COUNCIL REPORT

Regular Council

Report No. PDS 010-2024

Date: January 24, 2024
File No: 6480-30 N/A

To: Mayor and Council
From: Ryan Perry, Community Planner
Subject: Official Community Plan Update: Abbotsforward 2050

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council endorse the Official Community Plan (OCP) Update Work Plan, as attached to this report;

2. That Council endorse the OCP Update Engagement Strategy, as outlined in the Abbotsforward 2050 Stage 1 Background Research Report, pursuant to Section 475 of the *Local Government Act*; and

3. That Council direct staff to begin Stage 2 of the Official Community Plan Update.

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 present the Official Community Plan (OCP) Update Stage 1 Background Research Report, seek Council endorsement of the project work plan and engagement strategy, and request Council direction to move into Stage 2 of the project.

SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

Council identified an OCP update as a priority action of the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan to "ensure development decisions are based on our long-term strategies and are not swayed from our community vision by short-term goals". In the months following Strategic Plan adoption, the Province passed legislation changes aimed at increasing housing supply in BC, some of which trigger OCP changes. To advance the OCP Update and address legislation, staff have prepared a project work plan (Attachment A) and Stage 1 Background Research Report, complete with engagement strategy (Attachment B), for Council consideration. This report is now before Council to conclude Stage 1 and request direction to move to Stage 2.

BACKGROUND

Following Council adoption of the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan in January 2023, staff initially expected to undertake a comprehensive OCP 'tune-up' that would include strategic opportunities to strengthen housing policy. However, legislation (Bills 44 & 47) passed in November 2023 introduced significant Province-wide housing development options that must be integrated into local government zoning bylaws by June 2024 and reflected in all OCPs by the end of 2025. The Housing section of this report provides further detail on key changes.

Frequency of OCP Updates

Prior to Bill 44, it was typical for a local government to update its OCP every five to ten years to ensure policies continue to align with the community's growth vision and the changing needs of residents, businesses, and the local economy. Abbotsford's last OCP update was in 2016.

In November, 2023, the Province amended the *Local Government Act (LGA)* to mandate an OCP update every five years, in coordination with a new Housing Needs Report. This legislation requires all municipalities to prepare a new Interim Housing Needs Report by December 31, 2024 and complete a coordinated OCP update by December 31, 2025 – this cycle is to be repeated every five years, starting in 2028.

Building on the Abbotsforward 2016 OCP

Abbotsford's OCP, adopted in 2016, introduced a major turning point for city growth. The Plan sets a vision and framework for how Abbotsford will grow to 200,000 people and work towards seven transformative "big ideas". It establishes an urban structure comprised of distributed mixed-use centres contained within an urban development boundary. The aim is to direct 75% of new growth to existing neighbourhoods to make efficient use of existing infrastructure and amenities.

Since adoption of the 2016 OCP, the City has completed numerous supporting master plans, neighbourhood plans, strategies, and bylaws that align with and implement the OCP vision.

Statistics Canada (Table:17-10-0142-01) and BC Stats 'population estimates' indicate that Abbotsford added over 16,700 new residents between 2016 and 2021, representing an 11.3% population increase, and an annual growth rate (2.17%) that is outpacing the medium-growth scenario of the 2016 OCP (1.5%). If this trajectory continues, the City is on pace to reach 200,000 people sooner than expected.

Rapid population growth is not unique to Abbotsford and is evident regionally, provincially, and nationally. However, the 2016-2021 rate of population increase in Abbotsford and the Fraser Valley has exceeded that of the lower mainland, Vancouver and the province overall.

The OCP update process provides an opportunity to build on the successes of the existing Plan, while ensuring land use policies respond to changing needs and pressures, both today and into the future.

Housing | A Changing Planning Context

The OCP review provides an opportunity to coordinate with the findings of the City's Housing Needs Report, per LGA s.473 requirements, and reflect-on the goals of the 2020 Affordable Housing Strategy and 2022 Homelessness Action Plan.

While housing has always been part of the OCP project scope, recent senior government actions have amplified the required attention to this topic. Section 6.1 of the Background Research Report provides more detail on senior government initiatives that will involve OCP alignment or preparation of new OCP policy directions:

- The *Housing Supply Act, 2022* sets a Provincially legislated target for the construction of 7,240 new homes in Abbotsford over the next five years.
- The *Housing Statutes Amendments Act, 2023* requires the City to:
    - update City regulation to permit a secondary suite and/or a detached accessory unit on all lots zoned for single-detached dwellings, including those beyond the Urban Development Boundary (UDB);
    - update City regulation to permit three to four dwelling units on lots zoned for single-detached or duplex within the UDB, subject to exceptions;
    - designate lands within 400 m of a Provincially identified transit exchange (i.e., Bourquin) as a 'Transit Oriented Area', and facilitate minimum residential development heights and densities (6-10 storeys) within the Transit Oriented Area;
    - prepare a new *Interim Housing Needs Report* by December 31, 2024; further information on the required methodology is expected in 2024;
    - update the OCP by December 31, 2025 to consider the Interim Housing Needs Report and align with new mandated development permissions.
- The *Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF)* is a 2023 CMHC facilitated federal grant competition tied to local government commitments aimed at increasing local housing supply. Working in close consultation with CMHC, the City submitted an application to the HAF program in June 2023, which included seven Council endorsed (May 2024) housing initiatives. A decision on the application is pending.

DISCUSSION

Staff started work on OCP update Stage 1 in spring 2023, following Council adoption of the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan and approval of the project budget. Progress to-date includes comprehensive background research to establish a baseline understanding of today's planning context (including legislation changes), preparation of a project work plan, early engagement with local First Nations, and development of an engagement strategy to solicit meaningful input over the course of the project.

Work Plan

The OCP update is anticipated to take 18-24 months under a proposed work plan (Attachment A) that follows the City's familiar four stage process: (1) Background Research, (2) Explore New Directions, (3) Prepare New Policy, and (4) Adopt an Updated Plan. The project is now at the end of Stage 1, and the overall project will conclude prior to the December 31, 2025 legislated deadline.



Similar to previous planning projects, Stage 1 will formally conclude with Council receiving the attached Background Research Report (Attachment B). Stage 2 will focus on validating and further understanding the key issues and opportunities facing Abbotsford today and into the future, which will inform a series of high-level 'new directions' aimed at strengthening the OCP. Stage 3 will prepare specific policies based on the high-level new directions. Stage 4 will conclude the process by refining the draft policy and preparing an OCP amendment bylaw for Council consideration.

City staff will lead the OCP update process, supported by strategic involvement of consultant subject matter experts for components of the work. Attachment A provides a more detailed overview of the proposed Work Plan.

Stage 1 Background Research Report

The Background Research Report (Attachment B) provides an important baseline for exploring and discussing OCP improvements. It summarizes key changes and progress since the last OCP update in 2016, highlights some of the challenges impacting Abbotsford residents and businesses, and outlines early ideas and legislated requirements to 'jump-start' dialogue on potential OCP changes.

The Stage 1 report is organized into the following sections:

1.0 Introduction	Outlines purpose of an OCP, reasons for an update, and a summary of the four-stage planning process
2.0 Abbotsford Today	Analyzes demographic and housing characteristics, highlighting changes since the last OCP update
3.0 OCP Progress Report	Evaluates progress the City has made towards the vision & big ideas of the 2016 OCP
4.0 Existing Plans & Strategies	Highlights key City master plans, strategies and other initiatives closely tied to the OCP
5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples & Communities	Discusses local First Nation neighbours and recent federal and provincial actions related to UNDRIP
6.0 Challenges, Change, & Opportunity	Provides a preliminary assessment of challenges impacting residents and recent legislation changes
7.0 Engagement Strategy	Proposes a project engagement strategy in consideration of *LGA* requirements & early First Nations feedback
8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue	Outlines early OCP ideas to start community dialogue on OCP improvements and changes
9.0 Next Steps	Summarizes upcoming work leading from Stage 1

Project Branding & Identity

The 2016 OCP update was effective in raising community awareness of the planning process through a recognizable branding strategy - *Abbotsforward*. Given the strength of the existing OCP and the memorable *Abbotsforward* branding, staff propose to build on the previous process with an adapted brand for this update.



Abbotsforward 2050 is proposed to represent the next iteration of the Abbotsforward OCP vision, extending the planning outlook to the next 25 years.

Project Objectives

Based on preliminary review and background research, the following objectives are proposed to guide the OCP update process:

- Undertake robust and inclusive community engagement
- Understand how Abbotsford has changed since adoption of the 2016 OCP
- Understand the key challenges impacting residents and future growth of the city, such as housing and climate change
- Affirm the OCP vision, big ideas, and urban structure
- Increase housing supply in coordination with Provincial legislation changes
- Build on the successes of the existing OCP and identify areas for improvement
- Evaluate strategic land use and policy changes to support the goals of the plan
- Review development design guidelines to contribute to attractive and livable communities, particularly in multi-family areas
- Coordinate OCP policy with recent City plans and strategies
- Build on the recently completed AgRefresh process with a focus shift to urban areas

Engagement | Overall Project

Section 7.0 of the Stage 1 Report (Attachment B) outlines a high-level Engagement Strategy to guide public consultation throughout the project. Section 475 of the *Local Government Act* requires Council to consider consultation with certain groups such as First Nations, school districts, regional districts, neighbouring municipalities and other government agencies.

While Stage 1 largely focused on work planning and research, a key step involved early staff-to-staff engagement with local First Nations (Leq'a:mel, Mathxwí, and Semà:th) to understand how each Nation prefers to be engaged during the OCP update process. A meeting with staff from the People of the River Referrals Office (Stó:lō Nation) is planned for early 2024. Feedback is highlighted and reflected in the Engagement Strategy in section 7.0 of the Background Research Report.

Engagement | Stage 2 New Directions

Building on the overall project engagement strategy, Stage 2 will undertake broad outreach, and may include the following approaches:

Online Engagement	Launch Let's Talk project page as a central online location to learn about the OCP update, provide feedback, and stay involved.
In-Person Event/ Open House(s)	In-person event to share background research, discuss key issues/ ways to improve OCP, and get input on early ideas (Spring 2024)
Local First Nations	In coordination with First Nation staff, engagement may involve staff-to-staff meetings, touch points with committees and Chief/Council
Direct Contact	Written contact to raise awareness of project & engagement: • Special interest organizations • Government agencies - meetings, as requested
Council Committees	Project introduction and invitation to the Special Interest Organizations workshop (Spring 2024)
World Café	Interactive workshop with Special Interest Organizations to discuss key issues and get feedback on early ideas for OCP (Spring 2024).
Social Media	Raise awareness of opportunities to learn/provide feedback (on-going).
Advertising	Advertising focused on social and print media

The OCP Update Let's Talk project page will launch following Council receipt of the Stage 1 Background Research Report.

FINANCIAL PLAN IMPLICATION

Council's latest Five-Year Financial Plan Bylaw includes a budget of $250,000 to update the Official Community Plan. Staff do not anticipate further financial plan implications at this point, but acknowledge that an update to the OCP will likely drive updates to related City master plans at a future date.

Komal Basatia

Komal Basatia
General Manager, Finance and Procurement Services
Signed 1/22/2024 1:33 PM

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

This initiative is a key 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

In January 2023, Council prioritized an update to the Official Community Plan as part of the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. This report presents the Stage 1 Background Research Report as a baseline for the remaining stages of the OCP Update planning process.

Staff Recommend that Council endorse the proposed work plan and engagement strategy, and direct staff to proceed with Stage 2 New Directions of the OCP update.

Ryan Perry

Ryan Perry
Community Planner
Signed 1/12/2024 2:01 PM

Mark Neill

Mark Neill
General Manager, Planning and Development Services
Signed 1/22/2024 9:17 AM

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A - Official Community Plan Update Work Plan
Attachment B - OCP Update Stage 1 Background Research Report
Attachment C - Presentation

OCP Update Work Plan (18 to 24 Months)

Key Tasks

- Review relevant City Plans & Strategies
- Undertake research & analysis
- Review and monitor Provincial legislation
- Identify preliminary issues and ideas
- Prepare Background Research Report with Engagement Strategy

Engagement

- Staff Technical Advisory Group (TAG)
- Strategic Leadership Team (SLT)
- Early connection with local First Nations
- Council Presentation/Report

Key Tasks

- Validate key issues and early ideas for OCP improvement
- Analyze and address Provincial housing legislation
- Discuss and identify New Directions to guide new policies
- Test and analyze preliminary ideas
- Prepare a “New Directions Report”

Engagement

- Community: Let’s Talk online & open house(s)
- World Café with Special Interest Organizations
- Direct contact: First Nations & Government Agencies
- Council Committees, SLT, and TAG
- Council presentation and stage report



Key Tasks

- Draft new and updated OCP policies based on New Directions
- Technical testing of draft policies
- Engagement on draft policies
- Refine draft policies
- Prepare a “Draft Policies Report”

Engagement

- Community: Let’s Talk online & in-person event/open house(s)
- Direct contact: First Nations, Special Interest Organizations, and Government Agencies
- Council Committees, SLT, and TAG
- Council presentation, and stage report



Key Tasks

- Refine OCP policies
- Prepare and present OCP amendment Bylaw to Council
- Adopt the bylaw

Engagement

- SLT/TAG
- Formal Referrals
- Public Hearing

abbotsfwd 2050

OCP UPDATE | STAGE 1 BACKGROUND RESEARCH REPORT

January 30, 2024



ABBOTSFORD

Blank for double-sided printing

Contents

1.0 Introduction 5
1.1 What is an Official Community Plan (OCP)
1.2 Why update the OCP?
1.3 Planning Process
1.4 What does this process mean for residents?
1.5 This Document
1.6 Abbotsforward 2050 Objectives
1.7 Foundational OCP Excerpts
1.8 Relationship of OCP to Legislation, Plans & Strategies

2.0 Abbotsford Today 9
2.1 Who We Are
2.2 Where We Live
2.3 Where We Work & What We Do

3.0 OCP Progress Report 25
3.1 Urban Structure & Growth Plan
3.2 Big Idea | Create a City Centre
3.3 Big Idea | Establish Distinct + Complete Communities
3.4 Big Idea | Make Walking, Biking, + Transit Delightful
3.5 Big Idea | Make Places for People
3.6 Big Idea | Improve Natural + Built Systems
3.7 Big Idea | Enhance Agricultural Integrity

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies 43
4.1 Strategic Plan 2022-2026
4.2 Water, Sanitary Sewer, Stormwater, & Waste
4.3 Parks, Recreation and Culture (PRC)
4.4 Housing
4.5 Agriculture
4.6 Summary of Major Plans & Strategies

5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples & Communities 67
5.1 Local Indigenous Peoples & Communities

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity 71
6.1 Housing
» Federal Action on Housing
» Provincial Action on Housing | Recent Legislation Changes
6.2 Climate Change

7.0 Engagement Strategy 93
7.1 Who we will engage
7.2 How we will engage

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue 101
8.1 The Big Picture
8.2 Bold steps to increase housing supply
8.3 Strategic Policy Updates

9.0 Next Steps 109

10.0 Sources 110

11.0 Appendices 111
11.1 Existing OCP | Urban Land Use
11.2 Existing OCP | Rural Land Use
11.3 Existing OCP | City Centre Land Use Plan
11.4 Existing OCP | UDistrict Land Use Plan
11.5 Existing OCP | Historic Downtown Land Use Plan
11.6 Existing OCP | McKee Land Use Plan



Figures

Fig. 1 Abbotsforward 2050 Planning Process 6
Fig. 2 5-year Population Increase (2016-2021) 10
Fig. 3 Abbotsford's Population Growth (estimates) 1921-2021 10
Fig. 4 Abbotsford's Historical Growth Pattern 11
Fig. 5 City-wide Age Breakdown, 2021 13
Fig. 6 Median Age by Community 13
Fig. 7 Immigrants by Top Countries of Origin (2021) 14
Fig. 8 Proportion of Immigrant residents by Community (2021) 14
Fig. 9 City-wide Education Level 2016-2021 15
Fig. 10 City-Wide Average Household Size by Unit Type 2021 16
Fig. 11 Incomes, Rents, & House Prices 17
Fig. 12 Owner vs. Renter Households by Community 17
Fig. 13 Average Abbotsford Dwelling Value 2011-2021 17
Fig. 14 Permits Issued for Purpose-Built Rentals 2016-2022 (City building permit data) 18
Fig. 15 Abbotsford Residential Rental Vacancy Rate 2016-2022 18
Fig. 16 Average Apartment Rents in Abbotsford 2016-2022 (CMHC) 18
Fig. 17 Abbotsford Housing Stock City-wide 2021 19
Fig. 18 Housing Stock by Community 2021 19
Fig. 19 Age of City-wide Housing Stock (2021) 20
Fig. 20 Age of Housing Stock by Community 2021 20
Fig. 21 Labour Force by Industry (NAICS) 2016-2021 23
Fig. 22 Commuting Duration 2021 24
Fig. 23 2019 - 2023 Transit Ridership Trends for all trips 24
Fig. 24 Source: BC Transit Data Portal, September 2023 24
Fig. 25 2016 OCP Urban Structure 26
Fig. 26 Commercial Growth 2016 - July 2022 (approved rezonings & DPs) 27
Fig. 27 City Centre Development Approvals 2016-2022 28
Fig. 28 City-wide Residential Development Approvals 2016-2022 30
Fig. 29 Housing Stock 2011-2021 Census 30
Fig. 30 Recently approved rental apartment projects 31
Fig. 31 Reduced parking along the Primary Transit Corridor 35
Fig. 32 Culture Connect Culture Strategy At A Glance 37
Fig. 33 Rental vacancy rates comparison [apartments] 72
Fig. 34 Age breakdown 73
Fig. 35 Breakdown of households (HH's) by size over time 73
Fig. 36 Distribution of populations experiencing homelessness 74
Fig. 37 National Housing Strategy Targets (Canada 2017, p. 6) 76
Fig. 38 National Housing Strategy Investment - Excerpt (Canada 2017, p. 7) 76
Fig. 39 Excerpt from Provincial Homes for People Action Plan (pps 6-7) 79
Fig. 40 Provincial Legislation Timeline 82
Fig. 41 Total households experiencing core housing need 84
Fig. 42 Corporate emissions 2007 vs. 2022 88
Fig. 43 Current OCP Urban Structure: Part II - 1- 2 103

Maps

Map 1 Community Boundaries Map 12
Map 2 Median Household Income by Community 2021 15
Map 3 Average Household Size by Community 2021 16
Map 4 Population | Gross Residential Densities by Census Dissemination Area 21
Map 5 Dwelling Units | Gross Residential Densities by Census Dissemination Area 22
Map 6 Examples of Recent City Centre Development Approvals & Applications 29
Map 7 Natural and environmental features influencing growth patterns 48
Map 8 Abbotsford Transit Network 2020-2025 54
Map 9 Urban Node Pedestrian Priority Areas 55
Map 10 Long Term Bicycle Network Plan 56
Map 11 OCP Map 4 - Road Classification Network 57
Map 12 2018 PRC Master Plan | Parks and Trails: Existing Assets Future Priorities 59
Map 13 2018 PRC Master Plan | Recreation Facilities: Existing Assets & Future Priorities 60
Map 14 2018 PRC Master Plan | Culture: Existing Assets & Future Priorities 61
Map 15 Abbotsford's ALR and OCP Urban Development Boundary 63
Map 16 Federal Indian Reserve Lands and Abbotsford 70
Map 17 Emergency and Supportive Housing 75
Map 18 Conceptual Primary Transit Corridor Extension 104

Acronyms

ACC	Amenity Cost Charge	SSMUH	Small-Scale, Multi-Unit Housing
ALR	Agricultural Land Reserve	UDB	Urban Development Boundary
DCC	Development Cost Charge	ZB	Zoning Bylaw
DP	Development Permit		
LGA	Local Government Act		
OCP	Official Community Plan		

1.0 Introduction

1.1 What is an Official Community Plan (OCP)

The OCP is Abbotsford's roadmap for the future. It provides comprehensive and coordinated guidance on how neighbourhoods and employment areas will grow and change within the City.

More specifically, an OCP sets the strategic vision for the community, addressing land use, housing, transportation, economic growth, and environmental preservation. The OCP serves as a framework for making decisions about zoning, development permits, and infrastructure investments.

The process to update an OCP involves public input to ensure the community's aspirations and needs are considered. By clearly outlining goals ('Big Ideas'), the location of land uses, policies, and guidelines, the OCP aims to create a vibrant, sustainable, and cohesive community, aligning development with the values and preferences of its residents, while adhering to regulatory frameworks.

Legislated Requirements

Local governments in British Columbia are granted the authority to adopt an OCP under the *Local Government Act* (LGA), which stipulates what must or may be included the Plan.

Provincial legislation also sets out OCP consultation requirements and Council OCP bylaw adoption procedures. Most recently, the Province enacted the *Housing Supply Act* (Bill 43, 2022) and several housing-related changes to the *Local Government Act* (Bills 44, 46, 47, 2023), which are expected to have a notable influence on this OCP update process.

This report outlines a work plan and engagement strategy aligned with legislation.

1.2 Why update the OCP?

With the population in Canada pushing over 40 million, growth pressures and related impacts are evident throughout the country. Within this context, Abbotsford is a high-growth municipality that experienced an 11.3% population increase between 2016 and 2021 (according to 2023 Statistics Canada Population Estimates), exceeding the growth rate of the Lower Mainland and the province overall.

Abbotsford's growth and evolution brings many exciting positive changes, new opportunities, and a stronger local economy, but there are also broader-reaching challenges that need to be considered as Abbotsford matures into a larger city. Issues related to housing supply, affordability, and climate change have become more visible and acute since the last OCP update (2016), impacting local residents and the Canadian population as a whole.

This OCP update process was identified as a priority in Council's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, providing an opportunity to build on the successes of existing OCP policy, while ensuring land use policies respond to changing needs and pressures, both today and into the future.

1.3 Planning Process

The OCP update will be completed through the following four stage process over a period of approximately 18-24 months:



Stage 1 work sets a baseline understanding of how Abbotsford has changed since the last OCP update and summarizes progress under the existing plan. This work helps identify challenges that need to be addressed and outlines early ideas for discussion in Stage 2.



Stage 2 will focus on validating and further understanding key issues and opportunities facing Abbotsford today and into the future. This will be done through an engagement process framed by the background research and preliminary ideas/changes for the future. This stage will ultimately prepare a series of high level 'New Directions' to guide the preparation of more specific policy.



Stage 3 will focus on preparing new and updated policy based on the higher level new directions identified in Stage 2. This stage will involve technical testing and further community engagement on draft policies.



Stage 4 will focus on refining the updated OCP and presenting the plan bylaw for Council consideration.

FIG. 1 ABBOTSFORWARD 2050 PLANNING PROCESS

1.4 What does this process mean for residents?

An Official Community Plan (OCP) update holds significant implications for its residents, businesses, and landowners. The process involves reflecting on the city's long-term vision for guiding land use, housing, transportation, and supporting infrastructure.

For residents, this planning process provides a voice in shaping the city's growth and managing urban development. The OCP update process can help address current and emerging challenges, enhance amenities, coordinate transportation and land use, and promote a balanced mix of housing options.

