promote opportunity of inland container port to manufacturers (joint with CN Rail)

#### **High-capacity bandwidth – PG Advanced Networks**

- City-mandated task force promoting the expansion of the municipal fiber-optic network to allow use from the private sector and expand data-oriented uses it handles

#### **Market access**

- Initiatives Prince George (IPG) – Plans to facilitate growth in sales of at least 100 PG firms into the mining, oil and gas sectors
- 16/97 Economic Alliance – assists local firms to access mining opportunities in the region

#### **Bio-Energy**

- Northern Bio-Energy Partnership – promote policy and access responses that will facilitate growth
- Bio-Energy Conference – links region to world players

#### **Self-Employment promotion, training, financing, funding**

- Akaitcho Business Development Corporation (ABDC) – direct delivery of business counselling, training, facilitate access to money to start / expand their firms
- Community Futures – direct delivery of business counselling, training, funding, risk financing for individuals or entrepreneurs
- Initiatives Prince George (IPG) – Lead economic development service provider, primary coordinator of many initiatives also directly promoting PG as a destination for relocation

- Innovation Resource Centre (IRC) – involved in many larger initiatives noted here, provides direct service to firms to gain insights on technology-oriented fields
- National Research Council (NRC) provides direct delivery of business counselling to firms developing technology-oriented products, funder of some costs related to new product development
- PG Chamber of Commerce – Networking, promotion of business perspective to governments (policy)

### **Omenica Beetle Action Coalition (OBAC)**

- Establishing a regional economic development office and implementing OBAC's industrial sector strategies
- Marketing the region's considerable assets by establishing a brand for the Omenica region and developing a regional marketing program

## **LABOUR SUPPLY**

### **Initiatives Prince George (IPG)**

- Promoter of global opportunities – and related skills training – to firms in the city
- Primary deliverer of Live and Work

### **Live and Work PG**

- Works with local employers to identify areas of skills shortage, markets to prospective workers living outside the city, offers recruitment literature about PG, and coordinates with firms and agencies that offer services to new arrivals to PG, including immigrants to Canada.

### **Community Futures of Fraser-Fort George**

- Fosters self-employment by promoting it as a career path; provides training, delivers income support and risk financing
- Assembles and promotes information on opportunities to new and existing entrepreneurs

### **PG Chamber of Commerce**

- Involved in labour-oriented initiatives

### **Innovation Resource Centre (IRC)**

- Promotes and provides training targeted to technology-oriented self-employed, and those considering this path.
- Informs students about emerging technology trends and mentors

### **University of Northern BC (UNBC)**

- Provides degree-based education, including Northern Medical Program, MBA, and targeted First Nations programs, degree programs that prepare individuals for their chosen careers

### **College of New Caledonia (CNC)**

- Technical and trades-oriented education, University Transfer program, and targeted First Nations training

### **Northern Health Authority**

- Recruits health care professionals to the region



## **Prince George Nechako Aboriginal Education and Training Association (PGNAETA )**

- Provides employment training for Aboriginal people
- Facilitates partnerships with firms and communities to increase access to opportunities for First Nations

## **Applied Technical and Engineering Education Consortium (ATEEC )**

- K-12 initiatives to increase student, parent and counsellor interest in technical careers
- Post-secondary initiatives, based on known labour shortages
- Improves access and success rates for at-risk students in technology-related programs and careers
- Engages industry to support students through award programs, work experience and internships
- Promotes career tracks and skills to K-12 students in School District 57
- Works with initiatives such as Junior Achievement to promote careers and enhance math and science skills

## **Aboriginal Business & Community Development Association**

- Fosters self-employment by promoting it as a career path, trains and helps with income support and risk financing
- Develops strong partnerships between First Nations, firms, and local communities

## **Northern BC Construction Association**

- Promotes trades to students in the K-12 system
- Liaises with educators to ensure adequate trades-oriented training available to residents
- Provides Apprenticeship Toolkits to help employers and employees to increase trades in the labour market

- Identifies and develops the services and amenities required to attract and retain workers
- Develops and implements improved service delivery models to better meet health care and education needs

