



## **Official Community Plan Comprehensive Consultation Response February, 2010**

This document is provided to the City of Kelowna to summarize all of the issues that have been submitted to the City from our OCP consultation responses on September 2008, March 2009, June 2009, July 2009 and November 2009. The topics related to all of the issues submitted to date fall into the following broad categories:

- **Densification**
- **Affordable Housing**
- **Green Building**
- **Approval Process**
- **Transportation**
- **Housing**
- **Managing Infrastructure Costs**
- **Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions**
- **Permanent Growth Boundary**
- **Sustainability**
- **Economic Prosperity**
- **Technology Park**
- **Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

### **Outstanding Issues**

This document will also highlight the issues that remain outstanding from our previous OCP submissions. The topics related to the issues that still remain outstanding are as follows:

- **Economic Prosperity**
- **Technology Park**
- **Reducing GHG's**
- **Housing**
- **Public Transit**
- **Encouraging Green Technology**
- **Water Sustainability**

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The Chamber will continue to monitor developments on these issues as the OCP consultation process moves forward.

### **Economic Prosperity**

The Kelowna Chamber of Commerce has repeatedly urged the City to make economic sustainability a higher priority in the City's Official Community Plan. The Kelowna Chamber has more recently commended the City for initiating the process of developing an Economic Prosperity Framework that will undergo further public consultation before it is finalized.

In order for the Economic Prosperity Framework to do what it is intended to do, which is to establish principles to shape public policies to connect our economic strength to a healthy community, it must be carefully integrated into Kelowna's Official Community Plan.

Saanich, British Columbia provides a great example of a municipality that has carefully integrated economic considerations into their Official Community Plan. In a section of their OCP titled Economic Vibrancy, they outline a number of policies geared towards aligning economic viability with social and environmental well-being. Saanich also has an Economic Development Strategy that is referenced in their OCP.

The Kelowna Chamber recommends that the City of Kelowna take an economically sustainable approach, which includes social, environmental and economic aspects when revising land use guidelines and policies to support traditional and emerging economic sectors. The Chamber also urges the City to integrate the Economic Prosperity Framework into Kelowna's Official Community Plan.

### **Technology Park**

There is a need for a technology park in our community. Technology represents one of the major drivers of Kelowna's economy and there has been discussion surrounding the need for a Technology Park for several years now. There is interest from the development community to create such a facility, but to date, nothing has come to fruition.

Opportunities are being missed by Kelowna because of a lack of a technology park strategy. For example, there was an EDS storage centre that set up in Kamloops and this potentially could have happened in Kelowna if Kelowna had a technology park strategy. There are also federal government funds allocated to technology parks that Kelowna could tap into if we had a strategy.

At this point in time, there is no focus and no common message for a technology park in Kelowna and there is a need to bring key stakeholders together to

develop a technology park strategy and to define roles. While the Kelowna Chamber does not wish to lead this process, we do intend to act as a catalyst for the creation of a technology park strategy by bringing together key stakeholders to discuss basic needs, develop a strategy and define roles.

Clustering technology companies together is considered sound economic policy. The OCP should accommodate the needs of the sector to allow these companies to expand and thrive.

To allow the technology industry to realize its economic potential in Kelowna, the Kelowna Chamber of Commerce urges the City of Kelowna to acknowledge the need for a technology park in our community in Kelowna's Official Community Plan.

### **Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

The City of Kelowna signed the BC Climate Action Charter in 2007 which established the stated objective of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 33% by the year 2020. With the growth of our community, it is estimated by City staff that this will equate to a reduction of 50% of our per capita emissions. While this is a lofty and laudable goal, one needs to question if this target is too aggressive. Can this be achieved without placing a huge burden on the economy of the region?

Certainly, as a community we need to move forward to strive to make our City become more sustainable. Improvements to public transit and ride share programs will reduce the number of vehicles on the streets. Incentives to incorporate green technology in new buildings, along with green renovation incentives for existing buildings, will reduce the emissions of buildings in Kelowna.