Resident involvement ensures their values are reflected, influencing policies that impact their daily lives, the environment, and future generations.

1.5 This Document

This document is one of the first steps in the planning process, providing the following as a foundation for future stages of work:

- a comprehensive overview of how Abbotsford has changed since the last OCP update, in relation to demographics, land use, employment, infrastructure, and public spaces
- progress made towards the objectives and policies of the current Official Community Plan
- preliminary issues, challenges and opportunities for consideration as new policy is prepared
- early ideas to jump-start dialogue on possible new policy directions
- project work plan and engagement strategy to gather meaningful input from the community

1.6 Abbotsforward 2050 Objectives

The following objectives will guide the OCP update over its four stage process:

- Undertake robust and inclusive community engagement
- Understand how Abbotsford has changed since adoption of the 2016 OCP
- Understand and explore opportunities to address key challenges impacting residents and future growth in the city, such as housing and climate change
- Affirm the OCP vision, big ideas, and urban structure
- Increase housing supply in coordination with Provincial legislation changes
- Build on the successes of the existing OCP and identify areas for improvement
- Evaluate strategic land use and policy changes to support the goals of the plan
- Review development design standards and guidelines to contribute to attractive and liveable communities, particularly in multi-family areas
- Coordinate OCP policy with recent City plans and strategies
- Build on the recently completed AgRefresh process with a focus on urban areas

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

1. Updated Official Community Plan policy & mapping
2. Updated Development Permit Area Guidelines
3. Coordinated Zoning Bylaw recommendations

1.7 Foundational OCP Excerpts

Vision

Abbotsford is a city of distinct and increasingly complete neighbourhoods rich with public life. Our compact urban area is anchored by a thriving City Centre and surrounded by remarkable natural areas and flourishing agricultural lands. We are diverse, inclusive, and connected. We are green, prosperous, and healthy. We are a vibrant and beautiful community.

Big Ideas

The City's Official Community Plan is organized around 7 "Big Ideas" that comprise the most essential and transformative ingredients of the Plan. Throughout this report, the following icons will be used to highlight content related to each big idea.



CREATE A CITY CENTRE



ESTABLISH DISTINCT & COMPLETE NEIGHBOURHOODS



MAKE WALKING, BIKING, & TRANSIT DELIGHTFUL



MAKE PLACES FOR PEOPLE



IMPROVE NATURAL & BUILT SYSTEMS

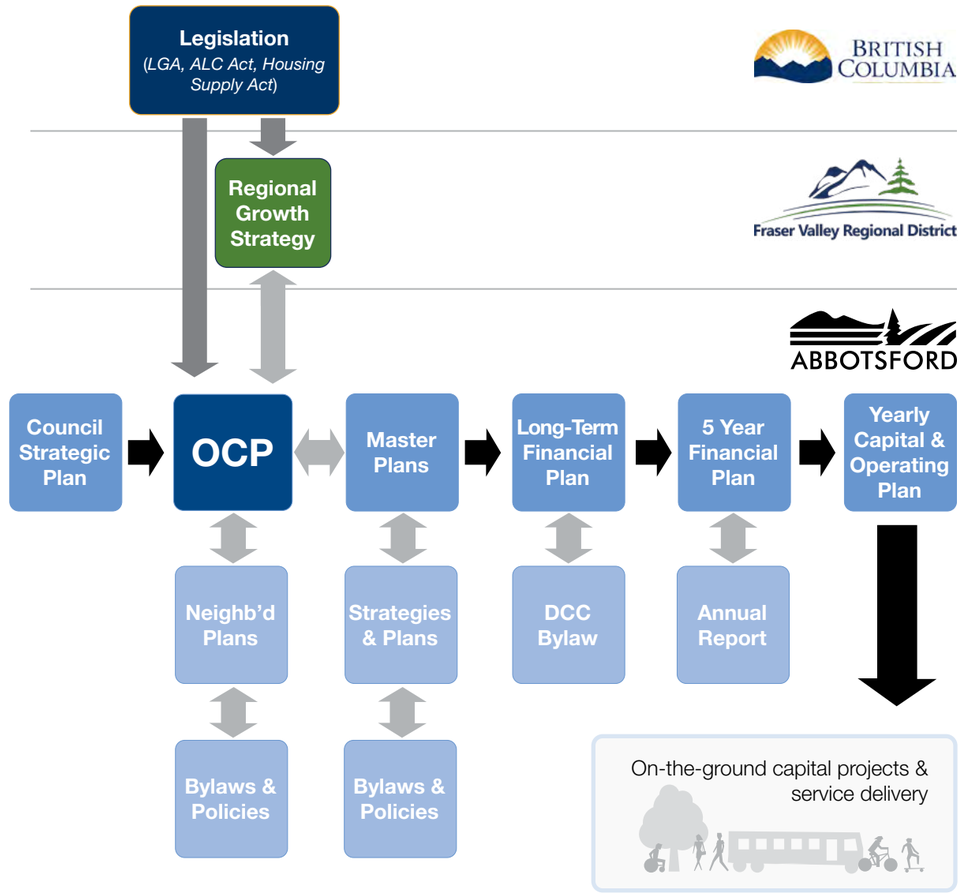


ENHANCE AGRICULTURAL INTEGRITY



MAKE THE PLAN WORK

1.8 Relationship of OCP to Legislation, Plans & Strategies



* Regionally, Abbotsford plays a central role in joint planning and coordination of utility services with neighbouring communities, such as water supply and sewer collection/treatment (e.g. Mission, Sumas)

2.0 Abbotsford Today

An important first step in updating the Official Community Plan is understanding where we are today. This section establishes a baseline for Abbotsford, focused around the following 3 key themes:

- Who We Are
- Where We Live
- Where We Work & What We Do

Where relevant, data on the following pages is presented at the community-level, in accordance with the Community Boundaries Map on the following page. Unless otherwise stated, the data presented in this section is from the 2021 Census.

2.1 Who We Are

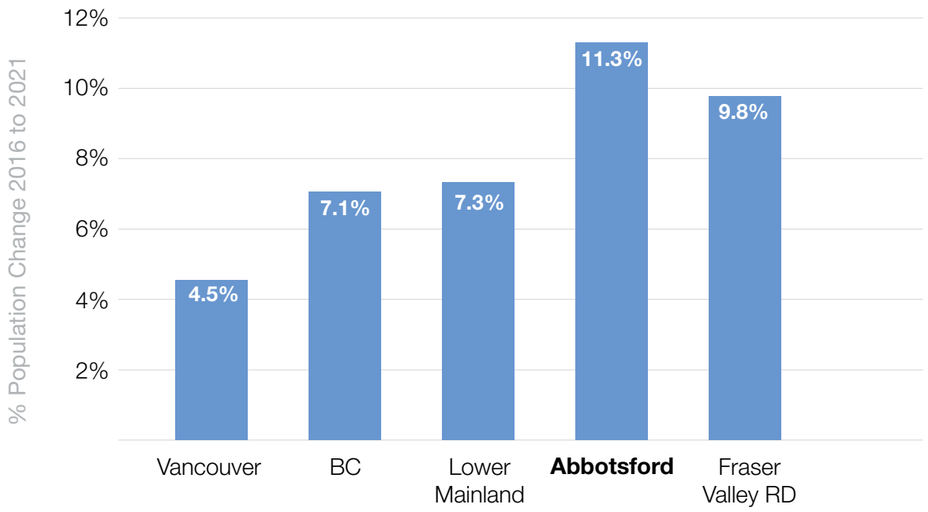
About the Data

This section of the Background Research Report relies largely on information collected through the Statistics Canada national Census of Population (every 5 years) and Statistics Canada/BC Stats population estimates prepared and adjusted each year.

The Census of Population aims to collect detailed demographic, social, and economic information from every individual and household in the country. It provides a snapshot of the population at a specific point in time and serves as a foundation for various government policies and resource allocation.

In addition to the 'population count' collected during the Census survey, Statistics Canada also prepares annual 'population estimates' using statistical methods and models to account for potential gaps (i.e., undercoverage/overcoverage) in the Census population count. The 'population estimates' build on the Census data, but are dynamic and adjusted as new demographic information becomes available, providing a more current understanding of population trends.

FIG. 2 5-YEAR POPULATION INCREASE (2016-2021)
Based on Statistics Canada Population Estimates (Release date: 2023-01-11)



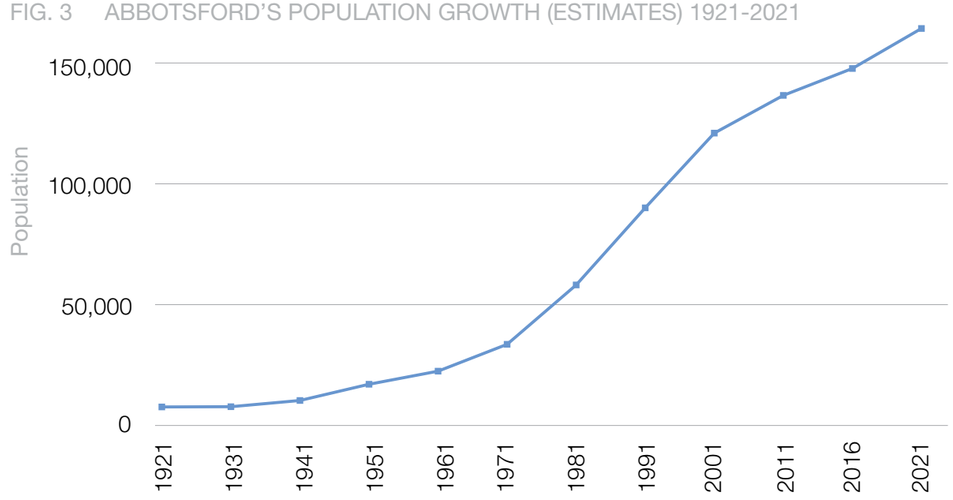
Population

Statistics Canada's 'population estimates', released in January 2023, put Abbotsford's 2021 population at 164,806[1], similar to the 2021 estimate (165,404) included in the Fraser Valley Future 2050 Regional Growth Strategy. The next Statistics Canada 'population estimate' is scheduled for release in May 2024. The 2021 Census of Population counted Abbotsford's population at 153,524 people, up from to 141,397 in 2016.

Based on 'population estimates' (Figure 2), Abbotsford's population increased approximately 11.3% between 2016 and 2021. In comparison, B.C. grew 7.1% and the Fraser Valley Regional District grew 9.8% over the same period.

This translates to an annual growth rate of approximately 2.17%. The 2016 OCP anticipates reaching a population of 200,000 by 2040 under a medium growth scenario of 1.5% per year. If growth rates remain similar to the last 5 years, Abbotsford is on pace to reach a population of 200,000 sooner than expected.

FIG. 3 ABBOTSFORD'S POPULATION GROWTH (ESTIMATES) 1921-2021



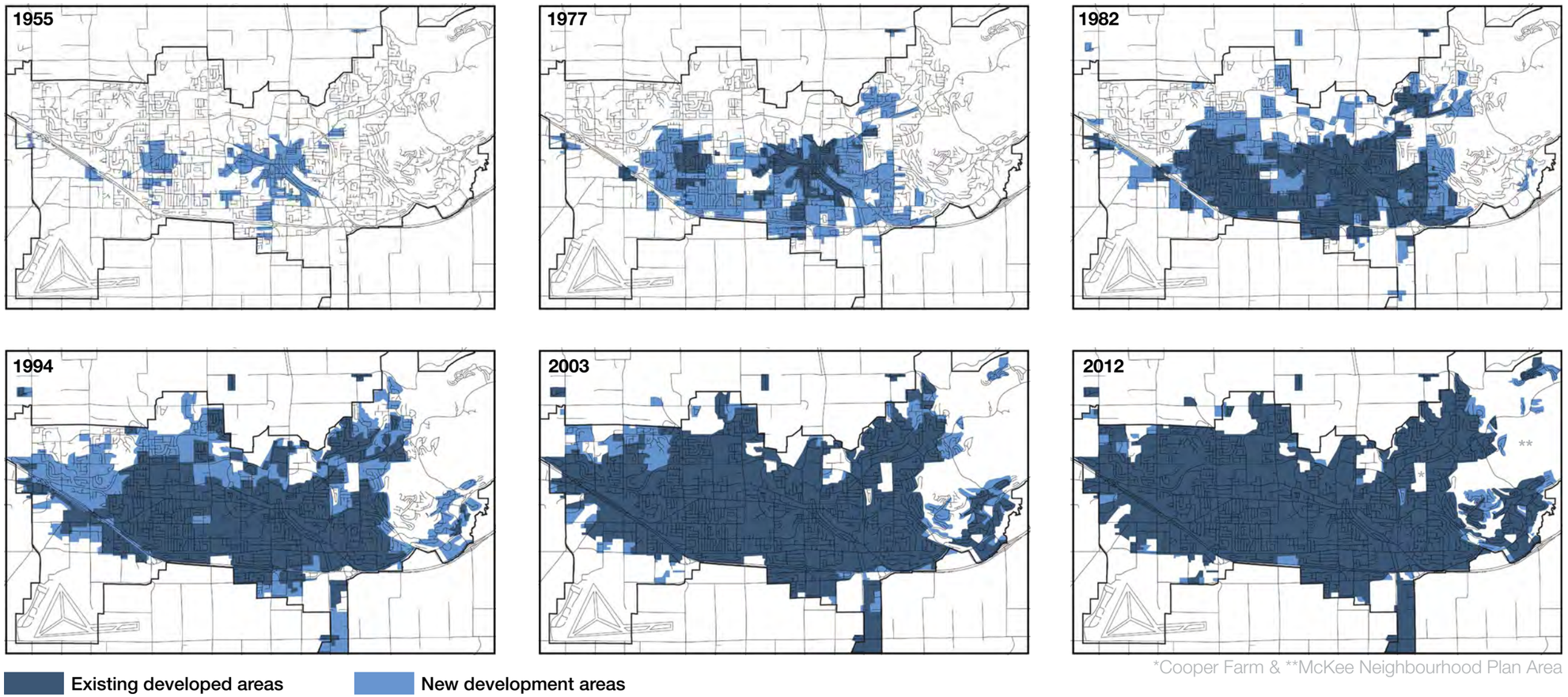
Historical Growth Pattern

Abbotsford has grown rapidly and evolved from a 'City in the Country' into the 'Hub of the Fraser Valley'. As illustrated in Figure 3 and the images below, Abbotsford grew significantly in the 1970's and 80's when single-detached housing was the norm and could be delivered quickly and efficiently. By 2012 Abbotsford's population had reached 140,000 and the majority of the urban area was built-out.

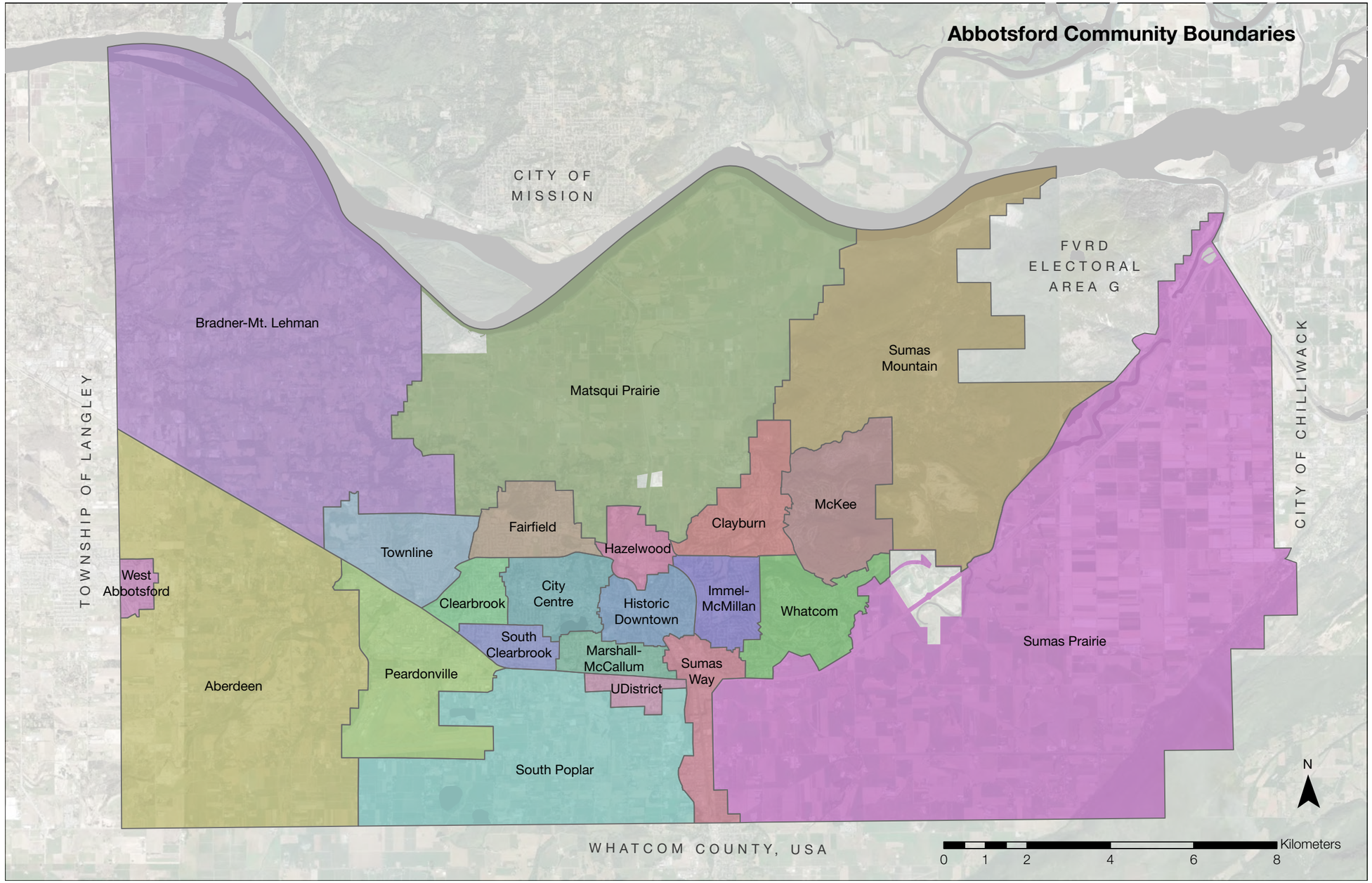
In this context, the City's development pattern and policy has shifted from largely 'greenfield' development to redevelopment and urban infill. This future growth pattern was solidified through the bold new vision set by the 2016 Abbotsforward OCP update, as well as subsequent plan development in City Centre, Historic Downtown, UDistrict, and Urban 3 -Infill areas.

With the exception of a few large undeveloped parcels (e.g. "Cooper Farm") and Abbotsford's last greenfield neighbourhood (McKee Neighbourhood Plan), the majority of future growth will be accommodated inwards and upwards through redevelopment of existing neighbourhoods and commercial areas.

FIG. 4 ABBOTSFORD'S HISTORICAL GROWTH PATTERN



*Cooper Farm & **McKee Neighbourhood Plan Area



MAP 1: COMMUNITY BOUNDARIES MAP

Age

The median age in Abbotsford has steadily increased from 35.1 years old in 2001 to 39 in 2016, and now 39.2 years old in 2021. While Abbotsford is aging, we have a younger population than the province as a whole (42.4).

The youngest community in Abbotsford is West Abbotsford, with a median age of 34 years, while the City Centre is Abbotsford's oldest, with a median age of 49.2 years.

FIG. 5 CITY-WIDE AGE BREAKDOWN, 2021

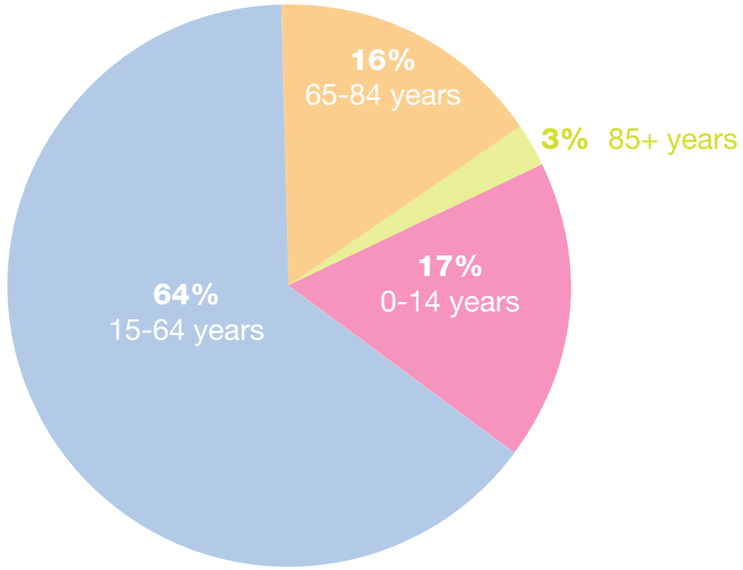
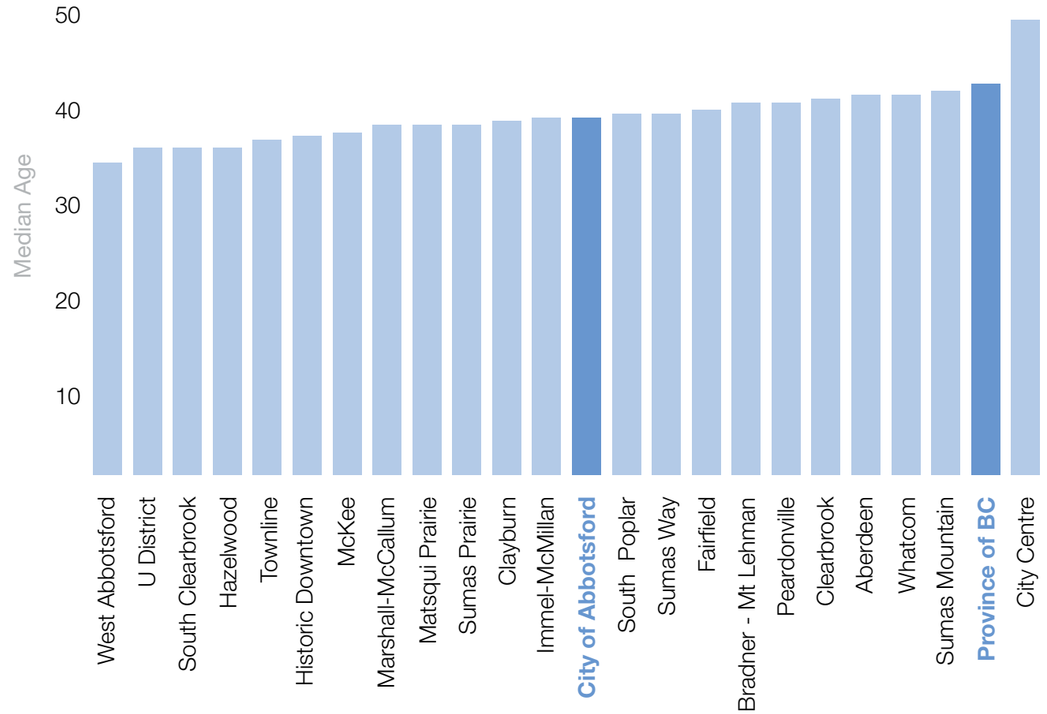


FIG. 6 MEDIAN AGE BY COMMUNITY



Immigration

In Abbotsford, 29% of residents are immigrants, which has increased from 28% in 2016. Approximately 14% of Abbotsford's 43,000 person immigrant population has arrived since 2016.

