



Facts in Focus



2018

FACTS IN FOCUS

DID YOU KNOW?

What is an OCP?

Growth is a fact of life for Kelowna. And, in the years to come, growth will continue to shape the city and the lives of its residents. If we manage growth poorly, its impacts will be largely negative. Conversely, if we manage it well, its impacts can be many and positive. In this way, *how we grow* matters today and to future generations.

The Official Community Plan (OCP) is the primary tool that local governments can use to guide the long-term growth of their communities. In Kelowna, the OCP sets out the vision, strategies and objectives for 20 years of growth. This broad, over-arching policy document provides guidance and direction on a variety of topic areas, including land use, urban design, transportation, parks and public spaces, social planning, heritage, infrastructure and community facilities. The OCP knits together policy from a wide range of subjects into one comprehensive growth strategy that sets the city on a path towards its desired long-term vision.

Despite being a high-level, long-term policy document, the OCP is a powerful tool that is grounded in the community's vision for the future. Many of the decisions made today have lasting impacts, and the OCP provides the framework that guides decisions and investment in the community over a 20-year period.

The future, however, is always a shifting picture, and the pace of change is only increasing. A good OCP, then, must be built on the principles of resiliency, ensuring that the city can respond to emerging issues and changing conditions.



The total number of private dwellings as of 2016 was 57,433 in the City of Kelowna.



Currently, there are 24,570 single family houses in the City of Kelowna.

A SNAPSHOT IN TIME

City Park, Kelowna 1987
(top left)

City Park, Kelowna, 2013
(top right)

Glenmore, Kelowna, 1987
(bottom left)

Glenmore, Kelowna, 2014
(bottom right)



The OCP is a vital document for Kelowna as the city faces the pressures of growth and change, helping to leverage the benefits of growth towards a common goal. Critically, the OCP provides the opportunity for all residents to become engaged in the kind of community they want to live in, one that will improve the quality of life for them and for their children.

Long-range planning can, therefore, have a critical role in influencing economic development, housing development, urban design, parks and recreation opportunities, public transportation, allocation of public facilities, and contribute to overall community health, well-being and a sense of belonging. This underscores the critical and important role of an Official Community Plan document and its relationship to directing development, infrastructure, and corresponding investments to ensure a high quality of life for decades to come.

The City has changed over time

In 1951, the City had a total population of 8,517 that occupied 2,615 households. By 1973 the population had increased six-fold, to approximately 51,000, driven in large part by a boundary extension which increased the total land area and the number of residents that were enveloped within its boundaries. That same year the Agricultural Land Reserve was brought into effect, requiring that any future land-use decisions be made with the long-term preservation of agricultural lands in mind.

The City's first Official Community Plan was approved in 1975, and sought to balance urban and rural environments, while responding to the wishes of its inhabitants which was said to be "a continuation of a low density form of development to retain the present life style as a City of homes." Subsequent sections established a framework to fulfill this vision.

By 1992, Kelowna's Strategic Plan identified a set of community goals that served to shift the fundamental direction of the next iteration of the OCP in 1995. These desires and aspirations focused development priorities on concentrating development activity in the City's Urban and Village Centres until 2020, supporting mixed-use buildings, pedestrian-oriented streets and public spaces, and a greater sense of community identity.

Some 16 years later, the 2030 OCP (adopted in 2011) sought to build on these smart growth patterns by establishing a Permanent Growth Boundary to curtail sprawl development, as well as to formalize an Urban Core boundary on which to focus redevelopment efforts. Through this update of the 2040 OCP, the direction will continue to strengthen

DID YOU KNOW?



Kelowna is 211 km² in its land base size.



The City's current population density is 601/km².



In 2016, the average age of the City's population was 43.4 years.

policies for complete communities, where mixed-uses and increased density supports infrastructure and transportation investments, and fosters healthier and connected residents. This emphasis on strategic redevelopment within existing areas, marks a shift towards a goal of creating a higher proportion of multifamily units (53%) to single-family homes (47%), facilitating a shift towards a smart growth settlement pattern.