However, any initiatives aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions needs to be weighed against the impact to the economy of Kelowna. Going forward, the Chamber would like the financial impacts of a GHG reduction plan to be succinctly outlined in a preliminary report and recommendations from staff to council as we cannot afford to embark on a legislated action that is financially unsustainable. In addition, the Chamber respectfully requests that the same preliminary report contain a detailed cost benefit analysis (CBA). The Chamber considers it essential that there is a detailed CBA which appraises and assesses the total expected costs measured against the expected benefits. We ask that the financial expressions of the CBA be adjusted for the period of the initiative and the expected benefits.

### **Housing**

The lack of market affordable housing continues to be an issue in Kelowna and will only be exacerbated as the economy continues to recover. To date, we have not been able to see an affordable housing strategy from the City that details how we are going to address this issue.

It is important to note that the issue of affordable housing/rental accommodation is more than a social issue. The availability of affordable housing/rental accommodation has economic implications as well; there is a direct impact on the ability of businesses to retain current employees who have difficulty in meeting their housing needs, and the ability to recruit new employees into the region due to high housing costs.

The Chamber urges the City to create more incentives to encourage the creation of more affordable housing units as part of a larger overall affordable housing strategy.

### **Public Transit**

Proper strategic planning of transportation infrastructure is necessary to ensure the effective movement of goods and services, and the travelling public.

Investing in an affordable, effective, and efficient public transit system will provide residents with an incentive to leave their vehicle at home. A strong transit system along key corridors, linking town centres and commercial centres, will provide a viable alternative means of transportation between the urban and suburban sectors of Kelowna and the neighbouring communities.

The Kelowna Chamber urges the City to invest in an affordable, effective, and efficient public transit system and undertake improvements to ride share programs to provide an incentive for people to leave their vehicle at home.

### **Encouraging Green Technology**

Economic sustainability needs to be a focus for any green initiatives. Addressing environmental and social issues must not have a long-term negative impact on our economy.

A 2008 Economic Sustainability Membership Survey conducted by the Kelowna Chamber of Commerce in July, 2008 asked members about their barriers to becoming more sustainable and initiatives they would like to see to improve their ability to adopt sustainable practices. The most common response had 38.96% of those surveyed indicating that a lack of programs and incentives was the largest barrier to them becoming more sustainable. 35% of respondents indicated that cost was the largest barrier for them.

There is often a significant cost to investing in green technologies that is prohibitive for some developers. The City of Kelowna can encourage the development of energy efficient buildings, landscapes and developments that are committed to green building programs such as LEED™ or BuiltGreen™ by enhancing incentives for these types of projects and making it more cost effective to invest in them.

The Chamber urges the City to work with other levels of government to develop incentives to facilitate the incorporation of green technology in new buildings, along with green renovation incentives for existing buildings.

### **Water Sustainability**

Another important issue that is vital to sustainability and a healthy economy is water sustainability. In order to accommodate future growth needs that either meet or exceed expectations, the City needs to have a clear strategy for how to effectively manage the water supply, employ water conservation techniques and plan for periods of water shortages.

The Kelowna Chamber also recognizes that the business community can take an active role in managing water by gauging their consumption and by using existing programs and resources available to them.

The Chamber urges the City to develop a clear strategy for water sustainability to ensure that the City is in a position to be able to provide for infrastructure to accommodate population growth needs that either meet or exceed expectations.

### **Recommendations:**

The Kelowna Chamber continues to have several outstanding issues related to the City's Official Community Plan that have not yet been fully addressed. The Kelowna Chamber of Commerce recommends that the City:

#### **Economic Prosperity:**

1. Take an economically sustainable approach, which includes social, environmental and economic aspects when revising land use guidelines and policies to support traditional and emerging economic sectors.
2. Integrate the Economic Prosperity Framework into Kelowna's Official Community Plan.

#### **Tech Park:**

1. Acknowledge the need for a Technology Park in our community in Kelowna's official community plan.

### Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions:

1. Recognizing the increased growth that will occur in Kelowna to 2030, reassess the ability of the City of Kelowna to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 33% by the year 2020 as outlined in the BC Climate Action Charter.
2. Assess the economic costs of all proposed initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

### Housing:

1. Increase incentives to encourage the creation of more affordable housing units as part of a larger overall affordable housing strategy.

