

Airdrie building permits hit record

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CALGARY HERALD

The value of building permits in the city of Airdrie hit a record in 2007, soaring by 68 per cent over the previous year.

Construction value in 2007 totalled \$454 million compared with \$270 million in 2006. In 2005, it was \$185.3 million.

A record 11,815 permits were applied for in 2007 against 9,443 in 2006, and city inspectors completed 23,866 inspections compared with 18,504 in 2006.

The strength in the provincial economy is a factor in Airdrie's boom, said Kent Rupert, planning and economic development team leader for the City of Airdrie.

"But I also think people are starting to look at Airdrie as an alternative to some of the other major urban centres, whether it's Calgary or Edmonton, be-

cause we're starting to have the support services and we're starting to see an increase in the retail," he said. "We're starting to become more of a whole community."

The commercial and industrial permits rose to about \$129 million in 2007, up from \$80 million in 2006. Some of the larger projects applied for included: \$41.8 million for a Costco Distribution Warehouse; \$28 million for an addition to East Lake Recreation and Wellness Centre; a new \$11-mil-



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lion Catholic elementary school in Thorburn; a \$6.5-million hotel in Sierra Springs; an \$8-million commercial and residential development on Main Street to replace the Old Hotel; several mixed-use/multi-family buildings throughout Airdrie; and industrial, office and commercial buildings in Kingsview Industrial Park.

Airdrie has become a primary industrial real estate market, said Chris Saunders, managing partner of Inducor Real Estate Solutions in Calgary.

"The secondary markets (like Airdrie) have become very viable due to costs and availability," he said. "The cost structure has been lower there historically, so it's been an attractive alternative."

Airdrie also experienced a record in residential permits with 1,786, compared with 1,483 in 2006.

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