

Report to Council



Date: March 31, 2025
To: Council
From: City Manager
Subject: Thriving Urban Centres: Rutland, Midtown and Capri-Landmark
Department: Long Range Planning

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives, for information, the report from Long Range Planning dated March 31, 2025, with respect to Thriving Urban Centres: Rutland, Midtown and Capri-Landmark.

Purpose:

To receive an overview of the current state of three of the five Urban Centres: Rutland, Midtown and Capri-Landmark.

Council Priority Alignment:

Affordable Housing
Economy
Climate and Environment
Transportation

Background:

At the March 10, PM meeting, the [Thriving Urban Centres: 2024 Trends in Urban Centres Report](#) was introduced to Council. The report provided a summary of trends that Kelowna's Urban Centres are experiencing and how they are different compared to the whole city. Key findings of the report demonstrated that Urban Centres:

- Are positioned for continued growth;
- Are significant hubs for employment;
- Have different travel habits compared to the rest of the city; and
- Provide a variety of amenities and services to support the people who live, work and play there.

Diving deeper into the Trends Report, however, reveals that Urban Centres are not all the same. There are substantial differences in how each contributes to providing a high quality of life for residents, workers and visitors. This report examines the unique characteristics of three of the five Urban Centres: Rutland, Midtown and Capri-Landmark. A future report will focus on the remaining two Urban Centres: Pandosy and Downtown.

Previous Council Resolution

Resolution	Date
THAT Council receives, for information, the report from Long Range Planning dated March 10, 2025, with respect to Thriving Urban Centres: Project Update and Trends Report	March 10, 2025
THAT Council receive the report dated September 11, 2023 regarding the Urban Centre Planning Framework, for information	September 11, 2023

Discussion:

Rutland, Midtown and Capri-Landmark are all in the early to developing stages of their evolution moving towards the OCP's vision of dense, amenity rich, mixed-use and walkable Urban Centres. While there are some similarities, Rutland, Midtown and Capri-Landmark each have unique characteristics. The sections below highlight some of these and others are summarized in *Attachment A: Urban Centre Highlights*.

Rutland

The Rutland Urban Centre encompasses the heart of Rutland, primarily along Highway 33 and Rutland Road. The neighbourhood is characterized by significant residential density with strip mall development, it offers some services and amenities but lacks a walkable hub. Highlights include:

- *Demographics:* Rutland is the most diverse of the Urban Centres, with over one in four residents identifying as Indigenous or as a visible minority, significantly higher than the citywide average. Rutland also has the highest youth population of the five Urban Centres, indicating more families with children live in Rutland compared to other Urban Centres.
- *Housing:* Two-thirds of Rutland's land base is currently residential and the neighbourhood has the highest population density of all the Urban Centres. The majority of people live in apartments, however, Rutland has a higher percentage of people living in ground-oriented units compared to other Urban Centres.
- *Growth:* While there hasn't been a significant increase in population over the past five years, this is expected to change. Rutland has seen a high volume of low-rise apartments being constructed in the past few years, that are now nearing completion. However, Rutland has had little new commercial growth over the same period.
- *Daily Needs:* Rutland isn't a large employment destination, offering fewer jobs than any Urban Centre. While indoor public space is limited, residents do benefit from the adjacent Rutland Recreation Complex and a new activity centre is being planned at Lions Park. In addition, residents have access to schools, grocery (full service as well as diverse cultural options), and Indigenous supports at the Métis Community Services Society.
- *Transportation:* Fewer Rutland residents walk and cycle than other Urban Centres. Contributing to this is low sidewalk completeness and having to drive to other areas for employment. Despite this, Rutland consistently has strong transit ridership and a new route, the 98 UBCO Rutland Express, offers increased service from Rutland to other Urban Centres and key destinations.
- *Climate & Environment:* Rutland has the second lowest tree canopy coverage and the lowest number of street trees per kilometre of the Urban Centres, indicating that many of the existing trees are on private property. Four parks offer green space along with places for recreation and connection.

Midtown

Of the five Urban Centres, Midtown is the least recognizable as an Urban Centre as the area is characterized by many big box shopping stores serving the region. In recent years, however, this area has started to see significant change with abundant residential development. Highlights include:

- *Demographics:* Midtown has a different demographic than the other Urban Centres – more people are immigrants and four in ten residents are over the age of 65. It is anticipated that the age demographic will become younger in the coming years with the onboarding of significant amounts of rental housing.
- *Housing:* Nearly 90 per cent of people in Midtown live in an apartment. The number of renters is lower than some of the other Urban Centres, but with many purpose-rental projects in various stages of development, the amount of purpose built rental units in Midtown could increase by a factor of six if all reach completion.
- *Growth:* Midtown has seen significant residential growth in the past four years, with building permits issued for 89 per cent of the units the OCP projected would be developed by 2040. A significant portion of this growth has been noted along Benvoulin and Benvoulin Court. The Orchard Park Transit Oriented Area introduced higher density residential uses adjacent to Midtown's boundaries (the area north of Highway 97) which may influence future demand for services.
- *Daily Needs:* With 60 per cent of its land base used for commercial businesses, Midtown offers a high variety of employment, shopping, restaurants and other local services; however there are other gaps to fulfill residents' daily needs. Midtown has no easy access to schools, indoor public space, or medical for all, within or adjacent to its boundary.
- *Transportation:* As a regional commercial destination, Midtown is also auto-oriented, but also offers numerous transit options with the Orchard Park Transit Exchange. With lower access to active transportation corridors, and limited shaded sidewalks, walking and cycling mode shares are similar to the city overall.
- *Climate & Environment:* Midtown only has one small park and lacks greenery, with the lowest tree canopy coverage of all the Urban Centres. This contributes to higher heat island risk that is exacerbated by extensive pavement and developed areas in and around the Urban Centre.