Current Direction of the 2030 Official Community Plan

The 2030 Official Community Plan (OCP) Bylaw No. 10500 was adopted on May 30, 2011 after an extensive public consultation process. The vision of the current OCP is:

- ▶ Urban communities are compact and walkable;
- ▶ Housing is available and affordable for all residents;
- ▶ People feel safe downtown and in their own neighborhoods;
- ▶ The natural environment (land and water) is protected and preserved;
- ▶ Walking paths and bicycle routes connect to key destinations;
- ▶ The economy is growing, vibrant and bringing in new businesses;
- ▶ Buildings and public spaces are attractive places; and,
- ▶ Recreation and cultural opportunities are plentiful.

In order to achieve that vision, the OCP is based on 10 guiding goals:

1. Contain urban growth
2. Address housing needs of all residents
3. Feature a balanced transportation network
4. Improve energy efficiency and performance of buildings
5. Foster sustainable prosperity
6. Protect and enhance natural areas
7. Provide spectacular parks
8. Include distinctive and attractive neighbourhoods
9. Enable healthy and productive agriculture
10. Encourage cultural vibrancy

Looking Ahead: Future Trends

Kelowna is in the midst of a time of rapid growth. Consider that between 1976 and 2016, the City of Kelowna grew from a population of 51,955 to a population of 129,442 (an average annual growth rate of 2.2 per cent). While it is anticipated that the City will add approximately 50,000 new residents by the year 2040, this OCP update needs to be strategic in its growth strategy and policies to guide it.

Growth signals that a City is in demand, and that it is creating jobs and new opportunities for residents. While growth can offer many opportunities, it does not come without its challenges. Population surges put strain on City infrastructure, civic facilities, programs and services, and can even impact quality of life. Therefore, the following trends need to be at the forefront:

FAST FACTS

129,442

City of Kelowna total population (as of 2016)

8.6%

Growth rate between 2011 to 2016

49,184

Projected new residents in City of Kelowna by 2040

1. **Change is happening at an unprecedented pace:** the past cannot be a predictor of the future, and cities need to rely on being flexible and adaptable to future circumstances where technology and innovation are going to heavily influence the future state.

2. **Population and demographic changes:** an aging cohort alongside an expanding student population and technology industry will require different community amenities and housing options to serve a diverse population.

3. **Evolving transportation technology:** rapid advancement of technology and autonomous vehicles will require land use and transportation to be strongly linked and promote multiple modes of transportation that are forward thinking and responsive to future choices.

4. **Asset management and infrastructure costs:** municipal costs of infrastructure investment will outpace municipal revenues. A responsible growth strategy, executed through consistent decision-making, will be required to maximize return on investment for City infrastructure, services, and asset management.

5. **Climate change is here:** the impact of climate change will be experienced on multiple levels from wildfire, flooding, drought, extreme weather events, and other occurrences. This will influence how the City needs to both mitigate and adapt, and will affect how residents live, move, recreate, design buildings, design infrastructure and respond to an unknown future state.

Current Challenges of the 2030 Official Community Plan

There appears to be continued widespread support for the 10 goals among community residents. However, some residents view that there has been a departure in some of original intent of these goals, as growth within the last seven years since the Plan adoption has been unprecedented. Some residents have the opinion that the Plan must be a rigid document and hold firm. Notwithstanding this opinion, the OCP has always been considered a 'living document'.

Since the adoption of the last OCP update, dozens of plans and strategies have been developed by the City to guide decision making in Kelowna. However, they have not necessarily been done in unison to ensure that they individually deliver on one community vision. The City has a multitude of competing objectives on how to prioritize and sequence capital investment and to accommodate growth while at the same time, maintaining and enhancing our existing infrastructure and assets.





Overall, the City has aspired to increase investment in active modes of transportation, and increase the network of trails and cycling paths that are integrated with key destinations. However, the density of people and jobs is generally not sufficient to support diverse transportation choices that would significantly shift walking, cycling, and transit as first mobility options.