The majority of Abbotsford's immigrants are from India (55%), followed by the United Kingdom (5%), the Philippines (4%), the United States (3%), the Netherlands (2%), and Vietnam (2%). The "other" category in Figure 6 below includes other places in Asia (11%), the Americas (8%), Europe (8%), and elsewhere (4%).

The community with the highest proportion of immigrants is Townline (51%), and the community with the fewest immigrants is Bradner - Mt Lehman (14%).

FIG. 7 IMMIGRANTS BY TOP COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN (2021)

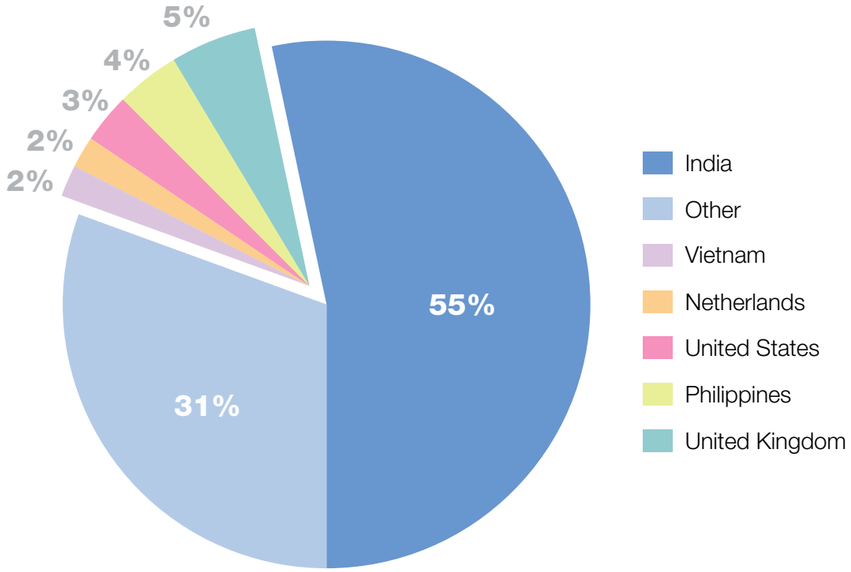
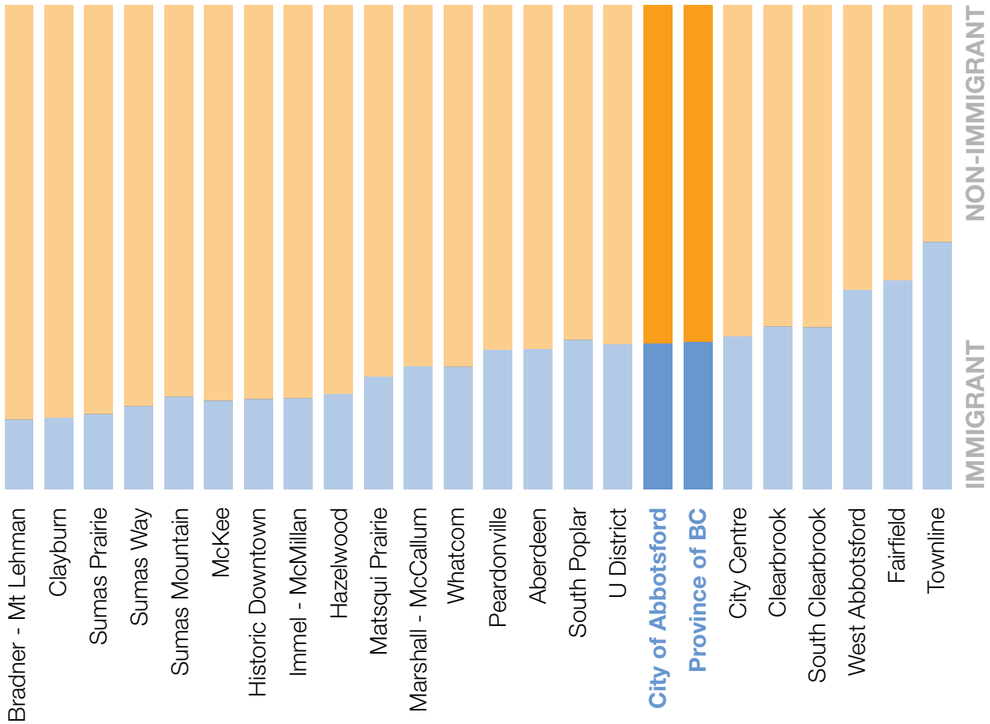


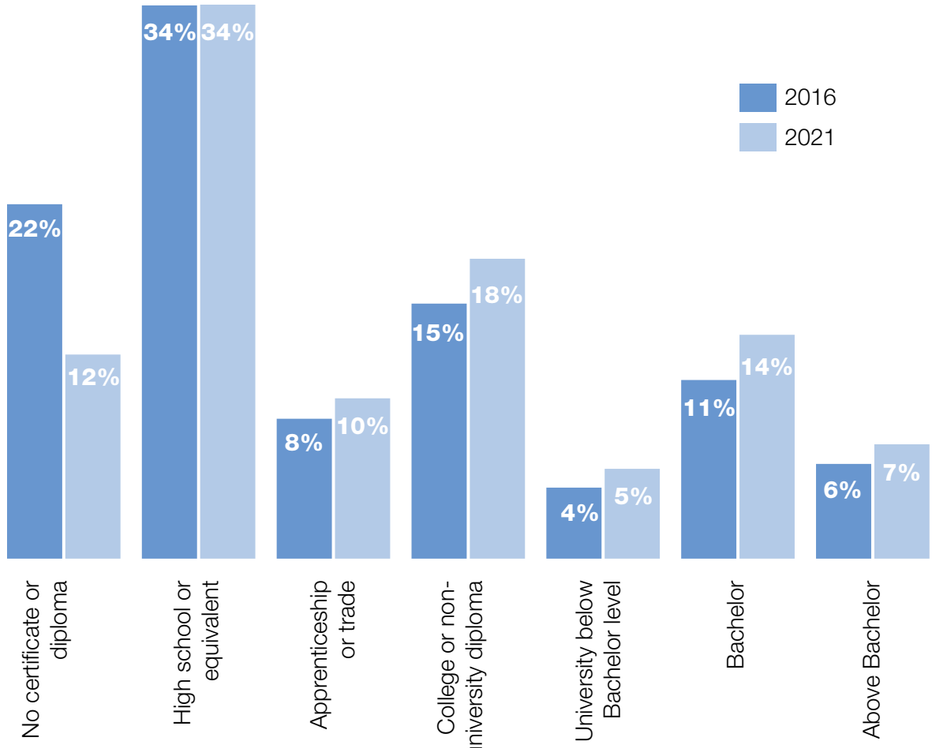
FIG. 8 PROPORTION OF IMMIGRANT RESIDENTS BY COMMUNITY (2021)



Education Level

Compared to 2016, a higher proportion of Abbotsford residents today (54%) have achieved some form of post-secondary education (apprenticeship or trade and above), while fewer residents have not obtained a certificate or diploma (12%).

FIG. 9 CITY-WIDE EDUCATION LEVEL 2016-2021

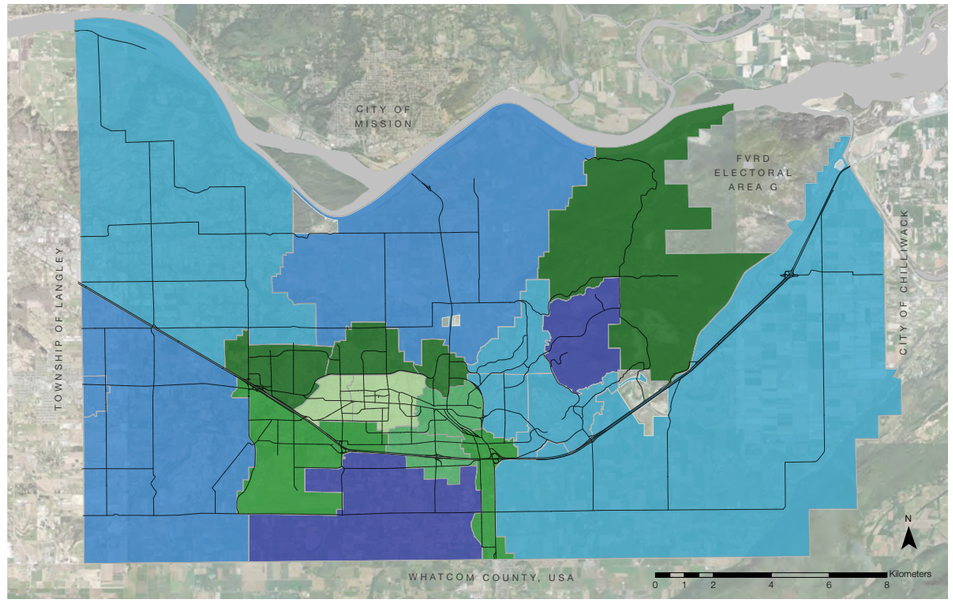


Household Income

The median household income in Abbotsford increased by 24% between 2016 and 2021, from $72,511 to $90,000. Median household incomes are the same in Abbotsford as in Metro Vancouver ($90,000) but higher than median household incomes in the FVRD as a whole ($86,000).

McKee has the highest average household income in Abbotsford ($145,000), while Clearbrook has the lowest average household income ($63,600).

MAP 2: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY COMMUNITY 2021

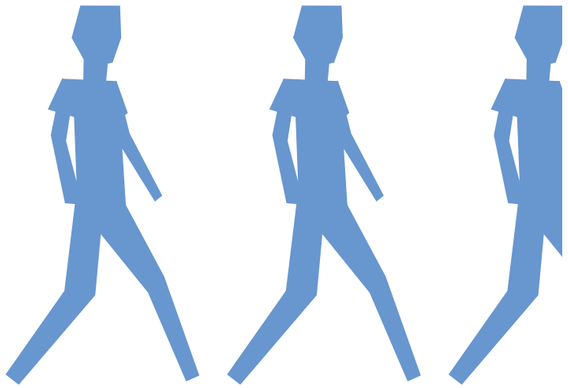


Household Size

The average number of people per household has remained constant at 2.8 from 2001 to 2021, which is higher than the provincial average (2.4).

In 2021, the City Centre had the smallest average household size at 2.1 people, while South Poplar, Townline, and West Abbotsford had the largest with an average of 3.7 people per household. In Abbotsford, household size is often a reflection of cultural norms and multi-generational households.

The average household size in detached dwellings is 3.3 people per household, which is the same as in 2016. For attached housing and apartments, the average household size is 2.6 and 1.8 respectively, both of which have ticked up slightly (0.1%) since 2016.



average 2.8 people per household (2021)

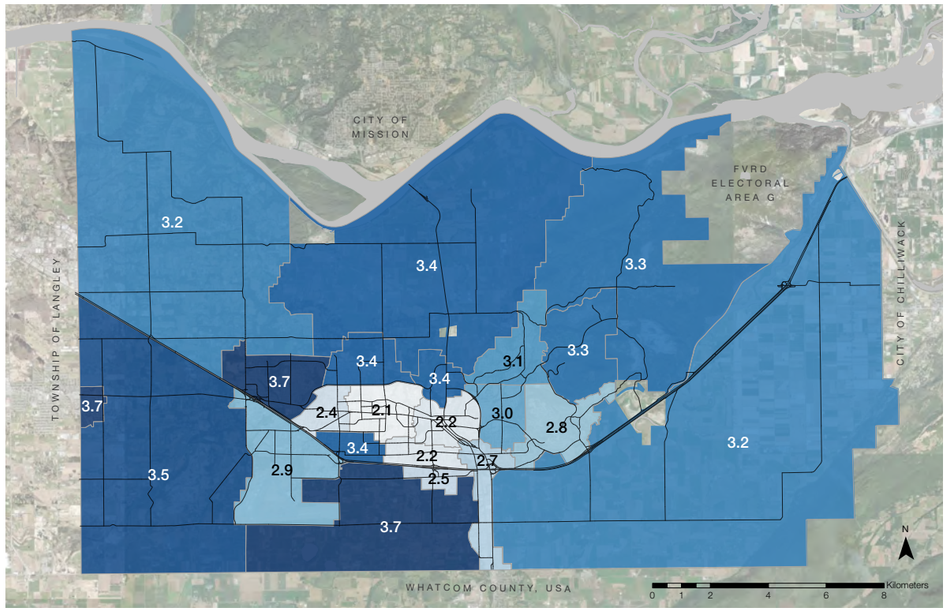
FIG. 10 CITY-WIDE AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE BY UNIT TYPE 2021



Apartment
1.8 ppl/household

Attached
2.6 ppl/household

Detached
3.3 ppl/household



MAP 3: AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE BY COMMUNITY 2021

2.2 Where We Live

Housing Tenure & Cost

The proportion of Abbotsford residents who own their home has decreased from 74% in 2011, to 70% in 2016, and to 69% in 2021. Province-wide, home ownership has also decreased and currently stands at 67%.

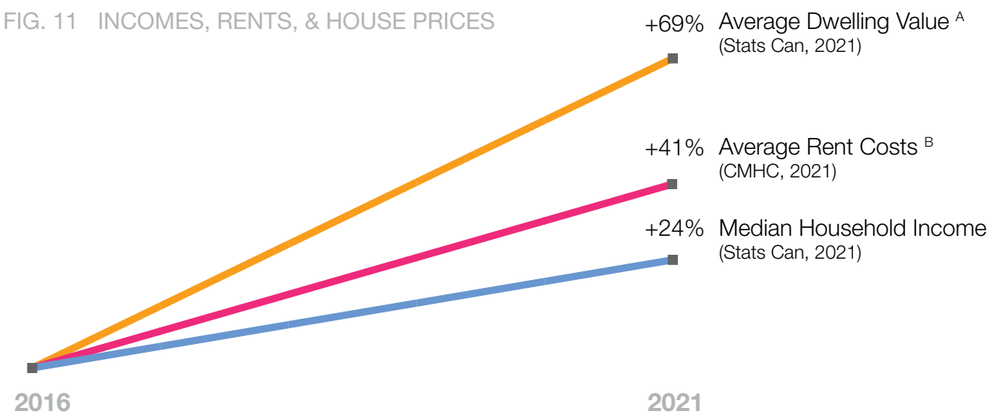
McKee has the highest proportion of residents who own their home (88%), while Marshall-McCallum has the fewest home owners in the city (44%).

In 2021, the average owner-estimated dwelling value in Abbotsford was $873,000, which is a 69% increase from 2016 ($516,858) and a 115% increase from 2011 ($405,802).

The cost of renting a home is also on the rise. In 2021, the average rent for an apartment in Abbotsford was $1,180 per month, an increase of 41% from 2016 ($839).

Household incomes have not kept pace with housing costs, climbing only 24% since 2016 (Figure 11).

FIG. 11 INCOMES, RENTS, & HOUSE PRICES



A 2021 Census owner-estimated value; Includes all dwelling types: single-detached, multiplex, townhouse, apartment
B Includes apartments only

FIG. 12 OWNER VS. RENTER HOUSEHOLDS BY COMMUNITY

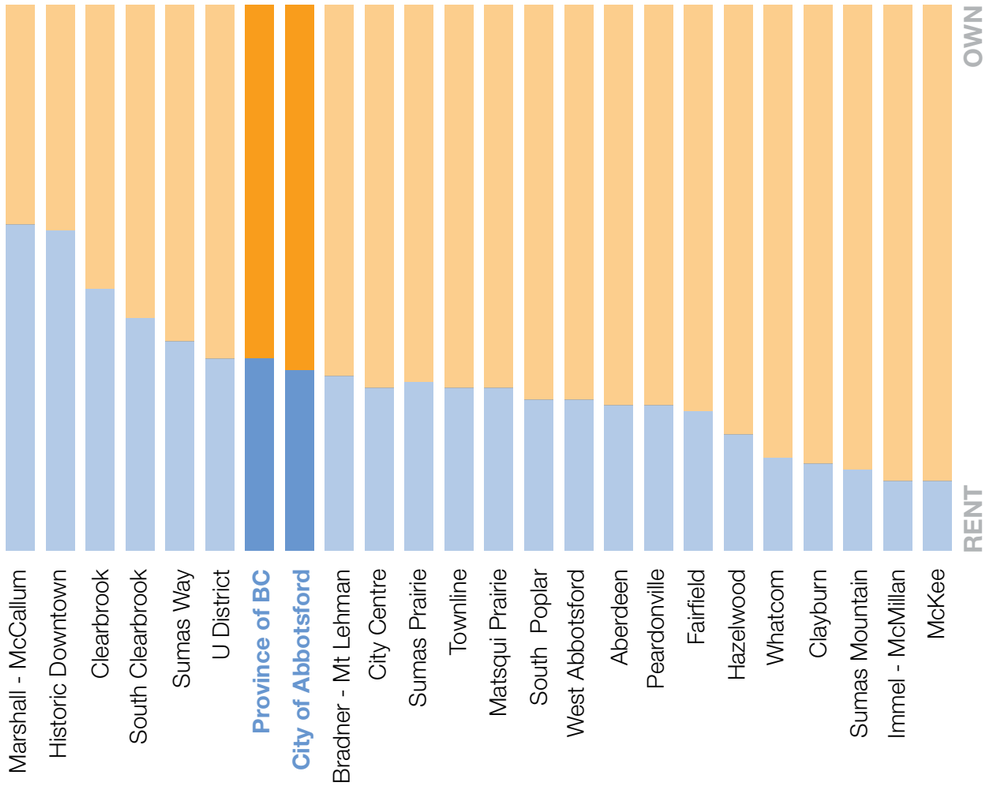
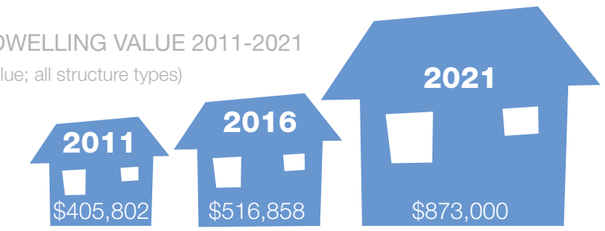


FIG. 13 AVERAGE ABBOTSFORD DWELLING VALUE 2011-2021
(2021 Census: owner estimated value; all structure types)



Rental Housing

Between 2016 and 2022, the City issued Building Permits for nearly 1,200 purpose-built rental units. This amounts to 38% of all new apartment units (Figure 14).

Abbotsford's rental vacancy rate has been trending up since 2016 and now stands at 1.6%, compared to 0.5% in 2016 (Figure 15). A healthy rental vacancy rate is generally considered to be 3%, providing sufficient housing supply for renters.

With the local rental market remaining tight, the average rent for an apartment in Abbotsford increased by 41% between 2016 and 2021. This trend continued through 2022, with average rents now 49% higher than 2016. Rent costs for family-friendly apartments (3+ bedrooms) have increased most significantly (+86%) since 2016 (Figure 16).

FIG. 14 PERMITS ISSUED FOR PURPOSE-BUILT RENTALS 2016-2022 (CITY BUILDING PERMIT DATA)

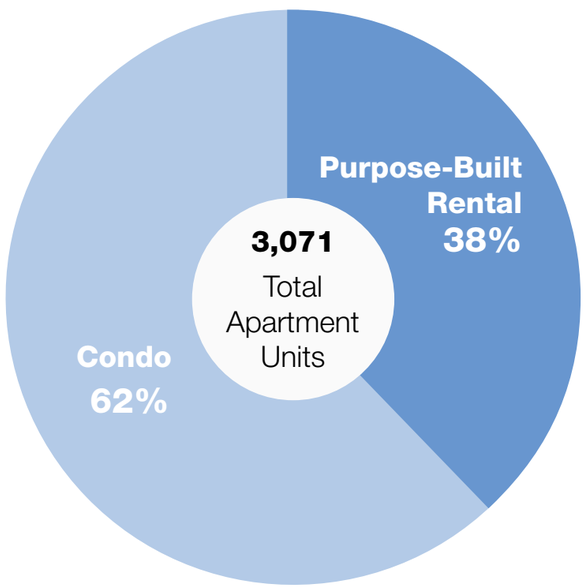


FIG. 15 ABBOTSFORD RESIDENTIAL RENTAL VACANCY RATE 2016-2022

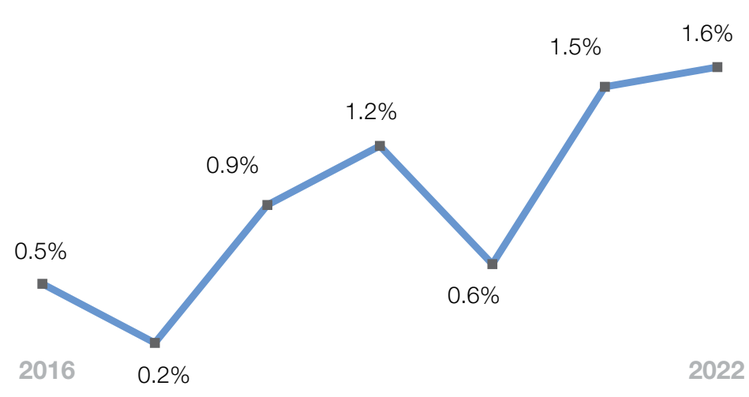
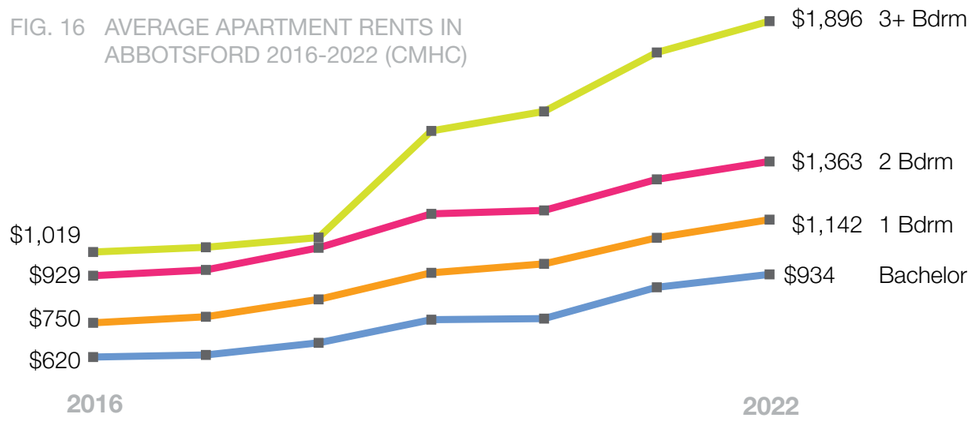


FIG. 16 AVERAGE APARTMENT RENTS IN ABBOTSFORD 2016-2022 (CMHC)

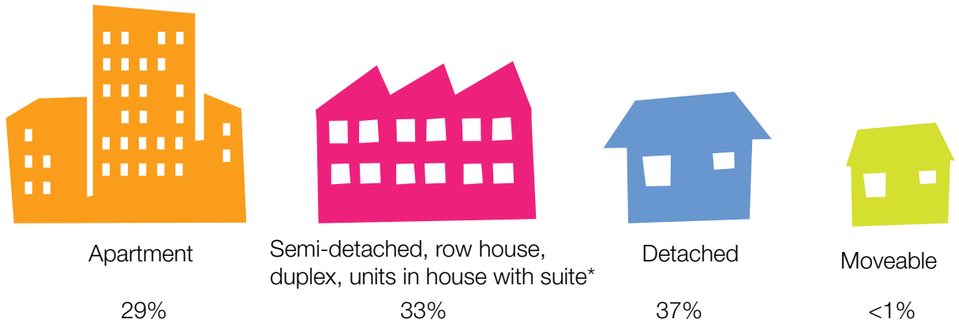


Housing Type

Approximately 38% of all homes in Abbotsford are single detached dwellings (including <1% moveable), while 33% are attached homes (semi-detached, rowhouse, duplex, detached with suites, etc.), and 29% are apartments. These housing types accounted for 41%, 32%, and 27% respectively in 2016. As Abbotsford grows, the proportion of multi-unit housing is increasing while the proportion of single detached dwellings is decreasing.