## **GREEN SECTOR STRATEGIES**

### **Bio-Energy Conference**

- The second-largest bio-energy conference in the world occurs in Prince George every two years. The next one is in June 2010
- Links firms, researchers, policy makers with trends in the field

### **Northern Bio-Energy Partnership**

- A broad-based partnership of industry, education and economic development agencies. Lead coordinator is Initiatives Prince George
- Focus is on identifying and removing barriers to the development of bio-energy in the central interior
- Actively working on policy and tactical areas to facilitate growth in production of wood pellets, as well as other bioenergy-related fields

### **University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC)**

- Maintains a University Industry Liaison Office to connect research capacity with industry needs
- Wood Innovation Centre of Excellence announced, details anticipated shortly

### **BC Hydro**

- Policies promoting purchase of “green energy” present opportunities for electrical co-generation from independent power producers, including “run of river” and wood-waste sources





## **Innovation Resource Centre**

- Delivering a cluster development initiative to assist firms in the “Clean Technology” area to expand / address their inhibitors to growth.
- Activities include access to markets, capital and research

## **National Research Council**

- Works directly with firms to assist them in developing innovative products for technology-oriented fields
- Green-related products have been a major focus, and continue to be a top priority
- Strong promotion of the annual Globe event in Vancouver to local and regional firms

## **Omenica Beetle Action Committee (OBAC )**

- Support the flow of wood fibre and other fibrous fuels to biomass energy projects
- Conduct research on alternative energy opportunities and make relevant information readily available to industry and government decision makers
- Provide ‘Leadership by Example’ in implementing alternative energy programs and initiatives at federal, provincial, and local government levels
- Increase the regional use of alternative energy systems in order to provide overall economic, social, and environmental benefits
- Provide training and certification for installation and systems operation to help build regional expertise in alternative energy

## **SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONS INITIATIVES**

### **City - Corporate Support & Financial Systems**

- Bio diesel and fleet anti-idling programs
- Municipal building energy retrofits
- LED traffic lights
- Building energy audits
- Kin centre ice plant upgrade
- Wastewater Treatment Plant uses microturbines fueled by digester gas to produce energy
- Lighting and water conservation programs
- Community technology fibre business plan

### **University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) - Green University**

- Partners with Canadian company, Calstone Inc. to refurbish used office furniture to prevent it from being deposited in a landfill
- The University also recycles asphalt that needs to be removed from the campus
- All major publications are printed on recycled paper, and online versions are available. UNBC has halved the number of academic calendars it prints every year
- All student grade statements and course schedules are provided online
- The student funded group Prince George Public Interest Research Group (PGPIRG) operates the biggest composting program of any BC university



## RELATED PLANS, AND LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION STRATEGIES

### Initiatives Prince George (IPG) Strategic Plan

- Advocate for: a dangerous goods route, corridor upgrades in all directions, and air quality improvement
- Create a logistics park outside the downtown airshed
- Encourage downtown redevelopment, promote offices and small retail downtown

### Prince George City Council Strategic Plan

- Related focus areas include improving health and safety, and strengthening and diversifying the economy
- Related priority projects include the Boundary Road connector between Hwy 97 and Hwy 16 East, increasing road rehabilitation, sidewalk and trail investments, improving air quality, and a lifecycle asset management strategy

### Prince George Official Community Plan (OCP)

- Existing OCP envisions growth to 100,000 - 180,000 by 2026
- Manages this growth by focusing it within an Urban Settlement Area, and phasing development within it, according to availability of servicing
- Focuses most major commercial development
- Accommodates primarily big box retail, and allows mixed-use developments
- Encourages downtown redevelopment and directs offices and small retail downtown

- Encourages industrial development that minimizes conflicts with residential uses, focused in the eastern sections of the city
- Develops a well designed built environment, protecting the natural environment through the encouragement of green building practices and design.
- Acts as a resource to the community by promoting energy efficiency and awareness.

### Regional District Official Community Plan (OCP)

- Protects most land for resource/agricultural uses
- Allows low-density development (> 4 ac lots) in the Prince George fringe, provided it is not to the detriment of nearby farms
- Allows significant rural development (1-4 ac lots, capacity 1,139 units) an easy drive from the City (e.g. Beverly, Pineview, Tabor Lake)





