



City of Merritt

Official Community Plan Update Workshops, October 7th, 2020

Business and Economic Development Workshop: 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Land Use & Housing Workshop: 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Infrastructure & Climate Change Workshop: 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.





Acknowledgement

***In the spirit of reconciliation, we acknowledge that we live,
work, and play on the traditional territories of the
Nlaka'pamux and Syilx nations, and all people who make their
homes in the Nicola Valley.***



Agenda

- Welcome, Introductions & Instructions (10 minutes)
 - Presentation participants include:
 - Don McArthur, City of Merritt Planning & Development Services Manager
 - Will George, City of Merritt Economic Development, Communication & Tourism Manager
 - Bob Evans, WSP, Senior Project Advisor & Presentation Facilitator
 - Chen Peng, WSP, Project Manager
 - Brittany Shewchuk, Project Planner
- Presentation & Live Polling (45 mins)
- Concluding Remarks (5 minutes)





Meeting Objectives

- To provide an overview of Merritt's Official Community Plan update
- To discuss background information / data that pertains to Economic Development in Merritt
- To virtually meet one another
- To generate discussion, and collect feedback on the future of Economic Development for the City of Merritt
 - Live polling questions will be included throughout the presentation, in order to collect feedback



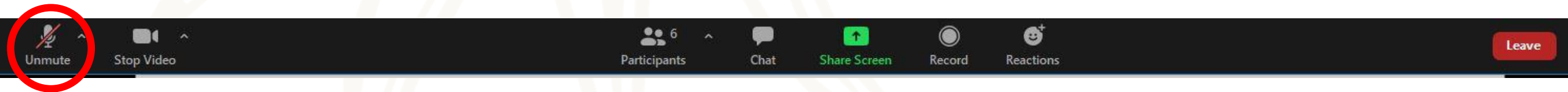
Today's Meeting

- Please disable video when not actively participating to maintain bandwidth
- Please keep your microphone muted when you aren't speaking
- There will be opportunities for questions and discussion throughout the presentation
- This presentation will use a secure external website for live polling and feedback
- This workshop will be recorded for posterity



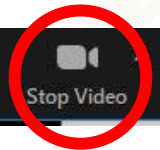
Zoom Instructions

Mute/Unmute



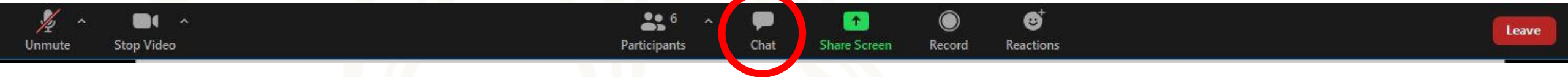
Zoom Instructions

Video



Zoom Instructions



Chat







Zoom Instructions




Chat

Participants (6)








EB Erika Blackie (Me)  

BS Brittany S (Host)    

Chat

To: Everyone   File 

Type message here...

Unmute  Stop Video  Participants 6  Chat  Share Screen  Record  Reactions  Leave





Mentimeter Live Polling Instructions

This presentation will use a secure external website for live polling and feedback.

1. Please visit www.menti.com (on your smartphone or desktop) when prompted.
2. Please enter this code: **2431520**, which will allow you to access and answer all of the live polling questions provided.
3. The live polling questions will be open until Thursday, October 8th at 8:00 p.m. PDT.
4. If you do not provide a response to a live polling question, please make sure to click 'submit' which will move you to the next question.



Go to www.menti.com and use the code 24 31 52 0

Q1: Who are you representing today? (select all that apply)

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Q2: Are you familiar with Merritt's current Official Community Plan (2011)?

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• Yes
• No



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Q3: Are you familiar with Merritt's Economic Development Action Plan (2015)?



Official Community Plan – What is it?

