



CITY OF WEST KELOWNA
MINUTES OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, May 12, 2021
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
2760 CAMERON ROAD, WEST KELOWNA, BC

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chris Kotscha, Chair
Laurie Evans, Vice Chair joined via Teams (arrived at 8:10 a.m. and left at 8:51 a.m.)
Amber Hall
Krista Mallory
Tyler Neels
Michael Porter
Lorrie Whiteway

MEMBER ABSENT: Nick Wizinsky

Staff Present: John Perrott, Economic Development & Tourism Manager
Chris Oliver, Senior Planner
Natasha Patricelli, Recording Secretary
Salina Curtis, Economic Development and Tourism Coordinator

1. CALL THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m.

In accordance with the most recent Provincial Health Officer Order regarding gatherings and events, the public was not permitted to attend the Economic Development Committee meeting in person. As an open meeting, it was webcast live and archived on the City's website.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

It was moved and seconded

THAT the agenda be adopted as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Economic Development Committee meeting held April 14, 2021 in the City of West Kelowna Council Chambers

It was moved and seconded

THAT the minutes of the Economic Development Committee meeting held April 14, 2021 in the City of West Kelowna Council Chambers be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. PRESENTATIONS

5.1 Chris Wills, Jason Wills and Lee Levering, Venture Realty - West Kelowna Commercial, Industrial, and Investment Real Estate Update

Highlights of the presentation include:

Retail Leasing and Sales

- Increase of retail interest in West Kelowna due to population growth;
- West Kelowna is a hot spot for people from the Lower Mainland and Alberta;
- Redevelopment of commercial properties has had a positive impact and results;
- Growth and density is encouraging commercial landlord investment;
- Retail lease rates: 10 year span increased approximately \$5 per sq. ft.;
- Prime retail in Westbank Town Centre achieving mid to high \$20 range;
- Working on investments with developers and landlords through inducements to tenants;

Development and Industrial

- Lease rates have doubled in the last 5 years;
- Lease rates range from \$12 - \$17 per sq. ft.;
- Not a lot of freehold land for sale;

- Freehold land prices have drastically increased over the last 5 years;
- During COVID some industrial businesses have pivoted, grown and expanded;
- West Kelowna small bay industrial is in high demand;
- Encouraging more small industrial development in West Kelowna;
- Ton of investment interest however lack of available product (land);
- Hard to get attention from local buyers (Kelowna for West Kelowna) due to bridge;
- Investors and developers from out of town, bridge is not an issue;
- Most developers prefer to own land vs. lease in West Kelowna;
- Unknown if West Kelowna will ever compete with large bay industrial in Kelowna;
- Strong investment and attention coming from outside West Kelowna creating an opportunity for increased rates;
- Difficult to get the attention from other communities in the valley;
- Not a lot of office inventory in West Kelowna;
- Currently through COVID no change in retail or industrial leases;
- When leases come due potential for office space to decrease in size;
- West Kelowna is not a market to pre lease - build before commitment;
- Collective effort from municipality, developer and tenants is needed to attract investment;
- Multi-generational properties require some re-investment to increase attractability for tenants moving into town;
- Minor adjustments required to achieve higher rents;
- Business licensing possibly an opportunity to encourage vision of community;
- Buyer beware that the property is to code, has proper permits and is utilized properly;

- Suggestion for more of a cultural district in the retail corridor of West Kelowna.

Questions on the presentation:

- Is there more industrial growth in the south Okanagan? Few pockets of industrial land with little inventory in the south Okanagan. Geographically, West Kelowna is positioned better for transport of goods into and out of the Valley.
- Is there investor interest from the U.S.A.? It is more common for Canadian investors looking in the U.S.A. than American investors looking here. Most interest is from Alberta and the lower mainland.
- Thoughts on downtown core in West Kelowna? A 2-block radius town hall meeting for minor changes would make an impact on look and feel. Downtown features unique buildings and the opportunity for redevelopment through current landowners. Potential risk of losing the history and culture of the area with out of town developers.
- Where are opportunities for an office park in West Kelowna? Limited geographically for opportunities however, Prairie West, Stevens and Main Street areas have potential with flat land and space for parking. Office community would support being part of the downtown core.
- What is the difference between freehold and leasehold land for purchase and lease rates? Westbank First Nation land lease are 125 years. Freehold commercial land is of high demand but difficult to find. Spillover from Kelowna is increasing prices here. Commercial lease rates are the same as freehold but it comes down to availability. Freehold and leasing are different tools for the same end result.

6. DELEGATIONS

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

8. REFERRALS

9. CORRESPONDENCE AND INFORMATION ITEMS

9.1 Official Community Plan Project Introduction

Highlights of the presentation include:

- OCP review Phase 1 - Develop the Vision has been completed;
- Phase 2 - 'from vision to ideas' with supplementary information;

- Future Phases include policy development and guidelines;
- Phase 2 activities include:
 - Project stakeholder event to confirm outcomes of visioning;
 - Westbank First Nation engagement;
 - Public event to drive discussion and interest for online engagement;
 - Proposed growth typologies public event for June 2021;
- Phase 3 will include a Council workshop, stakeholder workshop, and a second public event July - December 2021;
- Phase 4 will include a final opportunity for public and council committees to participate in the OCP.

9.2 Tourism Update

Highlights of the presentation include:

- Current Public Health Orders restrict travel and indoor dining experiences;
- Tourism groups put out a statement asking people to listen to the provincial health orders.
- Accommodators have been cancelling out of region reservations;

City & Visit Westside Support

- Development Services developed a temporary patio/space program;
- Visit Westside created a Patio Season blog post;
- Visitor Centre received many inquiries regarding travel restrictions;

Upcoming Projects and Opportunities

- Working on print and digital versions of the Visitor Guide, Westside Farm Loop and Trail Guide;
- 2 craft breweries now open in West Kelowna;
- Working with the BC Ale Trail to develop a West Kelowna Ale Trail;

- The Ale Trail will focus on a Kelowna and West Kelowna section on their website which will focus on Central Okanagan itineraries, profiles and digital assets;

Visitor Services

- Instant Messaging service on the visitwestside.com website;
- Visitor Centre has moved to a yearly contract.

9.3 Economic Development Update

Highlights of the presentation include:

Project Update

- Mayor's State of the City Presentation with GWBOT;
- Wine trail improvements at Glencoe & Elliott Road: driveway signs installed and banner poles to come in the next few months;
- Improved Bed and Breakfast signs in Lakeview Heights neighbourhood;
- Transition activities as John moves to a different municipality, Salina will be the interim EDC staff point of contact going forward.

Upcoming (Virtual) Events and Announcements

- August 27: GWBOT Golf Event

John Perrott thanked the Economic Development Committee for the groups dedication, support and time committed throughout the years.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

11. ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 a.m.

CHAIR

RECORDING SECRETARY