City of
Kelowna
Building Momentum

Before we get started, I want to acknowledge the great effort our athletes are making in Sochi. Canada is right up there among the medal leaders.

> Local athletes like Kelsey Serwa, Eric Neilson, former Kelowna Rockets Shea Webber and Duncan Keith are part of one of Canada's strongest teams ever.
>
> I know you all join me in wishing them all the best.
>
> However, one aspect of the Games that is troubling is that the Russian government has moved away from tolerance… away from celebrating diversity by introducing draconian laws.
>
> Governments around the world have taken a leadership role in speaking out against this discrimination – and I want to take this opportunity to say that the City of Kelowna unreservedly joins them.

The International Olympic Committee's own statement on Olympic Spirit is "to build a peaceful and better world … which requires mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play."

Council is entering the final 10 months of its three-year mandate.

We said at the start that we wanted to Move Opportunities Forward… and that continues to be our guiding principle.

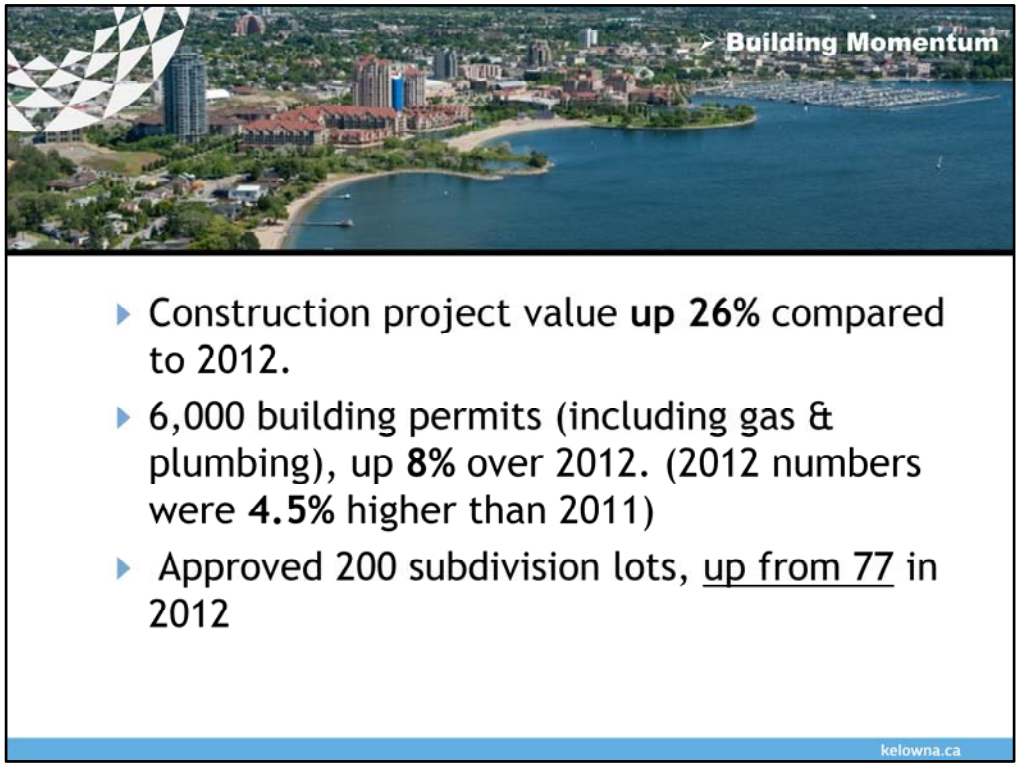
* Kelowna is Open for Business
* Reduced red tape, e.g. Planning Advisory Committee; frontline staff efficiencies
* Appointed an Executive Director of Business Development – Jim Paterson (also co-chair of United Way); Downtown map - prospectus
* Improving public engagement with online options
* Working on attracting new events: Skate Canada International Oct. 31 – Nov. 2, 2014; Buskers Festival

Working with partners to get things done

We keep only 8 cents of every tax dollar collected in Kelowna, so good relations with senior levels of government and the private sector are important.

