



ECONOMY AND JOBS

WHAT DOES OUR OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN SAY NOW?

- ▶ Encourage economic development that supports the unique character of the community
- ▶ Encourage employment-generating land uses
- ▶ Support a sustainable tourism economy
- ▶ Foster a business-friendly environment
- ▶ Support a balanced economy with a mix of retail, commercial, service, and industrial uses
- ▶ Add mixed commercial / residential in Westbank Centre, Boucherie Centre, and Gellatly Village
- ▶ Protect industrial land for a diversified economy
- ▶ Preserve and enhance the agricultural economy
- ▶ Celebrate amenities that support tourism - natural assets, recreation, walkability, and public realm

OPPORTUNITIES

- ▶ The [West Kelowna Economic Development Office](#) provides community-level economic development and tourism support
- ▶ West Kelowna is part of the [Central Okanagan Economic Development Commission](#) that brings communities together to build investment in the region
- ▶ The relative cost of West Kelowna land to places like the Lower Mainland make it attractive to businesses and residents
- ▶ The [Greater Westside Board of Trade](#) brings together more than 350 businesses in the area
- ▶ Development by [Westbank First Nation](#) over the last decade has increased employment opportunities on the Westside
- ▶ The West Kelowna Business Park attracts industrial and commercial businesses, creating jobs
- ▶ Tourism has trended upwards over the past decade



West Kelowna's unique integration of city and agriculture has solidified its position in the agri-tourism sector. Economic development initiatives like the [Westside Wine Trail](#) and the [Westside Farm Loop](#) bring together producers and grows awareness about agriculture in the community.

CHALLENGES

- ▶ The economy is constantly affected by external factors beyond City and individual control, for example COVID-19. This means our economy must adapt to remain strong
- ▶ Commercial vacancy on the Westside is a concern and commercial competition in surrounding areas is high
- ▶ Much of our workforce (74%) currently commutes outside of West Kelowna for work
- ▶ West Kelowna's older population means there are fewer working-age residents (15-64 years old)
- ▶ Young people often need or choose to leave West Kelowna to find employment opportunities
- ▶ West Kelowna is relatively new as a city, which means it is often less recognized by labour and industry developers than established communities
- ▶ Tourism is an important part of the economic base but competition, seasonality, and staff retention are challenges, along with emerging challenges from COVID-19 impacts