### Public Transit:

1. Invest in an affordable, effective, and efficient public transit system and undertake improvements to ride share programs to provide an incentive for people to leave their vehicle at home.

### Encourage Green Technology:

1. Work with other levels of government to develop incentives to facilitate the incorporation of green technology in new buildings, along with green renovation incentives for existing buildings.

### Water Sustainability:

1. Develop a clear strategy for water sustainability to ensure that the City is in a position to be able to provide for infrastructure to accommodate population growth needs that either meet or exceed expectations.

## **All Previously Submitted Issues**

### Issues submitted in September, 2008:

#### **Densification**

Densification in strategic pocketed areas makes sense for a variety of reasons as a way of accommodating the population growth while reducing urban sprawl. The higher the density, the lower the per capita use of energy for travel, infrastructure, and building conditioning costs. High density also saves farmlands from conversion to subdivisions, reduces the need for freeways in the region, and shifts the transportation mode mix toward transit.

## **Affordable Housing**

The Urban Development Institute (UDI) has sent a letter to Her Worship Mayor Sharon Shepherd responding to the Coriolls Report on Affordable Housing. In that letter, the UDI states that the incentives under the current density bonusing scheme are too small to deliver affordable housing units. The UDI also goes on to note that in the Coriolls Report, the consultant provides several positive suggestions regarding how the City can obtain more affordable housing (and other amenities) through development and urges the City to seriously consider these recommendations. Two of those suggestions include:

Allowing cash-in-lieu payments – UDI believes that this would allow more flexibility for the industry to take advantage of the density bonusing program, and should be adopted by the City for all developers. The money obtained through this process should only be spent for the purposes for which it is collected.

Increasing the size of the density bonusing – Not only will this provide affordable housing units, it will also increase densities and the number of units on the market, which will further improve affordability. At the same time, the consultant notes that the City could modify the "...zoning districts to add more bonus density that could be achieved without changing the structure type of the basic form and character intended in the zone."

## **Green Building**

Economic sustainability needs to be a focus for any green initiatives. Addressing environmental and social issues must not have a long-term negative impact on our economy.

## **Approval Process**

The existing approval process can be confusing and cumbersome for some developers. There is a need for the development of an improved approval process that is streamlined, clear and transparent for businesses.

## **Transportation**

In revising the OCP, it is important to focus on the movement of goods and services to ensure a healthy economy. Upgrading infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists should not be undertaken at the expense of the movement of goods and services.

**The Kelowna Chamber recognizes the need for an economically sustainable approach to ongoing development of our community:**

- 1. Amend current OCP guidelines to allow for higher densities in urban areas and ensure that residential densities are transit supportive to encourage densification and reduce urban sprawl.**
- 2. Increase incentives to encourage the creation of more affordable housing units.**
- 3. Enhance incentives for developments that meet specific LEED™ or environmental criteria.**
- 4. Develop an improved approval process that is streamlined, clear and transparent for business.**
- 5. Take an economically balanced approach to providing for the movement of people, goods and services.**

Issues submitted in March, 2009:

### **Economy**

Building on the statements made in September 2008, the Kelowna Chamber urges the City of Kelowna to place a greater emphasis on the future economy of Kelowna during the OCP review process to ensure that a strong economy continues to develop in the future.

The Kelowna Chamber urges the City of Kelowna to take a more balanced approach to sustainable development to ensure that the costs of the sustainable initiatives proposed are indeed realistic and affordable; and do not unintentionally drive up the cost of housing in Kelowna.

### **Transportation**

The Kelowna Chamber of Commerce urges the City of Kelowna to ensure that the movement of goods and services remains a priority in the future planning of our community's long term sustainability.

Issues submitted in June, 2009:

### **Housing**

The four scenarios recently proposed for feedback focus on the topic of density versus urban sprawl. Scenario #2 ("Urban Centres and Suburbs") and scenario #3 ("Hubs and Spokes") appear to attempt to find some balance between density and urban sprawl. Scenarios #1 and #4 do not adequately address the community's needs in this regard.