- An OCP is a municipality's highest level policy document that describes the **long-term vision** of communities through **objectives and policies** that guide decisions on planning and land-use management
- OCP objectives and policies will **accommodate the municipality's anticipated growth**, and guide where **future land uses** should be located / not located
- OCP's generally focus on **land use**, however can include policies for other areas such as **climate change, housing, and economic development**
- OCP policies provide a basis for Council and the public to evaluate development proposals, to **ensure that all development within the municipality is consistent with the municipality's vision**





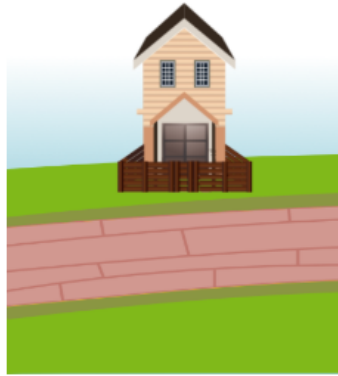
Merritt's Official Community Plan Update

- In 2011, the current Official Community Plan (OCP) was adopted by Council
- The City is currently in the process of updating its OCP
- The updated **OCP must reflect the changes** Merritt has experienced **over the last decade**, and reflect the **future growth projections, development intentions**, and **future vision** of the City of Merritt moving forward to 2040 through a series of **goals, objectives, and policies**
- The OCP update will be guided by a **comprehensive background research process**, and a thorough **community and stakeholder engagement process**, to ensure that the final document will be reflective of the community's goals and intentions, grounded through research



Official Community Plan – Project Timeline

| Phase 1 |



Project Kick-off
Engagement Plan
Development
May – July 2020

| Phase 2 |



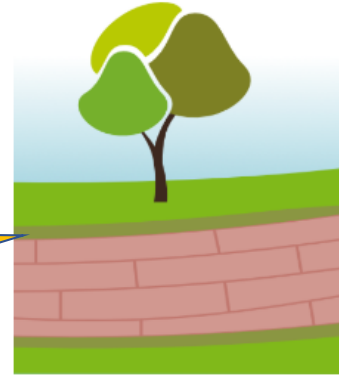
Background Analysis
July – August 2020

| Phase 3 |



Public Engagement
Events
September – November
2020

| Phase 4 |



Draft OCP Development
December 2020 –
February 2021
–
Report Back “What We
Heard”
Engagement Events
February 2021 – March
2021

| Phase 5 |



OCP Finalization
March 2021 – April 2021
–
OCP Final Adoption
Public Hearing
May 2021 – June 2021



Background Information: Population & Growth

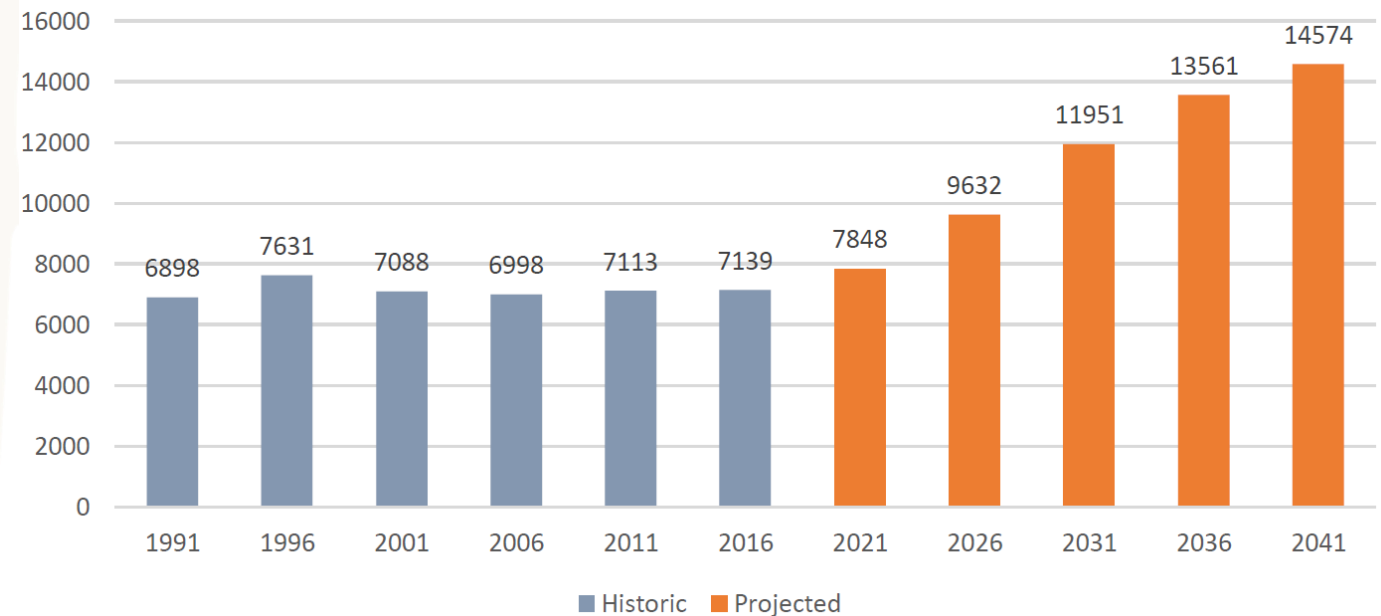
- Since 1991, the population has remained largely stable, with an increase of approximately 3.49%:

