Economic Development Profile 2015
About this document
This document was created to give entrepreneurs and investors the information they need to invest and thrive in Penticton—Canada's 2nd most entrepreneurial city. If you are seeking specific information about city regulations and business services (like business licenses, permits, zoning and more) please refer to our Guide to Doing Business in Penticton.

Disclaimer
Information contained within this publication has been compiled by the City of Penticton from sources deemed reliable, and while every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided, it is not guaranteed.

Readers should be aware that any information stated herein might change at any time and without notice. This publication is intended as an information source and does not imply endorsement of any service, association or organization.

This document was compiled in 2015 using the most up to date information and statistics available from Statistics Canada, BC Stats, the Okanagan Economic Development Society (OVEDS), the City of Penticton and other relevant sources. This document is considered a ‘living’ document—it’s updated regularly and can be found on our website.

This document does not include all of the available data. We encourage you to contact our Economic Development Office with any questions or comments.

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Welcome to Penticton!
Penticton is a vibrant, innovative, waterfront city focused on community, sustainability and economic prosperity. We are the major hub of the South Okanagan, with over 3,000 businesses serving over 100,000 people and 1.2 million visitors annually.

Our business-ready environment attracts entrepreneurs who want to succeed on their own terms. Whether your business is starting up or is already established, we try to make being here as easy as possible.

Our trade area features services and amenities in high demand, including the central college (providing cutting edge post-secondary and trades education in one of the world’s most sustainable buildings), a regional hospital and the largest convention centre between Vancouver and Calgary.

We're also neighbours with world access, including two airports within a one hour drive—one of which is international. We run business at a global speed, but at the end of the day we savour the pleasures of a slower life. That glass of wine tastes all the better after a 10-minute commute.

We are home to numerous events and festivals—including the Okanagan Wine Festival, Fest-of-Ale BC, the Penticton Peach Festival, Hot Jazz Festival, the Challenge Triathlon and the Peach City Beach Cruise. It’s no surprise then, that entrepreneurs choose Penticton for the lifestyle as much as the business climate.

Last but not least, Council is deeply committed to Economic Development. We’ve created a task force to keep us growing and adapting in changing economy, without losing sight of our four key pillars: technology, partnerships, training centers and niche manufacturing.

We invite you to come and experience the best of the Okanagan. Partner with business-friendly Penticton to live, build community and enjoy success at your pace.

Andrew Jakubeit
Mayor
Our approach

Penticton’s approach to economic development
Penticton believes that business is a key part of a healthy, strong community, which is why we try to make being here as easy as possible—through good policy, red tape elimination and excellent customer service.

Part of that service is providing you with the information you need to make strategic decisions. Our Economic Development Profile provides plenty of data, and more importantly, plenty of insight. We know this information can be difficult or time consuming to track down, which is why we’ve done it for you.

Some highlights of our research include:

- **Our labour force is ready to work in your business** - Small Business BC projected our fastest growing age group as 25-29 year olds and BC Stats revealed we have more college and trade-educated individuals than the provincial average;
- **Recruitment isn’t difficult** - Environment Canada ranked Penticton as “the most attractive climate of all Canadian cities,” and the Huffington Post listed us in their Top 5 world tourism destinations;
- **Penticton is ideal for growth** - while our daily necessity and regional markets are modest (about 85,000 and 250,000), 9 million people reside within 600km, 40 million are connected by our major Highway (#97) and 56 million are within a three-hour flight;
- **Manufacturers save money** - a study by KPMG revealed Penticton is the most cost-effective place in the North American Pacific Region to carry out manufacturing; and
- **Penticton is open for business** - Penticton was declared the 2nd most entrepreneurial city in Canada by the Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses in 2015.

In short, we welcome entrepreneurs. Our building officials, planning department and staff will help your business get going, growing or building. I will help you find the information you need and to get back to what’s important—running your business.

Colleen Pennington
EDO
Business services

Penticton & Wine Country Chamber of Commerce www.penticton.org
The Penticton Chamber of Commerce is a not for profit, member based association. Members benefit from networking as well as subsidized products and services (insurance, software, office supplies, gas, advertisements, etc.).

Tourism Penticton www.visitpenticton.com
Tourism Penticton markets our city and operates the Wine Country Visitor Centre. They also promote your event, accommodation or experiential travel business, while attracting major sporting events.

Penticton Indian Band Development Corporation www.pibdc.ca
The PIBDC is the “for profit” business investment and development division of the PIB. They offer residential and commercial development opportunities. In 2015, the Council for Aboriginal Business recognized their success with an Economic Development award.

Community Futures Okanagan Similkameen www.cfokanagan.com
Community Futures builds entrepreneurial capacity in the community through business support, specifically counseling, loans and advisory services. Survival rates for CF sponsored businesses are above the national average.

Accelerate Okanagan www.accelerateokanagan.com
Accelerate Okanagan helps develop and support creative entrepreneurs in the technology community. They are a hub of like-minded, ambitious individuals who seek collaboration through coaching, connections, info sessions and a shared workspace.

Women’s Enterprise Centre www.womensenterprise.ca
WEC helps women entrepreneurs to start, purchase or grow a small business. They provide training, business advice, resources and referrals to other services using a supportive, individual and practical approach.

Downtown Penticton Association www.downtownpenticton.org
The Downtown Penticton Association is the voice of downtown, bringing together residents, merchants and businesses to enhance the economic development and social fabric of Penticton.

Penticton Hospitality Association thepentictonhospitalityassociation.com
The PHA is the hospitality industry’s authoritative voice, representing a combination of small, medium and large accommodators throughout Penticton and Wine Country.
Naramata Bench Winery Association  www.naramatabench.com
The NBWA represents more than twenty award-winning wineries overlooking Lake Okanagan. Member wineries share marketing costs and benefit from being associated with a positive, established brand that lends their business an immediate level of consumer confidence and recognition.

Okanagan Falls Winery Association  www.ofwa.ca
The OFW Association offers the same benefits as the NBWA to another group of premiere wineries just south of Penticton.

Small Business BC  www.smallbusinessbc.ca
Small Business BC is British Columbia’s premiere resource centre for knowledge-based business development. They have been recognized by several national and international awards.

Canadian Centre for Business Growth  www.c2bg.ca
C2BG resolves strategic issues your growing business is facing. They provide analysis in five key areas: core strategy, market dynamics, existing market analysis, qualified sales leads and innovation.

South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services  www.soics.ca
SOICS is a one stop shop that works together with immigrants to help them get settled, find careers and learn all they need to know about starting their new lives in Canada—including business services and information about foreign direct investment.

Cowork Penticton  www.coworkpenticton.com
Cowork is an on-demand workspace located in Penticton’s vibrant downtown neighbourhood. They offer comfortable, affordable, workspaces and meeting rooms with amenities and social opportunities suited to tech start-ups, non-profit organizations, remote workers and small businesses.

WorkBC  www.ymcaworkbc.ca
WorkBC Employment Services Centres serve local businesses by providing key labour force information and recruitment services, including free job postings. Our local WorkBC Centres are operated by the YMCA Okanagan.

Penticton Industrial Development Association  no website
PIDA represents the interests of industrial businesses in Penticton. They are a sounding board for business owners to address issues and concerns, and they advocate to the City of Penticton to improve the economic climate. To get involved contact Frank Conci of AC Motor Electric.
Trade Area & Market Reach
Penticton is the regional service and market centre for the South Okanagan. It offers a full spectrum of services including professional, commercial, administrative, transportation and educational facilities. Each of these services will have different trade areas; however, we developed the following classifications to give you a general outline.

Primary
The residents of this trading area do most of their day-to-day shopping (and rely almost exclusively on the services and infrastructure facilities available) in Penticton. The driving distance does not generally exceed 20 to 30 minutes from the downtown area. The population within that range is approximately 85,000 persons, including the residential centres of Naramata, Kaleden, Summerland, West Bench, and Okanagan Falls—as well as the other unincorporated regional and rural areas. The downtown core itself is developing into an urban village, where the vast majority of amenities are within walking distance for downtown residents (including food, entertainment, transportation, pharmacy, banking and other services).

Secondary
The residents of the secondary trading area rely on Penticton for larger purchases (appliances, automobiles and recreational sports equipment) as well as specialized goods and services. They usually shop or do business on a weekly or monthly basis and are prepared to drive the 20 to 60 minutes to the city. The draw is primarily from the southern part of the region and includes Oliver, Osoyoos, Princeton and the rural areas, but it also includes some areas to the north like Peachland and Westbank. It’s estimated that the secondary trade area includes 110,000 people.

