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Companies Flock to Victoria's Tech Mecca

SMART. SUSTAINABLE. SUCCESSFUL.

Three words that encapsulate a progressive structure that has helped Vancouver Island gain global recognition as a premier destination for technology enterprise.

What was once a hospital building, built in 1971, is now an award-winning, environmentally sound mecca for Victoria's burgeoning technology community.

Vancouver Island Technology Park (VITP) is an ultra-modern research and technology transfer centre located in Victoria. Spanning 35 acres and offering 185,000 square feet of leasable space and the ability to develop an additional 235,000 sq. ft, VITP offers low office-operating costs compared to other cities in Canada and the United States, and a unique, interactive tech network.

Smart

Advanced technology is the fastest growing sector in Greater Victoria, and the region's third largest employer.

VITP Vice President Dale Gann was one of the visionaries to create this niche for the tech industry. "The building was a government asset, converted to a solid concrete structure in 2000," says Gann. "The question was what to do with it. We identified a need for a technology focal point."

The University of Victoria purchased VITP in 2005. Now a highly acclaimed centre of academic and biotech excellence, VITP is the locus of UVic's IDC—a tech-transfer office; VIATeC—which supports high-tech business development; and a Business Centre, which allows the high-tech community to meet and network together.

"This is not a stand-alone facility. The three together make a great whole," says Gann. "We assist with networking and economic development strategies. With the new ownership by the University of Victoria, there is the opportunity for continual innovation. Ideas are protected and we are the medium to interact with industry."

Sustainable

VITP is the first project in Canada to achieve certification under the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Rating System, achieving gold-level status for its cutting-edge, environmentally conscious and energy-efficient design.

That translates to numerous sustainable building choices including the use of recycled materials from the internal wiring to the plumbing; thermal windows and reduced-glare lighting; low-emitting carpets, paints and adhesives for better indoor air quality; sustainable water management to enhance and protect the nearby salmon creeks, and a grass parking lot.

VITP has been designed to be a great place for technology entrepreneurs and workers to live, work and play. Its range of amenities include the HardDrive Café and Lounge, fitness and storage facilities, on-site security, ample parking, outdoor basketball courts, walking and cycling trails that connect with regional trail systems, and direct access to public transit. The Business Centre has a 98-person, multi-purpose conference room and an executive video conference boardroom. The Wellness Centre provides treatment rooms for chiropractic, massage therapy, acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine.

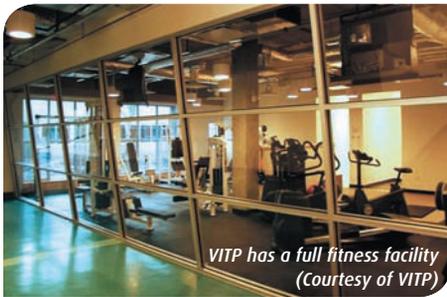
Despite its unassuming exterior, VITP is a wonder of amenities and eco-friendly design (Courtesy of VITP)



Successful

With a 97-percent occupancy rate, VITP is an obvious success.

Boasting the greatest concentration of high-tech companies and workers on Vancouver Island, VITP presently houses 28 tech companies and employs 1300 people, contributing \$80 million annually to the economy of British Columbia. Tenants represent tech clusters in fuel cell, new media, wireless, life science/biotechnology, ocean technology, and information and communications technology.



VITP has a full fitness facility (Courtesy of VITP)



Headquarters of Aspreva Pharmaceuticals at Vancouver Island Technology Park (Courtesy of VITP)

Gann attributes that success to an inclusive approach: "We differentiate ourselves with a focus on economic development rather than real estate, creating jobs for people and value-added aspects like debt management and people management. We facilitate relationships."

In 2004, Aspreva Pharmaceuticals came on board, making VITP the site of their global headquarters.

With offices in the U.S., Switzerland and Europe, Aspreva's focus is the development and

commercialization of medicines to treat patients with less common diseases. Currently Aspreva is working on treatments for autoimmune diseases including lupus nephritis, myasthenia gravis and pemphigus vulgaris.

Sage Baker, Vice President of Investor Relations and Corporate Communications for Aspreva, explains the progressive nature of their work. "There hasn't been a medicine approved for lupus in thirty years," says Baker. "It's not financially feasible for large pharmaceutical companies to develop treatments. The only current treatment for lupus involves chemotherapy medications, which are very harsh." Aspreva's partnership with F. Hoffman-La Roche in 2003 has allowed them to progress directly to advanced clinical trials for the disease. The company anticipates bringing treatment medications for lupus and other autoimmune diseases to market in the near future.

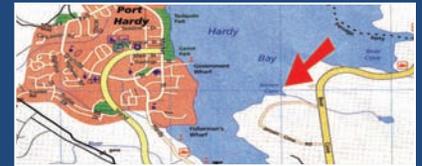
Aspreva has seen explosive growth since its creation in 2001. Employees have increased from 15 to 160, of which 60 are in the Victoria office. Since moving into VITP, Aspreva has expanded from 15,000 to 28,000 square feet. Last year the company made over \$76 million in revenue.

To Dale Gann, attracting Aspreva to VITP signals accomplishment. "It shows that our community is able to raise serious venture capital, able to hire top talent in Victoria and license with one of the biggest tech companies in the world."

Future plans for VITP include expanding another 235,000 square feet and bringing in another 1800 to 2000 people.

"We're building a tech community rather than a tech park," says Gann. "There's the Hard Drive Cafe, a place to rest, eat and share ideas. There's a wellness centre, and a conference and boardroom facility. People can live in Victoria on the salaries they make here. We really believe the Park is helping the tech industry grow."

—Belinda Bruce 



JENSEN COVE

17-acre Marine Industrial Property. Deep-water protected moorage, foreshore lease, 80-ton roll on / off ramp, a 44x300ft steel barge & concrete deck, steel frame industrial building, extensive shoreline, road access & full services. Possible 'lease-back' opportunity!.....**\$550,000**



ALERT BAY

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*More Properties available in the New Year!



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