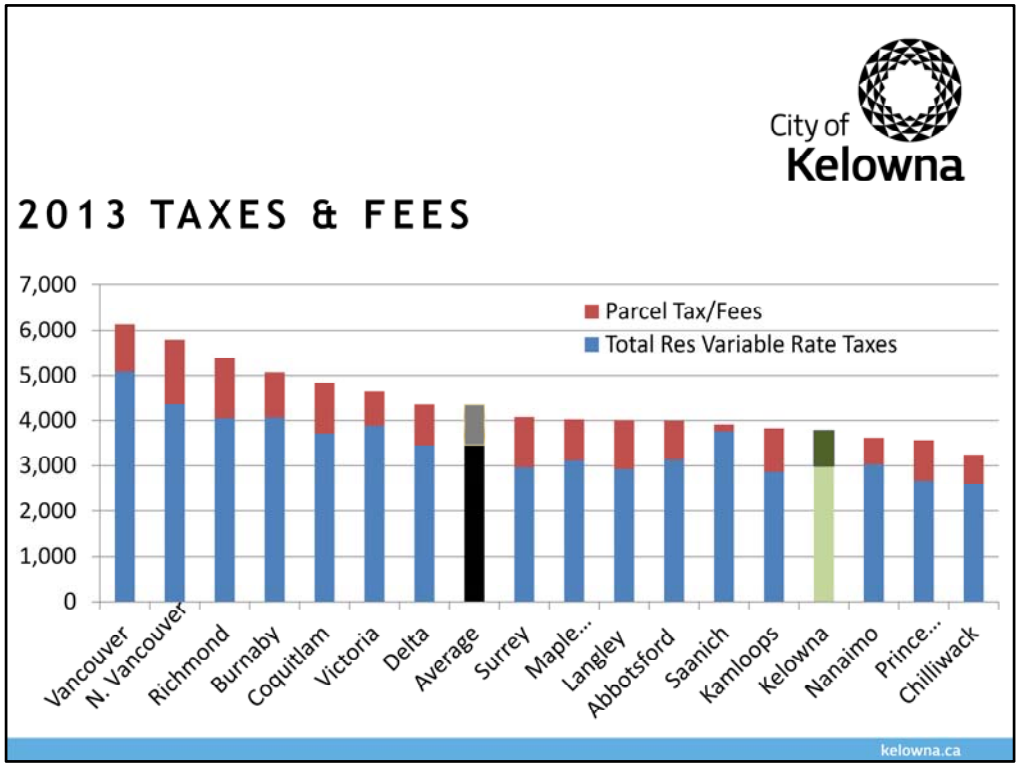
Partners are helping us fund some major initiatives:

* The $5 million public pier (Westcorp) – a project that was on the City's "wish list" for many years – now it's done…
* $1.2 million in federal Gas Tax for projects in 2013, such as Rails With Trails Phase 2
* Province funding the RapidBus Phases 2 & 3 linking West Kelowna to UBCO campus, and redevelopment of the Queensway Transit Terminal and Okanagan College exchange
* Kelowna Yacht Club redevelopment and Stuart Park Phase 2
* Kelowna United Soccer facility on City land



Some statistics from 2013 that show our progress:

* The value of construction projects in 2013 increase by 26 per cent compared to 2012.
* We issued approximately 6,000 building permits (including gas & plumbing), an increase of 8 per cent over 2012. (and 2012 numbers were 4.5 higher than 2011)
* Approved 200 subdivision lots, up from 77 in 2012



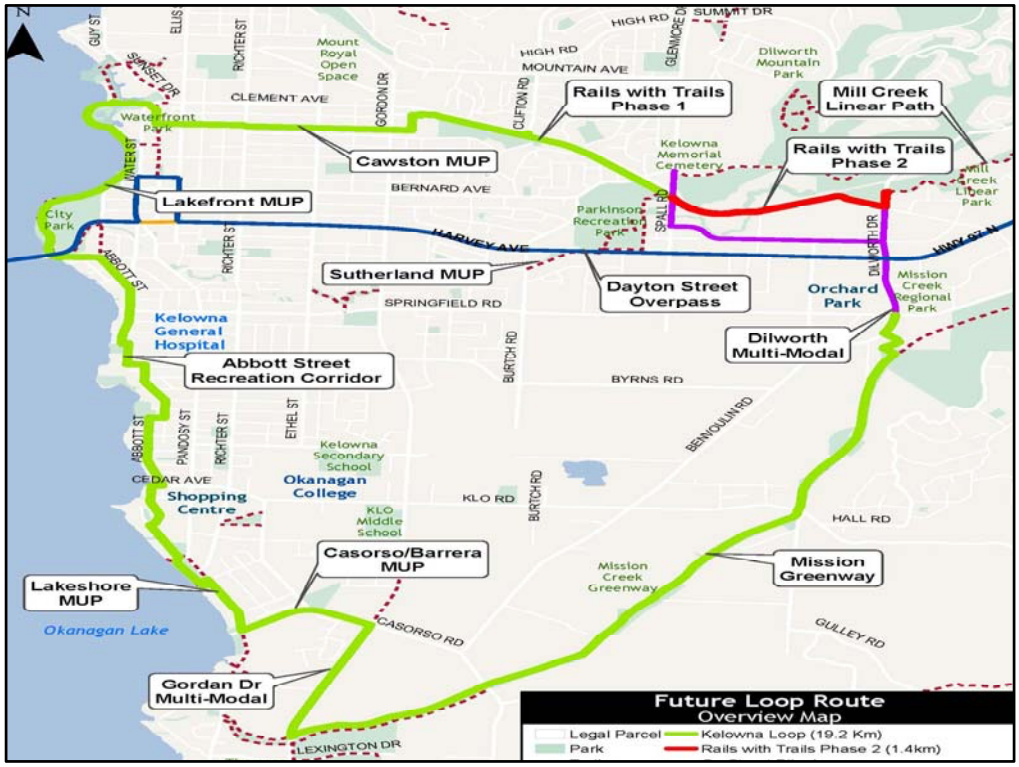
We're adding 22 new RCMP staff over four years, while keeping taxes among the lowest in B.C.