Supplementary
The third level of market extends outside the Southern Okanagan and captures a much larger region in British Columbia, including most of the Okanagan Valley and the urban centre of Kelowna. Given the excellent highways, central location and relatively short driving time, Penticton receives more than its fair share of the regional market. It is assumed that the regional market currently comprises more than 250,000 people.

Room to Grow
Nine million people reside within 600 kilometers of Penticton and 56 million are within a three-hour flight. Our major highway, Highway 97, runs from the Yukon and Alaska through the centre of British Columbia to Washington, Oregon and California. This transportation corridor alone provides access to a potential market of more than 40 million people. There are also two airports within a one hour drive that accommodate both domestic and international flights several times a day.
Figure 1: Penticton’s trade area and market reach 2014
Your guide to business in Penticton
Our Guide to Business in Penticton is a concise road map that will help you navigate the City of Penticton’s business services and regulations—so you can get started (or growing) quicker and at lower costs.

What’s included?
The guide includes information about:
• Business licensing
• Zoning
• Permits
• Utilities
• Property taxes
• Economic incentives

The value of being in Penticton
The City of Penticton has gone out of our way to be as business-friendly as possible. We’ve lightened the tax burden on business with Penticton’s property tax gap (1.6:1 as of 2015), we’ve slashed the cost of building permits and we offer a full suite of city-owned utilities.

Our economic incentives program relieves you from property taxes for up to 10 years if your project is a good fit for the community, and our building inspectors will help you troubleshoot city bylaws to reduce the building cycle and keep your project on budget.

Once your business is registered, you can apply for Provincial Government grants. We also connect you with regional supports that offer small business loans, workshops, networking, advice and mentorship—as well as quick connections to local suppliers when you need goods, transportation or other services.

You can use our free relocation materials to showcase Penticton’s lifestyle to your team (and our family resources to get everyone excited about moving). Or, if you’re looking for new hires, we can connect you with WorkBC to find the right talent for your company.

Simply put, we have many city programs that will support you and your business—which is why the Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses declared Penticton the 2nd most entrepreneurial city in Canada (2015). To learn more read our Guide to Business in Penticton or contact Colleen Pennington, our Economic Development Officer at (250)493-3323 or colleen.pennington@penticton.ca
Your Guide to Business in Penticton
Manufacturing and technology

Overview
The manufacturing sector consists of 80+ companies, most of which are focused on niche manufacturing and custom products. Penticton has approximately 280 acres (112 hectares) of industrial zoned land. The industrial area is centrally located for access to key trucking routes, especially the Highway 97 corridor.

The sector is driven by the ingenuity of local entrepreneurs, the availability of labour and the affordable cost of manufacturing. In fact, KPMG named us the most costeffective place to carry out manufacturing in the North America Pacific Region. As a result, we boast a wide range of companies that deliver high quality, cost effective products—including precision equipment, commercial truck trailers, recreational vehicles, modular homes, vitamins, food items and value-added wood products. Specific industry examples are provided in the following pages.

Regional advantages
Manufacturing and technology are quickly emerging as key sectors in Penticton due to:

• First-rate telecommunications infrastructure through multiple service providers who offer reliable high-speed connections, cell service, fixed line telecommunications, cable and satellite;
• Daily direct service to Vancouver and Calgary through Penticton Regional Airport (Kelowna offers another 70 domestic and international destinations);
• A geologically stable area, which is particularly important for industries with sensitive instrumentation and electronic data storage facilities;
• A large body of skilled, working-age professionals, providing talent and mentorship for upcoming entrepreneurs;
• A desirable and affordable place to live; and
• UBCO’s $8 million “STAR” applied research facility—which supports industry through new product development, rapid prototyping, advanced material fabrication, device and materials testing and impact assessment (among other services). Learn more at star.ubc.ca.

Accelerate Okanagan
Accelerate Okanagan cultivates the tech industry in the Okanagan by developing and supporting a vibrant entrepreneurial, creative and innovative technology community. Their community ranges from students and aspiring entrepreneurs to start-ups and early stage companies, as well as established companies (and the wide range of service providers who are critical to their success).

They offer programs that support entrepreneurs and companies looking to start, accelerate or grow. These programs combine elements such as needs assessments, hands on coaching, mentorship, and access to world class expertise – including connections provincially, nationally and internationally.

To date, they have engaged a community of over 4700 tech workers and 130 tech companies in the Okanagan Valley. They’ve also created 380+ jobs and secured $16 million in funding. Learn more at www.accelerateokanagan.com
Figure 2: Penticton's Industrial Zoned Land 2014

Industrial zoned land
PENTICTON IN PROFILE

Pattison Sign Group
www.pattisonsign.com
Pattison Sign Group is one of the largest sign and visual communication companies in the world and an industry leader in North America. Pattison chose Penticton for one of only 3 manufacturing plants in Canada.

Slimline
www.turbomist.com
A manufacturer of unique custom airblast spray equipment for agricultural use in orchards and vineyards. Slimline ships worldwide and has the major Canadian market share in their sector.

Cut Technologies
cuttech.com
Cut Technologies manufactures precision saw blades of all sizes in Penticton. They use the latest in robotic technology and highly skilled technicians to produce reliable, precision saw blades. Some of their major customers operate sawmills throughout North America.

Structurlam
structurlam.com
Structurlam is world renowned manufacturer of high quality glue-laminated beams, cross laminated beams and wood products for construction. They have contributed to more award-winning structures than any other manufacturer in North America.

Moduline Industries Ltd.
www.moduline.ca
Moduline manufactures factory-built housing and other structures throughout the United States, western Canada and the United Kingdom. They have 2,500 employees world-wide.

Big Bear Software
www.bigbearsoftware.ca
Big Bear Software is your near-sourcing partner for third-party software development. They create, redesign and improve complex software for Web and Windows applications. They specialize in Microsoft .Net technology and their clients span highly competitive Oil & Gas, Defense, and GIS industries.

International Barcoding Systems
ibcworld.net
IBC responds to industry needs with the most advanced technology in label & tag printers, label applicators, printer applicators, inkjet coding systems, hand held portable computers and laser scanners. They have an intimate understanding of modern manufacturing and distribution processes and vast experience in labeling, data collection systems design and implementation.

Windward Software
wws5.com
Windward Software creates fully-integrated, flexible, point of sale software solutions for independent retailers. They are a multinational company with 4000 clients in 35 countries and have been in operation for over 20 years.
Tourism

Overview
Along with the rest of British Columbia, Penticton attracts an increasing number of visitors from around the world—about 1.2 million per year. The lush valleys, stunning mountain areas and warm, freshwater lakes combine to create a beautiful landscape that is cited as the most outstanding characteristic of the region.

A close second is our excellent weather. We receive over 2000 hours of sunlight per year and we’re the most attractive climate in Canada (Environment Canada). When paired with our two waterfronts and diverse terrain, our long hot summers and short mild winters make it possible for visitors to ski in the morning, sail in the afternoon and golf year-round.

We also have several vibrant tourism niches—like sport tourism, agri-tourism, business tourism and events. We will explore each of these subsectors in the coming pages, along with industry examples.

Penticton offers over 1700+ rooms for families, couples and the budget traveller, ranging from luxury suites and lakeside hotels, to B&B’s, yurts, camping and RV accommodations. Neighbouring communities like Naramata and Summerland offer additional options. Visitors also benefit from our proximity to the 24 hour border crossing and the expanding flights at Penticton Airport. We have direct, daily service to Calgary and Vancouver, with connections to national and international flights from there.

For more information contact Tourism Penticton through www.visitpenticton.ca

Sport tourism
Sports enthusiasts enjoy Penticton’s iconic athletic events, including Granfondo, the Ultra Distance Triathlon, the Vancouver Canucks “Young Stars” tournament and our annual Dragonboat festival. They also appreciate our extended outdoor training season and diverse terrain, which three-time Olympian Simon Whitfield referred to as “some of the best cycling in the world.”

However, Penticton isn’t just for elite athletes. We attract no shortage of recreational athletes with our water sports, extensive trail network and world-class rock climbing (to name a few). Golf is also very popular, as we have 10 local courses that are open 230 days a year.

