

# Westbank First Nation Business Profile

## 28% Population Growth over 5 years

According to the latest census of Statistics Canada, WFN has experienced a 28% population growth, compared to 8.5% for the greater Kelowna area, between the last two (2011 and 2016) censuses.

[wfn.ca/business-development.htm](http://wfn.ca/business-development.htm)

## Partnerships

Okanagan Lake Shopping  
Centre, Churchill & PDG

Snyatan Shopping Centre  
& Anthem Properties

Central Okanagan Economic  
Development Commission

BC Transit & Kelowna Rapid Bus

Sustainable Transportation Partnership

Regional Growth Strategy (City of Kelowna)

Clean Air Strategy

Westside Wastewater Treatment  
Stakeholder Committee

Mission Creek Restoration Initiative

Regional District of Central  
Okanagan (improving GIS)

Ministry of Transportation

Fire Services Agreement  
(City of West Kelowna)

Okanagan College (Education MOU)

UBC Okanagan

West Kelowna Warriors

Tourism Kelowna & Visit Westside

Ponderosa Living

WIBCO Construction

Ntityx Development Corporation

## Business Growth & Satisfaction



### Annual Business Walk

WFN Chief & Council and Economic Development Commission participated in the 7th annual regional business walk, Oct 2, 2019. That day, 63 WFN businesses were surveyed, representing 15% of all WFN businesses, with results showing 94% of WFN businesses are 'growing' or 'steady'. The survey included questions about employee retention, recruitment, and business opportunities or challenges. The majority were positive about future growth in the region, but mindful of labour, physical space, and increased operational costs. To date, more than 2,000 Okanagan businesses have participated with 1-on-1 followup being provided for signage, zoning, parking, exporting, training and B2B topics.



## Fraser Report

A report released Fall 2019, titled "Property Rights and Prosperity: A Case Study of Westbank First Nation", by Canadian public policy think-tank, Fraser Institute, describes WFN's economic achievements as nationally progressive and leading edge.

[www.fraserinstitute.com](http://www.fraserinstitute.com)

## Demographics

**Government staff:** WFN employs approximately 200 people in finance, human resources, planning, development, engineering, assessment, legal, communications, economic development, education, health and wellness, youth and recreation, membership services, and at Pine Acres long-term Elders care facility.

**WFN Members:** 850

**Non-member residents:** 10,000

Non-member residents are represented by the WFN Advisory Council.

## Benefits to leasehold

Benefits to purchasing on leasehold land include no PST, GST, PTT or Spec Tax, and secure long-term investments (registered & often pre-paid leases of 50-125 years), plus available Land Title Insurance. Status individuals can work and shop tax-free, and by not purchasing the land, buyers save \$, allowing for higher quality purchases/areas.

## History

**1963** Became independent First Nation

**1977** First WFN Government office opens

**1981** Okanagan Nation Alliance formed

**1990** Property Taxation implemented

**1994** sənsisyustən school opens

**2003** Constitution & Land Code in effect

**2005** Self Government implemented

**2017** \$5.5 million Youth Centre opens

**2019** Int'l Indigenous Tourism Conference

**2019** \$9 million sənsisyustən school reno

**2020** sncəwíps Heritage Museum reopens

## Development

**Building permits:** Half a billion dollars in last 10 years

**Land value:** \$1.6 billion (vs pre-Self Government/2005 value: \$310 million)

**BC Assessment rank:** 58 out of 162 B.C. municipalities

**Annual tax revenues:** \$100 million (60% to Federal Government; 40% to Provincial Government)

**Number of businesses:** 515

**Number of homes:** 4,400

**Tax burden:** 42% business class, 55% residential

**Businesses include:** Home Sense, Winners, Mark's, Home Depot, London Drugs, Shoppers, Lakeview Lodge, Superstore, BCAA, Royal Bank, CIBC, BMO, U-Haul, Canadian Tire, Indigenous World Winery, Chopped Leaf, City Furniture, Dockside Marine and Landmark Xtreme Theatre.

**Highway infrastructure projects:** WFN administered the largest provincial infrastructure development projects on reserve in B.C., including a \$41 million highway intersection at Westside Rd, and two road extensions and overpass projects at \$9.3 million (Sneena Rd) and \$17 million (Campbell Rd).

**Ingredients for success:** Self-government agreement, availability of serviced land, Council commitment to economic development, competitive Development Cost Charges (e.g. new DCC program based on growth strategy), and agreements with all neighbouring local governments.

## Self Government

WFN (re)gained self-governance in 2005, which significantly increased development. It is the first reserve in Canada supported by land title insurance and the first with an Economic Development Commission. WFN's land tenure system is guaranteed, providing security in investments. Of the 36 Westbank Laws that govern WFN lands, there is a Land Use Planning Law, Subdivision Development and Servicing Law, and a Community Plan Law.

## Neighbourhoods

**Commercial:** Okanagan Lake Shopping Centre, Snyatan Shopping Centre, Governor's Landing & Market, Estates Square, Westbank Hubs: North & Centre, Vintage View Centre, Mountainview Plaza and Gateway Plazas I, II & III

**Residential:** Ponderosa, Sierras, Lakeview Lodge, West Harbour, Bayview, Lakeridge Park, Sonoma Pines, Sage Creek, Copper Sky, Westlake Estates, Sun Village, Grandview Terrace, Tuscany Villa, Tesaro Arca-Townhomes for Toys, Creekside-Crowntown, Elkridge, Royal Heights, Talons, Aria, and Campbell Road.