

Census data provides new picture of Penticton

(Penticton, BC – February 9, 2022) – Earlier today, Statistics Canada released the first portion of new information collected during the 2021 national census. The information provided details on population and dwelling counts for Canada, the provinces and territories, as well as for municipalities, including Penticton.

Based on the information shared, Penticton saw a 9.3 per cent population increase over the last five years (recorded at 36,885), marking a significant increase over and above the previous five years, which was 2.6 per cent (0.53 per year). Historically, Penticton's population increases have averaged 0.48 per cent per year over the past 10-15 years, hence the 2021 Census results marks a period of notable growth and activity for our community. Dwelling counts in Penticton also increased by 1562 (16,895 to 18,457) over the past five years, outpacing 2011-2016 date that showed an increase of only 510 dwellings.

By the City's own figures, over the past five years Penticton has experienced significant growth and economic development activity. Since 2017, 2087 new residential units have been approved, 80 per cent of which have been within smaller, more affordable housing types such as duplexes, apartments, townhomes and suites.

With its economic climate, range of different industries and beautiful lake front setting, Penticton is positioned for growth. Investment in strategic areas like the Downtown and North Gateway, along with investment in activate lifestyles through new active transportation infrastructure and new amenities, all bode well for a successful, vibrant and exciting future.

"I was pleased to see this data and the positive growth it reveals," said Penticton Mayor, John Vassilaki. "The geographic constraints that surround Penticton cap our community's outward expansion and force greater attention on creating a sustainable mix of housing types. So while housing affordability remains a challenge in Penticton, the figures captured in today's census indicate the City's housing polices have resulted in a desired mix of housing options for those moving to Penticton."

"Our Official Community Plan, approved by Council in 2019, identified an annual population projection of 1 per cent per year and a supply of 150 new housing units needed to support that growth," said the City's Director of Development Services, Blake Laven. "The actual data shows 219 units per year in the number of housing units approved by the City and, with today's census data

showing a population increase of 1.8 per cent, the time may have come – sooner than expected – to open up our OCP and review, again, our growth and development areas.”

“Over the past five years the City’s economic development strategy has prioritized the growth and development of local businesses. Adding more housing units is a must in terms of helping businesses to attract more workers”, said the General Manager of Community Services, Anthony Haddad. “Every sector within our economy is struggling to find new employees and affordable housing choices. Our City’s continued investment in housing policies that support sustainable forms of density in strategic areas of the community will need to continue to meet current and future population demands.”

What the census results mean for municipalities

Municipalities use census information on population counts, rates of growth and density to create a broad profile of their entire municipality. The census also provides the same indicators at the local level within individual municipalities.

Using census data, municipalities can analyze which local areas within their municipality have experienced the fastest population growth, and which local areas have in fact declined in population, thereby allowing for service delivery to be adjusted according to population changes. This information helps decision-makers to meet the various challenges of managing municipalities, including building infrastructure and housing, as well as improving transportation links, public services and the environment.

The next release of 2021 Census data is scheduled to occur on April 27, 2022 and will include information on dwelling type, as well as information on age, sex at birth and gender.

-30-

Contacts:

Anthony Haddad
General Manager of Community Services
City of Penticton
250-490-2579

Blake Laven
Director of Development Services
City of Penticton
250-490-2528

Philip Cooper
Communication Manager
City of Penticton
250-490-2583