

Council Report No. PDS 176-2025
Date: October 21, 2025
File No. 6480-30

To: Mayor and Council
From: Ryan Perry, Senior Community Planner
Subject: Abbotsford 2050 OCP Update – Stage 4 Implementation Bylaws

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Bylaw No. 3690-2025, “Official Community Plan, 2016, Amendment Bylaw No. 036”, be read a first time;
2. That Bylaw No. 3691-2025, “Abbotsford Zoning Bylaw, 2014, Amendment Bylaw No. 723”, be read a first time;
3. That Bylaw No. 3692-2025, “Abbotsford Zoning Bylaw, 2014, Amendment Bylaw No. 724”, be read a first time;
4. That, following first reading of Bylaw No. 3690-2025, “Official Community Plan, 2016, Amendment Bylaw No. 036”, Bylaw No. 3691-2025, “Abbotsford Zoning Bylaw, 2014, Amendment Bylaw No. 723”, and Bylaw No. 3692-2025, “Abbotsford Zoning Bylaw, 2014, Amendment Bylaw No. 724”, Council direct staff to send the bylaws to the following entities requesting comment, pursuant to Sections 475 and 476 of the *Local Government Act*:
 - a. Agricultural Land Commission
 - b. BC Transit
 - c. City of Mission
 - d. City of Chilliwack
 - e. Township of Langley
 - f. Mathxwí (Matsqui) First Nation
 - g. Leq’á:mel First Nation
 - h. Semá:th (Sumas) First Nation
 - i. People of the River Referrals Office (PRRO)
 - j. Fraser Valley Regional District
 - k. Metro Vancouver
 - l. Ministry of Agriculture and Food
 - m. Ministry of Environment
 - n. Ministry of Transportation and Transit
 - o. School District No. 34 (Abbotsford)
 - p. School District No. 93 (Conseil scolaire francophone)
 - q. University of the Fraser Valley

5. That Council, having considered the following in the order outlined, give second reading to Bylaw No. 3690-2025, "Official Community Plan, 2016, Amendment Bylaw No. 036":
 - a. The City of Abbotsford's Financial Plan;
 - b. The City of Abbotsford's Wastewater System Master Plan;
 - c. The JAMES Wastewater Master Plan;
 - d. The Fraser Valley Regional District's Solid Waste Management Plan
 - e. The matters under section 475(2) of the Local Government Act and is satisfied that the consultation undertaken to date, plus the consultation directed herein, meets the requirements of section 475 of the Local Government Act; and
 - f. The matters under section 476(2) of the Local Government Act and is satisfied that the consultation with School District No. 34 (Abbotsford) Board of Education and School District No. 93 (Conseil scolaire francophone) undertaken to date, plus the additional consultation referenced above, meets the requirements of Section 476 of the Local Government Act;
6. That pursuant to section 477(3)(c) of the *Local Government Act*, Bylaw No. 3690-2025, "Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2016, Amendment Bylaw No. 036", be advanced to an upcoming Public Hearing;
7. That, following second reading of Bylaw No. 3690-2025, Official Community Plan, 2016, Amendment Bylaw No. 036", Council direct staff to request the Fraser Valley Regional District Board's acceptance of the Region Context Statement set out in the bylaw;
8. That Bylaw No. 3691-2025, "Abbotsford Zoning Bylaw, 2014, Amendment Bylaw No. 723", be read a second time, and advanced to a Public Hearing;
9. That Bylaw No. 3692-2025, "Abbotsford Zoning Bylaw, 2014, Amendment Bylaw No. 724", be read second time, and advanced to a Public Hearing;
10. That, prior to adoption of Bylaw No. 3691-2025, "Abbotsford Zoning Bylaw, 2014, Amendment Bylaw No. 723", and Bylaw No. 3692-2025, "Abbotsford Zoning Bylaw, 2014, Amendment Bylaw No. 724" the Ministry of Transportation and Transit approve the subject Bylaws;
11. That Council authorize staff to waive fees associated with converting Development Variance Permit applications to Development Permit applications where the Abbotsford 2050 regulations no longer trigger the need for a variance; and
12. That the Mayor and Corporate Officer be authorized to execute all documents related to this matter.

REPORT CONCURRENCE	
GENERAL MANAGER The General Manager concurs with the recommendation of this report.	CITY MANAGER The City Manager concurs with the recommendation of this report.

PURPOSE

To introduce Official Community Plan (OCP) and Zoning Bylaw amendment bylaws to implement recommended Abbotsford 2050 policy and regulation updates.

SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

Council's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan identifies an OCP Update as a priority action to, *"ensure development decisions are based on our long-term strategies and are not swayed from our community vision by short-term goals."*

Building on the comprehensive Abbotsford 2050 planning and engagement process, this report presents a coordinated package of OCP and Zoning Bylaw amendments to guide Abbotsford's growth and change over the next 25 years. The proposed amending bylaws are recommended for Council consideration of first and second reading.