If you are interested in hosting a sport event in Penticton contact our Sport Tourism Coordinator for assistance. Your project may also be eligible for a community grant. Visit www.penticton.ca/grants to learn more.
**Agritourism**

The abundance of wine tours, farm tours, beer tastings, farm-stays, petting zoos, “u-pick” and farmers markets has contributed to a healthy and growing agritourism sector. The gourmet farm-to-table movement is rapidly expanding as local businesses create more value-added products (like honey, cheese, condiments, dried herbs and cider).

Visitor studies increasingly show the region is attractive to travellers with high discretionary income who value travel “experiences,” like touring facilities that produce jams from locally grown fruit, sampling the products and purchasing them on site.

Wine tourism in Penticton is also flourishing. We have over 160 licenced wineries within a one-hour drive that host thousands of unique events. Whether it’s live music, picnic lunches, weddings, grape stomping or bocce, the expansion into entertainment has been very popular. More recently, craft breweries and distilleries have taken root, offering events, tours and features of their own.

Other examples of agritourism activities in Penticton and area include:

- Farm tours, tastings, pairings and cooking classes;
- Horse riding, petting zoos and other livestock shows;
- Fall fairs, corn mazes, sleigh rides, the Penticton Indian Band Salmon Festival and other seasonal activities;
- Hunting and fishing (stocked pond), and wildlife rescue.

For more information about local agriculture, see the agriculture section on pg. 22.

**Business tourism**

Most of our business tourism stems from the Penticton Trade and Convention Centre (PTCC)—the largest convention facility between Vancouver and Calgary—which is just a few blocks from the sandy beaches of Lake Okanagan and our key hotels. Offering 60,000 square feet of versatile meeting and exhibit space, the PTCC hosts conventions, special events, banquets, meetings and consumer shows. The facility draws $12.57 million in participant expenditures every year.

The PTCC is equipped with numerous special features, including:

- A main Ballroom with over 15,000 square feet of function space
- The Executive boardroom and eight additional meeting rooms (all located on the same level);
- Convenient loading docks with drive-in ability and 600 complimentary parking spaces;
- Wireless high-speed internet available throughout the facility; and an on-site event manager.

To learn more about the PTCC and business tourism in Penticton, visit: [www.pentictonconventioncentre.com](http://www.pentictonconventioncentre.com)
Events and Festivals
Penticton is alive with events and festivals that attract thousands of visitors every year. We're home to BC's largest community and farmers market—which runs Saturday mornings six months a year and occupies more than five city blocks—as well as the Elvis Festival, Fest of Ale, Jazz festival, Children's Festival, the Peach City Beach cruise and the long running (and free) PeachFest.

A comprehensive list of Penticton's event would fill several pages, so it's best to check Tourism Penticton's events calendar to learn more.

The South Okanagan Events Centre (SOEC) is another important part of event tourism in Penticton. It offers more than 122 events per year and seats over 5000 people. Previous acts include world famous entertainers like Rihanna, Keith Urban and Cirque de Soleil.

An economic impact study of the SOEC complex found that direct spending from facility attendants is calculated to be $23.9 million annually, with spinoffs that boost the local economic activity in Penticton and region to be $33.9 million. This generates the equivalent of 368 jobs and produces roughly $2 million in tax revenue.

To learn more about the SOEC, visit www.soec.ca.

Penticton also hosts the Lake City destination Casino. The casino offers slots, table games, poker and live entertainment, and employs dozens of local residents—they also contribute over $1.5 million the the City budget each year.

Room revenues and seasonality
Like most communities in the Okanagan, Penticton demonstrates a seasonal fluctuation in room revenues. On average, Penticton earns 47% of its annual room revenues in the peak of summer—specifically July and August. Seasonality in Penticton (and other Okanagan communities) is represented in Figure 3 and Figure 4 on pg. 19.

Despite our seasonality, Okanagan room revenues grew by ~$1 million between 2012 and 2013, and again between 2013 and 2014. In 2014 the region's accommodation sector earned $24 million in room revenues (MRDT). Each year, Penticton actively extends our shoulder and winter tourism season with new attractions. Examples include our very successful fall Wine Festival, our numerous spring triathlon events, winter downhill and freestyle skiing competitions, and our successful 2016 bid to host the BC Winter Games (among others).

We also steadily increase winter revenues through our snowbird campaigns, which are particularly well received by Alberta's population. Our winter climates are extremely mild and offer respite for those from colder regions of the country.
**PENTICTON IN PROFILE**

**Apex Mountain Resort**
www.apexresort.com
Apex Mountain Resort remains one of the hidden gems of Canadian skiing. Located a short 30 minute drive from Penticton, Apex is a full service destination resort with champagne powder snow, great weather, incredible terrain and friendly people. There are 1112 acres of skiable terrain, including 67 named trails, four ski lifts (including a high speed quad) and 50 km of groomed cross-country terrain.

**Hoodoo Adventures**
www.hoodooadventures.ca
Hoodoo provides a variety of eco-adventures and team building activities for both individuals and groups. They offer tours, courses, races, events, youth activities, corporate events, group events and shuttles. Activities include hiking, kayaking, snow shoeing, climbing, rappelling, biking, skill courses, outdoor courses, survival training, local adventures and more recently, international travel.

**LocoLanding Adventure Park**
www.locolanding.com
LocoLanding Adventure Park is the ultimate in family fun and entertainment. With 10 attractions and hours of fun just of Okanagan Beach, you won’t know where to start! Go-karts, mini-golf, high-level ropes course, water spraying bumper boats, monkey motion, spider mountain, rock climbing and more—all set in lovely, award-winning gardens. Activities for all ages (as young as 18 months).

**Lakeside Resort & Casino**
www.pentictonlakesideresort.com
Penticton Lakeside Resort is a full service hotel in Penticton that offers luxurious amenities, clean, spacious rooms, and a spectacular view of Okanagan Lake. They host a number of room options, dining options, a 20,000 square foot casino and a prime downtown, lakefront location. Castaways Watersports is also on site, offering numerous action-packed rentals, including parasails, wakeboards, kayaks, jet skis, boats and more.

**Ramada Hotel**
www.pentictonramada.com
The Penticton Ramada is a four star hotel in downtown Penticton that backs onto the greens of the Penticton Golf & Country Club. With numerous luxury room rooms and amenities—including jacuzzis, private patios, fire places, air conditioning, high speed wifi, a gorgeous shared courtyard, pool and gourmet restaurants—you’re sure to enjoy your stay. The hotel offers custom golf, ski and romance packages, and is only a few blocks from Okanagan Beach, the South Okanagan Events Centre, and the ever popular Penticton channel.

**Kettle Valley Rail Trail**
No official website
The Kettle Valley Rail Trail is a 450km, public, multi-use recreational rail trail that runs throughout the Okanagan Valley and right into downtown Penticton. It’s infamous for its stunning mountain vistas, lake views, vineyard paths and large wooden trestles. The trail was developed during the 1990s after the Canadian Pacific Railway abandoned train service, but the trail retains its 2% grade, making it approachable to new or advanced hikers, cyclists and other adventurers. The KVR is scheduled to be included in the Trans Canada Trail system, and includes numerous exit and entry points with nearby parking.
Agriculture and wine country

Overview
The Okanagan Valley, which is roughly 200 km long and 20 km wide, stretches through the southern interior of British Columbia. The valley lies in the rain shadow of the mountains, creating a hot, sunny, dry climate. Most of the valley receives about 2,000 hours of sunlight per year and 250-400 mm of precipitation. We’re bounded by two fresh water lakes, Okanagan and Skaha, and there are several others nearby. The whole system drains south through the Okanagan River, which eventually meets with the Columbia River and flows into the Pacific Ocean near Portland, Oregon.

The Okanagan is home to more than 2,200 farmers with over 84,000 hectares of active farmland—and much of that produce is organically grown. We are also home to the Pacific Agri-food Research Centre (PARC), a national research facility with laboratories, libraries, research greenhouses and breeding programs that are designed to serve the Canadian tree fruit, grape and food processing industry.

Water
Long-term availability of water is an essential component for sustainable agriculture and communities, and first class water management is an integral component of success for the Okanagan Valley. Even though the basin is endowed with several large lakes with substantial net inflows, the semi-arid environment tempers this significantly. It’s estimated that 50-90% of inflow (depending on the lake) is lost through evaporation.