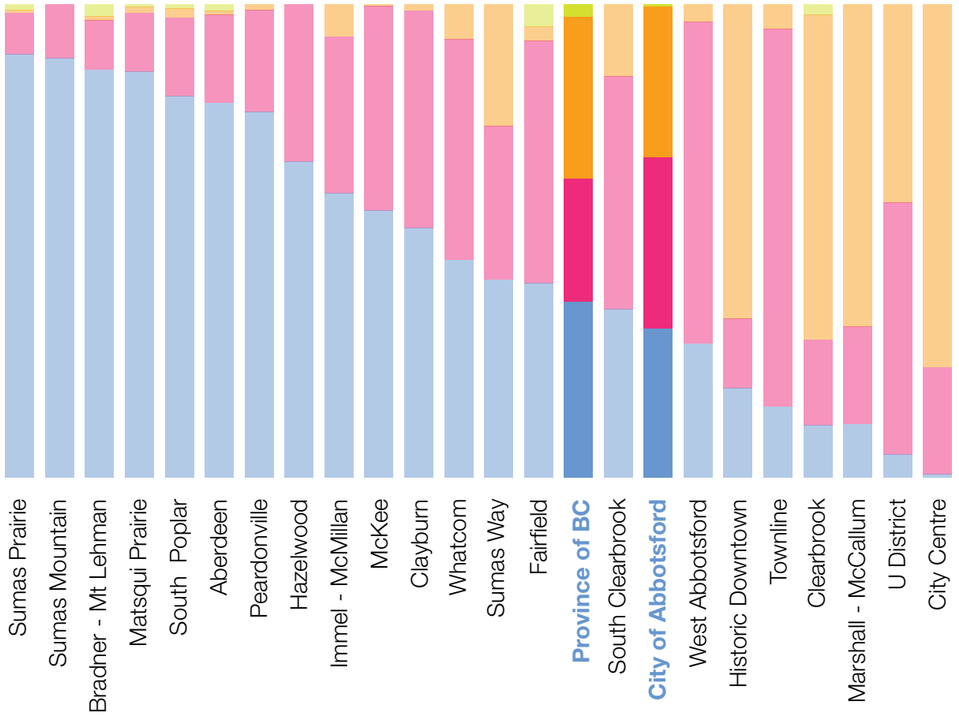
The highest concentration of apartments is located in the City Centre and in the four Urban Centres (U District, Historic Downtown, Marshall - McCallum, and Clearbrook), while the highest proportion of attached housing is in the prairies and on Sumas Mountain.

FIG. 17 ABBOTSFORD HOUSING STOCK CITY-WIDE 2021



*Includes Census categories: semi-detached house, row house, apartment or flat in a duplex

FIG. 18 HOUSING STOCK BY COMMUNITY 2021



*Includes Census categories: semi-detached house, row house, apartment or flat in a duplex

Age of Housing Stock

All but 5% of Abbotsford's existing housing stock was built since 1960, with the highest proportion (43%) constructed between 1981 and 2000.

The highest concentration of homes built since 2001 are located in McKee (89%) and in West Abbotsford (88%) and the highest concentration of older homes (pre-1961) are located in Matsqui and Sumas Prairies (26% and 20% respectively).

FIG. 19 AGE OF CITY-WIDE HOUSING STOCK (2021)

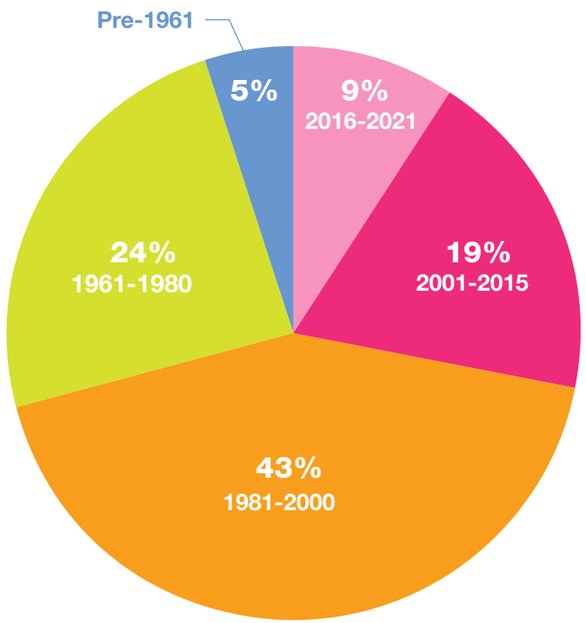
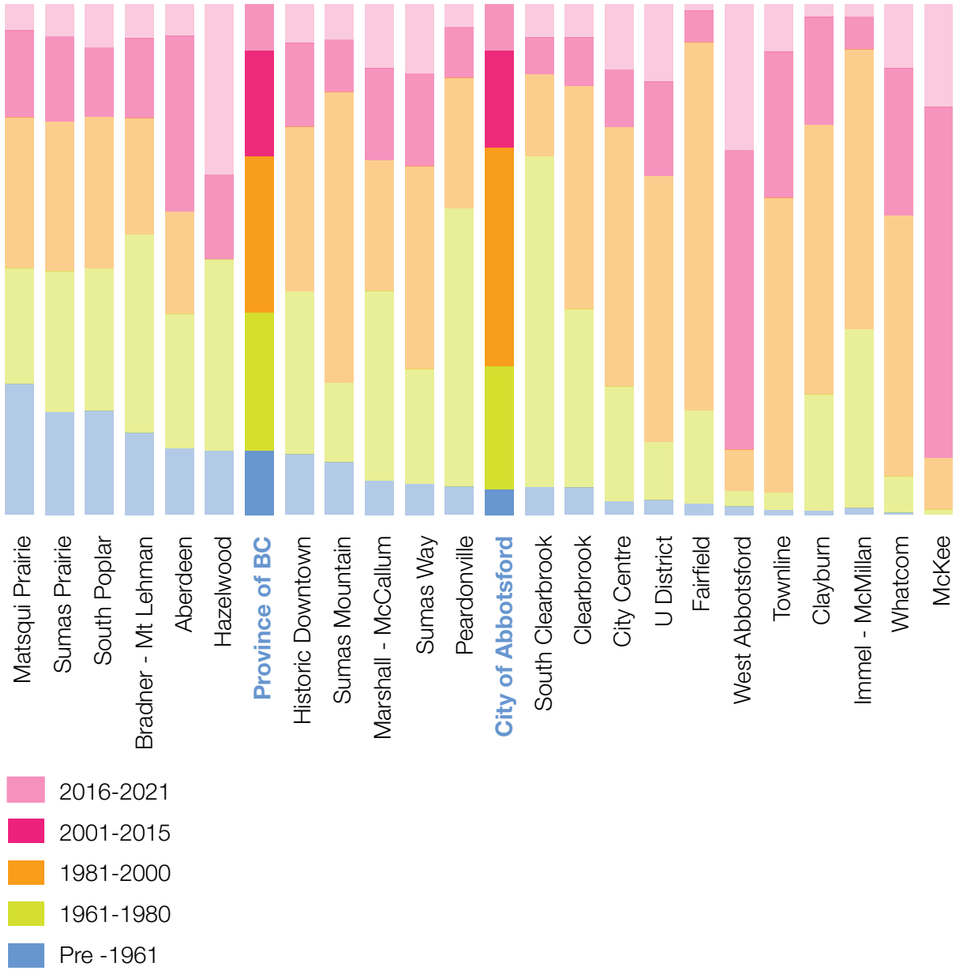
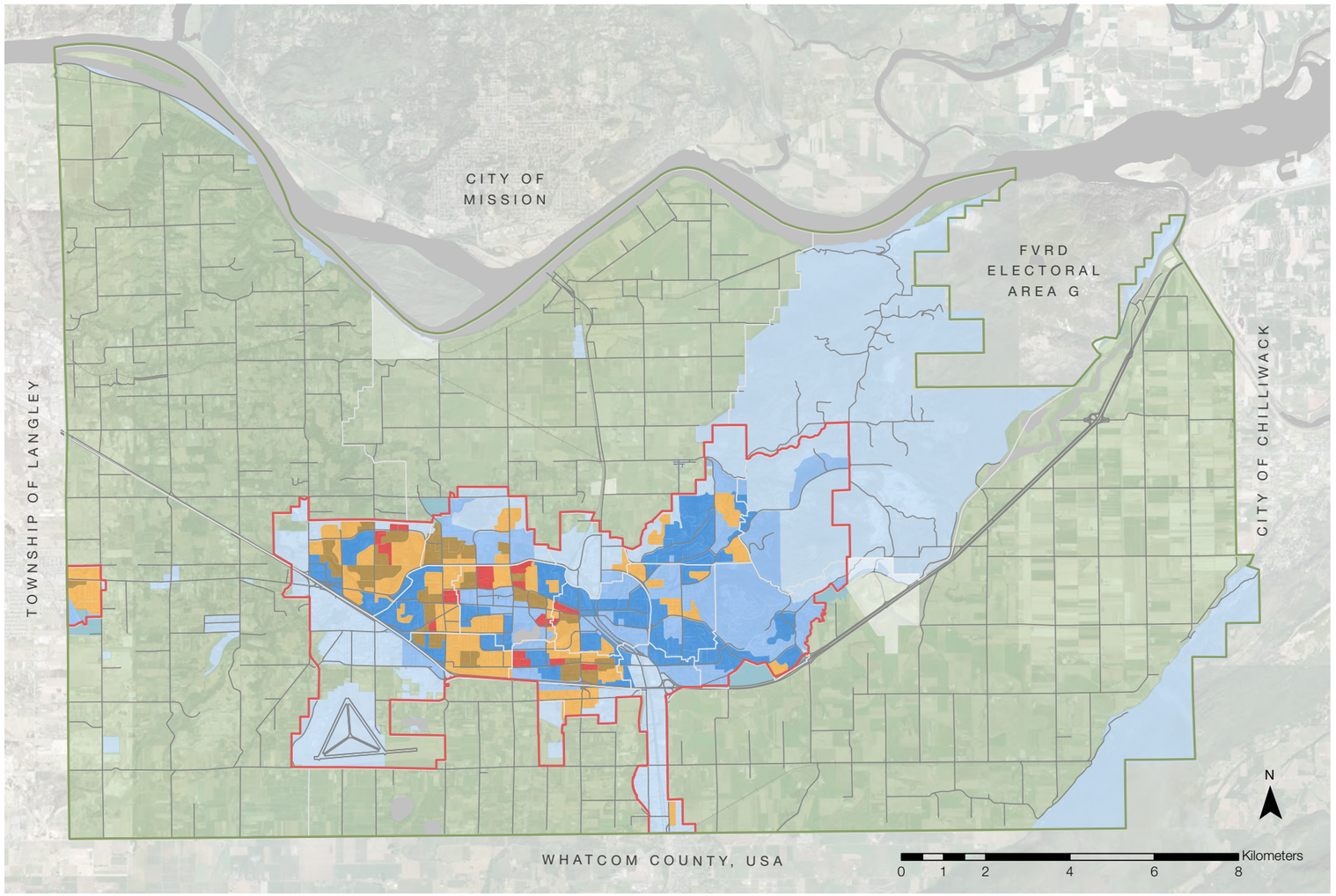


FIG. 20 AGE OF HOUSING STOCK BY COMMUNITY 2021



MAP 4: POPULATION | GROSS RESIDENTIAL DENSITIES BY CENSUS DISSEMINATION AREA

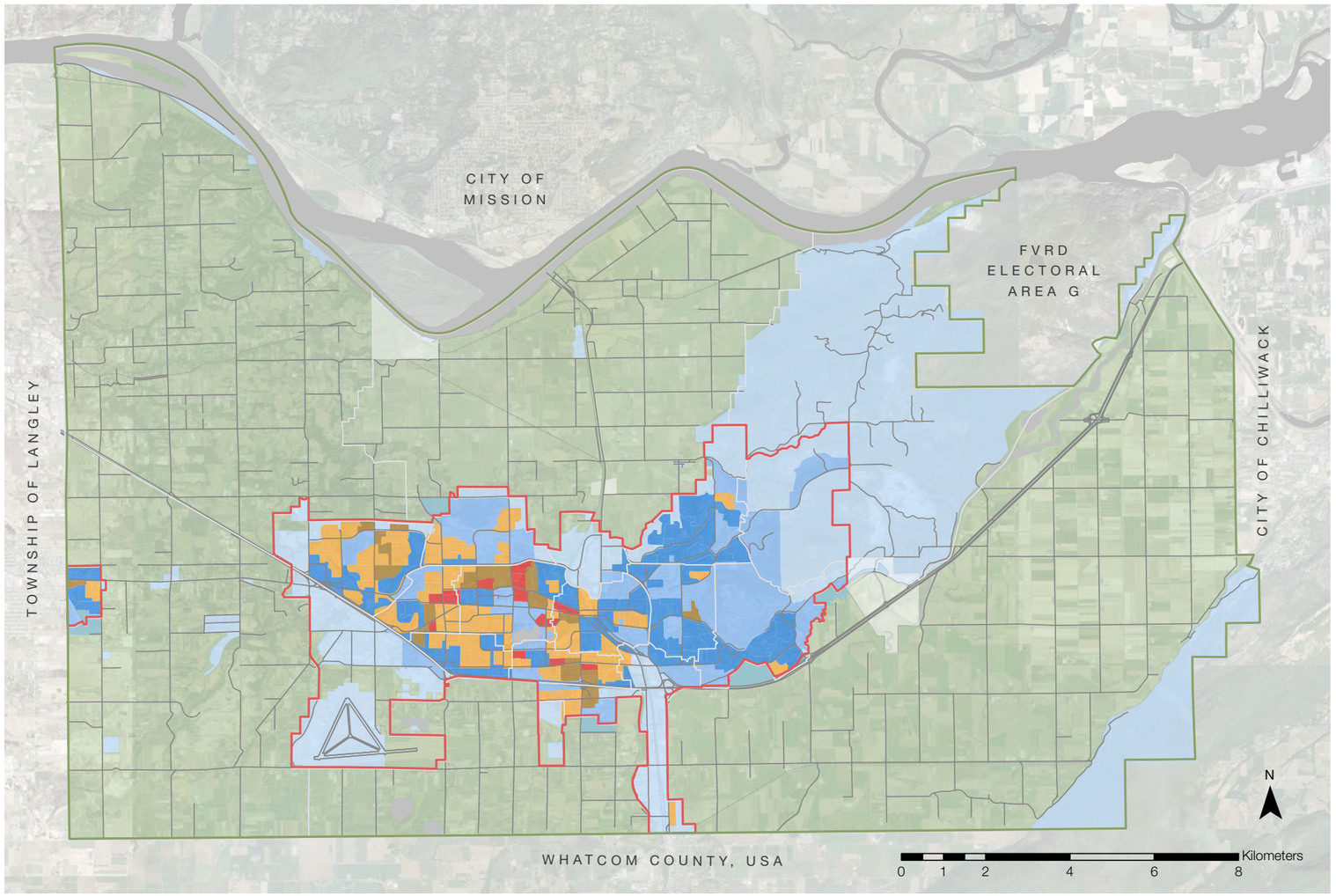


Population per hectare

- 0 - 10
- 10 - 20
- 20 - 32
- 32 - 50
- 50 - 80
- 80 - 165
- Agricultural Land Reserve
- Community Boundary
- City Boundary
- Urban Development Boundary

Data Source: Statistics Canada 2021
Note: Data not shown for areas within ALR

MAP 5: DWELLING UNITS | GROSS RESIDENTIAL DENSITIES BY CENSUS DISSEMINATION AREA



Dwelling units per hectare

- 0 - 3
- 3 - 7
- 7 - 12
- 12 - 20
- 20 - 40
- 40 - 90
- Agricultural Land Reserve
- Community Boundaries
- City Boundary
- Urban Development Boundary

Data Source: Statistics Canada 2021
Note: Data not shown for areas within ALR

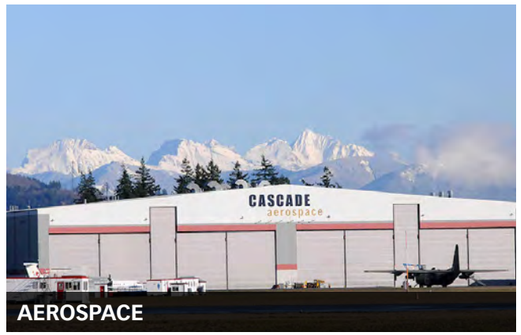
2.3 Where We Work & What We Do

Labour Force

In 2021, Abbotsford's labour force was made up of a little more than 81,000 people. The majority of workers are in the retail trade, health care, construction, and manufacturing industries.

Compared to 2016 there are fewer people working in the agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting industry, accommodation and food services, other services (except public administration), and wholesale trade. The industries that have experienced the most employment growth since 2016 are retail trade, health care, and construction.


RETAIL TRADE



AEROSPACE


CONSTRUCTION


HEALTH CARE & SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Examples: Common Industries in Abbotsford

FIG. 21 LABOUR FORCE BY INDUSTRY (NAICS) 2016-2021



Commuting to Work

In 2016, 10% of Abbotsford's working population had a daily commute that was longer than 60 minutes. By 2021, that had decreased to 8%. Meanwhile, 68% of residents have a commute of less than 30 minutes as of 2021, an increase of 1% from 2016. As our city continues to grow, more people are working closer to home.

64%

of employed Abbotsford residents work within the city, according to 2021 Census data

↑ 2% from 2016 Census counts

FIG. 22 COMMUTING DURATION 2021



***Note:** *The above commute to work data may not reliably indicate typical trends for Abbotsford given the impact of COVID-19 on travel patterns at the time of the 2021 Census collection. Unfortunately, alternative and more recent data is not available on this topic.*

The Way We Move Around

This report leaves out 2021 Census information on how people travel to work (i.e., transit, walk, bike, private vehicle, etc.) due to the overlap of the census collection period and COVID-19. Responses collected in this time period are unlikely to represent typical trends that can usefully be compared to pre and post pandemic transportation choices.

While the vast majority of trips in and around Abbotsford continue to be made by private vehicle, residents are demonstrating a desire to adopt alternative modes, as depicted by the increase in transit ridership (Figure 23).

11,800 trips per day typical in **2019**

13,700 trips per day typical in **2023**

= 16% INCREASE IN TRANSIT RIDERSHIP

FIG. 23 2019 - 2023 TRANSIT RIDERSHIP TRENDS FOR ALL TRIPS
Source: BC Transit Data Portal, September 2023

3.0 OCP Progress Report

In 2016, the City of Abbotsford adopted a new Official Community Plan (OCP), which charts a course for how the city should grow and evolve towards a population of 200,000. In the following pages, a remarkable amount of data can be found to gauge progress on achieving the vision established in the OCP.

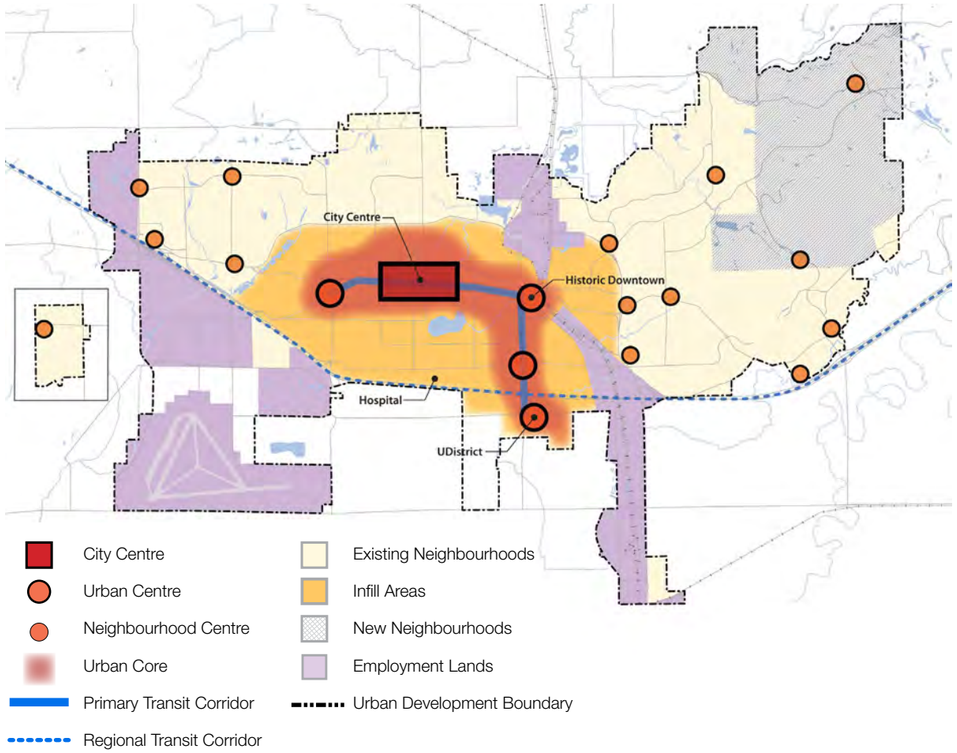
This section begins with an overview of progress towards the Urban Structure and Growth Plan before discussing each of the six 'Big Idea' policy sections in the OCP, giving the reader an idea of how the City is performing relative to each one.

3.1 Urban Structure & Growth Plan

The 2016 OCP introduced an Urban Structure & Growth Plan that strategically directs growth to priority areas within the city. This builds on historical policy that established an urban development boundary to contain growth in the city core. The urban structure features a hierarchy of mixed use centres, anchored by a primary transit corridor (Figure 24). See appendices for detailed land uses.

The growth plan focuses 75% of residential growth (~45,000 people) in centres and existing neighbourhoods. More specifically, 60% (~35,000 people) is envisioned for the Urban Core and 15% (~10,000 people) in Existing Neighbourhoods and around Neighbourhood Centres. The remaining 25% (~15,000 people) is slated for areas identified as New Neighbourhoods.

FIG. 24 2016 OCP URBAN STRUCTURE



How are we doing so far?

