



CITY OF
**WEST
KELOWNA**

2020 **YEAR IN REVIEW**

*A YEAR OF RESOLVE
AND RESILIENCY*





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MOVING OUR COMMUNITY FORWARD

OUR YEAR IN REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS WEST KELOWNA'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2020 AS WE CONTINUE TO BUILD A RESILIENT COMMUNITY AND DELIVER PRIORITY SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS SHAPED BY THE COMMUNITY AND CAPTURED IN COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES.

We will remember 2020 as a year that marked the start of construction of the Rose Valley Water Treatment Plant that will deliver clean, safe and reliable drinking water to over half of our city. We also undertook our Community Visioning initiative, and the long-awaited Urgent and Primary Care Centre opened in West Kelowna. And we continue to strongly advocate for social housing, power redundancy and removal of the Speculation and Vacancy Tax for our residents.

Despite COVID-19, we continued to move forward, preparing for the future while taking care of today. Council would like to thank the community for their continued work with us and, as we look back on just some of our accomplishments, we also look forward to a much brighter year ahead.

We are a responsive, solution-oriented local government that works in partnership with the community to create opportunities for growth and prosperity. Last year was like no other and we are grateful to our residents, businesses and partners for their support and patience during the unprecedented times of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through creative and proactive planning, we were able to maintain continuity of our operations and delivery of services while enhancing access through technology to keep connected to our residents and businesses.

As the pandemic landed in our city and all around us, we implemented immediate financial measures including pausing projects, putting a partial freeze on staff hiring, deferring interest and late penalties on utility bills and property taxes and reducing the property tax increase to help our community.



2020

YEAR IN REVIEW



INVEST IN INFRASTRUCTURE



ECONOMIC GROWTH AND PROSPERITY



1 new bridge



2 new approved neighbourhoods



1.4 lane km of new bicycle lanes



504 new business licences



2.2 lane km of new sidewalks



619 building permits issued



3.6 km of mains: sewer, storm sewer and water



2,564 business licences issued



14 lane km of resurfaced roads



\$120.2 million in construction value



STRENGTHEN OUR COMMUNITY



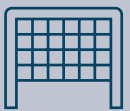
5.2k

ideas shared
on Community
Vision



700

digital
meetings and
workshops



773

recreational
programs



4,000

recreational
program
participants



394.5k

website visits



FOSTER SAFETY AND WELL-BEING



1

new urgent and
primary care
centre



2

new fire engines



6

wildfire mitigation
projects



150

new urban trees
delivered



17k

police case files
actioned

INVEST IN INFRASTRUCTURE

- ROSE VALLEY WATER TREATMENT PLANT
- MAJOR ROAD WORKS (GLENROSA ROAD, GELLATLY BRIDGE)
- PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES
- INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE

Investments to build strong and vibrant communities

This was a year of infrastructure investment for our city. The Rose Valley Water Treatment Plant will bring clean, safe and reliable drinking water to half of our population. Construction has started and, thanks to the support of a \$41 million federal and provincial grant and the authorization of the long-term borrowing model, the plant will be in operation in 2022.

We delivered \$5.17 million in transportation improvements along Glenrosa Road to create a safer and more walkable neighbourhood and completed drainage improvements.

We realigned the Glenrosa/McIver intersection, added streetlights, formalized transit stops and delivered on much needed sidewalks and cycling lanes for the City's largest neighbourhood.

We completed the \$2 million Gellatly Bridge Replacement Project, replacing a 70-year-old structure. The new bridge is fully modernized with sidewalks and bike lanes in both directions and an asphalt deck in place of the old wooden timbers, with sufficient clearance for annual runoff.

