



Photo: Darren Hull



HOW WE GROW

Our distinct and diverse neighbourhoods and our smaller town feel are defining features of West Kelowna. How and where we grow affects all aspects of our community - our transportation systems, our public spaces, our economy, our environment, and our character. Thoughtful planning or smart growth allows us to add population in a way that enhances quality of life for all and saves money over time.



Our population is growing.

Our population is increasing faster than much of BC, averaging 1.9% per year since 2007.¹ Building permits have reached all-time highs with 588 permits issued in 2019.²



We are getting older.

Our median age is a bit below other Okanagan communities, but our 65+ age group is growing rapidly leading to a higher proportion of seniors.³



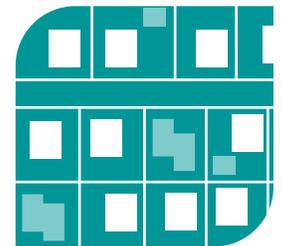
Our terrain affects where we grow.

Our hills, canyons, and agricultural lands means there aren't many flat or easy sites left to develop, so we've had to focus on making best use of available land.



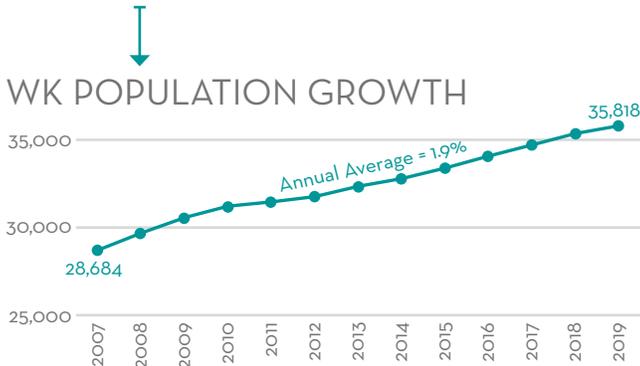
Westbank Centre is a target for growth.

New, amenity-rich, multi-family projects in Westbank Centre have been recently completed, encouraged in part by zoning updates and incentive programs.



Infill is being encouraged.

Recent updates to zoning and to secondary suite and carriage house regulations have increased infill opportunities to better use land.



References:

¹ BC Stats Population Estimates, 2020
² West Kelowna Building Permit Summary, 2019
³ Regional Housing Needs Assessment, 2019



Active agriculture lands are an important part of West Kelowna's character and are important to preserve and protect, even as the population grows.

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GROWTH & POPULATION

WHAT DOES OUR OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN SAY NOW?

- ▶ Work towards compact, complete neighbourhoods that reduce vehicle trips and greenhouse gas emissions, while fostering healthy neighbourhoods
- ▶ Prioritize growth, mixed uses, and higher density in Westbank Centre, Boucherie Centre, Gellatly Village, and neighbourhood centres
- ▶ Create three complementary mixed use centres:
 - » Westbank Centre, focused on commercial with higher density residential
 - » Boucherie Centre, focused on business park with residential
 - » Gellatly Village, focused on small-scale waterfront commercial and residential
- ▶ Encourage attractive light industrial, office, and commercial uses along the Hwy 97 corridor to support job creation and economic success
- ▶ Create community gateways that announce arrival into West Kelowna
- ▶ Preserve industrial areas that drive economic development
- ▶ Maintain established neighbourhood character
- ▶ Maintain working agricultural lands
- ▶ Increase public access to Okanagan Lake
- ▶ Avoid development in rural reserve areas to protect natural resources from growth pressures
- ▶ Undertake comprehensive development plans for large undeveloped areas including Raymer Bay, Smith Creek, and Goat's Peak to determine how to optimize development while protecting assets



New development near Westbank Centre has been helping to achieve goals from our last Official Community Plan and the Westbank Centre Revitalization Plan, by encouraging new growth close to our major community centres.

OPPORTUNITIES

- ▶ In 2019, West Kelowna ranked 12th on [Maclean's list of Canada's Best Communities](#), highlighting its growing attractiveness to new development
- ▶ New multi-family development is occurring in and near Westbank Centre, bringing additional residents to this neighbourhood
- ▶ Development near neighbourhood centres is growing the demand for commercial services in core areas
- ▶ Okanagan tourism has been thriving, although COVID-19 is impacting this sector

CHALLENGES

- ▶ Existing housing stock is mostly single-family, making it more difficult to accommodate a varied population
- ▶ Conflicts exist between adjacent active agricultural and residential land uses
- ▶ Steep slopes and terrain can limit development
- ▶ An aging population will require different types of housing, services, and facilities to age in place
- ▶ Pressures on services and infrastructure increase with population growth
- ▶ High housing demand reduces affordability
- ▶ Societal preferences for low-density single family homes can contribute to sprawl