

# 2 CAMPUS CONTEXT





*Ponderosa Pine Woodland*



*Great Basin Spadefoot Toad*

## 2.1 GEOLOGICAL, TOPOGRAPHICAL AND ECOLOGICAL CONTEXT

The UBC Okanagan Campus is situated along the McKinley Escarpment, where north-south-aligned ridges and valleys formed during the last glaciation of the Okanagan Valley. Positioned along the ridgeline, the campus is afforded panoramic views to the east—to the valley floor and rolling hills beyond, and to the west—to surrounding agricultural lands and Robert and Little Robert lakes.

With slopes ranging up to 30%, the campus’s topography is a significant factor in its evolution—in the placement and orientation of its buildings, roads, and open spaces. Several low-lying areas have developed into stormwater retention areas and wetlands and are valued as natural and ecological features on campus.

The campus sits within the ecological setting of the Okanagan Very Dry Hot Ponderosa Pine zone, which generally represents the driest woodland regions in BC, with hot, dry conditions in summer and cool conditions with little snow in winter. With a diverse landscape of pine woodland and open grassland, the campus contains several ecosystems and has plants and wildlife identified as being species at risk. Among those documented on campus are the Great Basin Spadefoot Toad and the Western Painted Turtle. Approximately 25% of the campus has high environmental sensitivity, representing primarily woodland and wetland ecological communities.

## 2.2 CULTURAL LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

The University respectfully acknowledges the traditions and customs of the Okanagan Nation and its people in whose territory the campus is situated. The *Syilx* (Okanagan) people have been here since time immemorial. In September 2005, the Okanagan Nation Alliance officially welcomed UBC to traditional *Syilx* (Okanagan Nation) territory in an official ceremony, *Knaqs npi’lsmist*, where UBC signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Okanagan Nation.

Traditional *Syilx* territory extends over approximately 69,000 square kilometers. The northern area of this territory is close to the area of Mica Creek, just north of Revelstoke BC, and the eastern boundary is Kootenay Lake. The southern boundary extends to the vicinity of Wilbur, Washington and the western border extends into the Nicola Valley.

The Okanagan Nation Alliance represents eight member communities through the Chiefs’ Executive Council represented by their Chief or Chairman. These communities include: Upper Nicola Band, Okanagan Indian Band, Westbank First Nation, Penticton Indian Band, Osoyoos Indian Band, Lower Similkameen Indian Band, Upper Similkameen Indian Band and Colville Confederated Tribes.