There are 7 storage reservoirs that support Penticton, most of which refill naturally through spring run off. Together, these reservoirs can store 15,645 ML of water. The lakes and creeks that supply these reservoirs are known for their ability to endure year round. Penticton’s name actually derives from Pente-hik-ton, a Salish word meaning “a place where water passes beyond” or “a place to live forever.”

Agricultural diversity
The roots of the agricultural industry run deep in Penticton. Our region was the first district in BC to have its Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) plan formally designated. In 2014, our ALR land accounted for 8% of our region’s overall land base, representing nearly 48% of ALR in the Okanagan Valley.

We primarily use our agricultural land for the production of food for human and animal consumption, but we also cultivate plants for fibre, fuel and other organically derived products (such as pharmaceuticals). However, it’s worth noting that not all agricultural land is capable or suitable for producing all agricultural products regardless of the level of management applied.

Climate and soils (with all their variability) are key factors that will determine what kind of products you can grow, and topography (particularly in BC) will influence what cultivation equipment can be used. However, there are many non-agricultural factors that will also determine if a parcel of agricultural land is right for you and your business—such as cost or access to transportation links.
The following pie chart gives a high-level outline the agricultural diversity in the region, while the tables below offer much more detail (regarding both the produce and the farmers themselves). In the pages to come we highlight a few of our key agricultural industries and provide some specific business examples.

**Figure 5: Penticton farming by industry 2011**

- Fruit and tree nut - 67% or 1,014 farms
- Other animal - 10% or 152 farms
- Other crop - 8% or 115 farms
- Cattle ranching - 6% or 91 farms
- Vegetable and melon - 6% or 65 farms
- Greenhouse, nursery and floriculture - 3% or 41 farms
- Sheep and goat - 1% or 12 farms
- Poultry and egg - 1% or 10 farms

**Figure 6: Selected farm and farm operator statistics for the South Okanagan Valley 2011**

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Okanagan Similkameen</th>
<th>British Columbia</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population census 2011</td>
<td>80,742</td>
<td>4,400,057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of farms</td>
<td>1,506</td>
<td>19,759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of farm operators</td>
<td>2,265</td>
<td>29,925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female operators</td>
<td>1,490</td>
<td>19,010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male operators</td>
<td>780</td>
<td>10,915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% male</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>63.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% female</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>36.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average age of farm operators</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>55.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% younger than 35</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% 35-54</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>40.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% age 55 or above</td>
<td>55.2</td>
<td>54.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Area (km²)</td>
<td>10,414</td>
<td>922,509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total area of farms (hectares)</td>
<td>84,058</td>
<td>2,611,382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total area of farms in crops (hectares)</td>
<td>11,899</td>
<td>599,674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average area of farms (hectares)</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total gross farm receipts (excluding forest)</td>
<td>132.7</td>
<td>2,935.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of land and buildings</td>
<td>2,698.7</td>
<td>32,183.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of farm machinery and equipment</td>
<td>112.0</td>
<td>1,834.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total farm capital (market value)</td>
<td>2,824.9</td>
<td>34,701.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating expenses</td>
<td>122.2</td>
<td>2620.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Figure 7: Farm statistics for various crops and livestock in the South Okanagan Valley 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop Type</th>
<th>Okanagan Similkameen</th>
<th>British Columbia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alfalfa and alfalfa mixtures</td>
<td>3,439</td>
<td>217,898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other tame hay and fodder crops</td>
<td>2,354</td>
<td>166,417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corn</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14,179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barley</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>26,479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheat</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>34,875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oats</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>35,164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apples</td>
<td>1,528</td>
<td>3,904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grapes</td>
<td>2,408</td>
<td>3,711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherries (sweet)</td>
<td>766</td>
<td>1,691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peaches</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pears</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plums and prunes</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apricots</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherries (sour)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blueberries</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8,441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raspberries</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1,747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strawberries</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatoons</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables (excluding greenhouse)</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>6,591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursery and greenhouse products</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>4,571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas trees</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2,621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horses and ponies - farms</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>6,087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horses and ponies - number</td>
<td>1,568</td>
<td>45,791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle and calves - farms</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>5,790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle and calves - number</td>
<td>16,117</td>
<td>620,638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep and lambs - farms</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1,587</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep and lambs - number</td>
<td>1,228</td>
<td>57,456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pigs - farms</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pigs - number</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>89,067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poultry - farms</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3,922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poultry inventory - number of birds</td>
<td>3,486</td>
<td>2,626,811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egg production - 000’s of dozens</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>65,124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bees - farms</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bees - number of colonies</td>
<td>1,028</td>
<td>33,603</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** some totals may not add to the sum of unit statistics due to rounding differences, and operator counts are rounded by Stats Canada to the nearest 5. This note also applies to Figure 6.
**Fresh produce and fruit production**
The South Okanagan is considered the fruit basket of Canada. Warmer temperatures and longer growing season are more conducive to fruit crops than almost anywhere else in the country. In 2011, our region led the production of peaches, apricots, plums, grapes, cherries, apples, tomatoes, as well as organic fruits and vegetables.

Agricultural land dedicated to fruit, berry and nut production in the South Okanagan represents 58% of land under cultivation in the Okanagan Valley, over 40% of which is for grape cultivation. We’re also home to 40% of the region’s vegetable and melon farms. Our highways are dotted with road-side produce stands and “u-pick” operations throughout the growing season. Local farm tours are becoming more popular year after year.

Penticton is also home to one of British Columbia’s largest farmers’ markets. During peak season, our Saturday market attracts over 5000 people per hour who want to sample and purchase fresh produce, baked goods, oils, herbs, jams, jellies and other food stuffs. The partnering community market also offers local artisans, agrifoods and personal goods among other things.

**Wineries, breweries and distilleries**
A very notable portion of our ALR land is dedicated to the cultivation of grapes. With around 82% of the total vineyard acreage in the province, the Okanagan Valley is BC’s premier grape growing region. The South Okanagan hosts more than 160 licensed wineries, ranging from small family run operations to large luxurious facilities.

Both critics and wine lovers have recognized our world class wines. USA Today lists us as the second-best wine region to visit in the world. Our Vintners continue to innovate with the introduction of new grape varietals, clones and specialty grapes, most of which thrive in our hot, dry, semi-arid climate.

The area is particularly known for the quality of its red and white table wines, ice wines and distilled products—but it also hosts an abundance of non-grape products listed with the British Columbia Wine Institute, including cider, mead, honey-wine, rice-wine and berry-wine. More recently, we’ve seen the emergence of several craft breweries and distilleries.

The expansion of wineries has led to a corresponding boom in wine related businesses like warehousing, bottling, labelling, tanks and laboratories. The Penticton campus of Okanagan College is also home to a new $300,000 wine information sensory lab—the first facility of its kind in the valley—and offers several wine industry specific training programs.

**Agritourism**
Agritourism is featured in the tourism section of this report. For more information, visit page 17.
PENTICTON IN PROFILE

Elephant Island Orchard Wines
www.elephantislandwine.com
Elephant Island is known for making unconventional and extraordinary wine from a variety of orchard fruits. They practice their craft with the same reverence and attention to detail as traditional winemakers, leading to a delightful and surprising experience you’re unlikely to find anywhere else.

La Frenz Winery
www.lafrenzwinery.com
La Frenz Winery has won Best Small Winery of the Year for two years straight (2013 and 2014) at the Riverside International Wine Competition, as well as the most combined gold medals at the 2014 Northwest Wine Summit.

Okanagan Label & Print
oklp.ca
OKLP specializes in the design and production of labels for wine, spirits and cigars. Their labels endure the damp, cool conditions of cellars, year after year, without fading or losing their stick. Their exceptional product quality has attracted international attention and numerous international clients.

Bad Tattoo Brewing
www.badtattoobrewing.com
Multiple handcrafted brews, available in pints and growlers to fill. Bad Tattoo also offers brewery tours, special events, and a restaurant service with stellar wood-fired pizza.

Cannery Brewing
www.cannerybrewing.com
The Cannery creates local, preservative-free craft brews and ales that are named after local icons (like the Naramata Nut Brown). Growler Club members enjoy specialty beers, limited release beers and refills.

Maple Leaf Spirits
www.mapleleafspirits.ca
Maple Leaf Spirits Inc. is a craft distillery that offers award-winning spirits and liqueurs that are made from locally grown fruit—like cherries, pears, apricots, peaches and Italian prunes.