Urban Core

Since adopting the 2016 OCP, Council has approved* over 2,500 net new residential units in the Urban Core. These new units provide the capacity to house approximately 4,650 people, or 65% of new residential growth**.

60% OCP target

65% actual

Existing Neighbourhoods & Neighbourhood Centres

Since 2016, approximately 830 net new units have been approved in Existing Neighbourhoods and Neighbourhood Centres, with capacity for approximately 2,000 people, or 28% of new residential growth.

15% OCP target

28% actual

New Neighbourhoods

Council has approved approximately 159 net new residential units in the New Neighbourhoods area since adopting the 2016 OCP. This is housing for roughly 500 people and amounts to 7% of new residential growth.

25% OCP target

7% actual

Prior to June 2023, the OCP did not permit rezoning applications in the New Neighbourhoods area until adoption of the McKee Neighbourhood Plan. With the plan now adopted, the proportion of residential growth experienced in the New Neighbourhoods is expected to increase, in line with 2016 OCP targets.

* Unless otherwise stated, 'approved' means rezoning and/or development permit issuance - projects under construction or ready to apply for building permit. Not all of these units have been built as of yet.

** Residential growth is estimated based on a calculation of approved unit counts and average household sizes by dwelling type.

Commercial Development

The OCP targets 70% of new commercial development in areas designated City Centre, Urban Centre, and Neighbourhood Centre.

From OCP adoption in 2016 to July 2022, the City approved 26 new commercial developments (represented by the number of dots on Figure 25). Of these, 14 (54%) are located in areas designated City Centre, Urban Centre, and Neighbourhood Centre, while 12 (46%) are located in other land use designations (e.g. secondary commercial, regional commercial).

42% of approved commercial floor area since 2016 is on lands with a mixed use centre designation, while 58% is within other land use designations (e.g. Secondary/Regional Commercial). This can be attributed to larger format retail occurring in areas with a regional draw, and smaller scale retail in mixed-use, community-oriented areas (represented by size of dots in Fig. 25).



Rendering of recently approved mixed use development at South Fraser Way and Montvue Ave

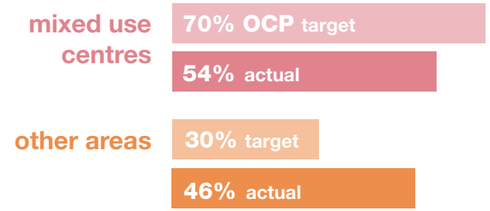
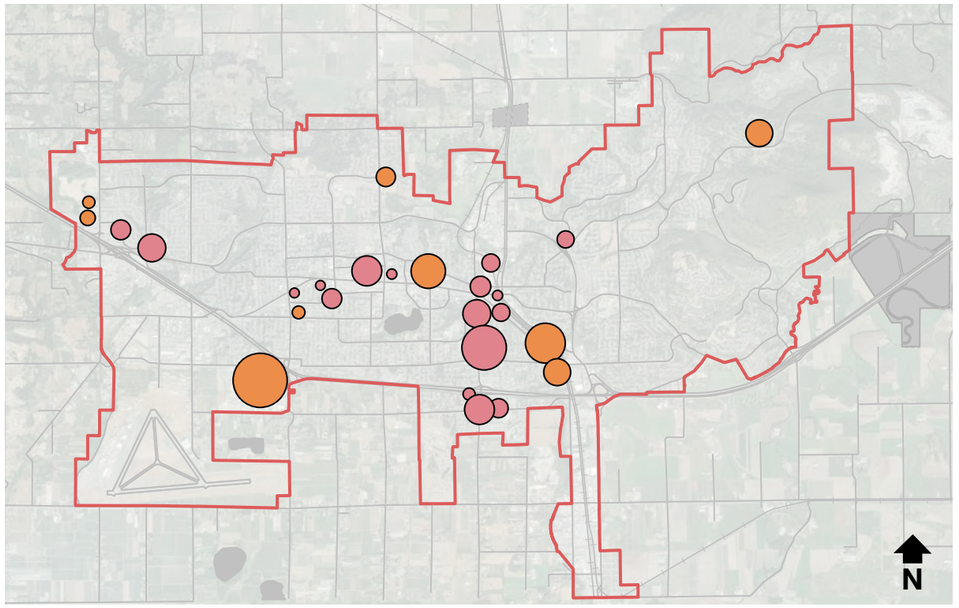


FIG. 25 COMMERCIAL GROWTH 2016 - JULY 2022 (approved rezonings & DPs)



3.2 **Big Idea** | Create a City Centre

The 2016 OCP envisions the City Centre as the heart of public, economic, and cultural life. It should be Abbotsford's most vibrant area, scaled to pedestrians, and rich with diverse activities. To achieve this vision, the OCP establishes the following 'Big Picture' objectives:



- Transform South Fraser Way into an Urban Boulevard
- Break up Large Blocks and Build at a Human Scale
- Connect Mill Lake
- Accommodate 10,000 more people

How are we doing?

City Centre Neighbourhood Plan

In April 2019 Council adopted the City Centre Neighbourhood Plan. Building on the 2016 OCP, the neighbourhood plan addresses the four 'Big Picture' items that are essential to the successful transformation of the neighbourhood.

Between 2016 and July 2022, ~545 net new units were approved (able to go to building permit) in the City Centre, which account for 15% of all units approved city-wide in the same time period. The pace of redevelopment has been somewhat slow due to the high-rise (i.e. concrete) housing typology envisioned in the core. To-date, the majority of development is 6 storey (wood frame) apartment, accounting for 94% of all new approved units in the City Centre.

FIG. 26 CITY CENTRE DEVELOPMENT APPROVALS 2016-2022



Big Picture | Transform South Fraser Way into an Urban Boulevard

The City Centre Neighbourhood Plan identifies South Fraser Way as a Signature Corridor, with a 34 metre right-of-way consisting of wide sidewalks, AAA bike lanes, a double row of trees, and a median tree strip. The Signature Corridor cross section has been embedded in the City's Development Bylaw and will be realized through the redevelopment of adjacent properties.

Big Picture | Break Up large Blocks and Build at a Human Scale

Maps 3 and 13 of the City Centre Neighbourhood Plan (CCNP) identify street closures and new connections geared towards creating a more walkable, fine-grained street network, making the area more convenient for walking and cycling.

Big Picture | Connect Mill Lake

The CCNP identifies future streets, place-making and wayfinding improvements to enhance connectivity between Mill Lake Park and the City Centre, including opportunities for retail uses facing the lake on Plaxton Crescent (see Map 6).

The City is currently developing a comprehensive long-term plan for Mill Lake Park, reinforcing Mill Lake as a city-wide destination park with leisure opportunities and environmental assets.

Big Picture | Accommodate 10,000 more people

The 2016 OCP plans to accommodate 10,000 new residents in the City Centre, who can walk to shop, play, and work. Since adopting the OCP, 545 new residential units have been approved in the City Centre (to July 2022), with the capacity to accommodate approximately 930 new residents. The majority of redevelopment in the City Centre is occurring along Gladwin Road, near Mill Lake, and throughout the infill area between Hillcrest Avenue and Peardonville Road.

Once development momentum picks up along the South Fraser Way corridor, which is envisioned for the highest density, the rate of residential growth is expected to increase. The following graphic reflects **approved** and **in-stream** City Centre development applications, illustrating progress towards this goal.





32828 Landeau Place



2505 Ware Street



Yukon Crescent



32528 Simon Avenue



2760 Gladwin Road



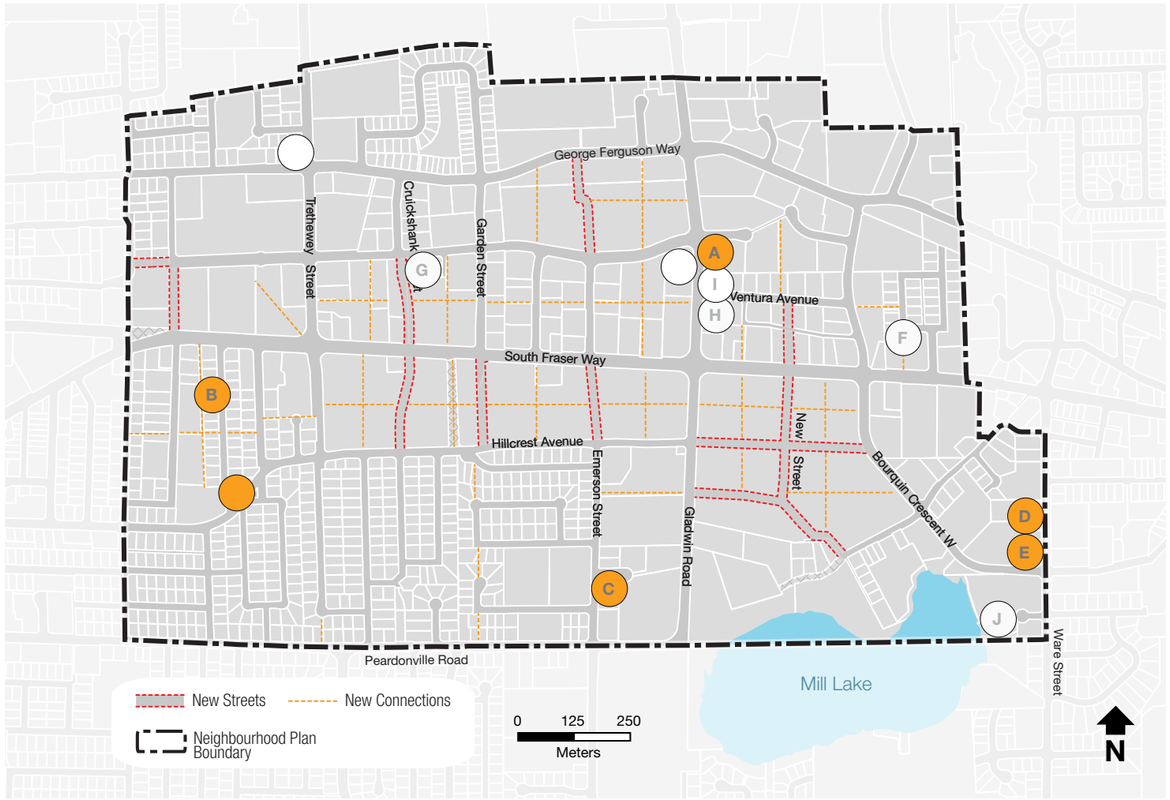
2649 James Street



2448 Emerson Street



2555 Ware Street



MAP 6: EXAMPLES OF RECENT CITY CENTRE DEVELOPMENT APPROVALS & APPLICATIONS



2790 Gladwin Road



33160 Plaxton Cr. | mixed-use on Mill Lake (now under construction)

Approved applications as of July 2022

In-stream applications as of July 2022

3.3 **Big Idea** | Establish Distinct + Complete Communities

The 2016 OCP prioritizes complete communities where residents can work, play, and access daily needs all within close to proximity to home. To support this vision, the OCP identifies the following 'Big Picture' objectives:



- Housing Options
- More People to Support Neighbourhood Retail
- Neighbourhood Main Streets



Cinema District, townhouse and apartment project in the UDistrict Neighbourhood

How are we doing?

Big Picture | Housing Options

The City approved over 3,700 residential units between 2016 and July 2022. Of these, 65% are apartments, 25% are townhouses, and 10% are single detached dwellings.

Abbotsford's housing stock is getting progressively more diverse. Since 2011, the proportion of detached dwellings in the city has decreased from 44% to 37% while attached housing and apartment units have increased (Figure 28).

FIG. 27 CITY-WIDE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT APPROVALS 2016-2022

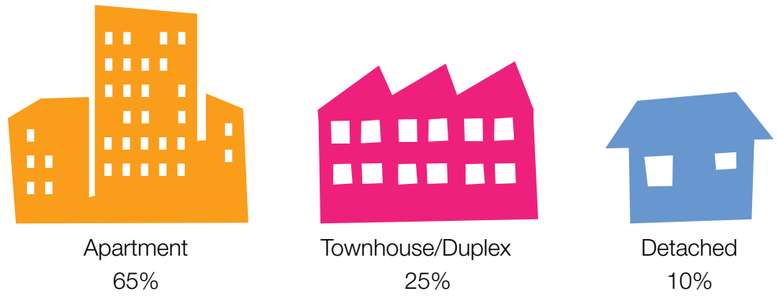
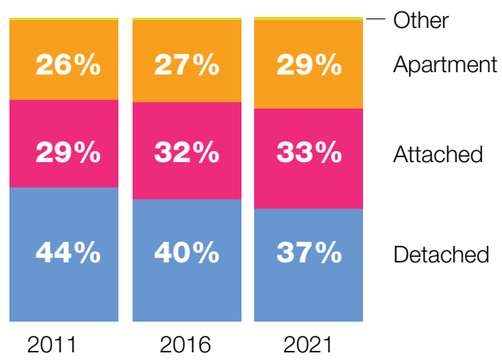


FIG. 28 HOUSING STOCK 2011-2021 CENSUS



Secondary Suites

The 2016 OCP introduced policy to enable secondary suites in all single detached dwellings, subject to conditions. Approximately 49% of all new single detached dwellings constructed since 2016 include secondary suites (581), with another 185 secondary suites added to existing homes.

49%
detached dwellings since 2016 include suites

In total, there are over 5,500 authorized secondary suites in the city today, playing an important role in housing diversity and affordability.

Rental Supply

The City's Building Permit data indicates that nearly 1,200 purpose-built rental units have been built since 2016 (~38% of all new apartment units). In addition, new provincial legislation introduced in 2022 prohibits strata corporations from restricting rentals, further relieving pressure from the rental market.

~38%
apartments since 2016 are purpose-built rental

2020 Affordable Housing Strategy

In 2020 Council endorsed the Affordable Housing Strategy, which identifies actions and tasks to build more affordable housing, diversify housing options, preserve existing affordable housing stock, build and nurture partnerships across the housing sector, and promote equity, inclusion, and accessibility through new housing options.

Supportive Housing Units

The City has facilitated four supportive housing projects, in partnership with BC Housing. Each project was developed on City-owned land and operated by a local supportive housing operator.

In addition, to encourage more supportive housing units, Council adopted Zoning Bylaw amendments in 2022 to enable supportive housing in all zones across the city (except agricultural areas).

FIG. 29 RECENTLY APPROVED RENTAL APARTMENT PROJECTS


32888 Maclure Road


2578 James Street


33338 George Ferguson Way


2850 Livingstone Avenue

Community Amenity Contribution and Density Bonus Program

In September 2023, Council adopted changes to implement a modernized community amenity contribution policy and density bonus program to support growth as Abbotsford develops into the future. Funds generated will go into the City's *Affordable Housing Opportunities Reserve Fund*, and towards recreation/green space amenities, culture amenities, and emergency services.

In November 2023, the Province brought forward new legislation for collecting Amenity Cost Charges (ACCs), but do not permit use of these funds for affordable housing. Therefore, affordable housing will rely on density bonus contributions. Staff are currently reviewing and evaluating how the City will coordinate its approach with the new legislation.

Big Picture | More People to Support Neighbourhood Retail

Complete communities require a critical mass of people to support neighbourhood retail and other community amenities. Since 2016, 74% of all housing units approved in Abbotsford are located in the Urban Core and in Neighbourhood Centres, with a capacity to accommodate nearly 5,000 residents. The four Neighbourhood Plans adopted since 2016 place the highest residential densities closest to retail areas to support local business.

Example: Historic Downtown Neighbourhood Plan

Council adopted the Historic Downtown Neighbourhood Plan (HDNP) in April 2019. Building on the OCP's direction, the HDNP's Neighbourhood Structure features a Primary Retail Area supported by medium density low-rise apartment buildings ranging from 4 to 6 storeys. By 2021, Council had approved more than 325 multi-residential units in the historic downtown, with a capacity to accommodate nearly 650 residents in close proximity to shops and services.



Redevelopment examples in the Historic Downtown Neighbourhood Plan

Big Picture | Neighbourhood Main Streets

Each of the four Neighbourhood Plans adopted since 2016 feature guidelines to achieve streets that encourage people to visit, gather, linger, and enjoy vibrant retail districts dispersed across the city.

Historic Downtown



University Village



City Centre



McKee Village



Character Sketches of Neighbourhood Plan main streets.

3.4 **Big Idea** | Make Walking, Biking, + Transit Delightful

The 2016 OCP seeks to make getting around by foot, bike, and transit convenient and enjoyable options. To achieve this, the OCP introduces four big picture ideas:



- Align Land Use and Transportation
- Redesign Streets
- Transportation Choice
- Rethink Parking

How are we doing?

Transportation Master Plan

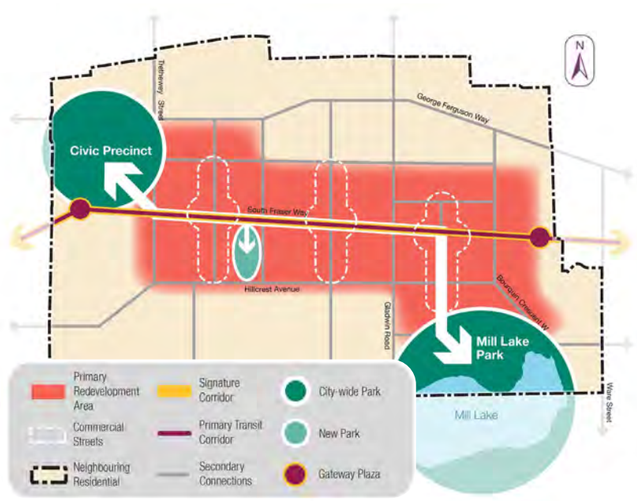
Council adopted a new Transportation & Transit Master Plan in June, 2018. The plan includes a variety of strategies geared towards walking, cycling, transit, streets, and new technologies.

Building on the 2016 OCP, the strategies are closely connected to the Urban Structure plan to ensure that the areas anticipated to experience the most growth and development are well served by transit, walking, and cycling infrastructure.

Big Picture | Align Land Use and Transportation

The 2016 OCP recognizes that a transition towards more daily trips by walking, biking, and transit requires a coordinated land use plan.

To support this approach, recent neighbourhood plans for the UDistrict, City Centre, and Historic Downtown, locate intensified residential redevelopment opportunities along the Primary Transit Corridor.



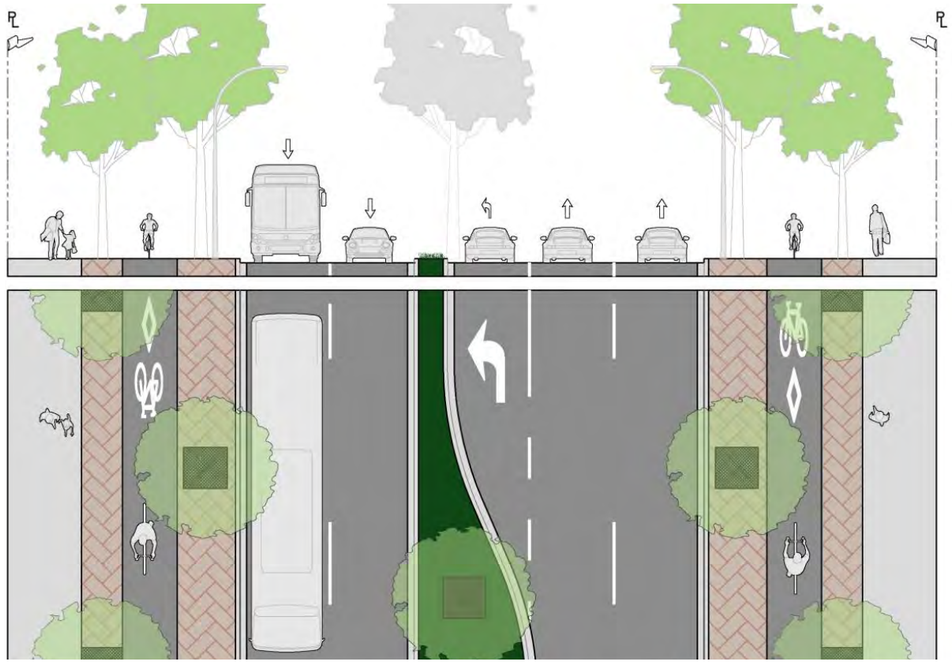
Coordinating Land Use and Transportation - City Centre

Big Picture | Redesign Streets

The OCP encourages prioritizing people when planning and designing streets to create places that are safe, enjoyable on foot and by bike, and function as community gathering areas.

Example of progress: Updated Street Designs

The City's four Neighbourhood Plans include redesigned street layouts, in alignment with the vision of the OCP. The cross-sections are now part of the City's Development Bylaw and will be implemented gradually as the city redevelops. As an example, the image below shows the Signature Corridor cross-section, envisioned in the City Centre Neighbourhood Plan, with priority shared between pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles.



City Centre Neighbourhood Plan Excerpt - Signature Corridor



Transit - Construction of the new Montrose Transit Exchange is set to start in 2024



Walking - Historic Downtown Street Standards & Guidelines



Cycling - Salton Road bike lane

Big Picture | Transportation Choice

Transit

Transit route improvements implemented in 2019 have helped foster remarkable growth in transit use post-COVID, with a 16% increase in ridership compared to pre-pandemic levels. The City is focusing on transit expansion in the urban core and the frequent transit network plan to ensure long-term transit services align with growth and development of the city. Currently, construction of the downtown Montrose Exchange is underway, and a future exchange at Highstreet Mall is in the design phase.

Walking

Annually, the City invests in walking infrastructure by constructing sidewalks, crosswalks, and traffic signals, which significantly enhance the pedestrian experience. The priority is to connect the walking infrastructure to key destinations throughout the city in a safe and efficient manner. Protecting pedestrian movements at intersections, improving street lighting and signage, and adding wheelchair accessibility are just some examples.

Cycling

Continuous improvements to the cycling network include retrofitting old bike lanes with green paint at urban signalized intersections, building new dedicated and protected bike lanes, and refreshing existing lane markings on an annual basis. These improvements help the City with its goal to make cycling more accessible for residents.

Complete Streets

Complete streets are streets that accommodate all users, such as pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and motorists. City initiatives include reviewing existing corridors and the future transportation network through a complete streets lens in order to design better and safer streets, while promoting sustainable transportation, achieving mode share targets, and balancing needs of all users.

Funding

Following adoption of the 2016 Official Community Plan (and as guided by the Transportation and Transit Master Plan) budgets for active transportation were increased.