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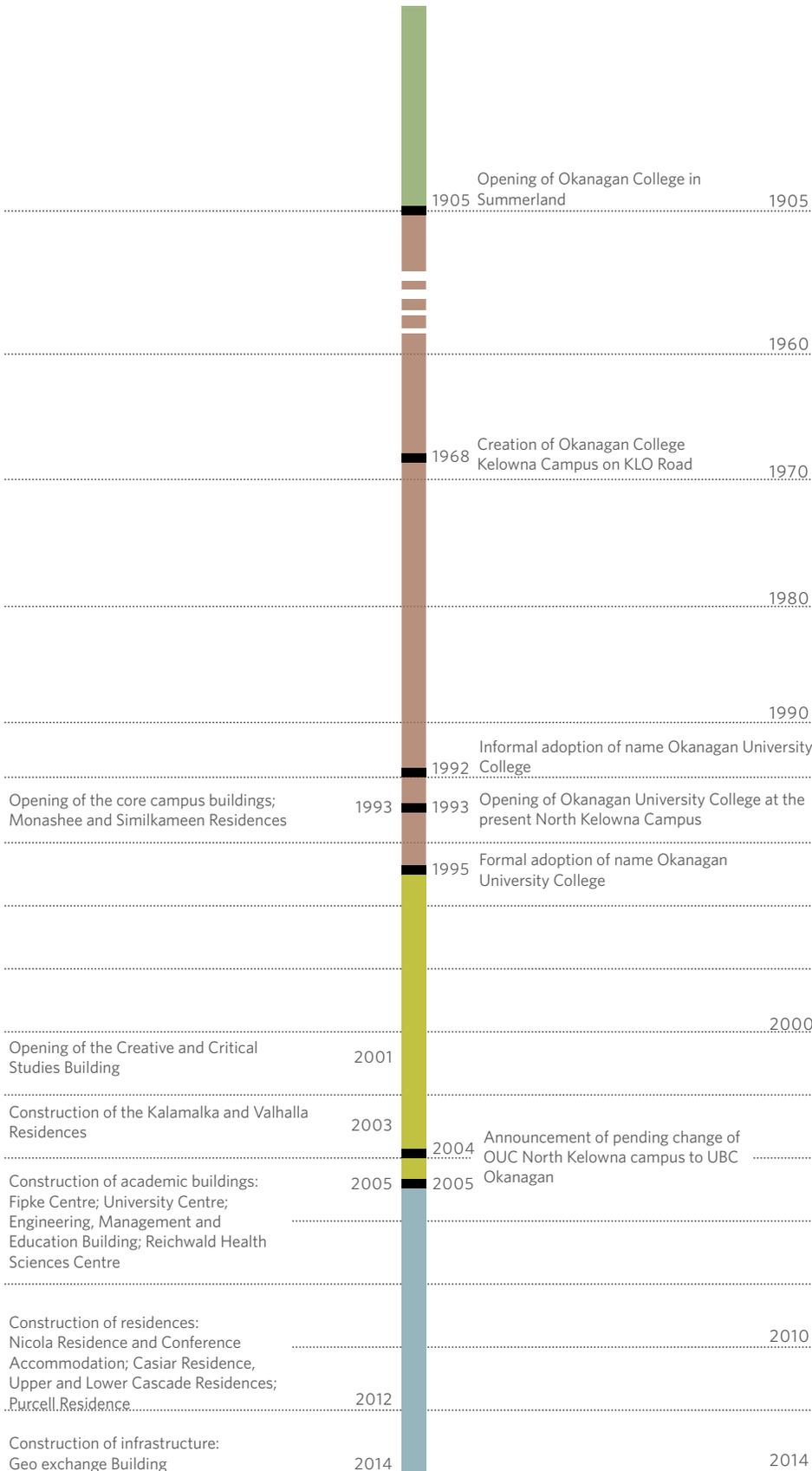


FIGURE 5 CAMPUS EVOLUTION TIMELINE



*Syilx* place names identify most significant land features by which visitors would remember the area. The campus is nearest to the body of water known as Duck Lake, which was a highly productive fishing lake in summer and winter for ling and lake trout and a now extinct species. The *Syilx* word *pəłmiws* refers to Ellison or more commonly, Duck Lake, and identifies it as having a delta area near the middle. A *Syilx* village was located in the vicinity and the campus grounds, including the airfield across the highway, were a highly productive harvesting area for game of all types, including birds, as well as the abundant *siya?* (Saskatoon berry, one of the *Syilx* four food chiefs) and a wild carrot called *słıuq<sup>w</sup>m*. Each year the profusion of wild sunflower or *smuk<sup>w</sup>axən* is a reminder of the natural abundance of *Syilx* food in this area.



Since the beginning of the twentieth century, the major appeal of the Okanagan Valley has been cultural—for its climate, proximity to Lake Okanagan, outdoor recreational opportunities and access to a major ski resort, as well as the aesthetic appeal of the natural and agricultural landscapes of the region. The settlement of the Okanagan Valley has significantly influenced its cultural landscape. When the City of Kelowna was incorporated in 1905 an orchard land boom was underway, bringing settlement and transforming the entire Okanagan Valley. Cattle ranching and grain growing emerged as economies in the latter half of the century, followed by expanding tourist and servicing industries that have intensified and expanded the valley's growth and urbanization.



Counter-clockwise from top left:  
 Campus Development, 2000  
 Campus Development, 2003  
 Campus Development, 2006  
 Campus Development, 2009  
 Campus Development, 2012



FIGURE 6 UBC OKANAGAN CAMPUS GROWTH SINCE 2000

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The University of British Columbia acquired and expanded on land initially developed as the Okanagan College campus, created through the amalgamation of a number of failed development lots purchased by Okanagan University College from the City of Kelowna in the early 1990s. Okanagan College opened its new physical campus on these lands in 1993, and was subsequently renamed Okanagan University College, with the original campus consisting of a core of four brick-faced buildings for Arts, Science, Library and Administration, arranged around a central courtyard with a gymnasium, two residences, and a daycare all set into the sloping site of a former quarry.