Some of the key challenges being considered in this update are:

- ▶ How can we better balance City-wide policy with neighborhood perspectives?
- ▶ Can we better manage development pressures and address demand for local amenities?
- ▶ How can we develop a Plan that represents a Community for All approach?
- ▶ How do we put Imagine Kelowna into practice through our City's growth strategy?
- ▶ What is the best way to engage citizens, organizations, stakeholders, and others to share responsibility in the OCP's long-term implementation?

Key Directions for the 2040 Official Community Plan

Great cities include a multitude of elements that enrich the lives of its community members. Many residents value the aesthetic quality of Kelowna's natural landscape. The preservation of natural resources through a deliberate growth strategy aims to support this. In recent years, the OCP has seen a steady trend towards more housing units that are multi-family vs. single family in housing form. This has resulted in two positive outcomes: the OCP exceeding its new housing target of 47 per cent single/53 per cent multi-unit, and the general location of these units to be within the Permanent Growth Boundary where infrastructure and amenities can be maximized.

Updating the OCP will offer the opportunity to incorporate and consolidate a number of recent and concurrent policy, strategy and infrastructure initiatives that relate to the OCP content. These include Imagine Kelowna, the Transportation Master Plan, Healthy Housing Strategy, Community for All, and 20 Year Servicing Plan just to name a few.

City-wide planning provides an opportunity for the community to explore the following:

- ▶ **Diversify housing options:** a wider range of housing types will help to achieve affordability goals, create more socially inclusive communities, and provide appropriate housing near employment hubs that are needed now and into the future to address local housing issues;
- ▶ **Expand transportation options:** promotion of alternative transportation choices that increase choice, affordability, and contribute to a reduction of GHG's;
- ▶ **Secure community amenities:** expanding the community's assets for an increasingly diverse population now and into the future;
- ▶ **Build more complete communities:** increasing the quality of life through proximity to services and amenities for everyday life activities and promoting connections between neighborhoods, urban centers, parks and schools. This will also reduce a household's cost of living;
- ▶ **Intensify the existing Urban Core:** accommodating population and business development in the Urban Core rather than expanding into other areas will be most cost effective to service, preserve greenfield and agricultural lands, promote alternative modes of transportation, and promote a healthier resident population;

- ▶ **Catalyze employment centers:** promote synergies between businesses, technology and supportive uses;
- ▶ **Preserve natural areas:** protection and enjoyment of natural areas and parks will promote security in water quality, preservation of biodiversity and habitat areas, ecological functioning and climate change resiliency.
- ▶ **Protect agriculture:** promote a resilient, diverse, and innovative agricultural community that celebrates farming and food production. This will ensure food security into the future, and deflect growth energy back into the Permanent Growth Boundary.

Accommodating and balancing this anticipated growth and change, while simultaneously protecting community values and providing the corresponding services and infrastructure to deliver on our community's vision will require careful consideration through this process.

The updated OCP will become a defining, catalyst document for our community and will shape how future generations interact with places and spaces in Kelowna for future decades. This 2040 OCP update is about articulating the community's vision into a growth strategy that has strong implementation reality to assure a successful future. Successful cities are key to a healthy future. The question is not whether we will grow, but how *well* we grow. Building a future for Kelowna does not mean shifting away from our community values or aspirations to accommodate new residents, but rather building consensus around the City's future state and realizing the greatest social, environmental and economic benefits.

The Facts in Focus papers are designed to be an education series for Council, the community, and interested stakeholders to learn about the breadth of topics that are covered by an OCP update process. There are eight Facts in Focus papers that will build on each other, and set the stage for the direction and goals to pursue in the OCP process. The upcoming papers to follow are:

- ▶ Population Projections and Housing Needs
- ▶ Building Complete Communities
- ▶ Transportation Networks
- ▶ Preserving Agriculture
- ▶ The Environment
- ▶ Climate Change
- ▶ Financing and Servicing the Plan

The City hopes that all segments of our community will become engaged in this OCP process. Stay involved, get curious, be informed, share your passion, and imagine your influence on our Kelowna!

Explore the Story Map: [What is an OCP?](#) or visit kelowna.ca/ImagineNext to see how you can influence *Our Kelowna as we Grow*, the Kelowna 2040 Official Community Plan update.

