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## TODAY IN BUSINESS

### COMMODITIES

Surging commodity prices, led by wheat, set a record

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### FIRST CALGARY

Dissident shareholder calls PR campaign a 'waste'

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# CALGARY BUSINESS

MONEY • ENERGY • TECHNOLOGY • WORK

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TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 2008

## MARGIN CALLS

### Competition watchdog clears NHL

**HOCKEY** • The federal competition watchdog has decided not to pursue action against the National Hockey League after concluding that its relocation practices and policies on ownership transfers "do not contravene" the Competition Act.

"We are confident that the NHL's policies are not anti-competitive," said Richard Taylor, deputy commissioner of competition, in a statement released by the Competition Bureau Monday morning.

Taylor added that after an "extensive investigation," the bureau has decided the "NHL's policies were directed at furthering legitimate interests of the NHL, and not to prevent competition."

It was first reported last June that staff at the Canadian anti-trust watchdog launched an inquiry into the NHL after it received a complaint last May, although the bureau would not confirm the inquiry.

At the time, there was concern that Canadian billionaire Jim Balsillie was being thwarted in his \$238-million US bid to purchase the Nashville Predators and relocate the hockey team to Hamilton, Ont.

Balsillie, co-chief executive of **Research in Motion**, maker of the BlackBerry wireless e-mail device, was not immediately available for comment.

However, Richard Rodier, a special adviser to Balsillie on his NHL interests, said: "The Competition Bureau is there to ensure access to markets and effective competition practices in Canada for the benefit of all Canadians. No doubt they conducted the inquiry to the best of their abilities to reach their conclusion, and did what they deemed best to protect the interests of Canadian consumers of professional hockey."

### Hasbro pays \$80M for Trivial Pursuit

**GAME** • **Hasbro Inc.**, the world's second-largest toymaker, bought the intellectual property rights to the Trivial Pursuit board-game brand for \$80 million from **Horn Abbot Ltd.**

Hasbro said Monday in a statement it has licensed Trivial Pursuit since 1983. The company's other games include Monopoly, Clue, Twister and the Game of Life.

Buying the licence to Trivial Pursuit will allow Hasbro to expand the brand into entertainment, publishing, promotions and digital gaming, Hasbro chief operating officer Brian Goldner said in the statement. Hasbro last year signed a licensing deal with **Electronic Arts Inc.** to make video, cellphone and other digital games based on Hasbro brands.

Trivial Pursuit: America Plays is set to begin airing as a television game show later this year, Hasbro said.

Hasbro, based in Pawtucket, R.I., fell 13 cents to \$28.04 as of 12:32 p.m. in New York Stock Exchange composite trading. Before Monday, the shares climbed 10 per cent this year.

**Mattel Inc.**, the maker of Barbie dolls, is the world's largest toymaker.

## HERALD ENERGY



Enmax president Gary Holden tells critics of its strategy to learn how to compete better

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## LAND SHORTAGE



Calgary Herald Archive  
 Calgary remains in the top five tightest industrial markets in North America, says a report by commercial real estate firm Avison Young.

# Land prices sizzle on Calgary boom

Supply crunch in hot market turns industrial space pricey

MARIO TONEGUZZI  
 CALGARY HERALD

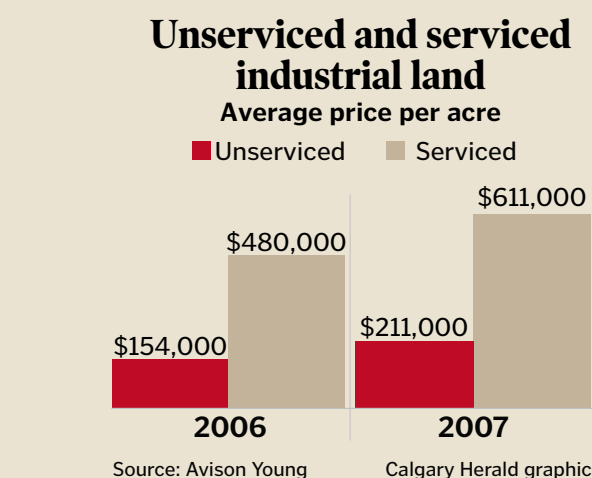
Serviced industrial land prices saw a significant increase in 2007 with the average hitting \$611,000 per acre, well above the average price of \$480,000 per acre the previous year, says a report by commercial real estate firm Avison Young.

"Prices continue to increase because there is very little serviced industrial land available inside the city," says the firm's Calgary Industrial Market Report Spring 2008.

It says Calgary remains one of the hottest economies in Canada and the growth and demand in the industrial market reflect that.

In the first quarter of this year, the vacancy rate was 2.31 per cent. It was 0.81 per cent in the third quarter of 2007 and 1.56 per cent at the end of the fourth quarter of 2007. The report says it's worth noting that of the over 1.2 million square feet of new industrial space completed in 2007, less than 300,000 square feet (23 per cent) remain vacant.