Upper Bench Creamery
www.upperbench.ca
Upper Bench hand-crafts their cheese on-site in a state-of-the-art, CFIA registered creamery using 100% pasteurized Canadian cow’s milk from Sicamous, B.C. They create seven different washed-rind, brie and blue cheeses. All of their cheese is gluten and additive free.

Wineland Dressings
www.wineland.ca
Wineland’s salad dressings are hand made in small batches from the finest available ingredients, locally sourced where possible, and are held to the highest standards. Founded by Chef Peter Young, Wineland now carries three signature flavours: roast garlic balsamic vinaigrette, raspberry and black pepper vinaigrette and cilantro and lime vinaigrette.
Overview
The construction sector employs a substantial portion of greater Penticton's labour force and has steadily increased over the last 10 years. Employment opportunities are forecast to remain strong in all the building-related trades.

The number of building permit applications the City receives has been relatively steady over the last eight years, as seen in Figure 8. However, the construction value of building permits is on the rise in recent years, with 2014 totalling close to 60 million (Figure 9).

Figure 8: Total number of building permit applications 2006-2015

Figure 9: Total construction value of building permits 2000-2014
The large jump in construction value in 2006 was driven by major investments in multi-unit residential developments. Residential construction fell in 2007, 2009 and 2011 in the absence of new multi-unit projects; however, the value of building permits remained high in 2007, 2008 and 2010 due to major institutional and commercial projects (including the multi-million dollar South Okanagan Events Centre). Since 2011, residential construction has increased, returning Penticton to a steadier pace of construction start-ups.

The chart below (Figure 10) shows Penticton’s 10 largest construction projects in the last five years—a total construction value of over $620 million.

**Figure 10: Penticton’s 10 largest construction projects 2010-2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Construction Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>550 Carmi Ave.</td>
<td>Penticton Regional Hospital</td>
<td>$325,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highway 97</td>
<td>South Okanagan Correctional Facility</td>
<td>$200,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>325 Power St.</td>
<td>Cascades Casino</td>
<td>$25,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3475 Wilson St.</td>
<td>Southwood Retirement Resort</td>
<td>$22,160,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Lakeshore Dr. W</td>
<td>Lakeside Resort &amp; Convention Centre</td>
<td>$17,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3388 Skaha Lake Rd.</td>
<td>Condominium</td>
<td>$14,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>275 Green Ave. W</td>
<td>Walmart Superstore expansion</td>
<td>$7,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2210 Main St.</td>
<td>Great Canadian Superstore</td>
<td>$6,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highway 97</td>
<td>OK Falls Waste Water Treatment Plant</td>
<td>$3,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2111 Main St.</td>
<td>Save on Foods renovation</td>
<td>$2,500,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of these projects used the City of Penticton’s Economic Incentives (EIZs), which can reduce or relieve property taxes for up to 10 years. Depending on the project, you may also be eligible for Development Cost Charge Reductions (DCCRs). To learn more about EIZs and DCCRs visit our online Business Hub.

If you’re interested in starting a construction project in Penticton, we have good news: applying for a permit is easier than ever! As of 2015, business licence and permit applications can be made online.
Greyback Construction
www.greyback.com
Greyback Construction Ltd. has been a part of a multitude of commercial, industrial, institutional and residential projects; an indicator of their diverse building capabilities. Their in-house philosophy is to collaborate as a team to meet the needs of their clients. Greyback’s management team includes Canadian Construction Association Gold Seal Certified Project Managers, Estimators and Superintendents.

Wildstone Construction and Engineering
www.wildstone.com
Wildstone has the in-house capability to self-perform a wide variety of construction services throughout western and northern Canada. They are not just General Contractors. They are Builders, Engineers and Construction Managers that specialize in infrastructure—from design-building substations for remote mining operations to wineries in the Okanagan Valley.

Mavco Plumbing and Heating
www.mavco.ca
Mavco Plumbing & Heating Ltd. has been working with residential, commercial, strata, care homes, hospitals, government facilities, restaurants and wineries in the South Okanagan area for over 18 years. They employ licensed, insured and bonded journeymen, ticketed plumbers, gas fitters with Class B certification, as well as HVAC, heating, air conditioning and refrigeration technicians. They are open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and were voted 2014 Best of the Okanagan Plumbing Company.

Eckert Electric
www.eckertelectric.com
Eckert Electric has been in business for over 50 years and was recently voted the 2012 Best of the Okanagan Electrical Contractor. They offer renovations of any size to all types of residential, commercial and industrial projects; infrared thermal imaging services; indoor and outdoor man lifts; and 24/7 emergency services. Eckert Electric is also a certified home automation and audio dealer.

Andrew Sheret Ltd.
www.sheret.com
Andrew Sheret Limited is a B.C. owned and operated company, and has been in business for more than 120 years. They are proudly employee and family owned with 22 locations across the province. Andrew Sheret has specialized in a variety of products, including plumbing, heating, air conditioning, fireplaces, irrigation, pumps, water filtration, solar and water works. They focus on the sale and distribution of both North American and international products to cities, municipalities, trade and retail customers. They do not participate in product installation.

E.B. Horsman and Son
www.ebhorsman.com
Established in 1900, E.B. Horsman & Son is the largest independently owned and operated electrical wholesaler in Western Canada. With 21 strategically placed locations they look confidently towards the future, recognizing that in this fast paced world they must constantly renew theirselves and their capabilities to meet the ever changing needs of the electrical, industrial automation and communications markets.
Virtual and mobile work

What is virtual work?
Virtual workers (sometimes known as remote workers, mobile workers or telecommuters) are employees that do not commute to a central place of work on a daily basis. They can work from almost anywhere and at any time thanks to modern communication tools and their ability to keep up with new technology. As a result, they generally benefit from more autonomy and a flexible schedule.

One example is what’s known as a “donut schedule.” You work for a few hours in the morning, and then take a break in the afternoon to pursue something you love before you return to work in the evening. That might be golf, skiing, biking or the beach; you could attend a workshop, conference, networking event or take a class at the local college; or you might pick up your kids from school and watch their baseball game. As long as your work is done by the end of the day, it’s up to you how to spend your time.

Virtual work is more than a pipedream or an option for just the tech crowd — many companies now pride themselves on having employees all over the globe. It is expected that in 2016, a third of the global workforce will be virtual and that by 2020, 58% of all employment will be contract-based.

It’s also surprisingly diverse. Virtual workers range from lawyers, graphic designers, HR support, and financial advisors to virtual assistants, researchers, marketers and sales roles. In Penticton alone, virtual work includes freelance writers, illustrators, environmental consultants, software development, team leads for IBM and Intel and a number of people managing their own start-up companies from tech to publishing (to name a few).

In short, virtual work is expanding, increasingly popular, and it looks like it’s here to stay.

Why Penticton?
Penticton is home to a growing community of virtual workers and entrepreneurs for several reasons—but one of the most common reasons we hear is the opportunity to have an outstanding lifestyle while still enjoying a fast-paced career that allows for flex time and professional growth.

When it comes to lifestyle, Penticton is hard to beat. We’re a smaller community where there are zero traffic jams and it only takes 10 minutes to drive from one end to the other. Our housing is affordable, we know most of our neighbours, and our kids can walk to school.

We’re surrounded by natural playgrounds, including mountains, two waterfronts and 180 vineyards—but we have all the amenities of a larger centre, including a new, multi-million dollar recreation centre; hundreds of first-class restaurants; and a stellar event centre with international acts such as Rihanna, Ringo Starr, Marilyn Manson, Keith Urban, and Cirque de Solei. We also have the most attractive climate in Canada and receive over 2000 hours of sunlight a year (Environment Canada).

However, we’re also very connected—Penticton has the ICT and transportation infrastructure to support your business. We have great internet speed, including high speed fibre and free wifi in the downtown core.
in key locations (including Main Street and the recreation centre). Need to ship product in our out? There are two airports and the USA border crossing all within a one hour drive.

Getting to your clients is just as easy, with year-round access to major highways and Penticton Regional Airport (which is a 15 minute drive from anywhere in the City). Flights to Vancouver and Calgary are only 45 minutes and run 2-3 times a day, so you can make a morning meeting and still be home that night. We also have the retail stores to provide your business with needed supplies, a technical community to help you set up, and a vibrant café industry with fabulous food and vibrant atmospheres that inspire you to create.