BACKGROUND

The Official Community Plan is the City's primary planning document, providing a long-term growth vision that guides staff recommendations, and supports Council decision-making as Abbotsford's diverse neighbourhoods and the local economy evolve to accommodate a future population of 250,000 residents.

The Abbotsford 2050 OCP update is now nearing completion of its four-stage process, which has included extensive community engagement and regular reporting to Council.



The project was initially envisioned as a minor OCP update; however, shortly after project launch the Province introduced sweeping, province-wide housing legislation. This legislation established minimum development permissions for lands near transit exchanges and along frequent transit corridors, and significantly expanded allowances for Small Scale Multi-Unit Housing (SSMUH) in urban areas previously limited to single-detached dwellings or duplexes.

As a result, the amendments developed through the Abbotsford 2050 process are substantial, and build on the City's initial legislative SSMUH response in June 2024. The updates proposed in this report incorporate thoughtful, context-specific approaches tailored to Abbotsford and, in some cases, advance longer-term planning objectives that could be compromised if deferred in SSMUH-eligible areas.

Beyond legislative compliance, the proposed OCP and Zoning Bylaw updates strengthen Abbotsford's growth plan, positioning the city to address emerging opportunities, challenges, and the evolving needs of residents and businesses – both now and into the future.

The attached bylaws are the result of a comprehensive planning and engagement process, with regular progress updates shared with Council and the community at key milestones:

- Stage 1** On January 30, 2024, Council received the [Stage 1 Background Research Report \(PDS 010-2024\)](#) and directed staff to proceed to Stage 2.
- Stage 2** On November 24, 2025, Council received the [Stage 2 New Directions Report \(PDS 117-2024\)](#), which summarized engagement findings, and directed staff to begin Stage 3.
- Stage 3** On May 13, 2025, Council received the [Stage 3 Draft Policy & Regulation Report \(PDS 094-2025\)](#) and directed staff to engage the community on the draft OCP and Zoning Bylaw updates.
- On October 7, 2025, Council received the [Stage 3 Engagement & Refinements Report \(PDS 174-2025\)](#) and directed staff to prepare implementation bylaws as the final stage (Stage 4) of the Abbotsford 2050 project.
- Stage 4** Council consideration of the attached bylaws and a subsequent Public Hearing represent the final steps of the Abbotsford 2050 project, which remains on track for completion ahead of the legislated December 31, 2025 deadline.

DISCUSSION

OCP Amendments

The proposed OCP amendments (Bylaw No. 3690-2025) replace the main OCP document in-full (Schedule A) and amend all Neighbourhood Plans (Schedules B to E) to align policy content, maps, and graphics accordingly. The OCP bylaw closely reflects the draft OCP document attached to the October 7, 2025 Stage 3 Report (PDS 174-2025), with updates made to correct errors, clarify language, and address omissions.

While not exhaustive, the following provides a snapshot of key updates included in the proposed OCP bylaw. Detailed discussion of each item is provided in the May 13 & October 7, 2025 Stage 3 Reports:

- *Secondary Transit Corridors*: Introduces new 'Secondary Transit Corridors' connecting Highstreet and the hospital campus to the Primary Transit Corridor, guiding the prioritization of transit service with new housing, health services, and employment areas.
- *Urban Centres*: Increases height and development permissions in Urban Centres to support growth and housing along key transit routes.
- *Mill Lake South Urban Centre*: Establishes a new mixed-use Urban Centre between the hospital and Mill Lake Park to broaden housing options and provide complementary commercial uses near major amenities, transit, and health services.
- *Townhouse & Apartment*: Adds new townhouse and apartment areas near mixed use centres, south of the City Centre, and along major road corridors to increase housing supply and coordinate with transportation networks.
- *Neighbourhood Centres*: Expands development permissions in Neighbourhood Centres to support reinvestment in local shopping/service destinations and introduces new requirements for publicly accessible amenity/gathering space on larger sites.
- *Small Scale Multi-Unit Housing (SSMUH)*: Provides more flexible SSMUH options tailored to existing neighbourhood contexts, and in response to Provincial legislation.

- *Non-Market Housing*: Creates new opportunities for non-market housing (e.g., seniors, low income) on place of worship sites and land designated Urban Area Manufactured Home Park.
- *Gateway Commercial*: Introduces a new 'Gateway Commercial' use that elevates design expectations for commercial development at city entry points and permits hotels up to 6 storeys.
- *Truck Parking*: Establishes a new Light Industrial land use designation to provide targeted commercial truck parking opportunities near Fraser Highway.
- *Parks and Open Space*: Updates parks mapping and policies to strengthen guidance for planning, integrating and acquiring new park space as the city grows.
- *Policies Supporting Big Ideas*: Adds and updates policies that support arts, culture, heritage, accessibility, climate resilience, and a strong local economy.
- *Development Permit Guidelines*: Updates Development Permit Area guidelines to refine regulations that support residential livability, manage the urban-natural area interface, and improve overall development implementation.

