



CENTRAL
OKANAGAN
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION

Organization: Central Okanagan Economic Development Commission (COEDC)
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Appendix B – Sample Blog, [Economic Development – A day in the life](#) (best viewed online)

Economic development is a fast-paced, always changing, yet often misunderstood field that offers a chance to make a difference in the communities where we live and work. Working in local government can sometimes be mistakenly perceived as boring, old fashioned or monotonous. In economic development, that couldn't be further from the truth. Everyday is different and I have the honour of working with innovative, entrepreneurial people and businesses across industries and of all sizes.

When the powerhouse marketing team at [Accelerate Okanagan](#) invited me to takeover the @OKGNtech instagram account on June 1st as one of the [Faces of #OKGNtech](#), I jumped at the chance to show what a day in the life of local economic development looks like.

Here are some of the highlights.

6:13am: Early morning hike before work.

You have to get up pretty early to keep up with economic growth in the Okanagan. With a census to census growth rate of 8.4% (national average is 5%), the Central Okanagan is one of Canada's fastest growing regions and it's not hard to see why. We have established infrastructure, a collective attitude and culture that fosters entrepreneurship and Canada's best lifestyle - it's all here now.



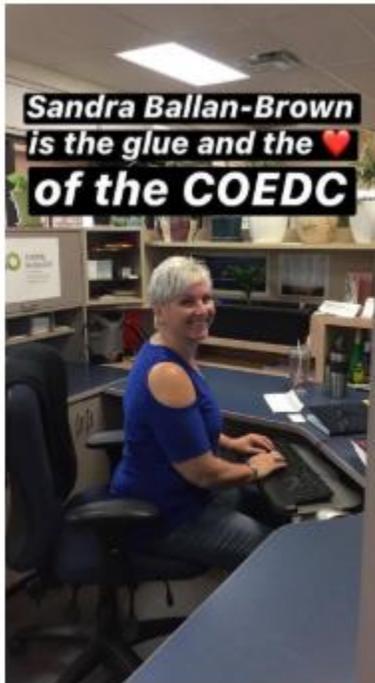
7:30am: The Daily Grind

May 28-June 1 was [Bike to Work Week](#) in BC and the Central Okanagan had almost 2200 riders logging 58,000km throughout the week. The region's typically short commutes and [extensive bike paths](#) make it easy. Part of economic development is connecting and supporting other organizations and initiatives like Bike to work Week that are working to strengthen our community



8:00am: Meet the Team

I arrived at the office just in time to catch Director of Economic Development, Corie Griffiths, head out the door. As the leader of the COEDC and an authority on the local economy, Corie regularly speaks to local groups and events to provide economic climate update. I caught Corie on her way to meet with clients interested in investing in the region before providing an economic update to the Kelowna Bar Association.



10:00am: KF Aerospace Tour with International Delegation

The COEDC is the first point of contact for many people, companies, institutions and governments looking to connect with the region. When a group of Applied Engineering and MBA students from Bochum University of Applied Sciences in Germany reached out to prior to visiting the region, we knew they would appreciate a visit to [KF Aerospace](#).





With 800 employees at their home base in Kelowna, KF Aerospace is the region's largest private sector employer. They specialize in aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul and are responsible for keeping many of Canada's passenger jets in tip top shape.

The company has some of Canada's best technical expertise in converting aircraft. They are frequently contracted to convert passenger planes from all around the world to cargo - a several month process that completely overhauls the plane, from removing seats and installing refrigeration to using precision engineering to cut new doors to accommodate cargo.

1pm: Westbank First Nation 28th annual síya? celebration

The annual [síya? celebration](#) honours the land, resources, and the achievements and hard work of the school children as they near the end of the school year.

The COEDC works closely with [Westbank First Nation's Economic Development Commission](#) to provide economic development services to Westbank First Nation members, residents and businesses.

Did you know that the Westbank First Nation Economic Development Commission was the first First Nation's EDC in Canada?



2pm: New Business Opening



The most important (and most fun) part of my role as Business Development Officer is connecting with new and existing businesses for [in-depth site visits](#). The objective is to learn more about the opportunities and challenges of local businesses and identify trends in the region that we can help businesses mitigate or capitalize on, for example a skills shortage in a particular industry or demand for certain products in export markets.

This month I'm focusing on the rapidly expanding craft beverage market (tough job!). I visited [Truck 59 Cider](#) in West Kelowna prior to opening and came back to say congratulations on opening day!

3pm: Check-in with COEDC contractor

Local connector and wearer-of-many-hats Dustyn Baulkham runs the [COEDC Connector Program](#). Connector matches newcomers with well-networked local Connectors in the region. The Connectors are asked to meet the newcomer for coffee and provide them with at least three warm introductions to relevant people in their network. The newcomer then repeats the cycle with the new connections, allowing the newcomers to integrate quickly into the local professional community. Dustyn is also the Executive Director of [Artsco](#) and past president of the [Kelowna Pride Society](#). We caught up at his office in the Rotary Centre for the Arts.

Workforce development and talent attraction and recruitment is a key part of economic development. Okanagan businesses are growing and continue to express an urgent and immediate need for skilled workers. This is evidenced by a [58.1% increase in job](#)



[postings](#) in the first quarter of 2018. The COEDC is working to attract and retain skilled workforce through programs like Connector and the [Okanagan Young Professionals Collective](#) and informational resources like this [infographic](#) and our [Make Your Career Here](#) factsheet.

5pm: Camping time!

The best part of living and working in the Okanagan is easy access to the good stuff. It's more of what you want (Mountains! Lakes! Local produce!) and less of what you don't (Traffic! Pollution!). After a full week, I like to take advantage of the Okanagan lifestyle by packing up the family and heading to one of the many [lakeside campgrounds](#) less than 30 minutes from the front door. Nowhere does lifestyle like the Okanagan.

Thanks for following along on my #OKGNtech takeover. Follow @OKGNtech on instagram to catch more takeovers from the community. Check out the [AO blog](#) for all the latest in #OKGNtech and to meet the other Faces of #OKGNtech.

Krista

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