Recognizing the need to further expand post-secondary opportunities in the province, the BC Ministry of Advanced Education announced a plan in 2004 to create a UBC campus in the Okanagan by assigning the Okanagan University College's North Kelowna campus to UBC. In July 2005, UBC acquired the campus and, in September, classes began with 3,500 students. Following the completion of a major capital investment program in 2012, the campus has more than doubled student enrolment to 7,500 full time equivalents (FTE) and nearly tripled its building floor area, transforming into a world-class university.

## 2.3 LOCAL PLANNING CONTEXT

The UBC Okanagan Campus is located within the City of Kelowna. As a result, development within the campus is subject to the City's bylaws, permits, and approval processes. In June 2008, while the 2009 update of *The UBC Okanagan Master Plan* was being prepared, the City of Kelowna adopted the current site-specific zoning for the UBC Okanagan Campus to facilitate the campus's anticipated growth. This zoning is consistent with the City of Kelowna's Official Community Plan (OCP), which designates the UBC Okanagan Campus for Educational/Major Institutional (EDINST) land use.

The current CD20 - Comprehensive University Development zoning for the Main Campus allows a full range of academic, research and supporting land uses essential to a university. In addition to acceptable uses, the zoning also regulates density, site coverage and building heights, among other aspects. The West Campus lands are presently zoned A1 - Agriculture 1 and are not included in the CD20 zone area. A1 - Agriculture 1 permits primarily only agricultural uses. The West Campus lands are located within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and subject to the ALR's requirements and processes.

*The Campus Plan* process involved a review of City of Kelowna plans and policies, as well as discussions with senior departmental staff, to place anticipated campus development into the context of its surroundings, plan for future use and development, and acknowledge the important and reciprocal roles of the campus and adjacent development in providing community benefit.

Development permit approval from the City is required for any proposed alteration of land or proposed development within the defined Natural Environment and Hazardous Condition Development Permit Areas identified in the City's OCP. This process is taken to ensure the protection of environmentally sensitive areas and groundwater resources, and to ensure safety. The City also requires a Farm Protection development permit approval for certain uses and activities on agricultural lands, and for any development proposed adjacent to agricultural lands.

Transport Canada has an approvals role for buildings near airports, which affects building heights on the Okanagan Campus. *The Campus Plan* has maintained building heights within the limits currently understood to be acceptable to Transport Canada, and consistent with the City's zoning for the campus.

## 2.4

### EXISTING SITE AND SURROUNDING CONTEXT

UBC's Okanagan Campus is located within the northeast quadrant of the City of Kelowna, on the west side of Highway 97. It is bordered by a mix of agricultural, residential, recreational and industrial uses, regional roads, and the Kelowna International Airport.

The Main Campus lands (the focus of *The Campus Plan*) consist of 105 hectares (260 acres). In 2010, the University purchased an additional 103.6 hectares (256 acres) of land located immediately west of the Main Campus and in the ALR, referred to as the West Campus lands. The West Campus lands are separated from the Main Campus by a narrow legal parcel (approximately 3m wide) owned by the Glenmore-Ellison Improvement District (GEID) and that runs along the entire length of the campus's western boundary.

The campus is presently accessed from the north and from the south by Highway 97. University Way enters campus from the east, and Alumni Avenue via John Hindle Drive enters from the south. It is anticipated that a new access road to the campus from the west will be constructed in 2016–2017, following the extension of John Hindle Drive from the City's Glenmore landfill site to connect with the existing John Hindle Drive segment at the southern edge of the campus.