The Kelowna Chamber recommends that the City:

1. Broaden the OCP perspective on housing to develop a housing strategy to ensure that the Kelowna has adequate social housing, inventory of single detached homes, townhouses, and rental accommodations to accommodate middle income residents.
2. Reassess the population growth estimates used in the OCP document (1.55%) to properly accommodate for our future housing needs; incorporating worst case/best case scenarios of growth.

### **Transportation**

In previous responses, the Kelowna Chamber has indicated its concern regarding the movement of goods and services. Considering increased congestion as a method to get people out of their vehicles is not a viable option. Economy viability becomes a casualty in this scenario. Proper strategic planning of transportation infrastructure is necessary to ensure the effective movement of goods and services, and the travelling public.

The Kelowna Chamber recommends that the City:

1. Strategic plan for investments in transportation infrastructure to ensure the effective movement of goods and services, and the travelling public.
2. Invest in affordable, effective, and efficient public transit system to provide an incentive for people to leave their vehicle at home.

### **Managing Infrastructure Costs**

As part of an ongoing housing strategy, the City (in consultation with stakeholders) will need to determine strategically what areas will require infrastructure upgrades, and to which area new infrastructure will be developed to accommodate new development. With a clear understanding of our housing needs (single detached homes, townhouses, and rental accommodations), the City can effectively plan for long term infrastructure needs in those areas.

The Kelowna Chamber recommends that the City:

1. In consultation with stakeholders, as part of an ongoing housing and commercial development strategy, strategically determine the existing areas of Kelowna that require infrastructure upgrades.
2. In consultation with stakeholders, determine areas in which new infrastructure will be developed to accommodate new housing and commercial developments.

## **Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

As noted in the survey, the City of Kelowna signed the BC Climate Action Charter in 2007 which established the stated objective of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 33% by the year 2020. With the growth of our community, it is estimated by City staff that this will equate to a reduction of 50% of our per capita emissions. While this is a lofty and laudable goal, one needs to question if this target is too aggressive. Can this be achieved without placing a huge burden on the economy of the region?

The Kelowna Chamber recommends that the City:

1. Recognizing the increased growth that will occur in Kelowna to 2030, reassess the ability of the City of Kelowna to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 33% by the year 2020 as outlined in the BC Climate Action Charter.
2. Undertake improvements to public transit and ride share programs to reduce the number of vehicles on the streets.
3. Work with other levels of government to develop incentives to facilitate the incorporation of green technology in new buildings, along with green renovation incentives for existing buildings.

Issues submitted in July, 2009:

### **Housing**

The refined land use scenario which is based on the Hubs and Spokes model generally focuses on directing higher density along major roadways, urban centres, village centres and neighbourhood centres. This approach is supported by the Kelowna Chamber.

The Kelowna Chamber recommends that the City:

1. Incorporate worst/best case scenarios of population growth estimates used in the OCP and ensure that provisions are in place to properly accommodate for our future housing needs should they exceed expectations.
2. Reassess present housing strategy and ensure that they are consistent with future demographic trends and housing preferences.
3. Define and adapt innovative strategies aimed at ensuring a sufficient stock of truly affordable housing for the workers needed to keep Kelowna's economy healthy.

### **Permanent Growth Boundary**

Also included in the refined land use plan is the concept of a permanent growth boundary in which areas beyond the boundary will not be supported for more intensive use than permitted by current zoning. The Kelowna Chamber recognizes the importance of preserving agricultural lands and reducing urban sprawl but contends that it is not clear whether the concept of a growth boundary would be the most effective means of preserving open space.

The Kelowna Chamber recommends that the City:

1. Reconsider the proposed permanent growth boundary based on evidence from other communities using this strategy, and focus on preserving open space by other smart growth techniques such as revitalization.

### **Sustainability**

To ensure a sustainable future for Kelowna, the Kelowna Chamber believes that economic sustainability should be a high priority for the City of Kelowna and should be taken into consideration when revising OCP land use policies and guidelines.