We advanced priority parks projects, with more than 220 residents providing input into the design of Carate Park in Westbank Centre. We worked with the Marr Fee family for a Licence of Occupation for its property in Rose Valley to provide interim dog off-leash, walking and bicycling areas, enhancing vibrancy and improving connectivity through the neighbourhood's extensive network of popular trails.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ Constructed 2.2 lane km of new sidewalks
- ▶ Built 2.0 lane km of new cycling paths
- ▶ Paved 14 lane km of roadway
- ▶ Invested \$6.1 million in rehabilitating and upgrading City streets
- ▶ Installed 3.6 km of new mains: 1.3km water, 410m sanitary sewer, and 1.9km of storm sewer



**INVEST IN
INFRASTRUCTURE**



Council's site visit of Rose Valley Water Treatment Plant construction



Glenrosa Road construction

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND PROSPERITY

- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
- BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
- FINANCE

Creating economic growth and prosperity

Despite these extraordinary times, building and business activity remained strong, with 619 building permits issued totalling \$120.2 million in construction value. Staff issued more than 500 new business licences, totalling 2,564 for 2020, including secondary suites.

The City remained agile and focused on responding to building and development needs and supporting business and economic activity during unprecedented times. We created protocols to reduce service interruptions to the business community in response to COVID-19.

To help provide a reprieve financially to residents and businesses during COVID-19, Council reduced the projected tax increase of 4.8 per cent by two per cent, resulting in a net 2.8 per cent increase to support commitments for additional firefighting staff. Council waived the one per cent penalty on late Utility Bill payments and postponed the 10 per cent property tax payment penalty from July 3 to Oct. 1.

Council endorsed the Smith Creek Comprehensive Development Plan, which will eventually allow for the development of hundreds of single and multifamily units on three large properties, totaling 154 hectares, above Copper Ridge Drive and Smith Creek Road over the next 20 years. The 93-hectare Goats Peak Comprehensive Development Plan, adjacent to Highway 97 and Gellatly Road South, returned to Council for consideration. This first phase proposes 142 single-family or duplex lots and 42 townhouses. An unprecedented number of development applications were submitted in 2020, despite the challenging times.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Mayor Gord Milsom delivered the annual State of the City address to a full house with the Greater Westside Board of Trade (GWBOT). The City maintained contact with the GWBOT and businesses during the pandemic and created social media campaigns, including joint videos, encouraging residents to buy local in support of area businesses.

In January and February, staff also hosted three Budget Open Houses across the City to gain community feedback on the 2020 Financial Plan and the Council Strategic Priorities, along with providing many updates on the Rose Valley Water Treatment Plant, road and sidewalk expansions and West Kelowna's first City Hall.

HIGHLIGHTS



**ECONOMIC GROWTH
AND PROSPERITY**

- ▶ Construction valued at \$120.2 million
- ▶ Processed 619 building permit applications; second highest year
- ▶ Reduced tax increase from 4.8 to 2.8 per cent
- ▶ Received 504 new business licences
- ▶ Approved the Smith Creek Comprehensive Development Plan to guide future growth



Socially distanced service was often available, but online access was encouraged during COVID-19.



Mayor's State of the City Address on March 4, 2020

STRENGTHEN OUR COMMUNITY

- COMMUNITY VISIONING (OURWK)
- COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS
- COVID-19 RESPONSE
- ENHANCING ENGAGEMENT WITH OUR COMMUNITY

A year of collaboration and partnership actions

Our Community Vision initiative engagement took place in two phases starting in the summer. Through the OurWK portal, the City received 5,290 ideas and 1,409 completed questionnaires as staff worked with non-profit organizations, the business community, residents associations, School District No. 23, agencies and local and regional partners to establish a new vision for the community. Visioning is the first step in updating the Official Community Plan.

The City engaged the community on proposed regulations for Short Term Rentals that include requiring operators to obtain business licences to operate vacation properties and suites.

The Province of BC provided COVID-19 relief funding of \$4.6 million to help ease the financial impacts of the pandemic on City operations. We worked collectively among our local municipal and regional partners to put in measures to protect our communities from COVID-19 and to plan for post pandemic economic recovery.