Big Picture | Rethink Parking

Council adopted Strategic Zoning Bylaw updates in June 2022 that included changes to parking requirements that underscore the City's understanding of the relationship of sustainable land use, low-carbon development, and transportation decisions. Key elements of the changes include:

- reduced parking requirement for 1-bedroom apartment units, from 1.5 to 1.25
- expanded historic downtown parking reduction/exemption area
- updated provisions for parking reductions near the primary transit corridor (Figure 30)
- introduced requirement for EV-ready parking stalls in new residential developments
- increased requirements for bicycle parking in new developments

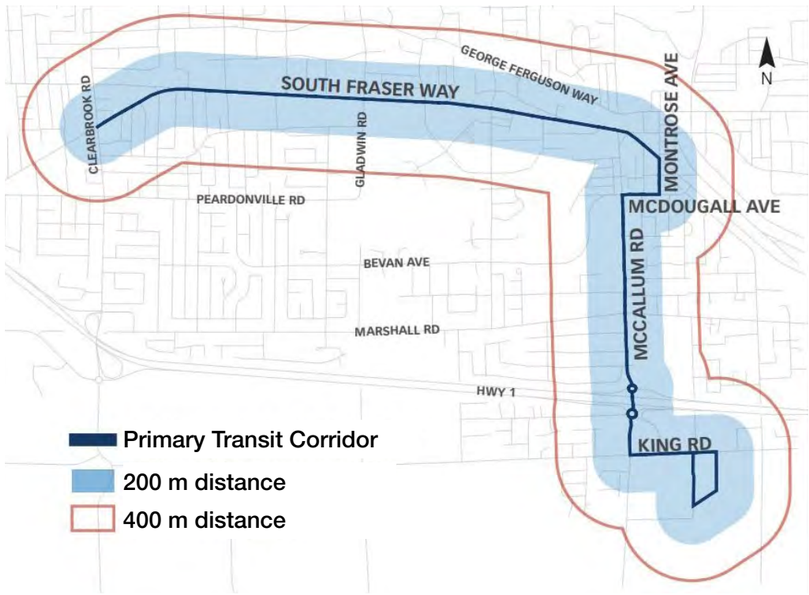


FIG. 30 REDUCED PARKING ALONG THE PRIMARY TRANSIT CORRIDOR

3.5 **Big Idea** | Make Places for People

The 2016 OCP envisions Abbotsford as a city full of beautiful and interesting public places, with parks, plazas, and other open spaces providing the stage for public life. To achieve this vision, the OCP identifies the following big picture ideas:



- Open Spaces and People Places
- Creative and Cultural Expression
- Local Economy
- Inclusive and Diverse Community

How are we doing?

Big Picture | Open Spaces and People Places

The City has undertaken many initiatives since 2016 to support a diverse and dynamic system of parks, trails, urban plazas, and recreation amenities. Examples of initiatives undertaken in recent years include:

- Planning/ development of new urban plazas
- Go Play Outside Initiative
- Age Well Mobile Wellness Program
- New Pickleball Courts at Jubilee Park
- Play Box program expansion
- New Strategies for Arena & Aquatic Services and Facilities
- Recreation Child & Youth Summer Pass Launch
- Artist in Residence Program in public spaces
- Advancing amenity additions in parks (e.g. washrooms, shelters)
- New bike shelter at Clearbrook library
- Neighbourhood trail connections (e.g. Eagle Mountain)
- Park upgrades and new park development
- Shade & natural elements added through more than 8,300 tree and native shrub plantings in parks (631), roadways (2,145), and natural areas (5,548), as of September 2023

Example: *Further Action on Urban Plazas and Active Streets*

Consistent with the OCP vision, progress on two new Historic Downtown urban plazas (Rail District and West Railway) will bring new life to the neighbourhood with opportunities for community connections and gathering.



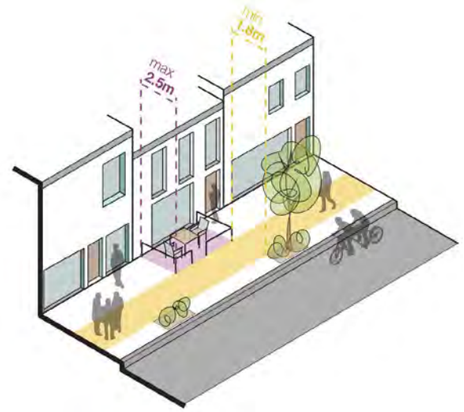
Rail District Plaza



West Railway Plaza Concept

Example of Progress: Council Patio Policy

In June 2022 Council adopted a new Patio Policy to guide applications for patios seeking to expand into and share frontage areas along sidewalks. The intent of the policy is to enhance the pedestrian experience by enabling businesses to spill out into the public realm, bringing more life to city streets.



Big Picture | Creative and Cultural Expression

In 2022 Council endorsed Culture Connect. This new culture strategy supports the OCP by identifying opportunities to grow the City's cultural ecosystem. One of the key goals of the strategy is to enable high quality and versatile cultural spaces and places that encourage creativity and participation.



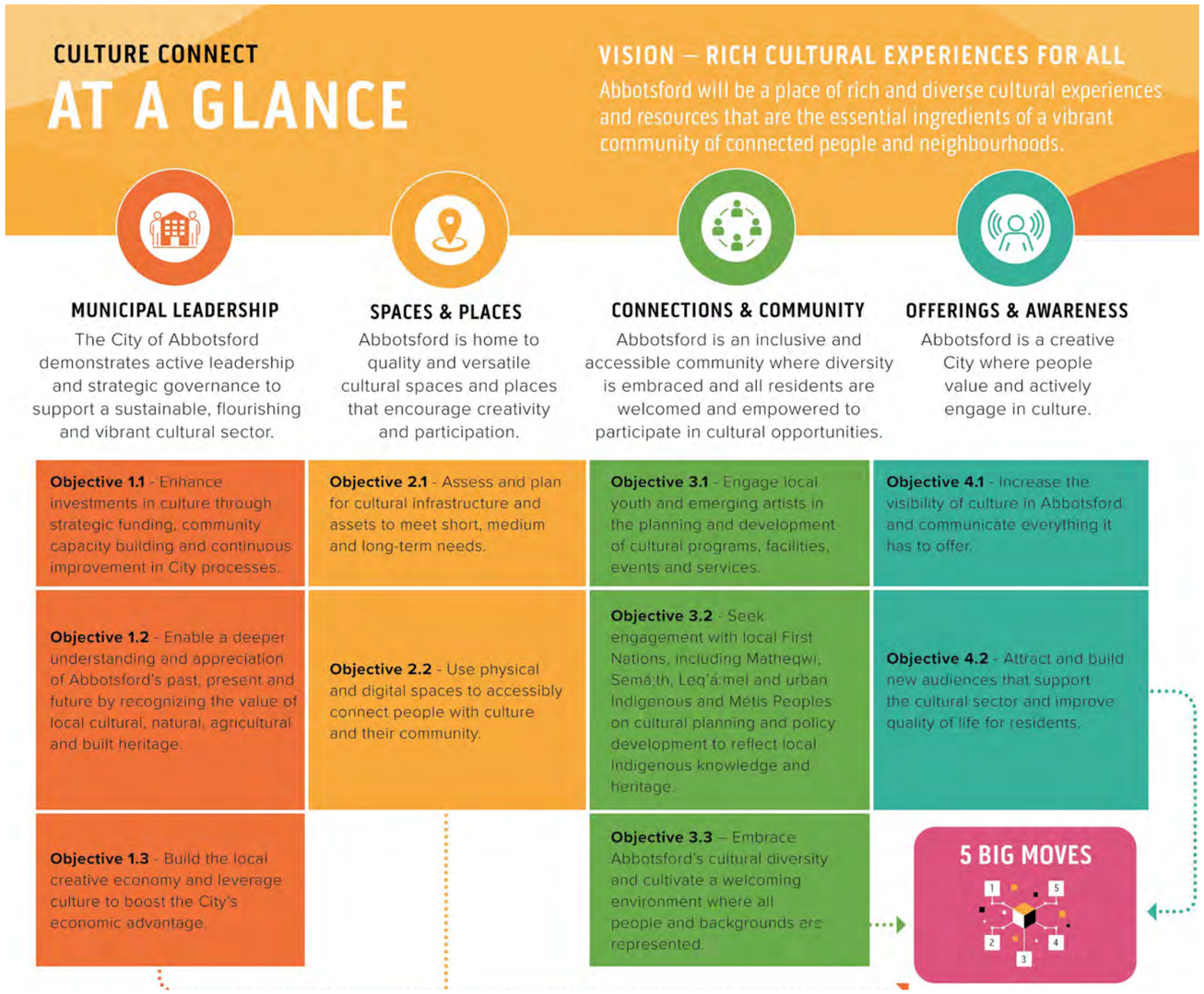


FIG. 31 CULTURE CONNECT CULTURE STRATEGY AT A GLANCE

Big Picture | Local Economy

Abbotsford continues to enjoy a vibrant, local, diverse, and resilient economy, and the City is committed to providing continued support for local businesses. The City's Business Retention and Expansion Program focuses on existing businesses and is building a trusted working relationship to support business expansion plans.

The City's Economic Development team has identified priority sectors in Abbotsford, including technology and innovation, agriculture and agri-foods, aerospace and aviation, film and television, and advanced manufacturing.

Support for the local economy also extends to City investments in transportation infrastructure that is vital to supporting the efficient movement of goods.

Example: Aerospace and Aviation

The Abbotsford International Airport (YXX), is highly motivated to attract new aerospace developments. Some initiatives to support the aerospace industry include:

- Attracting aerospace-related initiatives that build-on/complement existing economic base;
- Facilitating the development of programs and businesses engaged in training, in-service support, manufacture and development of aerospace platforms;
- Supporting the development and training of skilled human capital;
- Enhancing the national presence of Abbotsford-based aerospace and advanced technology stakeholders, and;
- Creating the conditions for a viable and healthy economic and business environment through city and airport-based initiatives, incentives and networking opportunities.



Aerospace and Aviation



Marshall Road Connector opening

Supporting Goods Movement

Several recent transportation investments support the important role of goods movement in the local economy:

- New Marshall Road connector and Fraser Highway improvements support regional east-west connections
- Vye Road overpass and Sumas Way improvements improve vehicle and rail movement in a key employment area and streamline connections to USA
- Mt Lehman Rd improvements enhance airport and Highway 1 connection



Filming in Abbotsford

2022 Local Film & Television Production

- 70 Film Productions
- 148 Film Inquiries
- 10 Series
- 7 Commercials
- 330 Filming Days
- $2.6 Million Economic Impact

Big Picture | Inclusive and Diverse Community

The City has developed or is in the process of developing a variety of initiatives to foster inclusivity throughout the city, from accessible buildings and public spaces, to amenities that meet a variety of cultural priorities. Some examples include:

- Culture Connect, Culture Strategy 2022
- Addition of Accessibility and Equity Council Advisory Committee
- Culture Corner at ARC & MRC
- Komagata Maru Street Renaming
- Traveling Tactile Museum (2024 launch)
- New Cultural Network
- Cultural programming in parks
- Cenotaph added to Community Heritage Register (2020)
- Grant Park accessibility improvements and challenger baseball (2022 Excellence Award)
- PRC Master Plan reflects desire to ensure all park spaces are accessible and inclusive

Komagata Maru Street Renaming

In July 2023, in collaboration with the Khalsa Diwan Society and the South Asian Studies Institute, the City of Abbotsford honoured the Komagata Maru tragedy with an unveiling of 3 commemorative panels and a commemorative street renaming of a portion of South Fraser Way.





Grant Park accessible playground



Grant Park accessible challenger baseball facility

3.6 **Big Idea** | Improve Natural + Built Systems

The 2016 OCP views Abbotsford as becoming both more “city” and more “country”, where the city becomes more urban while the integrity of the country becomes stronger. The big picture ideas to achieve this vision include:



- Natural and Built Areas in the City and Country
- Views
- Resource Conservation and Responsibility
- Sustainable Infrastructure

How are we doing?

Big Picture | Natural and Built Areas in the City and Country

Since adopting the 2016 OCP, the City has successfully protected and maintained many important ecosystems and habitats, and enhanced environmental quality. Healthy and natural systems play an important role in absorbing and weathering climate change stressors.

Examples of progress include:

- Willband Park trail connection to Hazelwood Ave
- Vicarro Ranch rezoning established large tracts of land for long term preservation and the retention/improvement of a community trail system
- Urban Forestry Strategy, 2022
- Acquired Erratic Park, preserving a large glacial erratic rock at 31116 Firhill Drive
- Ongoing protection of Streamside Protection and Enhancement Areas (SPEA) through redevelopment
- Habitat restoration works along Bertrand Creek
- Design and development of Engineer Park
- Creation of Mill Lake Master Plan
- Adoption of McKee Neighbourhood Plan open space, geotechnical designations, and integration of new Wildfire Development Permit Guidelines
- Over 8,300 trees and native shrubs planted in parks (631), roadways (2,145), and natural areas (5,548), as of September 2023

Example: *Engineer Park*

The future park site in West Abbotsford consists of about 3.5 hectares nestled amongst established single detached neighbourhoods. The park will preserve and enhance natural features such as Bertrand Creek, meadow grasslands, and perimeter tree canopy, while stitching together the community with pedestrian walkways.



Engineer Park Concept Drawings

Big Picture | Views

The OCP encourages protecting and highlighting views to natural features, such as Mt. Baker. In support of this objective, the recently adopted McKee Neighbourhood Plan (2023) includes policies to protect and enhance views, wherever possible. The Plan recommends a viewing platform on McKee Peak to optimize views over the Fraser Valley and onwards to Mt. Baker.

Park planning and programming elements of the on-going Mill Lake Master Planning process are also considering the importance of views to Mt. Baker.



McKee Peak Neighbourhood Plan Concept Sketch

Big Picture | Sustainable Infrastructure

The City has advanced the 2016 OCP goal of maximizing the efficiency and performance of municipal infrastructure in a number of ways, modelling climate leadership for the community.

The City's 2022 Green Buildings Framework guides climate action initiatives related to new construction and significant renovation of civic buildings. Guided by this framework, the Abbotsford Recreation Centre Heat Recovery and Optimization (HeRO) project will recover waste heat and optimize energy-sharing, reducing emissions by 70%.

Other examples of progress include:

- *LED Street light Replacement Program*; over 6,000 lights; 38% annual emissions reduction
- Integrated Stormwater Management Planning for Willband Creek and Fishtrap Creek
- Work on a new water supply to improve the drought resilience of the regional water supply serving Abbotsford
- Sanitary system improvement and renewal projects (e.g. new Gladwin and Downes Road siphon chamber, Queen Street Pump Replacement)
- 2021 Flood Recovery and Long Term Flood Mitigation work

Big Picture | Resource Conservation and Responsibility

The 2016 OCP establishes a goal of conserving water and energy resources for current and future generations by planning with a long term perspective.

Since 2016, the City has made progress and, in many ways, excelled in its approach to mitigating the impacts of climate change. In addition to OCP policies that support densification and reduced car dependency, other City initiatives include:

- Active transportation enhancements
- EV charging requirements for new development
- Buildings sector education & training
- Automated curbside collection
- Irrigation & Landscape Water Assessment resident rebates (Our Water Matters)
- ARC Heat Recovery & Optimization Project; waste heat recovery + energy sharing
- Continued development of the Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI) , for rapid detection of customer leaks and improved public awareness of efficient water use
- LED Street light Replacement Program; over 6,000 lights; 38% annual emissions reduction



3.7 **Big Idea** | Enhance Agricultural Integrity

The OCP seeks to ensure agricultural areas are protected and maintained as places for agricultural growing, production and processing in support of thriving livelihoods, while also recognizing the increasing impacts of climate change. The big picture objectives to achieve this consider:



- Agriculture in the Country
- Food in the City

How are we doing?

Big Picture | Agriculture in the Country

In 2022, the City completed AgRefresh, a three stage planning process to review and modernize agricultural policies, bylaws, and regulations for Abbotsford's farming areas, and to establish a framework for improving bylaw compliance in the Agricultural Lands Reserve.

AgRefresh updated OCP policy, the Zoning Bylaw, prepared a new supporting Council Policy for agricultural areas, and implemented a bylaw compliance approach tailored to ensure agricultural areas remain focused on farming. AgRefresh demonstrates the City's commitment to ensuring Abbotsford remains surrounded and sustained by a thriving and diverse agricultural sector.

Specific topics addressed through AgRefresh include:

- House size
- Farm worker housing
- Farm product processing
- Alcohol production facilities
- Agri-tourism & gathering for events
- Farm retail
- Agri-industrial
- Urban-rural interface

Big Picture | Food in the City

Since 2016 the City has undertaken several initiatives to support the establishment of urban agriculture. Most recently, in 2022, Council adopted Zoning Bylaw amendments to enable urban bee-keeping on single-detached dwelling properties throughout the city.

The City also supports annual community events centred around agriculture, including Berry Fest, Taste of Abbotsford, and the Abbotsford Farm and Country Market.

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

Following adoption of the 2016 OCP, the City prepared several master plans and strategies to support implementation of the new OCP directions and to guide more detailed decision-making (Plan 200k).

This section of the Report provides a high-level overview of City plans and strategies that complement the OCP through coordinated long-term planning of utilities/services (water, sanitary sewer, stormwater, waste management), parks, amenities, and transportation improvements needed to support the growth plan and goals of the OCP. Several strategies also provide guidance for preparing bylaws, policies, and setting priorities for capital investment and service delivery.

Some of the findings and recommendations in these plans and strategies will help inform updates for this OCP process, whereas some plans will need to be updated in response to the Abbotsforward 2050 OCP outcomes.

4.1 Strategic Plan 2022-2026

Endorsed by Council in January 2023, the Strategic Plan sets the priorities of City Council for its four year term (2022-2026). The plan outlines a set of goals and actions for the City under four Guiding Principles. These principles are closely tied to the vision and policies of the OCP. **Council identified an OCP update as a key priority action to achieve Goal 4 of Principle 1.**

Strategic Plan | Vision

The City of Abbotsford is the Hub of the Fraser Valley. As the cultural and economic centre of the region, Abbotsford will be home to centralized services and agencies including health care, court services, transportation, university, airport, provincial and federal government, entertainment and cultural facilities, and commerce. We are diverse, inclusive, and connected; we are sustainable, safe, and healthy; we are a vibrant, prosperous and generous community.

Principle 1: Inclusive and Connected Community

The City of Abbotsford is a community of inclusive, diverse, and green neighbourhoods, connected to convenient and affordable transportation and vibrant commercial centres. Our community is built on the foundation of our cultural heritage and natural beauty and we provide active living opportunities for all residents which contributes to the vitality and social cohesion of our City.

Goals

1. Embrace diversity as one of our community's greatest strengths
2. Capitalize on transportation opportunities in and through the City
3. Value recreation and support facilities, amenities and activities that connect us
4. Ensure development decisions are based on our long-term strategies and are not swayed from our community vision by short-term goals

Principle 2: Sustainable and Safe City

We are committed to keeping our residents and our community safe and to addressing social issues that impact our city. We are proactive in our stewardship of the environment and we value our natural assets and support sustainable growth. We are committed to minimizing environmental impacts and addressing climate change in our community.

Goals

1. Value our community's connection with the environment
2. Support a multi-disciplinary approach to public safety
3. Facilitate action to mitigate social issues that impact our community

Principle 3: Vibrant and Growing Economy

The City of Abbotsford is a regional hub of creativity and innovation where talent, investment and business thrive. We are a dynamic and prosperous community with a vibrant downtown and a fully diversified economy. We are a location of choice for development and sustainable investment.

Goals

1. Recognize the value of innovation in our local economy, especially agriculture
2. Develop a vibrant and diverse economy
3. Invest in building relationships that facilitate alignment

Principle 4: Organizational Excellence and Integrity

The City of Abbotsford has strong fiscal discipline, consistent governance and aligned operations. We actively manage our City finances with exceptional care. We are committed to being fair, equitable, transparent and democratic in our decision making. We maintain collaborative relationships with other communities and levels of government.

Goals

1. Our City services and programs are efficient and effective and we provide excellence in customer experiences
2. Financial decisions consider long-term costs alongside the value to the community
3. We have open and transparent governance
4. Our workforce is involved, safe and engaged

4.2 Water, Sanitary Sewer, Stormwater, & Waste

Water

Water supply is essential for the health, safety, and quality of life of residents and businesses. Supporting and managing population growth through the OCP requires an adequate, safe, and reliable water supply to satisfy the various needs of the community and provide fire protection.

Source

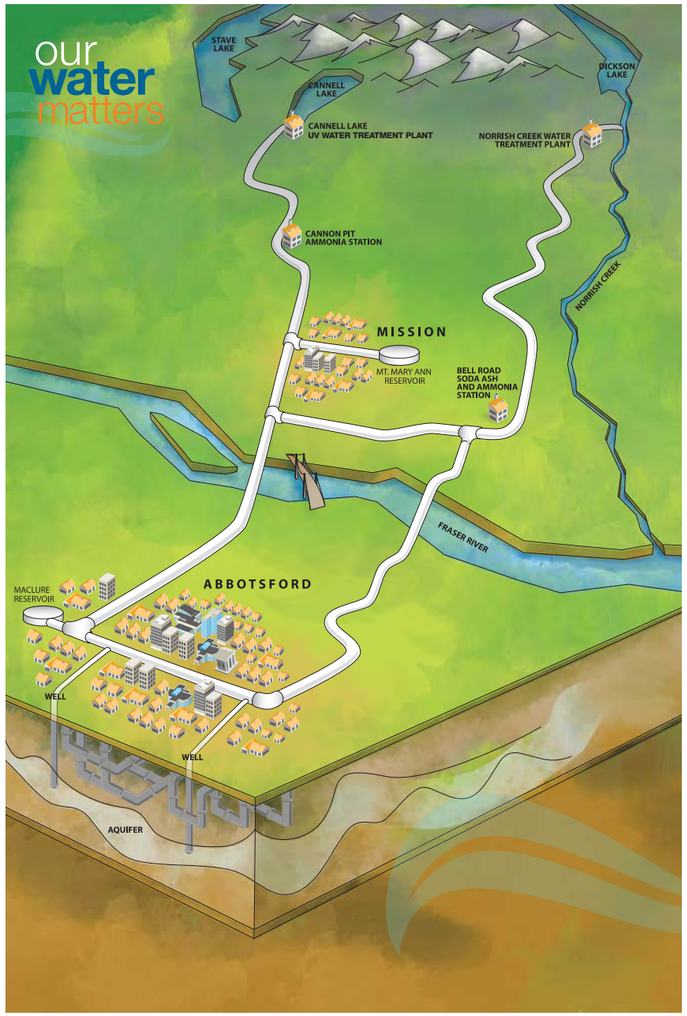
The City of Abbotsford receives its water from a regional water supply that is jointly owned and shared with the City of Mission. Operationally, the regional system is managed by the City of Abbotsford.

Currently, the water supply draws from three sources; Norrish Creek, Cannell Lake, and the Abbotsford-Sumas Aquifer. The regional system treats and delivers drinking water to Abbotsford and Mission via nearly 90 km of large diameter transmission pipes. Each City is then responsible for distribution to customer connections and billing within their community.

Coordinated Planning

Abbotsford's long-term water supply planning is guided at two levels, a regional plan that considers the supply needs of both Abbotsford and Mission, and a plan focused on distribution and storage needs within the City of Abbotsford. The regional and city master plans are updated periodically. The most recent plans were completed in 2018.

In addition to planning to meet the required supply needs, water demand management and asset management are key components of long-term planning. Ongoing water conservation and efficiency programs aim to eliminate water wastage and increase effective use of water such that the need for costly supply upgrades may be deferred further into the future. Asset management efforts aim to maintain existing infrastructure such that the water supply system performs reliably over its long service life and community investments achieve maximum benefits.



Consumption, Efficiency and Growth

Between 2018 to 2022, Abbotsford used an average of 52 million litres per day (ML/d) of drinking water, with a peak day demand ranging from 70 to 100 ML/d. Mission tends to use approximately one quarter of this amount.