OCP Transition for Rezoning Applications In-Process

The proposed OCP includes provisions to facilitate a smooth transition for in-stream rezoning proposals that were consistent with the current (2016) OCP at the time of application but do not align with the proposed Abbotsforward 2050 land use framework.

For in-stream rezoning applications that do not involve an OCP amendment application, the updated OCP will deem these applications consistent with the OCP until they are completed, withdrawn, or expire in accordance with the *Development Application Procedures Bylaw, 2016*.

Zoning Bylaw Amendments

Two Zoning Bylaw amendment bylaws are proposed to implement the updated Abbotsforward 2050 vision and direction of the OCP. Bylaw No. 3691-2025 proposes to update Zoning Bylaw regulations, and Bylaw No. 3692-2025 proposes to update the Zoning Bylaw map.

Bylaw No. 3691-2025 (Zoning Bylaw Regulations)

Proposed Zoning Bylaw Regulation updates closely coordinate with the OCP amendments, with examples of key changes provided below:

- *Definitions*: Updates/adds definitions to support implementation of SSMUH regulations, including a new definition for *Impermeable Surface* to regulate hard surfaces. Other updates exclude a portion of attached garage in the definition of *Floor Area, Net*.
- *General Regulations*:
 - Updates text to cross-reference new zone names
 - Adds new landscaping standards
 - Increases maximum size for secondary suites
 - Flags that housing in the ALR is subject to the *ALC Act*
 - Updates Density Bonus Eligibility Area to include Urban Centres, per the OCP.
- *Parking*: Harmonizes parking requirement for all townhouse development with 4 or fewer units at 1.5 stalls/unit. Adds parking requirements/regulations for commercial truck parking.

- **Small Scale Multi-Unit Housing Zones:** Adds seven new zones to enable SSMUH, tailored to location and neighbourhood context. Background/rationale on the proposed SSMUH changes is provided in the October 7, 2025 Stage 3 – Engagement & Refinements report.
- **New Zones:** Adds new zones to implement key OCP designations:
 - Urban Centres
 - Neighbourhood Centres
 - Light Industrial (commercial truck parking).
- **Zone Updates:** Amends the following zones to align with updated OCP designations:
 - City Centre Residential Zone (RMC)
 - Regional Commercial Zone (CRZ)
 - City Centre Mixed Use Zone (CCM)
 - Historic Downtown Commercial Zone (C7)
 - Health Campus Zone (P8)

Bylaw No. 3692-2025 (Zoning Bylaw Map)

Bylaw No. 3692-2025 proposes Zoning map amendments applicable to approximately 20,700 properties. Apart from one location proposed for P8 Health Campus Zoning, the properties proposed for rezoning within the Urban Development Boundary are eligible for small-scale multi-unit housing and the zoning coordinates with the vision of the OCP. Table 1 provides an allocation breakdown of the new zones.

Generally, the proposed amendments increase development flexibility and strive to minimize instances of bylaw non-conformity for existing properties. Furthermore, where a property has site-specific zoning permission, these provisions are carried forward.

Table 1 – Proposed SSMUH Zoning Allocation

Proposed Zone	# of lots
Townhouse 1	1,680
Townhouse 2	1,110
SSMUH 1	3,160
SSMUH 2	13,230
SSMUH 2-g	1,140
SSMUH 3	250
SSMUH 4	130
Total	20,700

In addition to the rezonings summarized above, the amendment also incorporates housekeeping changes to eliminate redundancies. For example, RS3-A sites located outside the Urban Development Boundary are now proposed as RS3 zoning given the June 2024 change to permit secondary suites.

Proposed Zoning Bylaw Transition

Bylaw No. 3692-2025 [Zoning Map amendments] proposes to ease the transition to new zones by granting in-stream protection to all lots with a development application submitted prior to the date Bylaw No. 3692-2025 [map] is ultimately adopted.

In essence, for all properties with an in-stream development application, the proposed Zoning identified in Bylaw No. 3692-2025 only takes effect if the application is withdrawn, denied, or cancelled in accordance with the Development Application Procedures Bylaw, or if the applicant

requests, in writing, to receive the new zoning. Otherwise, where in-stream development applications are successfully completed, properties will retain the related zoning.