Recreation and Facilities staff worked closely together during COVID-19 to coordinate the safe closures and re-openings of 17 City facilities. Crews installed three new portables at Municipal Hall to ensure safe social distancing for Council meetings and City staff to ensure reliable governance and service continuity.

Engaging the community through new digital tools was one way we could ensure we remained connected with our community during COVID-19. We hosted and participated in 700 digital meetings and workshops, launched an online community engagement platform and improved our outreach in more meaningful and strategic ways.

HIGHLIGHTS



**STRENGTHEN
OUR COMMUNITY**

- ▶ Community Visioning initiative resulted in highest engagement to date
- ▶ Collaborated with Westbank First Nation and municipal and regional partners to strengthen our community
- ▶ Despite COVID-19, safely delivered 773 recreation programs serving 4,000 participants in keeping with provincial health orders
- ▶ Connected digitally with 3,315 followers on Facebook, 2,627 on Twitter, and 2,567 on Instagram and 3,760 e-news subscribers



New portables to accommodate social distancing for Council Meetings



OURWK Community Vision initiative engagement

FOSTER SAFETY AND WELL-BEING

- FIRE AND RESCUE
- POLICE SERVICES
- URGENT AND PRIMARY CARE CENTRE
- CLIMATE ACTION

Providing essential services for a resilient and safe community

The community praised the opening of a new Urgent and Primary Care Centre in November to serve the Greater Westside, and was grateful to the Province of BC for delivering integrated health services for our residents.

Two new fire engines, at Rose Valley-Station 33 and Glenrosa-Station 34, strengthened the City's protection services. A new utility terrain vehicle (UTV) and trail rider chair went into service for rescues and response to emergency calls including the Rose Valley Reservoir Wildfire in August. West Kelowna Fire Rescue collaborated with Parks to complete wildfire mitigation in six parks and public spaces, using a \$64,500 grant from the Province of BC's Community Resiliency Investment Program and matching City funds. Nearly 50 FireSmart grants were awarded to private homeowners to help mitigate wildfire risks on their properties.

West Kelowna/Kelowna Rural RCMP serves City of West Kelowna, District of Peachland, Westbank First Nation, Regional District of Central Okanagan electoral areas and Big White. In 2020, members and staff actioned 17,000 files in these areas, providing service 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Service demands slightly increased overall from 2019, directly related to COVID-19 and primarily due to support of first responders and Interior Health. The newly created Community Safety Unit provided enhanced service with two additional members in 2020.

We're strengthening our relationship with Westbank First Nation through Council-to-Council meetings and dialogue, sharing our strategic priorities and we continue to explore more and new ways to work together to benefit our communities across the Greater Westside.

The Corporate Climate Action annual report highlighted the City's ongoing efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and defined future target levels. Among the many initiatives, staff coordinated the first ever Urban ReLeaf Program delivering 150 low-cost trees to residents' properties throughout the Westside adding to the city's green canopy.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ Strengthened fire protection in Rose Valley and Glenrosa and rescue response
- ▶ Worked with BC Wildfire Service to extinguish fire in Rose Valley Reservoir
- ▶ Created a Community Safety Unit
- ▶ Advocated for the delivery of a provincial Urgent and Primary Care Centre
- ▶ Gave 48 grants totalling \$15,450 to residents to mitigate wildfire risks on their properties



**FOSTER SAFETY
AND WELL-BEING**



Parks staff deliver trees as part of the inaugural Urban ReLeaf Program





West Kelowna Fire Rescue's UTV was put to good use at Rose Valley Reservoir Fire



As your West Kelowna City Council, we express our sincere gratitude across the community for the kindness and compassion shown to one another during these unprecedented times. We've made great progress as we deliver our Strategic Priorities but, above all, we continue to take care of each other along the way. We now look forward to what we know will be an outstanding year ahead in 2021, and we wish you good health and safety as we all move forward together.

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