Current demands are much less than past forecasting predicted for the present population. The significant improvement in water conservation is partly credited to the deployment of smart water meters, known as Advanced Meter Infrastructure or AMI. Benefits of AMI include helping detect customer leaks and allowing residents to track consumption. Concurrently with demand management efforts, the City is actively developing new supply sources to accommodate increases in future demand and improve system reliability.

Sanitary Sewer

The City's sanitary sewer system includes two components: wastewater collection and treatment.

Wastewater from urban residences and businesses is collected by a series of pipes and pump stations and conveyed to the Joint Abbotsford Mission Environmental System (JAMES) Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) before being discharged into the Fraser River. The treatment process ensures the protection of public health, and marine and aquatic life.

Wastewater Collection System

The wastewater collection system (34 pump stations and ~575 km of sewer mains) serves Abbotsford and Sumas, Washington. In 2017, following adoption of the OCP, the City completed a Wastewater Collection Master Plan. The Plan analyzed the impact of the OCP on the collection system and identified the improvements necessary to support the envisioned population of 200,000 by 2041, in addition to new industrial, commercial and institutional growth.

The Master Plan identifies long term capital costs, timing and investment priorities, providing guidance to optimize and upgrade the sewer system in consideration of risks, resiliency and climate change impacts (e.g. severe storms). The plan projects $38 million in infrastructure upgrades by 2041, and $28 million for system maintenance, renewal and improvements.

Since adoption of the 2017 Master Plan, the City has completed several capacity building and renewal projects to keep pace with growth (e.g. new Gladwin and Downes Road siphon chamber, Queen Street Pump Replacement).

Wastewater Treatment Plant

The JAMES Plant treats wastewater collected in the urban areas of Abbotsford, Mission and Sumas, WA. Originally constructed in 1981, growth has driven several facility expansions over the years. Future expansion to the east and west of the existing site is proposed in response to building code and seismic requirements, and to prepare for climate change.

The Joint Wastewater Master Plan was adopted in 2018 and estimates capital expenditures of ~$260 M by 2041. Of this total, $88 M is expected to go towards flood-proofing and ground improvement, with $124 M estimated for expanded treatment capacity. Importantly, the City is not expected to be the sole funding source for future improvements. Grants from higher level of governments will be pursued to facilitate major projects within the Capital Program.



Wastewater collection improvements



James Wastewater Treatment Plant (Abbotsford-Mission Joint Wastewater Master Plan 2018)

Stormwater (drainage and flood control)

Over the past century, Abbotsford's forests were cleared and changed to pasture and developed for urban uses, resulting in less rainfall retained by trees and soil.

With urban development, more land is covered with impervious surfaces such as asphalt and roofs, dramatically increasing runoff into ditches, creeks and streams. If not managed, these increases can erode creek banks and cause downstream flooding.

One of the 7 Big Ideas in the OCP is to improve natural and built systems. As new development occurs in Abbotsford, the City uses the following approaches to support this goal:

- Direct runoff to detention facilities and discharge to downstream drainage systems at a controlled rate that mimics pre-development patterns, or infiltrate into the ground for groundwater recharge;
- Implement source controls, such as rain gardens, bio-filtration swales, and absorbent soils to reduce runoff volumes and provide treatment; and
- As redevelopment occurs in older neighbourhoods without storm sewer pipes, implement better systems to move stormwater and infiltrate runoff for groundwater recharge.

Integrated Stormwater Management Planning (ISMP)

The City has prepared several ISMPs to enhance watershed health and mitigate development impacts in urban areas. These plans combine a range of strategies, such as green infrastructure, erosion control, habitat restoration, drainage systems, and water quality controls, to reduce flooding, prevent water pollution, and protect natural ecosystems. ISMPs can also identify habitat restoration needs for non-streamside areas, such as parks and forested areas.

- Fishtrap Creek ISMP (nearing completion) - watershed in the southwest area of the City
- Willband Creek ISMP (2019) - watershed in the centre of the City, including Mill Lake
- Clayburn Creek ISMP (2012) - multiple tributaries, including Stoney Creek, Poignant Creek, and Diane Brook. Clayburn Creek drains through Matsqui Slough into the Fraser River.

Streamside & Natural Areas

The City has a Streamside Protection Bylaw (No. 1465-2005) that defines required development setbacks from watercourses, depending on existing streamside conditions.

To protect the natural environment, ecosystems and biological diversity, the OCP applies Natural Environment Development Permit Guidelines to development in specific areas of the city. The recently approved McKee NP goes further with additional policy standards to address our changing climate and recognize the unique challenges of urban development on a mountain. McKee policies include erosion and drainage control measures, including requirements for community detention ponds to mitigate development impacts on the downstream drainage system.

Geotechnical Setbacks

Several streams are located within steep sloped ravines. As development proceeds in proximity to these areas, it is common to require geotechnical assessments to determine appropriate building setbacks.

While not solely related to stormwater, the 2016 OCP introduced Steep Slope Development Permit Guidelines to protect people and property from hazardous conditions such as landslides, erosion and debris flow in steeply sloped areas of Abbotsford. The McKee Neighbourhood Plan includes specific local guidance given the unique hillside character of the neighbourhood.

More recent development in sloped areas reflects the OCP guidance, with better slope integration and reduced use of retaining walls.

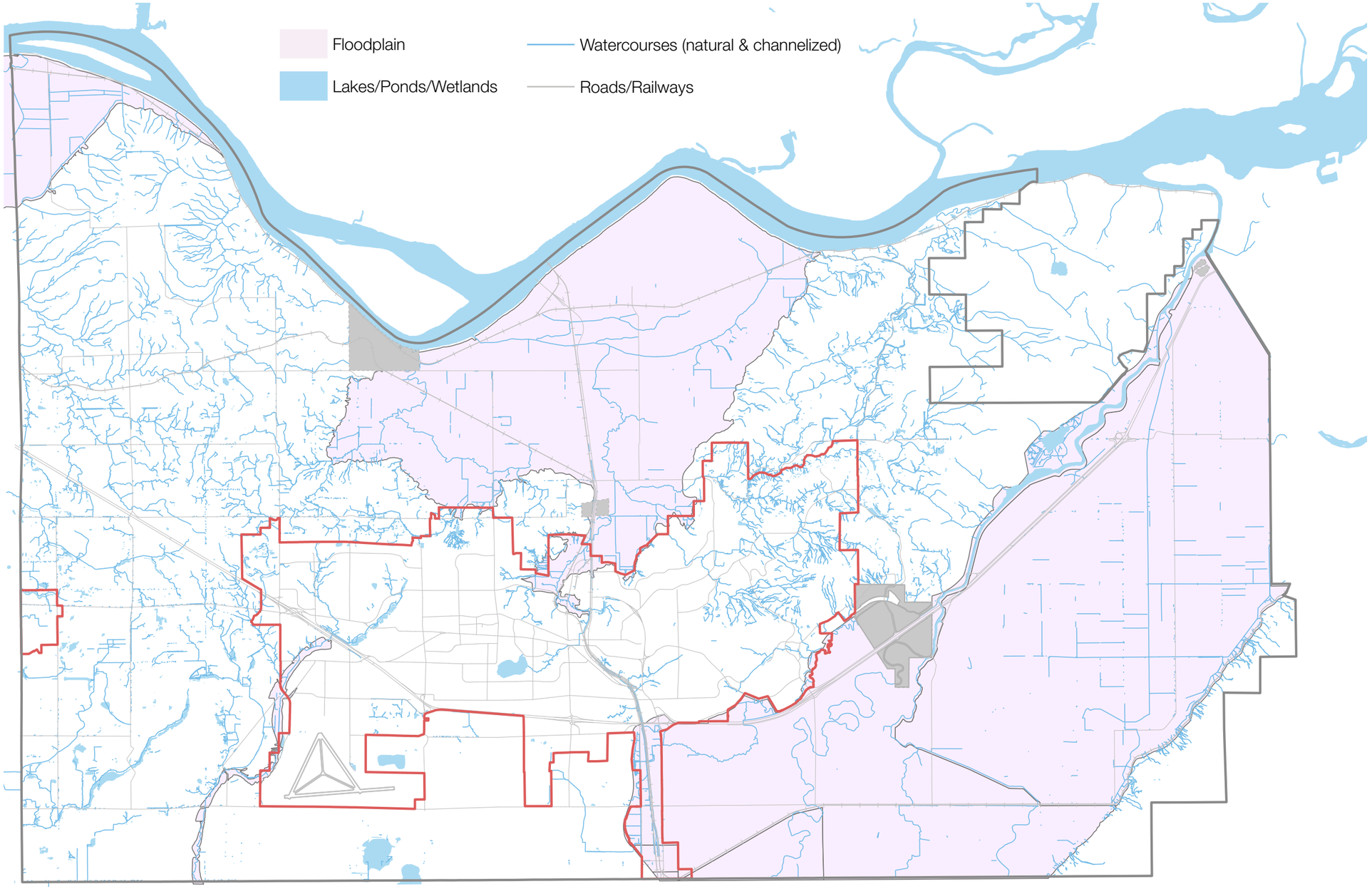
On-Lot & Regional Stormwater Requirements

The City's Development Bylaw (No. 3620-2022) outlines stormwater management requirements, including on-lot stormwater source controls such as absorbent landscaping, rain gardens, on-site infiltration trenches, and neighbourhood-scale detention facilities.

Flooding Hazards

The City's Zoning Bylaw includes floodplain mapping that identifies areas of potential flooding. Specific regulations set out protection measures for development in these areas.

MAP 7: NATURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES INFLUENCING GROWTH PATTERNS



November 2021 Atmospheric River Flood Event - Sumas Prairie

On-Going Flood Mitigation Efforts

In November 2021, Abbotsford experienced one of Canada's largest flooding disasters. The Nooksack River overflowed and breached its dike, and floodwater headed straight to Abbotsford, flooding Sumas Prairie.

Discussions on a long-term plan are currently on-going under the Sumas River Watershed Flood Mitigation Collaborative Framework. This work involves collaboration with the Province, City of Chilliwack, Semà:th (Sumas) First Nation, Mathxwí (Matsqui) First Nation, and Leq'á:mel First Nation.

While the long-term planning continues, the City is currently pursuing funding to advance three key 'urgent works' due to the timeline and urgency. 'Urgent works' include:

1 *Barrowtown Pump Station Resiliency*

The 2021 flood highlighted vulnerabilities at Barrowtown Pump Station when the station was nearly overwhelmed. The loss of Barrowtown Pump Station would lead to a major increase in flood extents and damages throughout the Sumas Prairie East (former lake bottom), with flooding potentially lasting for several months until the station can be repaired and draw down the accumulated water.

Flood resilience improvements to the pump station are a high priority to reduce the potential direct damages, residential displacement, economic disruption, and environmental impacts resulting from widespread and prolonged inundation of Sumas Prairie East.

2 *Sumas River Conveyance System (Pump Station)*

A key part of providing flood resilience along the Sumas River is to allow river outflow to continue even when the Fraser River backwaters the floodgates at Barrowtown Dam.

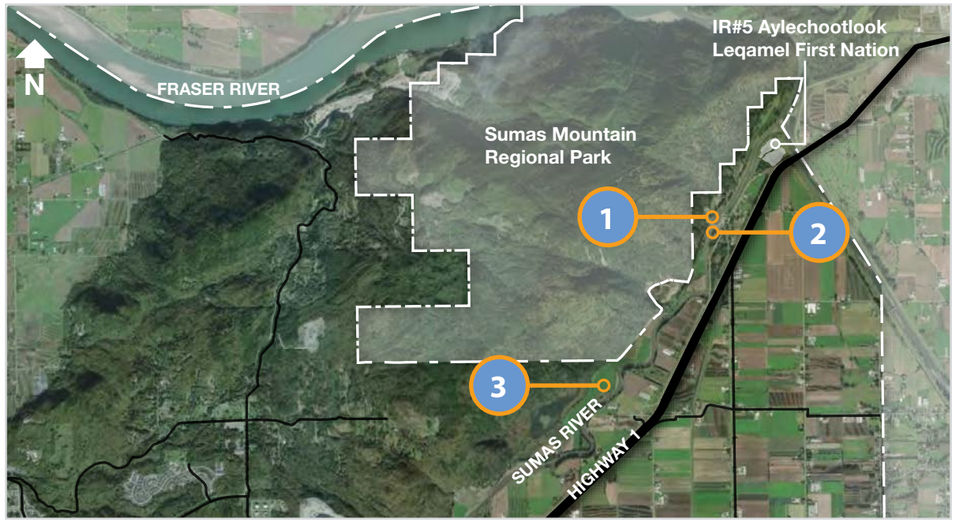
A Sumas River conveyance system (pump station) was proposed as part of flood mitigation studies since at least the 1990s. A new high-capacity pump station, with a similar capacity to the existing flood boxes at 225 m^3/s, will mitigate flood risk to all upstream residents, businesses and critical infrastructure. The exact location and size are to be determined during design. This element is a multi-year project estimated to take 6 to 7 years from design to completion.

3 *Habitat Enhancement/Flood Storage Area*

This element presents an opportunity to create additional flood storage within the existing Sumas River corridor between Highway 1 and Barrowtown Dam and pursue enhancements, such as:

- Enhance habitat (aquatic/terrestrial);
- Improve water quality;
- Include spiritual and cultural values;
- Recreation and indigenous education of the historic Sumas Lake.

This element will require the City to purchase fee simple lands and remove material to create storage/habitat for fish/terrestrial life. This element also requires a combination of capital works and operational adjustments to the City's flood protection and irrigation systems.



Proposed Flood Mitigation 'Urgent Works'

Solid Waste Management

The *Environmental Management Act* defines municipal solid waste as refuse originating from residential, commercial, and institutional uses, as well as demolition, land clearing, and construction.

Province

The Ministry of Environment requires all regional districts to prepare and implement a plan for managing and reducing garbage generated within their respective boundaries.

Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD)

Abbotsford is part of the FVRD Solid waste Management Plan (2015), which aims to divert (recycle/compost) 90% of landfill waste by 2025.

In 2020, the FVRD enacted a solid waste sorting bylaw applicable to all owners or occupants of residential, commercial, industrial and institutional properties in Abbotsford, Chilliwack, Harrison Hot Springs, Hope, Kent, Mission and Electoral Areas A - H.

Municipal

Abbotsford's OCP aligns with the FVRD plan, incorporating the 90% by 2025 waste diversion target (Policy 5.16). The City's recycling and composting practices/services will play a key role in achieving this goal and minimizing Abbotsford's impact on our natural resources.

The City's Solid Waste Management Bylaw requires all residents and businesses to sort their waste prior to disposal. The curbside collection program currently diverts 60% of landfill waste and increased the volume of compost collected by 3% between 2021 and 2022.

Currently, Abbotsford's garbage is exported outside City boundaries due to the absence of a landfill within the City. The City-owned Abbotsford-Mission Recycling Depot, located north of Historic Downtown, supports municipal curbside collection and offers residential recyclables processing. Additionally, there are several privately-owned facilities that support waste sorting and management in Abbotsford.

The City is taking steps to better regulate recycling depots, composting facilities, auto wrecking yards, and waste transfer stations. Recent Zoning Bylaw updates will help ensure waste management operators conduct business in a way that is compatible with surrounding land uses and prevents nuisances.



Transportation

Transportation plays a central role in a city's development. Transportation and the urban structure (including buildings and land use) have a profound impact and influence on one another. Decisions about the location and type of development has an impact on how people travel.

Transportation and Transit Master Plan

The 2018 Transportation & Transit Master Plan is a multi-modal plan that is closely coordinated with the City's land use plan to provide strategic direction for investment over the next 25 years.

The City is working towards a future where 25% of all trips are by sustainable transportation modes, such as walking, cycling, and transit.

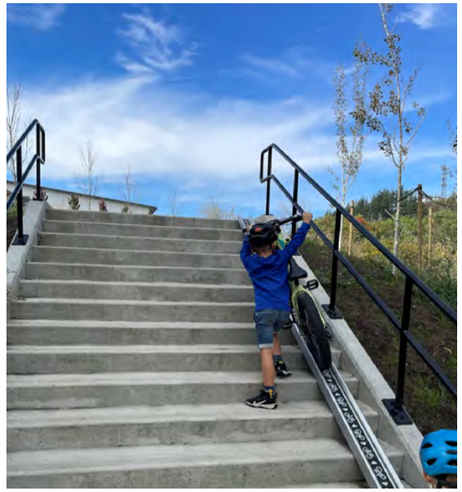
As new development introduces a greater mix of land uses, daily trips will become shorter for many residents by bringing more destinations within walking distance. The coordination of land use and transportation is becoming increasingly important due to factors such as climate change, air pollution, traffic congestion, population growth, and an aging population.

A well-coordinated transit system has significant potential to enhance the economic vibrancy, liveability, and sustainability of the community. The Master Plan focuses on building a rapid transit network with high frequency bus connections between UFV, the City Centre, and Highstreet, supported by a secondary feeder network. Regional connections to Metro Vancouver, Chilliwack, and Mission are also prioritized.

The Plan also envisions an extensive bicycle network that includes key routes that are physically separated from cars to increase the attractiveness of cycling for people of "all ages and abilities".



Salton Road AAA cycling facility



Cycling stair assist ramp - Eagle Mountain

Neighbourhood Plans

Recently completed Neighbourhood Plans (NPs) for the City Centre, Historic Downtown, UDistrict and McKee prioritize sustainable transportation forms in their design and land use policy. Furthermore, the NPs emphasize the role of the public realm in supporting transportation choice, with wider sidewalks, new street furniture such as benches for seating, safer crosswalks, designated bicycle lanes and more street trees. Policies aim to encourage walking and biking by making active modes more comfortable and enjoyable.



Enhancing the Pedestrian Realm - Vision for Historic Downtown Improvements (HDNP Fig. 18)

Streetscape Standards and Guidelines

A key Big Idea in the OCP is to make walking, biking, and transit “delightful” and enjoyable. To achieve this, changes are required in the way streets are designed by creating “complete streets” in key locations. Many streets will be rebuilt so that more space is allocated for pedestrians and cyclists featuring wider sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and more street trees and vegetation.

Given the importance of ‘getting the details right’, the City prepared ‘Streetscape Standards and Guidelines’ for the Historic Downtown in 2021, outlining specific direction on design and finishings. Similar work is underway for the City’s mixed-use urban core neighbourhoods (e.g. City Centre, UDistrict).

Development Bylaw Updates

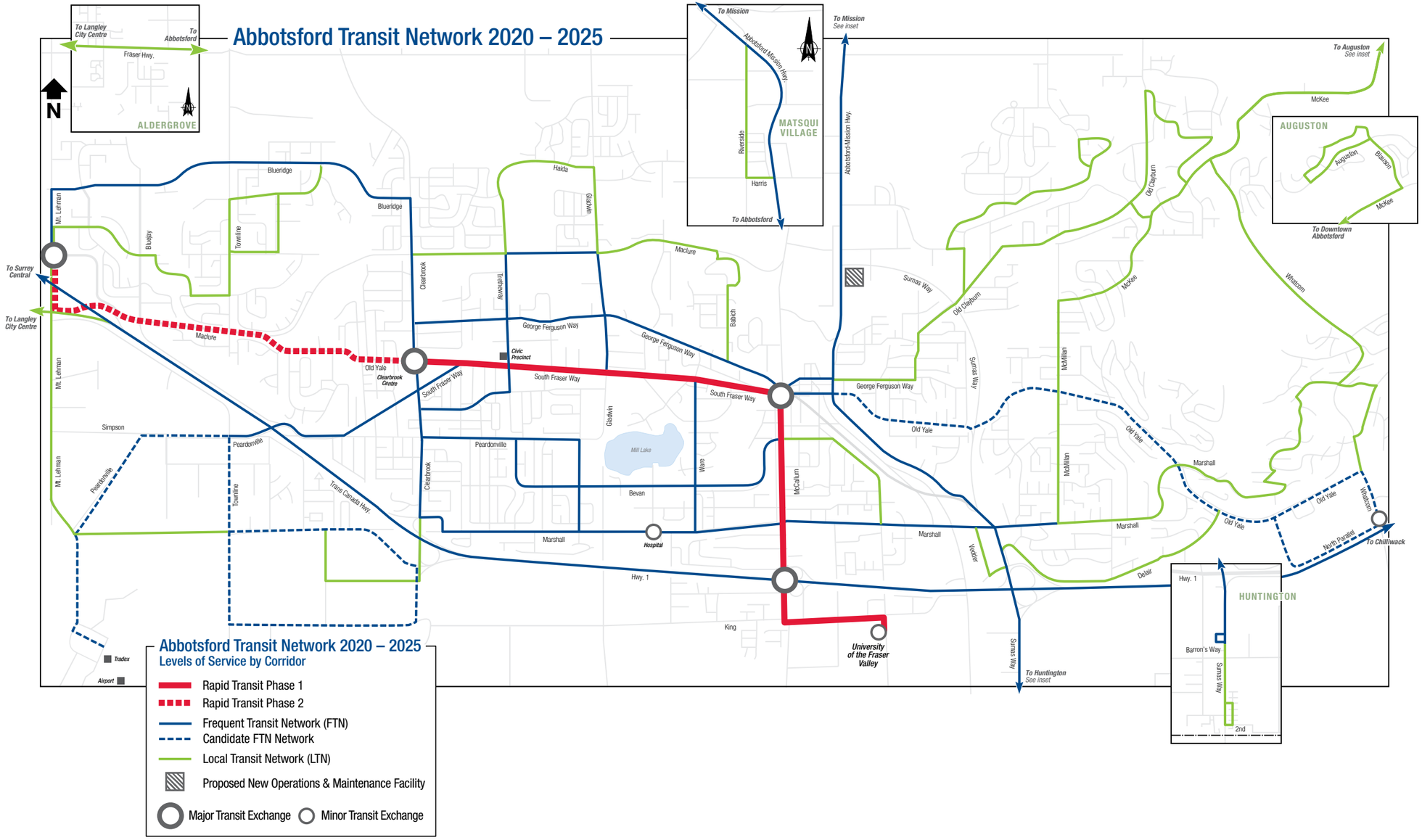
The City’s Development Bylaw (No. 3620-2022) was recently updated to reflect new street cross-sections for collector and arterial roads, including the signature corridor of South Fraser Way. For all streets, sidewalks will be widened from 1.5 metres to a minimum of 1.8 metres and soil volumes for street trees will be increased to improve tree liveability and life span. On-street bike lanes or multi-use pathways are incorporated into many street standards.



