Chapter 6: Environment
Focusing on protecting the most important features of our natural landscape, water sources and on reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
The goals, objectives and policies in this chapter are targeted at the protection of the natural environment, natural systems and the ecological goods and services produced by the environment.

Human well-being and nearly all economic activity depend on a healthy natural environment. The natural environment and biological diversity (biodiversity) is well known to convey widespread social, cultural and intrinsic values known as ecological goods and services for residents and visitors.

That same biodiversity and ecological landscape which provides for our basic needs is under imminent threat from various human forces including but not limited to rapid urbanization, agricultural expansion, and wildfire mitigation. A healthy natural environment positively impacts both quality of life and economic vitality. Biodiversity and a properly functioning ecosystem must be protected.

In an effort to optimize environmental benefits, the City of Kelowna will take a precautionary, integrated ecosystem management approach and ensure that the environment is afforded a high priority in all land use related decision-making. The goals, objectives and policies in this chapter are targeted at the protection of the natural environment, natural systems and the ecological goods and services produced by the environment. The reduction of corporate and community greenhouse gas emissions is also a key component of this chapter.

**THE CITY OF KELOWNA WILL:**

**Objective 6.1** Protect and enhance Kelowna’s biodiversity.

**Policy 1**

*Natural Ecosystem Management.* Ensure the protection of biodiversity, the conservation of critical habitats and the sustainable use of biological resources through the incorporation of an integrated ecosystem management approach and the use of best available knowledge.

**Policy 2**

*SpeciesAtRisk.* Require a landscape-level approach to ecological planning and management to ensure the ongoing function of environmentally sensitive areas, establishment and/or retention of corridors and habitat connectivity and the preservation of threatened and endangered species.

**Objective 6.2** Improve energy efficiency and reduce community greenhouse gas emissions.

**Policy 1**

*GHG Reduction Target and Actions.* The City of Kelowna will, in partnership with: senior governments; local residents and businesses; NGOs; external agencies; and utility providers, work towards reducing absolute community greenhouse gas emissions by:

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$ Economic Sustainability   Social Sustainability   Environmental Sustainability   Cultural Sustainability
• 4% below 2007 levels by 2023;
• 25% below 2007 levels by 2033; and
• 80% below 2007 levels by 2050.

The City of Kelowna’s efforts will be focussed on creating a dynamic community that embraces sustainable transportation options, energy efficient buildings and vibrant urban centres.

The City will support the reduced use of fossil fuels in buildings by encouraging renewable energy supplies, and energy efficient technologies in new and existing buildings.

The City will lead through example and strive to meet the BC Climate Action Charter targets for the reduction of GHG emissions from municipal infrastructure.

**Objective 6.3  Maintain and enhance Kelowna’s natural resources.**

**Policy 1  Tree Canopy Coverage.** Set a target of 20% for tree canopy coverage through preservation measures and planting strategies (location and species), in accordance with City policy and plans.

**Policy 2  Preferred Plant Species.** Use species of plants well-adapted to Kelowna, drought-tolerant, pest-resistant, with preference for plants indigenous to the Kelowna area, compatible with urban development and adapted to the specific site conditions in restoration and replanting practices on City land. Emphasize “right tree in the right location” to help ensure that trees will not have to be removed due to future conflicts with utility wires, building foundations, etc.

**Objective 6.4  Provide compensation options for unavoidable losses.**

**Policy 1  Mission Creek Aquatic Habitat Compensation Bank.** The Mission Creek Aquatic Habitat Bank may only be used to compensate for unavoidable losses to aquatic habitat in the City of Kelowna. Guidelines for use of the Bank will be established to address such things as application criteria, geographical area to which the Bank applies, project priorities and costs, and method of estimating compensation contributions.

**Policy 2  Use of Compensation Bank.** When compensation is required to address harmful alteration, disruption or destruction of fish habitat (a HADD) under the federal Fisheries Act, the ability to contribute to the Mission Creek Compensation Bank as a compensation option will be at the discretion of senior government fisheries agencies. Contribution to the Bank for non-HADD related compensation proposals will be at the discretion of the City with input from senior agencies, as needed.

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**Economic Sustainability  Social Sustainability  Environmental Sustainability  Cultural Sustainability**