Housing Needs Report

In accordance with the *Local Government Act*, Council received the Interim Housing Needs Report (HNR) on October 30, 2024, which identifies a 20-year housing need of 37,185 units. By staff estimates, the proposed updates to the Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw enable sufficient capacity to accommodate the anticipated 20-year housing need.

Regional Context Statement

In 2024, the Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD) adopted a new Regional Growth Strategy, *Fraser Valley Future 2050*. Under the *Local Government Act*, municipalities must have an updated and accepted Regional Context Statement (RCS) within two years of a Regional Growth Strategy being adopted. For the City of Abbotsford, this deadline is April 25, 2026.

The RCS confirms alignment of an OCP with the regional planning framework established by the FVRD. The *Local Government Act* requires that an OCP include a RCS identifying the relationship between the OCP and the Regional Growth Strategy and demonstrating consistency between the two. The proposed OCP amendments are consistent with FVRD's Regional Growth Strategy.

To meet these legislative requirements, Part 8 of the updated OCP (Bylaw No. 3690-2025) includes a new RCS. Staff recommend forwarding the proposed RCS to the FVRD for consideration and acceptance following first and second reading of the amendment bylaws.

Development Variance Permit Fees

Updated policies and regulations proposed through Abbotsforward 2050 bylaws may no longer trigger the need for a bylaw variance for some in-stream applications. Staff recommend that Council authorize staff to waive the fee associated with converting a Development Variance Permit to a Development Permit to support the transition to new regulations.

NEXT STEPS

Following 1st and 2nd reading, pursuant to section 477 of the *Local Government Act*, Council must consider Bylaw No. 3690-2025, "Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2016, Amendment Bylaw No. 036", in conjunction with the City of Abbotsford's Financial Plan, Wastewater System Master Plan, and JAMES Wastewater Master Plan, and the Fraser Valley Regional District's Solid Waste Management Plan.

Financial Plan

The primary mechanism for funding development set out in the OCP will be through developers paying for the necessary infrastructure as new projects proceed, as well as strategic capital investment guided by City master plans. This is consistent with the City's existing Financial Plan.

Waste Management Plans

The Abbotsforward 2050 OCP planning process involved City Engineering staff as part of the interdepartmental project working group, helping inform the draft policy concepts and approaches over the course of the project. Following completion of the Abbotsforward 2050 OCP project, the City will be reviewing and potentially updating applicable infrastructure Master Plans in coordination with the proposed land use and policy changes.

Referrals

Pending first and second reading of the OCP and Zoning amendment bylaws, staff will undertake the referral process, pursuant to the *Local Government Act*. All written comments received will be provided at the public hearing.

Public Hearing

To allow for the 30-day referral period, staff recommend scheduling a Public Hearing for November 25, 2025. Staff anticipate presenting the OCP and Zoning Bylaw amendment bylaws in tandem at the Public Hearing for comment in consideration of the close link and given that the proposed Zoning Bylaw amendments do not solely deal with residential matters.

Should the bylaws advance through initial readings, next steps will involve the Public Hearing, Council consideration of third reading, request for Ministry of Transportation and Transit Zoning Bylaw approval, and Council consideration of final adoption for the three bylaws.

Post-Adoption

Given the broad scope of the proposed updates, staff anticipate the potential need to follow the Abbotsford 2050 initiative with post-adoption OCP and Zoning Bylaw amendments aimed at addressing any errors, omissions, or implementing coordinated changes. Staff will monitor for any post-adoption issues/items and report back to Council should the need for subsequent amendments arise.

FINANCIAL PLAN IMPLICATION

Council's latest Five-Year Financial Plan Bylaw includes a budget of \$250,000 to update the Official Community Plan. Project costs to-date total approximately \$135,000. Staff anticipate a budget of approximately \$115,000 remaining. As the funding for this project has been received through the Province's Local Government Housing Initiative Fund, the remainder may be available for other eligible projects if they meet the grant requirements.

IMPACTS ON COUNCIL POLICIES, STRATEGIC PLAN AND/OR COUNCIL DIRECTION

The OCP update is an 'action' identified under Goal 4 of Principle 1 in Council's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. Updating the Official Community Plan ensures that one of the City's central policy documents remains responsive to current legislation, challenges, aspirations and opportunities.

SUBSTANTIATION OF RECOMMENDATION

The attached bylaws implement the recommended changes stemming from a comprehensive planning and community engagement process. Staff recommend granting first and second reading to the OCP and Zoning Bylaws.

APPROVALS (Clerk's Office Use Only)

General Manager Approval
Chief Financial Officer Approval

City Manager Approval

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Bylaw No. 3690-2025, OCP Amendment Bylaw No. 036

Attachment B – Bylaw No. 3691-2025, Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 723 [Regulations]

Attachment C – Bylaw No. 3692-2025, Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 724 [Map]

Attachment D – Presentation