This shows all Taxes (municipal & other) along with Utility Parcel Taxes/fees for the municipalities over 75,000 population in BC.

Of 17 communities shown here Kelowna was 4th lowest in terms of all taxes/fees at $3,782. This is 13% below the average of $4,367 shown in the black line. This also does not include the Home Owner Grant reduction, which is $200 higher away from the Lower Mainland.

A number of the things we inherited or initiated in our first year are just now coming to fruition.

- Interior Health project deal put together early in 2012; plans to begin construction this year
  - * This creates a chain reaction of other moves, including construction of new parkades at Ellis and the Library
- The Monaco project could be under construction this spring... 2 Towers, 22 and 30 storeys, one occupied by a hotel chain
  - * So the area around the Ellis & Doyle intersection is going to be one of the busiest places in B.C. for some time...
- And on Tuesday, plans were submitted to the City of Kelowna for the development of the Willow Inn site
  - * A long-awaited proposal...
  - * The IHA & Willow projects indicate confidence in the local economy.
- Central Green
  - * one BC Housing development announced and development applications from Troika for two more properties
  - * We expect more Central Green property development plans to be announced this spring.
- A fresh start on the Pandosy Waterfront
  - * public consultation – all Kelowna taxpayers have invested in that property; all residents can have their say on the matter; want to get the best value and * best uses out of that investment;
  - * Using a charrette process on Feb. 25 and 26 – charrettes have been successful for projects such as the Downtown Plan and Central Green.
  - * This is a project that exemplifies the diversity of considerations Council must weigh: financial, technical, public interest and feasibility.



I mentioned Rails with Trails a minute ago…

This moves us a step closer to closing the loop on 19.2 kilometres of off-road multi-use pathway that encircles the city.

With the $3-million Rails With Trails extension from Spall Road to Dilworth this year, you can travel on a safe off-road path from the east end of Mission Creek Greenway to the Gordon Drive path, over to the Casorso path, connect with the Lakeshore Road path that leads to City Park and along the waterfront to the Cawston Avenue, which connects with Rails With Trails, which will now go to Dilworth Drive, which connects (along green bike lanes on the road) with the Greenway again.

As a Council, we want to work collaboratively, engage in partnerships and keep moving opportunities forward.

Using that approach, some significant developments that received approval in the last two years include:

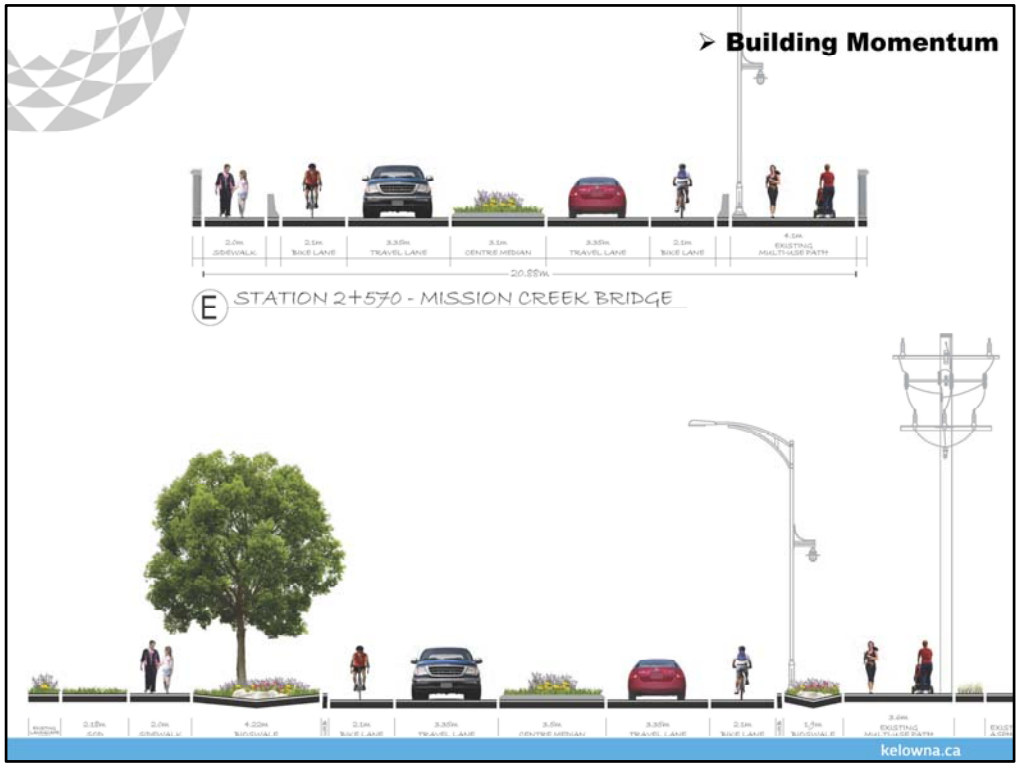
* Final approval for the Manteo expansion
* Final approval for the Hiawatha hotel & residential community, including traffic circle
* Negotiated the Interior Health building for downtown – 800 more workers downtown
* Bernard Avenue - $14 million project will be completed in June; great support from property owners, who agreed to pay 25% of streetscaping costs, the DKA & merchants

Kelowna International Airport expansion of the International Arrivals Customs Hall

* YLW had another record-breaking year of passengers traffic: 1.5 million passengers, as each month established a new high in passenger counts
* It has 10 airlines flying to 13 destinations year-round and now offers six seasonal sun locations
* YLW introduced new non-stop routes in the last two years to LAX, Whitehorse, Abbotsford, Cranbrook and Ft. McMurray

Elsewhere over the last two years…

* $25 million invested in Rutland infrastructure: parks, transit facilities, sidewalks, landscaping, highway upgrades and recreation facilities.
* Commercial expansion at the Superstore property on Baron Road; The Keg, Marshalls & Dollerama
* New office buildings on Leon and Lawrence for the first time in many years – 2 now open and a third coming soon on Leon.
* 3rd reading for the Pleasantvale Housing redevelopment at the foot of Knox Mountain, and the selection of the Society of Hope as the facility operator; BC Housing says construction could begin as early as July, with occupancy projected for the fall of 2015.
* 3rd reading approval for parking on Royal Ave to improve emergency patient care at KGH.
* 3rd reading approval for new Upper Mission school site at the Ponds village centre for Grades 6 & up.