**The very real virtual community**

A common misconception about virtual workers is that they’re all hidden away in home offices working by themselves—but in Penticton, it doesn’t have to be that way unless you want it to.

Jennifer and Nick Vincent (local residents and community builders) founded Cowork Penticton in 2012. Cowork Penticton is a flexible, shared working space for start-ups, non-profits, small businesses and virtual workers. To date, 80+ virtual workers and businesses use Cowork’s facilities.

The shared environment provides the creative and collaborative community that many digital workers miss when they work from home or in a coffee shop, along with the amenities of a professional office space: like high speed internet, meeting rooms, projectors, photocopying and an expresso machine (to name a few).

They also have dedicated social spaces, regular events and an ever-changing flow of new faces. Coworking is like a club and a serviced office all rolled into one, with one flat fee based on your needs—whether it’s a drop in pass, a full-time desk membership, or just somewhere to meet your client.

If you’re interested in joining the Cowork community or want to learn more, visit [www.coworkpenticton.com](http://www.coworkpenticton.com). You can also take a virtual tour of Cowork’s facilities by clicking [here](http://www.coworkpenticton.com).

**Learn more and get involved**

If you want to become a virtual worker check out the City of Penticton’s website for tips, tricks and resources—including the tools or the trade, possible career paths, virtual work job databases and strategies for negotiating virtual work with your current employer.

There’s also an online community that’s united by the hashtag #PentictonWorks. Search your favourite social media sites to follow the stories of local virtual workers and see what day-to-day life is like. You can also visit [www.pentictonworks.ca](http://www.pentictonworks.ca), as well as the official PentictonWorks Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.
Coming Soon!
Population growth, distribution and family structure

According to BC Stats, Penticton has experienced slow reliable growth over the last ten years. The latest projections predict it will increase by slightly less than 1% annually between now and 2017.

Figure 11: Penticton population projection 2007-2017

However, projected growth in the next five years is not equal among all age groups. Some groups are projected to grow while others will shrink.

The fastest growing projection for age groups is 25-29 year olds. This group is expected to grow by 24% over the next five years, reaching 2,762 by 2017 (an additional 533 consumers). The fastest shrinking group is 20-24 year olds who will decline by 19.5% (or 521 consumers) over the next five years.

By 2017, infants are expected to grow by 9%, 1-9 year olds will increase by 18%, 10-24 year olds will shrink by 12%, 25-44 year olds will increase by 15.5% and 45-54 year olds will fall by 15%. The 60-74 year old group should increase by 18.2%.

Today, the population of Penticton is just under 43,000. Net migration to the area will continue to be high and population growth is expected to be strong through the next two decades. Slightly higher growth can be expected in the outlying areas due to their lower base population and availability of more affordable and developable land.
A more detailed picture of our current population (including age, sex and family structure) is included below. Our gender split is roughly 50/50 across most age groups. Some age groups have slightly more females, particularly the 70+ age groups (as females generally outlive their male peers).

**Figure 12: Penticton population by five-year age groups and sex (absolute numbers) 2011**

Penticton’s family structures are representative of the larger B.C. population. Married and common-law couples without children account for roughly 70% of two-parent households, while lone-parent families account for 15% of the total families in Penticton.

**Figure 13: Penticton family structure 2011**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Characteristic</th>
<th># of Families</th>
<th>% of Families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12,905</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married couple</td>
<td>9,355</td>
<td>72.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lone-parent</td>
<td>1,940</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common-law</td>
<td>1,605</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 14: Penticton family structure 2011**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Characteristic</th>
<th># of Families</th>
<th>% of Families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,161,420</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married couple</td>
<td>844,430</td>
<td>72.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lone-parent</td>
<td>175,160</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common-law</td>
<td>141,825</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Income and household spending

**Average household income**
Penticton household incomes reported strong growth from 2008 to 2011 (reaching a peak of $65,976), and then fell back slightly in 2012 (to $64,106). Household incomes are projected to grow 2-3% annually over the next five years.

**Figure 16: Penticton average household income 2008-2012**

However, Penticton’s household income statistics can be a little misleading. A sizable chunk of our population is retired and intentionally limits their income to reduce their income taxes. The average net worth of a Penticton resident is actually fairly high, which demonstrates that there is more more wealth in the community than household income would suggest.

**Household spending**
Total household spending in Penticton for 2012 was an estimated $1.28 billion (down slightly from $1.34 billion in 2011, which was the peak of the last five years). This coincided with the drop in household income for 2012.

The most money spent by Penticton households in 2012 was on the house itself, which includes mortgage and/or condominium charges, maintenance and repairs, water, fuel and electricity charges. These totalled approximately $250 million.

The second largest amount was spent on transportation ($182 million). These expenses include purchases and maintenance of automobiles, gas, accessories, insurance, flight costs and public transportation. The third greatest cost was food ($126 million) including spending on restaurants, in between meals and grocery purchases.
Figure 17: Penticton’s aggregate household spending 2012
Labour force

The regional labour force is made up of more than 46,000 people and is a stable and productive one. If you are willing to attract workers within a 30 minute commute (which isn't difficult given Penticton's amenities), the population jumps to 85,000. Our population grows steadily each year.

Employers benefit from a skilled, diverse labour pool of long-term employees with high productivity. These factors make Penticton an appealing location for business ventures of all kinds. For more information, read the Labour Market Outlook for 2012-2022 (produced by WorkBC). It examines the possible future state of supply and demand in the BC labour market for over 40 occupations.

Educational attainment

When compared to the rest of BC, Penticton offers a strong base of skilled trades and general labour. The percentage of the city and regional population (25 years and over) with a high school graduation certificate is similar to that of the rest of the province. The percentage of persons with post-secondary trade certificates and/or college credentials is higher.

Figure 18: Highest level of completed education for working age population 2012

![Bar chart showing the highest level of completed education for working age population 2012 in BC and Okanagan regions.](chart.png)
**Participation rates**
The labour force participation rate in the Thompson-Okanagan region is expected to remain at 61.2% with a slight change to 61.7% by 2020. In the South Okanagan, labour force participation is 53.8% and unemployment is estimated to be 9.1%.

**Figure 19: Unemployment rates (%) from 2004-2013**

**Wage rates**
Wage rates in the Okanagan Region are very attractive to employers. A large proportion of minimum wage occupations are paid at close to minimum wage. This presents an opportunity for companies with slightly higher wages to attract and retain workers.

**Figure 20: Wage rates in the Okanagan 2011**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOC 4</th>
<th>NOC Description</th>
<th># persons (2011)</th>
<th>Low wage per hour</th>
<th>Median wage per hour</th>
<th>High wage per hour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6421</td>
<td>Retail sales persons/ sales clerks</td>
<td>7,965</td>
<td>$10.25</td>
<td>$11.75</td>
<td>$24.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8431</td>
<td>General farm workers</td>
<td>1,375</td>
<td>$10.25</td>
<td>$12.00</td>
<td>$16.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6411</td>
<td>Sales rep. for wholesale trade</td>
<td>1,460</td>
<td>$10.25</td>
<td>$23.50</td>
<td>$36.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7265</td>
<td>Welders and machine operators</td>
<td>875</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
<td>$27.00</td>
<td>$36.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1114</td>
<td>Other financial officers</td>
<td>980</td>
<td>$17.50</td>
<td>$30.77</td>
<td>$52.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6221</td>
<td>Technical equipment sales specialists</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>$13.90</td>
<td>$24.04</td>
<td>$40.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6611</td>
<td>Cashiers</td>
<td>2,970</td>
<td>$10.25</td>
<td>$10.30</td>
<td>$14.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6242</td>
<td>Cooks</td>
<td>2,115</td>
<td>$10.25</td>
<td>$11.50</td>
<td>$16.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6641</td>
<td>Other food attendants, helpers, etc.</td>
<td>3,805</td>
<td>$10.25</td>
<td>$10.25</td>
<td>$14.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Public and private schools
Penticton’s public schools belong to School District 67: Okanagan Skaha, and School District 53: Okanagan Similkameen. Together, they serve a population of 8,800 students through 26 schools, 1,431 teachers and 1,490 support staff (not including temporary positions). Some specialized educational programming in the region includes:

- ConnectEd;
- YouLearn;
- Strong Start;
- Success by Six;
- Communities for Kids;
- Speech and Language Services;
- Full-day Kindergarten;
- Child Care Resource and Referral;
- French Immersion; and
- Advanced college placement.