The Kelowna Chamber recommends that the City:

1. Take an economically sustainable approach, which includes social, environmental and economic aspects when revising land use guidelines and policies to support traditional and emerging economic sectors.
2. Develop transportation infrastructure strategies to address the assessed impact on traffic congestion that increased density will have in our city and the subsequent impact that this may have on the movement of goods and services and on tourism, transportation and the service sectors.
3. Develop a clear strategy for water sustainability to ensure that the City is in a position to be able to provide for infrastructure to accommodate population growth needs that either meet or exceed expectations.

Issues submitted in November, 2009:

### **Economic Prosperity**

The City of Kelowna has prepared a draft Economic Prosperity Framework that outlines economic development in our community.

The Kelowna Chamber of Commerce recommends that the City:

1. Revise the Economic Prosperity Framework based on feedback received.

2. Provide clarification as to how the Economic Prosperity Framework will be used to influence the land use plan.
3. Look to other municipalities that have developed similar economic prosperity documents to see how they have managed to integrate their economic plans into their land use document.
4. Continue to gather input from stakeholders as the City moves forward with this process.

### **Technology Park**

Technology represents one of the major drivers of Kelowna's economy and there has been discussion surrounding the need for a Technology Park for several years now. There is interest from the development community to create such a facility, but to date, nothing has come to fruition.

The Kelowna Chamber of Commerce recommends that the City:

1. Acknowledge the need for a Technology Park in our community and include specific zoning for the creation of one in the OCP land use plan.

### **Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

In June, 2009, the Kelowna Chamber put forth several recommendations to the City in regards to the City's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 33% by the year 2020 as part of signing onto the BC Climate Action Charter in 2007.

The Kelowna Chamber of Commerce recommends that the City:

1. Avoid implementing experimental policy designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and instead look to what other municipalities have done with regards to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and implement policies that have proven to be successful.
2. Assess the economic costs of all proposed initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

# Municipal Affairs

Update to City Council – OCP  
Feedback

February, 2010

## Overview

- Economic Prosperity
- Technology Park
- Reducing GHG's
- Housing
- Public Transit
- Encouraging Green Technology
- Water Sustainability

## ***Economic Prosperity***

### **Recommendation:**

- ***The Kelowna Chamber recommends that the City of Kelowna take an economically sustainable approach, which includes social, environmental and economic aspects when revising land use guidelines and policies to support traditional and emerging industries.***
- ***The Kelowna Chamber recommends that the City of Kelowna integrate the Economic Prosperity Framework into Kelowna's Official Community Plan.***

## ***Technology Park***

### **Recommendation:**

***The Kelowna Chamber recommends that the City of Kelowna acknowledge the need for a Technology Park in our community in Kelowna's Official Community Plan.***

## **Reducing GHG's**

### **Recommendations:**

- ***Recognizing the increased growth that will occur in Kelowna to 2030, reassess the ability of the City of Kelowna to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 33% by the year 2020 as outlined in the BC Climate Action Charter.***
- ***Assess the economic costs of all proposed initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.***

## **Housing**

### **Recommendations:**

***The Kelowna Chamber recommends that the City increase incentives to encourage the creation of more affordable housing units.***

## **Public Transit**

### **Recommendations:**

***Invest in an affordable, effective, and efficient public transit system and undertake improvements to ride share programs to provide an incentive for people to leave their vehicle at home.***

## **Encouraging Green Technology**

### **Recommendation:**

***Work with other levels of government to develop incentives to facilitate the incorporation of green technology in new buildings, along with green renovation incentives for existing buildings.***



## ***Water Sustainability***

### **Recommendation:**

***Develop a clear strategy for water sustainability to ensure that the City is in a position to be able to provide for infrastructure to accommodate population growth needs that either meet or exceed expectations.***

## ***Conclusion***

•Monitoring developments on outstanding issues:

- Economic Prosperity
- Technology Park
- Reducing GHG's
- Public Transit
- Encouraging Green Technology
- Water Sustainability

•Waiting for next round of public consultation