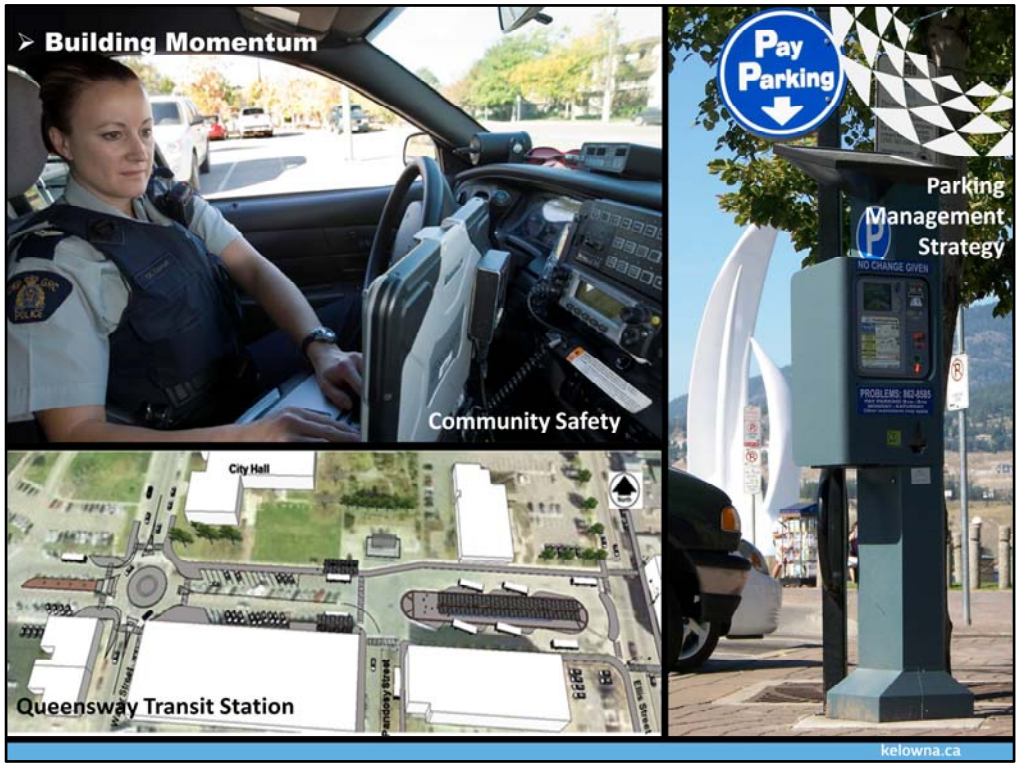


We are gaining momentum and we see a number of opportunities coming forward that will help grow our economy and enhance citizens' quality of life.

One of the big projects starting this year is the Lakeshore road improvement and bridge replacement.

It's a $10-million project in detailed design right now, with a public information session to follow this spring.

This road handles 12,000 vehicles a day … 25% of the traffic volume on Highway 97 every day… it's a key commuter artery from the South Mission. It's also a premier tourism and recreation corridor in Kelowna.



The new Kelowna Police Services building will be a huge project for the next few years.

* We will be asking residents for approval to borrow $42 million
* Over the 30-year payback terms, it works out to $3.33 per household per month.

The redevelopment of the Queensway Transit Exchange will allow us to move more people, more efficiently through downtown as the RapidBus expansion continues to be phased in.

* A mixed-use building in the bus loop will include new space for bus operator facilities and security office
* Traffic circle at Water Street will improve safety for drivers and pedestrians and keep traffic moving more efficiently

* Improved lighting for increased visibility and safety
* New streetscaping and landscaping
* Added public space and pedestrian walkways

The Province is also adding left-turn signals on the highway at Gordon, Burtch and Cooper – with the City paying 40% of the cost.

Something else underway is a Parking Management Strategy.

* The strategy takes a look at parking rules, regulations and rate changes city-wide.
* It's an example of the kinds of infrastructure and policy updates we need to keep up with a city that grows by up to 2,000 citizens a year.

Kelowna is tops in Canada for vehicles-per-capita, and has been like that for a long time.

* But, we're beginning to move the needle on the use of other methods of commuting – transit, walking, cycling.
* A record-number 5 million transit riders last year
* UBC Okanagan and Okanagan College helping develop a critical mass of riders and changing the culture of transit
* 79% of British Columbians own a bicycle… so we're trying to make it easier for them to get it out of the garage and use it to commute to work on these off-road paths.

I've talked a lot about WHAT we've done and WHAT we're going to do… But I also want to tell you WHY we work the way we do…

We are, first and foremost, careful financial managers.

* There's no question that Kelowna is among the most cost-effective local governments in B.C. when you compare what you pay for the services received
* For the past decade, property tax increases have averaged less than 2.6% annually.
* Kelowna has the second-lowest City staff per population ratio in Canada for cities that offer the same services.
* 81% of citizens polled in 2012 said they received good value for their taxes.

Careful financial management helps create a positive atmosphere for businesses to invest in Kelowna… which helps us build and invest in priorities important to our residents and businesses.

Community Safety is a priority, and we continue to make progress there.

* RCMP report an overall 10% reduction in crime last year compared to 2012.
* We're investing in new police staff and the necessary facilities.

Public Engagement is a priority, and we continue to expand options.

* Online options get more visitors than open houses and get more diverse voices
* More City information services to communicate directly with citizens
* Visit kelowna.ca and sign up with
* e-Subscribe to have updates on any City project emailed to you.

Public Amenities are a priority for our residents and important to our tourism economy

* Public access to waterfront property remains a community objective
* Facilities are well maintained and our parks and trail networks continue to expand
* Kelowna welcomes 1.5 million visitors annually.
* The tourism industry accounts for approximately 7,100 direct jobs and 11,300 indirect jobs, $218 million in wages and $279 million in annual spending.

Active Living is a priority, and we're investing in more opportunities to lead healthy lives.

We take full advantage of the natural environment and climate to enhance citizens' quality of life with waterfront pathways, miles of sandy beaches, a wide selection of golf courses, locally grown produce and food products, vineyards, wineries, watersports and wintersports.

We have everything it takes to be one of the healthiest communities in Canada.

We contribute to Quality of Life with the basics… clean water, good roads, nice parks… AND we add value by providing other services when possible.

We are laying the groundwork for a city that is a positive place to invest in for many years to come and a great place to call home.