Penticton also has a variety of private options. We are home to Christian, French and Montessori elementary schools, as well as the Okanagan Hockey Academy—the first hockey-specific sport school recognized by both BC Hockey and Hockey Canada. In other words, your future employees and your employee’s children are very well supported on their path to success.

The University of British Columbia - Okanagan
The University of British Columbia (UBC) is one of North America’s largest public research and teaching institutions and is consistently ranked among the world’s 40 best universities. UBC’s Okanagan campus opened in Kelowna in 2005, which is only a 40 minute drive from Penticton. There are more than 8,300 students enrolled in undergraduate and graduate programs in eight faculties and schools:

- Irving K. Barber School of Arts and Sciences;
- Faculty of Applied Science (includes Engineering);
- Faculty of Health and Social Development;
- Faculty of Medicine (Southern Medical Program); and
- Faculty of Management;
- The College of Graduate Studies.

For a full listing of UBC Okanagan’s 53 undergraduate specializations and 14 graduate programs, follow the links. UBC Okanagan’s economic impact is estimated at $1.5 billion, which includes 1,464 permanent employees and over $400 million in construction projects since 2005.
**Okanagan College**

Okanagan College (OC) is British Columbia’s second largest trades training institution and the largest post-secondary institution in the region. They educate and train more than 22,000 people annually and offer a wide variety of degree, career, trade, technology, vocational, university transfer and continuing education programs. OC has 14 locations and 1,200 employees. Penticton hosts one of their largest campuses and offers studies in:

- Business;
- Computer Information;
- Engineering Technologies;
- Trades;
- Health and Social Development;
- University Studies (Arts and Sciences);
- Continuing Studies Certificates; and
- Adult Education.

Programs of note include the Criminal Social Justice Diploma, the Sustainable Construction Management Technology Diploma and several wine industry training certificates. OC has made several large investments to support these programs, including the construction of the Jim Pattison Centre of Excellence in 2011 (which is the recipient of several internationally recognized awards and is ranked among the most sustainable buildings in the world) and the Wine Information Society Sensory Centre in 2014 (a $300,000 state-of-the-art viticulture lab).

**Sprott Shaw Community College**

Sprott Shaw is a private institution that focuses on skills for jobs in high growth industries. They have two campuses (one in Kelowna and one in Penticton) and train over 4500 students each year. Both locations feature small class sizes, qualified instructors, hands-on training and a learning environment for adults of all ages. Over the last several decades Sprott Shaw has built a solid reputation with both government and the private sector for their training excellence and their students’ record of securing work after graduation.

The College offers dozens of basic courses with a range of variations to suit specific applications, including topics like accounting, administration, business, sales, technology, communications, healthcare, early childhood education, languages, construction and hospitality/ tourism (among others).

**HNZ Topflight**

HNZ Helicopters operates out of a state-of-the-art training facility located at the Penticton Regional Airport and holds an international reputation for the calibre of its helicopter mountain training. Over the last 60 years, elite military, police, corporate and individual pilots from around the world have come to Penticton to experience our comprehensive ground school, experienced instructors and several varieties of mountain terrain.
Housing

Average and median prices
The average and median selling price for single detached residential homes and strata units increased substantially in the Okanagan Valley between early 2002 and mid-2008. Prices continued to increase well ahead of the Consumer Price Index at a rate in excess of 15% per annum until around mid to late 2008.

The trend is not unlike the real estate boom that took place in other major centres—fuelled by low-cost mortgages that surged speculative buying by non-resident out-of-province owners. Price escalation cooled off from mid-2008 with the onset of a worldwide economic downturn, a drop in consumer confidence, high levels of residential stock across various categories and tightening of Canadian mortgage lending rules.

Average and median price trends are discussed below for both Penticton and surrounding communities, as this provides a closer sense of market value. As you will see, average prices are higher than median prices in the Okanagan. This means the cumulative value of residential homes above the median price significantly exceeds the cumulative value of residential homes below the median price.

It’s also good to know that more than 80% of Penticton home sales in 2012 were priced below $500,000. On average, 42 lots sell in the Penticton area per year.

Single detached residential properties
Figure 21 shows the 12 month trended average selling price vs. median selling price for single detached residential homes for the North, Central and South Okanagan. Average and median prices trend similarly for all regions.

Median prices for single detached residential homes in the Central Okanagan are generally around $80,000 higher than for the same category in the Northern Okanagan, while the difference in average price is even higher at around $100,000. Price levels in the southern Okanagan are generally around $180,000 lower on average, than in the central Okanagan (median price data not available for the southern Okanagan). For the last several years, the South Okanagan—Penticton’s home—has been the most affordable of the group.

Residential condominium and apartment properties
Figure 22 shows the 12 month trended average selling price vs. median selling price for strata residential units in the North, Central and South Okanagan. Average and median prices trend similarly for all regions.

Median prices for strata category residential units in the Central Okanagan are generally around $40,000 higher than for the same category in the Northern Okanagan, while the difference in average price is even higher at around $50,000. While median price data is not available for the South Okanagan, our average price trend demonstrates affordability when compared to other communities in the region.
Figure 21: Okanagan Valley single detached house average and median price trend 2002-2012

Figure 22: Okanagan Valley strata properties average and median price trend 2002-2012
Dwelling count and structural type
In Penticton, 53.4% of private households lived in single-detached houses and 4.3% lived in apartment buildings with five or more storeys. The rest lived in other types of dwelling structures. See Figure 23 for more details.

Figure 23: Penticton Dwelling count and structural type 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structural Type</th>
<th># of Dwellings</th>
<th>% of Total Dwelling Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single-detached house</td>
<td>10,250</td>
<td>53.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-detached house</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row house</td>
<td>1,565</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apartment building (5+ storeys)</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apartment building (&lt;5 storeys)</td>
<td>4,320</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apartment, duplex</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other single-detached house</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19,200</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rental market
The rental market in Penticton provides over 2000 units of rental accommodation. Fall 2012 vacancy rates were 5% compared to a provincial average of 3.7%.

Figure 24: Penticton rental market 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Rental</th>
<th># of Units</th>
<th>Vacancy Rates</th>
<th>Average Rent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor apartment</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>53.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 bedroom</td>
<td>1,030</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 bedroom</td>
<td>957</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 bedroom+</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,227</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC (10,000+)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More information
For additional insights into the mortgage and residential housing market in Penticton, visit the South Okanagan Real Estate Board (SOREB) website at www.soreb.org. For more information regarding the Canadian market (including policy, forecasts, trends and more general information) visit the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) website at www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca.

If you are seeking information about moving to Penticton, including buying or renting a home, read our Residents’ Guide. It includes information about housing, employment, education, activities, community resources and more. Once you’ve made your decision, use our Move to Penticton Checklist to get started.
Real estate for business

Overview
The City of Penticton regularly invests in the revitalization of its community, which recently focused on our two waterfronts and downtown core. With new lakeside paths, amenities, play structures, bike trails and parks, our two waterfronts attract increasing numbers of both residents and visitors. In 2014 alone, the City and local businesses invested $1.3 million in downtown revitalization, creating flexible streetscapes that help merchants capitalize on foot traffic. When paired with our aggressive beach, food truck and street vending policies—along with BC’s largest downtown community market—it’s no coincidence that we boast some of the lowest downtown vacancy rates in BC.

Commercial
Downtown - The City of Penticton worked with Colliers to complete an economic forecast for growth in the downtown core. The Colliers Report forecasted 91,000+ square feet of commercial growth and demand for 60+ units per year of residential development. So far, their predictions have proven to be very accurate. Several substantive commercial projects have been initiated, including two new breweries, a movie theatre, a gymnastics club, several wineries and a soon-to-be hotel (to name a few).

Waterfronts - The north beach is more than just downtown Penticton. It hosts a numerous tourism and recreation facilities, including the South Okanagan Event Centre, Locolanding Adventure Park, Gateway Casino, Penticton Golf & Country Club, Coyote Cruises and several hotels and restaurants. The south beach has a different feel with camping, RV accommodations, board shops, beach volleyball, tennis courts, rooftop patios and soon-to-be waterslides. South end development centres around the marina and Barefoot Beach resort.