1991 population = 6,889

2016 population = 7,139

- The City is looking to increase Merritt's population through **policy changes and incentives** which will attract new residents to relocate in Merritt
- The growth rate was calculated using the Province of British Columbia's growth rate as a baseline (1.2%) supplemented by Merritt's residential development permit applications & recent neighbourhood plan (2,000+ units to housing market in next 20 years)
- With these interventions, Merritt's population is projected to reach a population of **14,574 by 2041**, this is an **increase of 104.14% over the next 25 years**

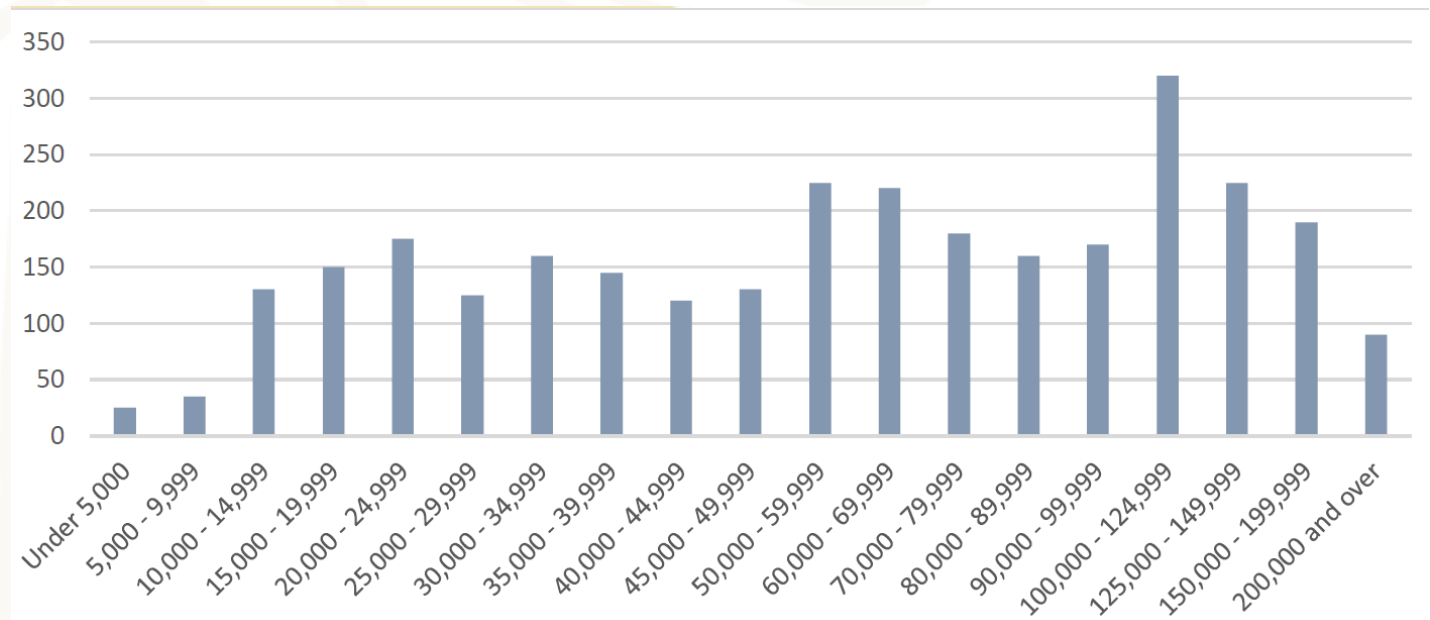
Projected Population Change, 1991 - 2041



