

UDI Loves City

By Monique Tamminga
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Dozens of developers and large business owners from around the Lower Mainland came out for an early morning breakfast meeting on Thursday to find out what opportunities exist in Langley City.

Hosted by the Urban Development Institute, more than 70 guests registered for the leadership breakfast presentation at the Summit Theatre in Cascades Casino on Thursday.

Developers heard about how the City of Langley is the place to be for commercial, residential and industrial development opportunities.

The City is uniquely positioned to take advantage of the explosive growth occurring in the nearby Willoughby, Clayton and east Cloverdale areas, said UDI in its invitation to the developers.

"Since 2003, the City's streamlined processes have approved more than 420,000 square feet of commercial floor space, 150,000 square feet of industrial floor space and 800 multi-family residential units," said UDI.

"The amount of people interested in what Langley City has to offer has exceeded our expectations," said City's head planner Gerald Minchuk who also was the moderator for the event.

"This is a great opportunity for us to engage the development industry in our own neighbourhood, rather than going to see them in Vancouver.

"I think what we present will open a lot of eyes to the growth potential and opportunities here," he said before the meeting.

Developers and business owners have often complimented the City's planning staff for getting their development permits through for council approval quickly and efficiently and for being so available and hands-on.

"We have continued to move forward on all our economic initiatives and I think that's why we have had a lot of success," said Minchuck. In recent months alone, the City has approved big box stores to be built on the corner of Glover Road and Langley Bypass. A new car dealership on the westside of the Bypass has just received approval and many high-end apartment complexes are under construction.

Some of the presenters at the Thursday-morning breakfast meeting included the senior vice-president of Century Group, a firm that has built nearly a decade's worth of housing, mainly townhouses, in Langley City.

And Blake Hudema, president, Hudema Consulting Group Ltd., spoke to the large crowd, as did vice-president John Brown of the Canadian Institute of Planners.