Main Street - Central Main St. is made up of large commercial zones including anchor properties, strip malls and shopping centres. This area is one of our major north-south corridors, offers ample free parking and is well-served by public transit. It provides both day-to-day and occasional necessities for most of the South Okanagan. Existing businesses include Safeway, Walmart, London Drugs, Superstore, Sport Check, BC Liquor, Earl’s, Whitespot and Cherry Lane Mall (among others).

Industrial
Our industrial lands are concentrated in two distinct areas representing approximately 280 acres (112 hectares) of Penticton’s land area. One is immediately beside Highway 97 and offers strong visibility, while the other is connected by a short, five minute trucking route. Most of Penticton’s industrial options are empty buildings or warehouses, as both the manufacturing sector and the lands themselves are well developed. If you are seeking a large, undeveloped property for your business, it would be available in neighbouring communities like Okanagan Falls and the Penticton Indian Band.

Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) In 2014, our ALR land accounted for 8% of our region’s overall land base (or 10,414.26 km2), representing nearly 48% of ALR in the Okanagan Valley. Over the last 40 years, there have been both inclusions and exclusions to the ALR, but the net reserve remains largely the same.
**Institutional**

Two major provincial projects have pumped over $500 million into the local economy and are creating thousands of new construction and ongoing operational jobs. The $325 million Penticton Regional Hospital Expansion will triple the size of the existing hospital and will create 2000 jobs in the construction stage alone. The $200 million South Okanagan Correctional Facility will be constructed on Osoyoos First Nations land and is scheduled for completion in 2016.

**Opportunities with the Penticton Indian Band**

The Penticton Indian Band (PIB) continues to develop the lands adjacent to Penticton. In 2015, they were awarded developer of the year by both the Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers (Cando) and the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB). The PIB recently announced the first five hectare phase of the Satikw Crossing Commercial Complex at Green Avenue Bridge—which connects prime PIB land to downtown Penticton. Anchor tenants have already been identified, but several properties are still available. Commercial leases are signed with the Federal Government. Visit [www.satikwcrossing.com](http://www.satikwcrossing.com) to learn more.

**Looking for property?**

The City of Penticton uses an online map based on geographic information system (GIS) data. Users can apply various layers of information to the maps based on their needs, including city boundaries, street names, zoning, official community plan and hazard areas. For a given parcel, public data such as assessed value and land size is also available. The system can be launched on all web browsers and gives users additional functionality like bookmarking favourite maps and online “mark up” with text and shapes, measuring anything from properties to driveways.

If you’re having difficulty finding the information you need using the online map, contact Planning and Development Services at 250-490-2501 or [development@penticton.ca](mailto:development@penticton.ca). If you’re having trouble locating a suitable property for your business, contact Colleen Pennington, our Economic Development Officer at 250-493-3323 or [colleen.pennington@penticton.ca](mailto:colleen.pennington@penticton.ca).
Infrastructure and services

Transportation
Penticton Regional Airport (YYF) offers direct one-hour flights to Vancouver and Calgary (two or more times a day, everyday) and generates an estimated $24.73 million for the provincial economy. You can fly out for a morning meeting and still be home that night, all without traffic or a painful commute.

Kelowna International Airport (YLW) offers 66 daily non-stop commercial flights to Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Seattle, Victoria, Prince George, Edmonton, Cranbrook, Whitehorse and Fort McMurray—plus seasonal service to Las Vegas, Phoenix, Los Cabos, Puerto Vallarta, Cancun and Varadero. In 2014 alone, YLW served 1.6 million passengers. The terminal building is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and is only a 40 minute drive from Penticton.

Highway 97 runs from the Yukon and Alaska through the centre of British Columbia to Washington, Oregon and California. At 5,380km, it is one of North America’s longer continuous highways and it runs directly through Penticton. This transportation corridor provides quick and affordable access to more than 40 million people.

The Trans-Canada Highway spans 8,030km and travels from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean, crossing all ten provinces of Canada (and just 40 minutes north of Penticton). It is, along with the Trans-Siberian Highway and Australia’s Highway 1, one of the world’s longest national highways. Because Canada has a fairly unique population distribution (75% of Canadians live within 100 miles—or 161km—of the US Border), this highway provides easy access to the vast majority of the Canadian market.

BC Transit operates several main routes in Penticton, as well as the handyDART door-to-door service for residents with mobility issues. The conventional fixed routes are served by eight buses, while handyDART is served by two. In 2014-2015 ridership was 442,000.

Health
Penticton Regional Hospital is a 237-bed facility offering core medical and surgical services, 24-hour emergency and trauma treatment, acute services, an ambulatory clinic, outpatient clinics, and diagnostic/paramedical services. In 2014, the provincial government announced a $325 million dollar expansion project for PRH. The new care tower will provide 287,500 square feet of new facilities that will be will be LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold certified. PRH serves ~38,900 patients per year.

Utilities
Both the electric and water utilities are owned and operated by the City of Penticton. The City provides electrical service to approximately 17,000 customers, while the water utility provides water service to over 35,000. Our customer base includes residential, commercial, and industrial users. Agricultural users have the option of connecting to an untreated water system for crop irrigation.
The revenue generated from our utilities is used to fund key capital projects. For example, our Advanced Waste Water Treatment Plant was recently given a $24 million upgrade to become a greener, industry leading facility that is capable of meeting our treatment needs for the next 20 years. To learn more about City of Penticton Utilities contact our Utilities Clerk at 250-490-2489 or utilities@penticton.ca.

Information and communications technology
High speed internet is a staple of the modern world and modern business, but sometimes high speed internet just isn’t enough. That’s why the City of Penticton installed dark fibre. Dark fibre can offer secure, high speed connections between physical locations. For example, Okanagan College leased dark fibre from the City to connect their main campus with their satellite office, and the Regional District leased dark fiber to connect their offices to their data center. The advantages of dark fibre are the unlimited speed, high security and a dedicated, single use connection.

We can provide dark fibre services back to our central hub where equipment can be co-located. Connectivity to other network services might also be possible. To learn more, contact the IT Department at itmanager@penticton.ca or 250-490-2499.

Popular media outlets

**News and online forums:**
- Penticton Herald - [www.pentictonherald.ca](http://www.pentictonherald.ca)
- Western News - [www.pentictonwesternnews.com](http://www.pentictonwesternnews.com)
- Infotel - infotel.ca/penticton
- Castanet - [www.castanet.net](http://www.castanet.net)

**Television**
- Global BC - Ch. 30 - [globalnews.ca/bc](http://globalnews.ca/bc)
- Global Okanagan - Ch. 32 - [globalnews.ca/okanagan](http://globalnews.ca/okanagan)

**Local Radio**
- CBTP CBC Radio One - 93.7 FM - [www.cbc.ca/radio](http://www.cbc.ca/radio)
- CJMG Sun FM - 97.1 FM - [www.sunonline.ca](http://www.sunonline.ca)
- CIGV Okanagan Country - 100.7 FM - [okanagancountry.com](http://okanagancountry.com)
- CKOR Easy Rock - 800 AM - [penticton.myezrock.com](http://penticton.myezrock.com)
- CFUZ Peach City Radio - 92.9 (on air 2016) - [www.peachcityradio.org](http://www.peachcityradio.org)
References

Figures
Figure 1: Okanagan Valley Economic Profile 2015, pg. 26
Figure 2: Data provided by the City of Penticton.
Figure 3: Okanagan Valley Economic Profile 2015, pg. 38
Figure 4: Okanagan Valley Economic Profile 2015, pg. 38
Figure 5: Okanagan Valley Economic Profile 2015, pg. 42
Figure 6: Okanagan Valley Economic Profile 2015, pg. 43
Figure 7: Okanagan Valley Economic Profile 2015, pg. 44
Figure 8: Data provided by the City of Penticton.
Figure 9: Data provided by the City of Penticton.
Figure 10: Data provided by the City of Penticton.
Figure 11: Small Business BC Penticton Market Profile
Figure 12: 2011 Census data
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Figure 17: Small Business BC Penticton Market Profile
Figure 18: Okanagan Valley Economic Profile 2015, pg. 78
Figure 19: 2011 Census data and BC Stats Labour Force Survey
Figure 20: 2011 National Household Survey, BC Stats Labour Force Survey and workinginCanada.ca
Figure 21: South Okanagan Real Estate Board data
Figure 22: South Okanagan Real Estate Board data
Figure 23: 2011 Census data
Figure 24: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp., Rental Markets Report Fall 2012