Capri-Landmark

Capri-Landmark is a major employment destination and has the second largest daytime work population in the community. The Landmark area in particular plays a major role in the city's economy. While it hasn't seen as much housing or population growth as other Urban Centres yet, the neighbourhood is poised for significant future growth and investment as outlined in the Capri-Landmark Urban Centre Plan. Highlights include:

- *Demographics:* Capri-Landmark has the youngest median age of the five Urban Centres, with a high percentage of the population between the ages of 20 to 44 years. Capri-Landmark households are less affluent, with almost two thirds of households having low to moderate incomes (less than \$80,000).
- *Housing:* While many homes are apartments, there are still larger areas of Capri-Landmark that have older, single-family homes. Despite home purchase prices being almost 40 per cent lower than Citywide averages in 2023, nearly 7 out of 10 residents rent.
- *Growth:* Capri-Landmark hasn't seen as much housing or population growth with fewer building permits issued than any of the other Urban Centres over the past four years, however there was a slight uptick in building permits issued in 2024. Significant development could happen adjacent to Capri-Landmark with the Burtch/Harvey Area Redevelopment Plan. Capri-Landmark, however, has

seen more commercial growth than any of the other Urban Centres, with new office towers such as Landmark 7.

- *Daily Needs:* There are significant employment opportunities, particularly in the Landmark area, however, Capri-Landmark lacks some services to help residents meet their daily needs. There are no schools or public indoor space within its boundaries but Parkinson Recreation Complex and one elementary school are adjacent to it. It does have a few grocery options and now hosts Kelowna's Farmers Market twice weekly from April to October providing access to diverse local foods and social connections.
- *Transportation:* Walking and cycling have a lower mode share in Capri-Landmark which could be partially due to lower sidewalk completeness and few residents being close to an Active Transportation Corridor. Residents do have transit options, with access to bus rapid and frequent transit routes on Gordon, Springfield and Highway 97.
- *Climate & Environment:* Capri-Landmark has few active parks (accounting for less than two per cent of the land base, the second lowest of the five Urban Centres). Recently a parcel of land was acquired in the Landmark area to help fill this gap, but the \$12.3 million purchase price demonstrates the costly challenge of expanding park space in any Urban Centre.

Conclusion and Next Steps:

Additional information is being collected on the five Urban Centres through engagement with the public and interested and affected parties; through the development of an interactive Dashboard; and through analysis of growth and employment projections. This information will all help to inform an Urban Centres Future Direction Report that will be presented to Council this summer. The report will outline options for new policies and actions to help continue to grow each Urban Centre into a complete community.

Internal Circulation:

Climate Action & Environment
 Communications
 Cultural Services
 Development Planning
 Housing Policy and Programs
 Integrated Transportation
 Parks Planning & Design
 Real Estate
 Social Development
 Urban Forestry

Considerations applicable to this report:

Existing Policy:

- 2040 Official Community Plan
 - Objective 4.1 Strengthen the Urban Centres as Kelowna's primary hubs of activity.
 - Objective 4.2 Foster more inclusive and socially connected Urban Centres
 - Objective 4.3 Protect and increase greenery in Urban Centres
 - Objective 4.5 Promote more residential development to balance employment uses in the Capri-Landmark Urban Centre
 - Objective 4.7 Focus new development in Rutland strategically to create a new high-density business and residential hub to support improved services and amenities
 - Objective 4.8 Support modest residential development to transition Midtown into a transit-supportive neighbourhood

- Objective 9.1 Incorporate equity into planning decisions and resource allocation in our community
- Policy 16.3.1 OCP Implementation Actions.
 - Action 17 – Develop a Rutland Urban Centre Plan (short term)
 - Action 19 Develop a Midtown Urban Centre Plan (long term)
- 2023-2026 Council Priorities
 - The Urban Centres framework outlined in this report would further advance Council’s 2023-2026 priorities, particularly:
 - Affordable Housing: Urban Centre planning advances and streamlines processes to accelerate housing in the areas where 50% of future housing units are targeted.
 - Transportation: The Urban Centres Dashboard will inform upcoming transportation projects.
 - Climate and Environment: Urban Centre planning will explore opportunities to make our Urban Centres low-emission and more resilient to the effects of climate change.
 - Economy: Urban Centre planning allows for a strategic approach to growing employment in Kelowna’s busiest activity hubs.

Financial/Budgetary Considerations:

The City has received \$149,500 of grant funding from the Complete Communities Program, administered by the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) to assist with this process. These funds supplement the \$75,000 of annual funding for Urban Centre Planning identified in the Long Range Planning base budget.

Consultation and Engagement:

Public engagement will help inform the final deliverable of the Thriving Urban Centres process. Now until April 6, the public will be able to provide input on actions that could improve quality of life in each of the Urban Centres through a mix of online survey and in-person engagement opportunities. In addition to public engagement, staff will also be hosting workshops and meetings in the coming months to gather input from a variety of interested and affected parties including those representing development and building; economic development; major employers; and service providers.

Communications Comments:

Engagement opportunities are posted on the City’s [Get Involved Kelowna](#) site and promoted using a variety of City-owned channels, digital ads, print ads, and social media.

Considerations not applicable to this report:

Legal/Statutory Authority:

Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:

Submitted by: T. Guidi, Planner Specialist

Approved for inclusion: R. Miles, Long Range Planning Department Manager

Attachments:

Attachment A: Highlights of Rutland, Midtown and Capri-Landmark Urban Centres