Background Information: Household Income

- 2015 City of Merritt median household income = \$62,544
- 2016 Provincial median household income = \$69,995

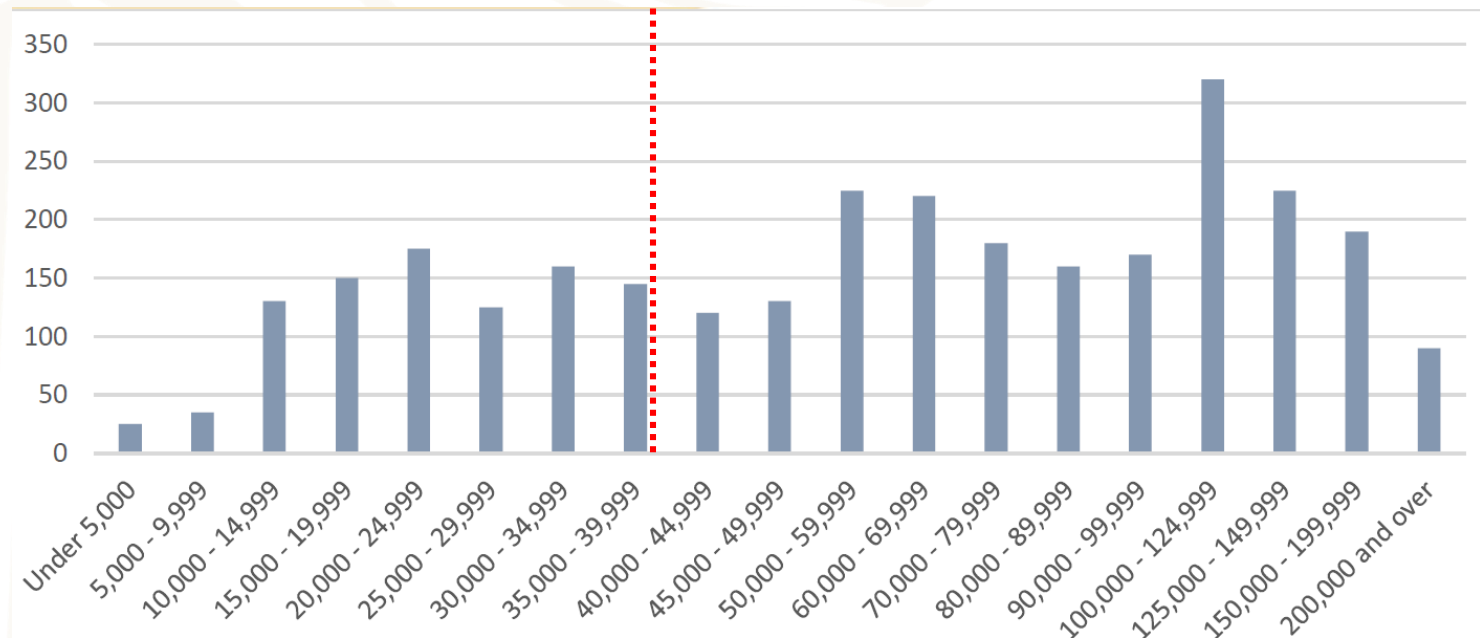
Household Income Distribution (2015)



Background Information: Household Income

- **Approximately 35% of Merritt households** live below Canada's Official Poverty Line (after-tax income of under \$40,000.00)
- Approximately **29.6% of Canadian households** live below this poverty line.
- Approximately **30.5% of British Columbia households** live below this poverty line.