"With the expected continuing demand for industrial space in Calgary, this vacancy



is still considered quite low, and Calgary remains in the top five of the tightest industrial markets in North America," says Avison Young.

The continuing rise in the price per acre for industrial land in the city is a pure demand and supply issue, said Adam Legge, vice-president and chief economist for Calgary Economic Development.

"There is really strong, continued demand for industrial land in Calgary. We have a shortage of supply so in those tight conditions the price gets bid up to people who have a greater ability to pay," he said.

The demand remains high in Calgary because there is plenty of interest in the distribution/logistics area as well as in the niche manufacturing sector.

"A lot of our current companies are needing new, bigger facilities. There's some shift-

ing around internally of companies that have outgrown their space," said Legge. "It's (demand) coming from a lot of different perspectives."

Just last week, a report by KPMG said Calgary now ranked as Canada's second-priciest place to run a business.

Calgary edged past Toronto to take second-place honours, behind only Vancouver as Canada's costliest city for business, according to KPMG's 2008 Competitive Alternatives study.

In 2006, Calgary was ranked the fourth-most expensive Canadian city by the study in terms of business costs, behind Vancouver, Toronto and Ottawa.

In 2008, Toronto fell to fourth spot, behind Vancouver, Calgary and Chilliwack, B.C. Edmonton ranked fifth.

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# Imperial fights for oilsands permit

Fate of \$8B Kearl project hangs in balance

JON HARDING  
 CALGARY HERALD

**I**mperial Oil Ltd. will go to court next month to prevent any further unravelling of an environmental approval it received more than a year ago for its \$8-billion Kearl oilsands mine.

The federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) last month revoked the permit it issued around the impact of the Kearl development on fisheries habitat, according to a letter sent by the fisheries department's regional director general, Bob Lacombe, to Imperial two weeks ago.

Canada's oldest oil company said on Monday the authorization from Feb. 27, 2007, is valid and that it will fight to retain the approval in a Federal Court hearing set for early May in Calgary.

Imperial Oil said that losing the permit could mean a delay for the project, which was due to produce first oil in 2011.

"It's too early to say with any clarity whether or not this will have any material impact on schedule," said Pius Rolheiser, a spokesman for the Calgary-based oil company.

"Obviously it depends on the outcome of the court proceedings. Could it result in a delay? That's possible. Is it inevitable? No."

The possible setback is fallout from a Federal Court of Canada ruling in March that found the joint federal-provincial panel charged with reviewing the project failed to justify its finding that the open pit mine would have no significant impact on air quality.

That lawsuit was spawned by a coalition of environmental groups led by Ecojustice — formerly the legal arm of the Sierra Club — after Kearl was granted its initial regulatory approval.

Justice Tremblay-Lamer said in early March the panel erred with respect to emissions, and while she refused to overturn the entire approval process, she remitted the ruling back to the panel to reconsider specific points related to greenhouse gas.

Canada's fisheries department offered no comment, but Stephen Hazell, executive director of the Sierra Club of Canada, applauded the DFO for saying "no" to runaway oilsands development.

"The feds, as usual are tiptoe-



Are other oilsands players watching with concern? Not at this point...

GREG STRINGHAM, CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF PETROLEUM PRODUCERS VICE-PRESIDENT

ing around, Alberta absolutely refuses to do anything that in any way inconveniences Wall Street investors," Hazell said. "This is the first time ever that any government has said no a tar sands company."

Kearl, he said, would account for an increase of emissions equal to one per cent of Canada's total and be equal to adding 800,000 new vehicles to Alberta's roads.

The panel did not explain how it came to its decision that that amount would not be "significant."

Greg Stringham, vice-president of the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, said it appears the latest wrinkle for Kearl relates to the environmental assessment process rather than water use or destruction of fish habitat, and as such is not likely an issue set to sweep other future oilsands developments into a state of uncertainty.

"Are other oilsands players watching with concern? Not at this point," Stringham said. "They recognize the issues, but this is something that came from the way the application was processed. For DFO, since the (final) approval is subject to appeal, they're probably thinking they should hold onto their permit for a while."

Kearl, 70 per cent owned by Imperial and 30 per cent by Imperial's parent, Exxon Mobil Corp., would produce 100,000 barrels a day of bitumen.

Imperial Oil has not offered a time frame for when it will make an investment decision on Kearl and Rolheiser said any work at the site in northeastern Alberta related to fisheries habitat and requiring the DFO permit is not scheduled to take place for some time.

JHARDING@THEHERALD.CANWEST.COM

### Kearl oilsands mine

**Cost:** \$8 billion  
**Ownership:** Imperial Oil Ltd. 70%  
 ExxonMobil Corp. 30%  
**Projected output:** 100,000 barrels of bitumen per day