Many of the lands around the campus are being developed. The lands to the north and east of the campus along the Highway 97 corridor have been rezoned for light industrial, high tech, and service and commercial uses including a hotel and grocery store. These land uses will replace the sand and gravel operations that have historically occupied this area. An extension northward from the northeast roundabout is planned for Hollywood Road North that will provide collector road access to the land owned by UBC at the northeast corner of the campus. Over the next few years this portion of the campus is anticipated to complete its lease with the existing gravel and sand operations.

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The ridge area southwest of the campus, known as University South, has been subdivided and rezoned for comprehensive residential and commercial land uses. Access to these lands will be from Academy Way, which will extend south from John Hindle Drive to Sexsmith Road. Aberdeen Hall Preparatory School (K-12) has also been developed in this area.

The north side of campus is bordered by the Quail Ridge development. A regional trail links the north campus to Quail Ridge, as do other informal trails. Presently there are no vehicular connections, but City plans include a future road extension from Quail Ridge southwest to connect to the future John Hindle Drive extension.

In addition to the University’s West Campus lands, other lands bordering the campus are also in the ALR. These include lands to the south between University South and Highway 97, the Quail Course at the Okanagan Golf Club to the north, and the lands east of the highway.

The campus has a complex system of servicing infrastructure implemented across the site that affects future campus development. This includes a major high-pressure gas line that runs west of the residences and Discovery Avenue, a GEID water main under University Way, and a spillway through the Ponderosa Pine Woodland area that connects to the reservoir.

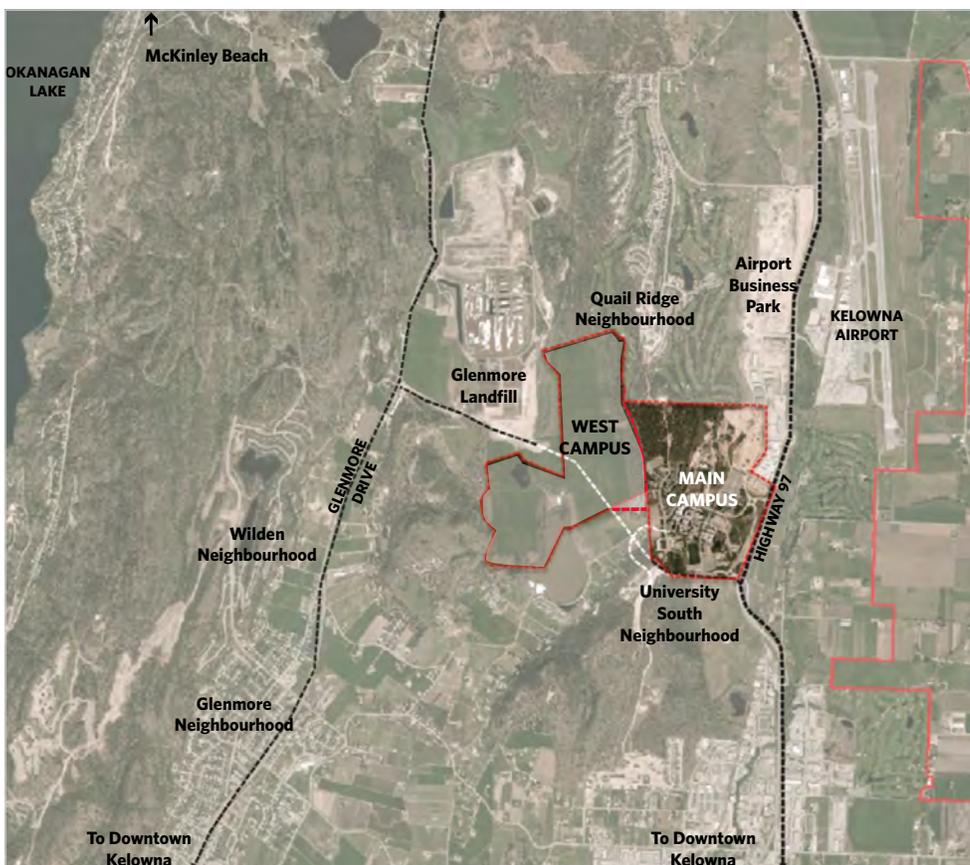


FIGURE 7 UBC OKANAGAN CAMPUS AND SURROUNDING CONTEXT