Household Income Distribution (2015)



Background Information: Employment

- The highest percentage of jobs are within Manufacturing, Retail, Health Care, Accommodation, Education, Agriculture & Forestry, and Construction

Employment Distribution (2016)

Occupation	Total Labour	% of Total Jobs	
Agriculture & Forestry	240	7%	7
Mining	110	3%	
Utilities	25	1%	
Construction	290	9%	5
Manufacturing	410	13%	2
Trade	45	1%	
Retail	415	13%	1
Transportation	120	4%	
Information and Culture	40	1%	
Finance	30	1%	
Real Estate	30	1%	
Professional	50	2%	
Management	0	0%	
Administrative	120	4%	
Education	280	9%	6
Health Care	360	11%	3
Arts and Entertainment	55	2%	
Accommodation	320	10%	4
Other	150	5%	
Public Administration	140	4%	





Economic Development: Challenges

Challenges:

- Many lumber operations have folded
- City and region in need of additional employment opportunities
- Development in Merritt's downtown has been stagnant in recent years (the majority of commercial development is located on the northwestern edge of the city)
- Few residents living downtown who could support economic growth



Economic Development: Opportunities

Opportunities:

- Highway accessible lands are available for development
- Existing post-secondary facilities that can provide education and training to local population
- Development of industry friendly policy
- Diversify the agricultural industry (i.e. City could work with the Thompson Nicola Regional District & Nicola Valley landowners to promote new opportunities such as orchards and vineyards in the region)
- Incentives, such as tax exemption programs for local businesses
- Creation of Downtown Revitalization Plan that could foster and support economic development
- Few popular store-fronts located downtown (Save on Foods & Pharmasave) that could 'anchor' other businesses and services to locate downtown



Menti Meter: Question 4 to 7 Preamble

- In order to support Merritt's future projected population growth, more employment opportunities will be required in the city and the region.



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Q4: What tools could Merritt utilize to promote economic development within the City and region? (select all that apply)

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Provincial tax incentives, tax exemptions, and business incubator programs to attract and support the establishment of local businesses	Development of industry friendly policy to support the community's existing industrial base	The addition of 'light industrial' land uses within the updated OCP, through the rezoning of some of Merritt's existing 'heavy industrial' zoned land	The update of Merritt's existing Economic Development Action Plan



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Q5: Do you have any other thoughts / ideas pertaining to other tools the City could use to promote economic development?

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Q6: Please rank all below industries out of 10 which could be supported/developed to promote economic diversity/sustainability to the city & area.

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Warehousing / distribution and other similar uses that would strategically use Merritt's location (at the confluence of 3 major highways)

The agriculture industry, and the expansion of diverse agricultural opportunities (as 30% of City land is zoned Agriculture)

Supplementary health care services / businesses that could support Merritt's existing hospital

Expansion of tourism opportunities that take advantage of Merritt's climate and natural features

Renewable energy opportunities



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Q7: Are there other new or existing industries that Merritt could support to provide economic diversity / sustainability to the city & region?

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Merritt
FLOURISH UNDER THE SUN

Menti Meter: Question 8 and 9 Preamble

- Downtown has been stagnant for a number of years, and the creation of a Downtown Revitalization Plan that could outline principles and strategies that could transform the downtown area into an enjoyable place where people could live, work, and play, and enhance the pedestrian experience for those who visit downtown, could also be one component of strengthen economic development in Merritt.
- Question 8 is a multiple choice question that provides options for what the City can do to improve downtown.
- Question 9 is open-ended, which provides the opportunity for you to provide other ideas for how the community can improve downtown.



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Q8: How can the City improve the existing downtown area? (select all that apply)

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Encourage more commercial development to located downtown	Encourage the development of more residential housing units downtown	Improve the streetscape, i.e. landscaping, lighting, more public gathering spaces	Increase safety in the downtown



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Q9: Do you have any other thoughts / ideas pertaining to how the the community can improve Merritt's downtown area?

 Mentimeter





Thank you!

Thank you for your participation and for your interest in Merritt's OCP update!

For more information, please visit:

www.merritt.ca/ocp

If you have any questions, feel free to contact:

Don McArthur, Planning & Development Services Manager

Planning@merritt.ca

or

Will George, Economic Development, Communication & Tourism Manager

wgeorge@merritt.ca

