

# Growth in transport keeps moving along

BY DAVID PARKER, CALGARY HERALD    JANUARY 13, 2009

A lot of questions are being asked about the state of the development/ construction industry, and there are indeed concerns about the residential sector in both the new homes and condo markets. Although I don't see a start being made any time soon on new office projects in the downtown core, there are several under-way with confident owners.

Retail and suburban office seems quite steady and industrial just keeps bouncing along. Transportation remains a strong sector in this city and a tour of either the northeast or southeast shows just how important warehousing has become. The latest announcement by Blair Sinclair reports a development to build a large trucking terminal in the Eastlake industrial area.

It's only 16 months since I reported Sinclair had joined First Industrial Investment to become its regional director and senior development officer here after 10 successful years with Tonko Realty Advisors. Since then he has established a strong presence in Alberta for the Chicago-based leading provider of industrial real estate supply chain management solutions.

He has purchased 22 hectares of land in the Edmonton area and five in Calgary.

The commercial site Sinclair purchased near Edmonton is in First Park Nisku on the east side of the QE2 Highway to the south of Highway 19 in Nisku Industrial Park. There are 18 lots for sale through Avison Young Commercial Real Estate and Sinclair says interest is high with two offers being made over the Christmas holidays.

The Calgary lands will be used to develop a build-to-suit facility for Canada Cartage.

A 28,000-square-foot truck terminal designed by Gibbs Gage Architects will be built on the site located along 102nd Avenue S. E. and includes parking and staging for tractor/trailers. Canada Cartage was represented by Chris Saunders, managing partner of Inducor Real Estate Solutions, who saw the benefits of the land on a rail spur, having quick access to Barlow and Deerfoot trails, and being near the CP Intermodal yards.

Canada Cartage is a leading national provider of custom-located, dedicated trucking services and warehousing. It has been serving customers across Canada since 1914 and has around 1,500 trucks and 1,900 trailers; the new facility will help support its expansion plans for southern Alberta.

The investment was made through First Industrial's \$285-million FirstCal Industrial Canada joint venture with California Teachers' Retirement System, the second-largest public pension fund in the U. S.

I'm tired of listening to economic woes so it was good to catch up with Peter Jurisic, vice-president of

business development at Blatant Media, to ask how his business is being affected.

He reports that revenue over the last quarter versus a year ago is up nearly 200 per cent and the learning company that uses technology to provide training solutions is acquiring some great new accounts. Jurisic says companies have to keep a competitive advantage and continue to train employees while cutting costs.

Instead of touring staff around its retail outlets, giant U. K.-based photo retailer Jessops is using Blatant's online program to train staff in its 2,700 outlets. Specialized Bikes is using a similar training program for clerks in its retail stores across the U. S., and also added to the list of clients are Getty Images, Logitech and New York University, which use Blatant for employee professional development.

Another interesting new account is the United States Olympic Committee. They didn't do so well in Beijing and the governing body of some 70 organizations has moved strongly toward the use of online training. The Calgary company is also working with City Transit on a training course that will be able to track progress through a digital audit process.

Nice to be able to talk to a business with such a positive outlook.

Wednesday we say goodbye to George Cornish, who passed away last week. He was tireless in retirement years in offering his wise counsel to organizations such as the Calgary Airport Authority, Alberta Blue Cross, Enmax and the University of Calgary, but I and many others appreciate most the years in which he did such a fine job as chief commissioner of the City of Calgary. A good man.

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