Historic Downtown Streetscape Standards & Guidelines (2021) Montrose

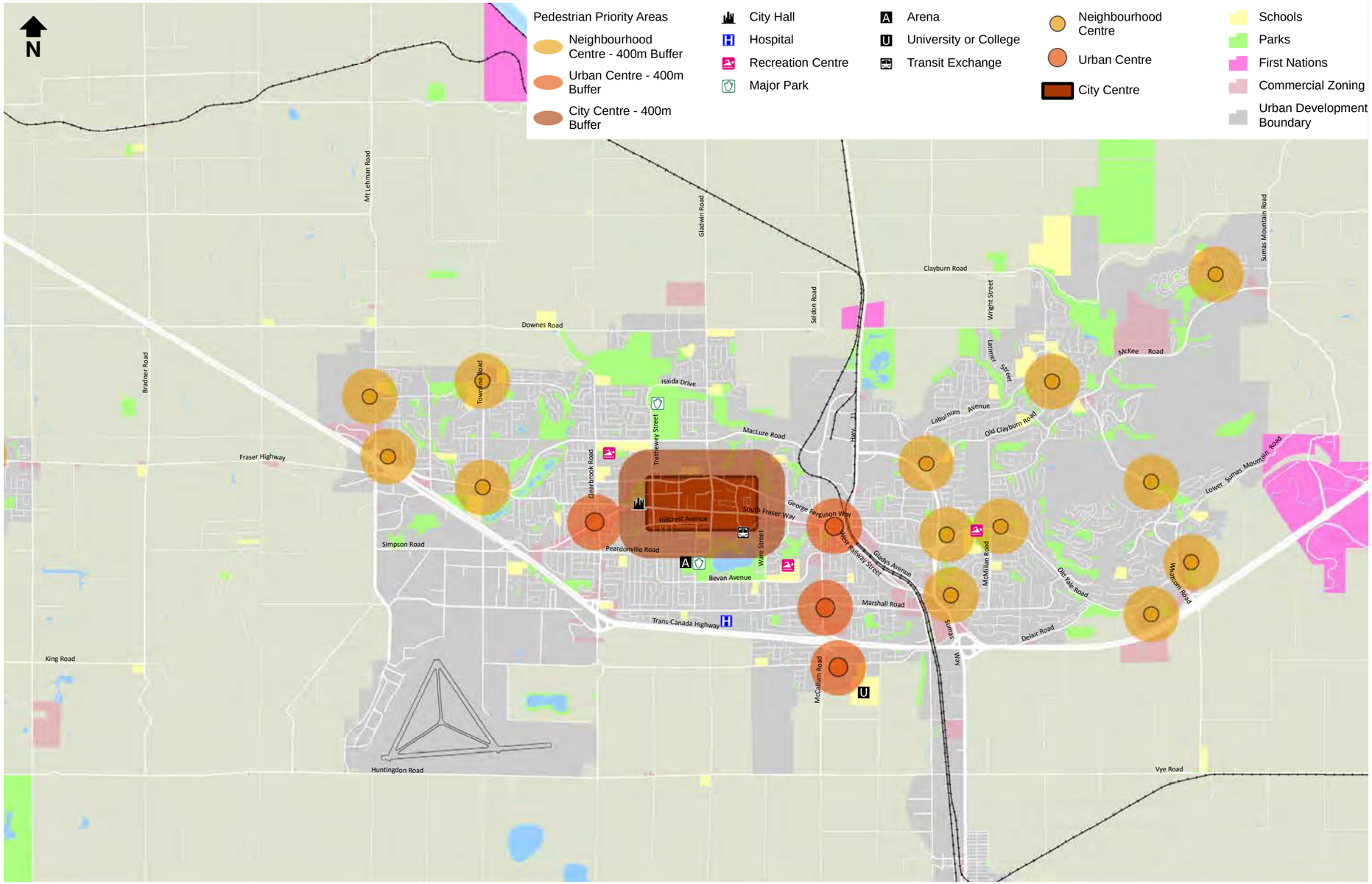


Historic Downtown Streetscape Standards & Guidelines (2021) cover rendering

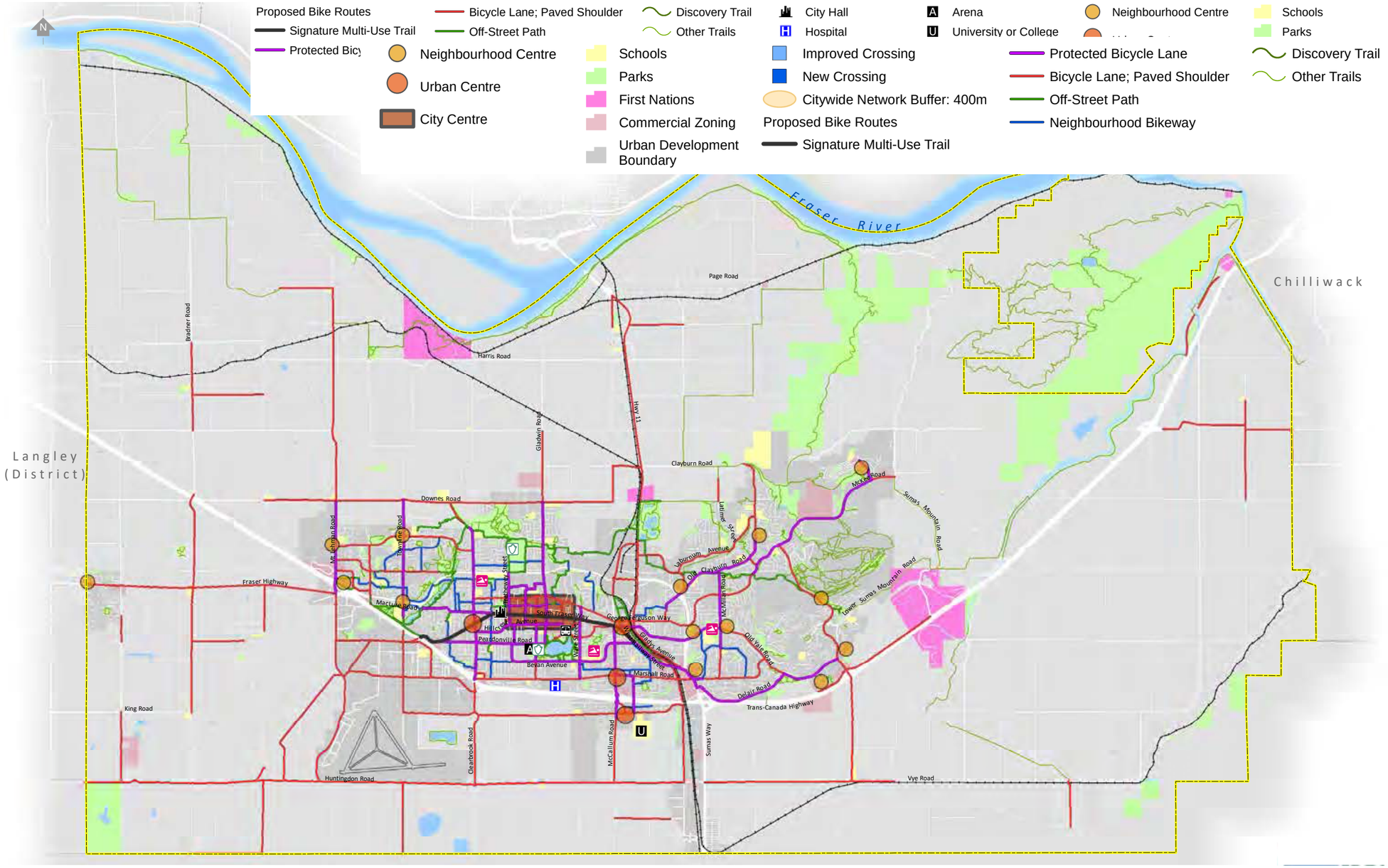


MAP 8: ABBOTSFORD TRANSIT NETWORK 2020-2025 (FIGURE 20 TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN 2018)

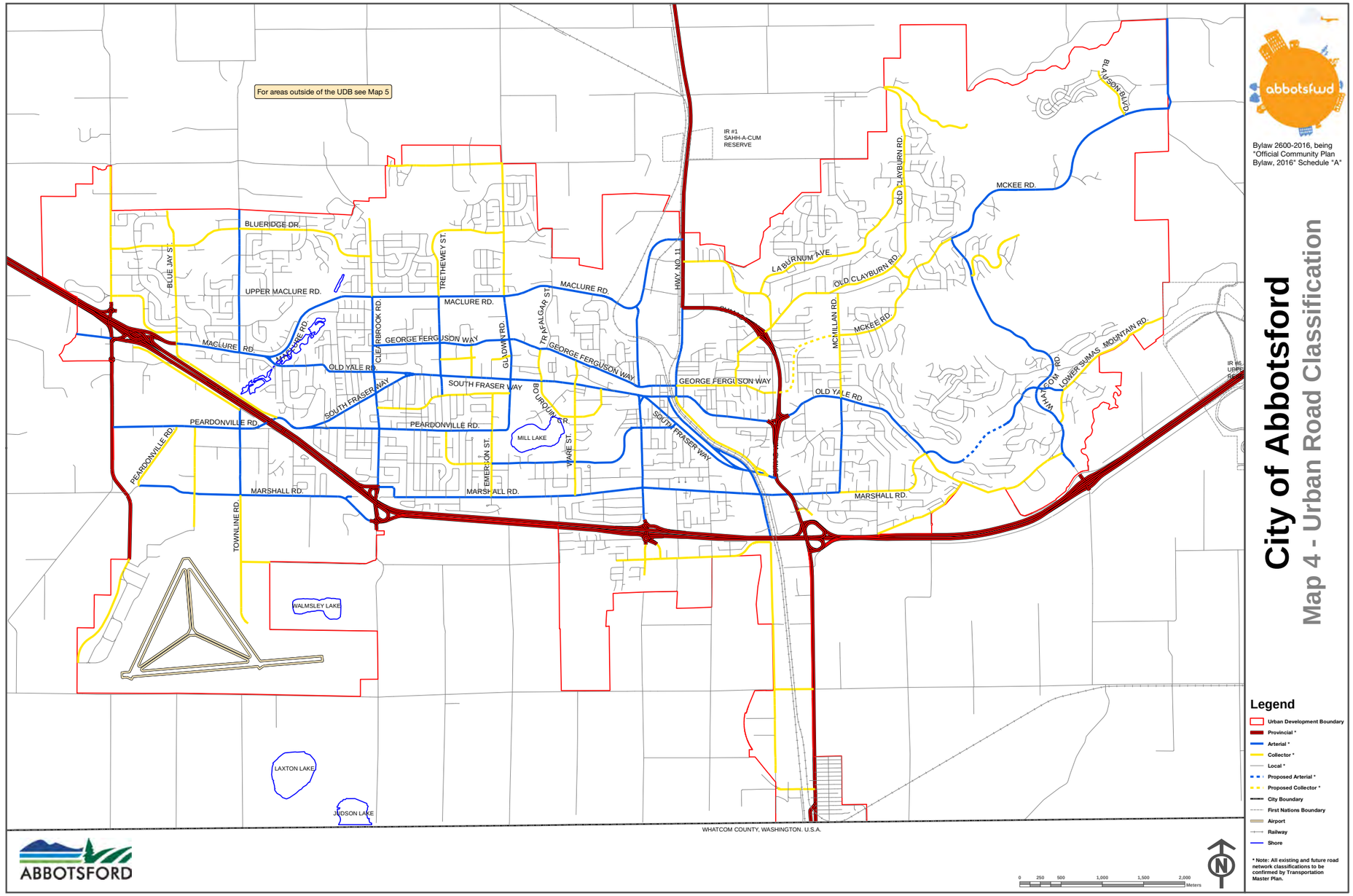
MAP 9: URBAN NODE PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY AREAS (2018 TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN FIGURE 28)



MAP 10: LONG TERM BICYCLE NETWORK PLAN (2018 TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN FIGURE 17)



Note: This Master Plan map does not address City planning for trail and off-road cycling. The Parks division is planning to begin work on a trail and off-road cycling plan in 2024.



MAP 11: OCP MAP 4 - ROAD CLASSIFICATION NETWORK

4.3 Parks, Recreation and Culture (PRC)

Parks and other open spaces are important for the quality of life of residents. Parks offer opportunities for both passive and active recreation and they provide access to protected natural areas. The City's Parks, Recreation & Culture Master Plan (2018) identifies the following guiding principles:

- comfortable, safe, and welcoming to all members of the community and designed for all levels and life stages
- multi-use, flexible, multi-seasonal, inclusive, accessible, and adaptable to changing community needs
- support excellence in sports, arts, and culture, as well as unstructured, self-scheduled and drop-in forms of participation
- support healthy environments and mental, social, and physical well-being
- service delivery approach that is creative, collaborative, and fiscally responsible

There are many types of existing parks ranging from city-wide parks such as Mill Lake, community and neighbourhood parks, and other open spaces including natural areas, public cemeteries, urban plazas, and public golf courses. Trees and plants on streets or private property also contribute to the park-like nature of the City.

Looking Ahead

The PRC Master Plan envisions several investments planned over the next 25 years. The Mill Lake Park Master Plan is currently being developed, setting a path for improving a key City Centre park often referred to as 'the jewel of Abbotsford'.

Several new neighbourhood and community parks and public spaces will be added in coordination with development of the McKee Neighbourhood Plan area and redevelopment of existing neighbourhoods, such as City Centre and Historic Downtown.

The long-term vision includes a new aquatic facility and a new multi-sport training & tournament centre.

To support Culture in the City over the long-term, several new facilities are envisioned, including a library for the east side of Abbotsford, improvements to the Turner house and Clayburn park, a new outdoor amphitheatre, and a new performance theatre.

The following maps summarize the investment priorities into the future.



Crossley Park, Abbotsford

PRC Master Plan **Park** Investment Priorities & Context

Circles are shown as general locations

Asterisks = location to be determined

Existing Parks
Map does not show undeveloped land secured for future park development

Trails (on-going investment)

Priorities for Enhancing Existing Parks & Infrastructure

A. Civic Precinct Park
B. City Park*
C. Mill Lake Park
D. Jubilee Park
E. Clayburn Park
F. Hazelwood Cemetery

New Park Priorities

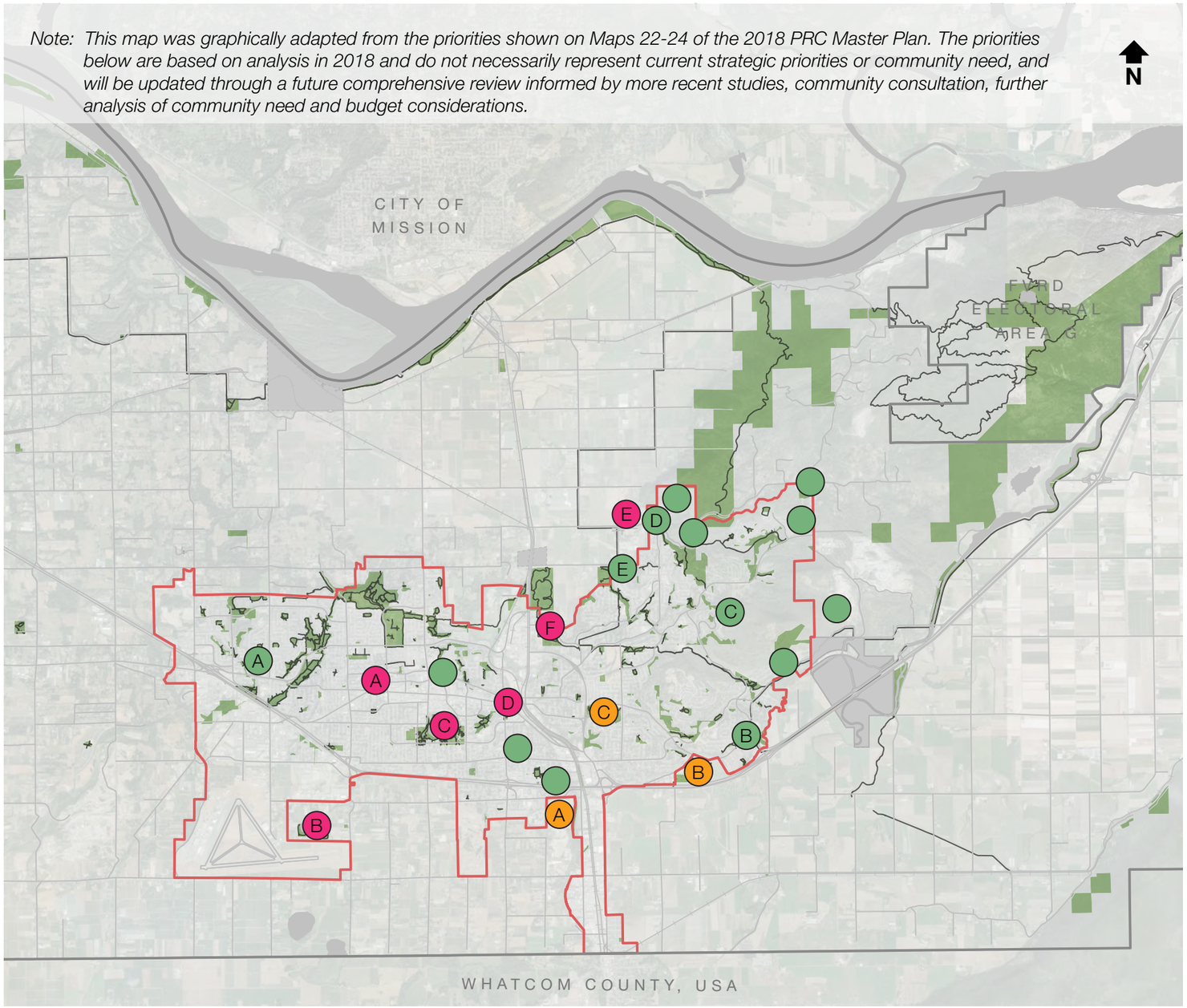
A. Erratic Rock Park
B. Timberlane Park
C. Dog Park*
D. Abby Grind Relocation*
E. Youth Park (longboarding)*

+ other new unnamed parks

New Facility Priorities

A. Option 1: Multi-Sport Outdoor Tournament Centre*
B. Option 2: Multi-Sport Outdoor Tournament Centre*
C. Sportsfield Development

Note: This map was graphically adapted from the priorities shown on Maps 22-24 of the 2018 PRC Master Plan. The priorities below are based on analysis in 2018 and do not necessarily represent current strategic priorities or community need, and will be updated through a future comprehensive review informed by more recent studies, community consultation, further analysis of community need and budget considerations.



MAP 12: 2018 PRC MASTER PLAN | PARKS AND TRAILS: EXISTING ASSETS FUTURE PRIORITIES (ADAPTED EXCERPT)

PRC Master Plan **Recreation** Investment Priorities & Context

Circles are shown as general locations

Asterisks = location to be determined

Priority Facility Enhancements

A. Matsqui Recreation Centre Expansion

New Facility Priorities

A. Multi-Sport Indoor Training and Tournament Centre

B. Additional Aquatic Facility

Existing Recreation Facilities

A. Agrifair Arena

B. Matsqui Centennial Auditorium

C. MSA Arena

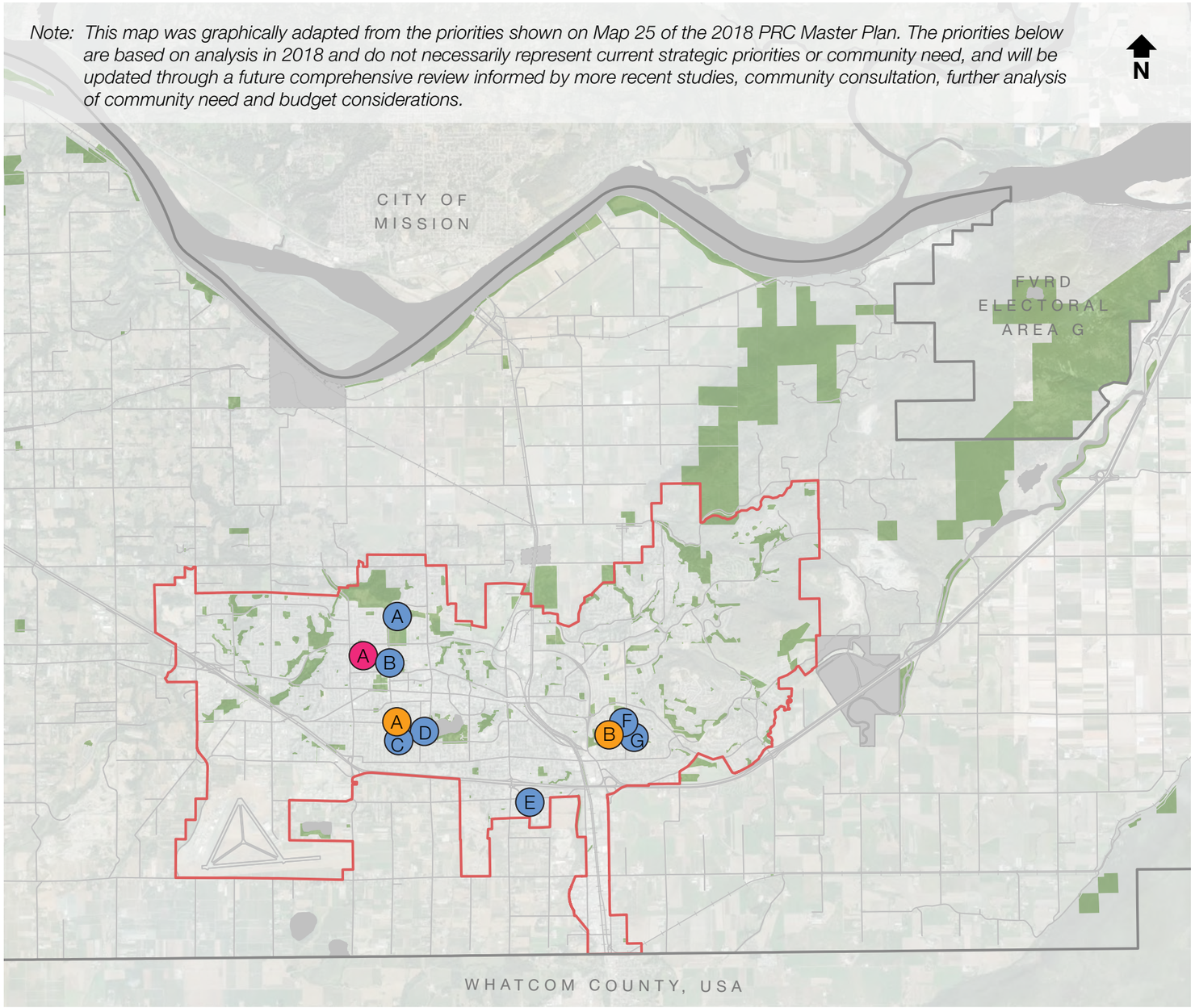
D. Centennial Pool (outdoor)

E. Abbotsford Centre

F. Abbotsford Recreation Centre

G. Abbotsford Curling Club

Note: This map was graphically adapted from the priorities shown on Map 25 of the 2018 PRC Master Plan. The priorities below are based on analysis in 2018 and do not necessarily represent current strategic priorities or community need, and will be updated through a future comprehensive review informed by more recent studies, community consultation, further analysis of community need and budget considerations.



MAP 13: 2018 PRC MASTER PLAN | RECREATION FACILITIES: EXISTING ASSETS & FUTURE PRIORITIES (ADAPTED EXCERPT)

PRC Master Plan
Culture Investment Priorities & Context

Circles are shown as general locations

Asterisks = location to be determined

Priority Facility Enhancements

A. Mt Lehman Library
B. Clearbrook Library
C. Turner House & Clayburn Park

New Facility Priorities

A. Performance Theatre*
B. Outdoor Amphitheatre
C. Eastside Library*

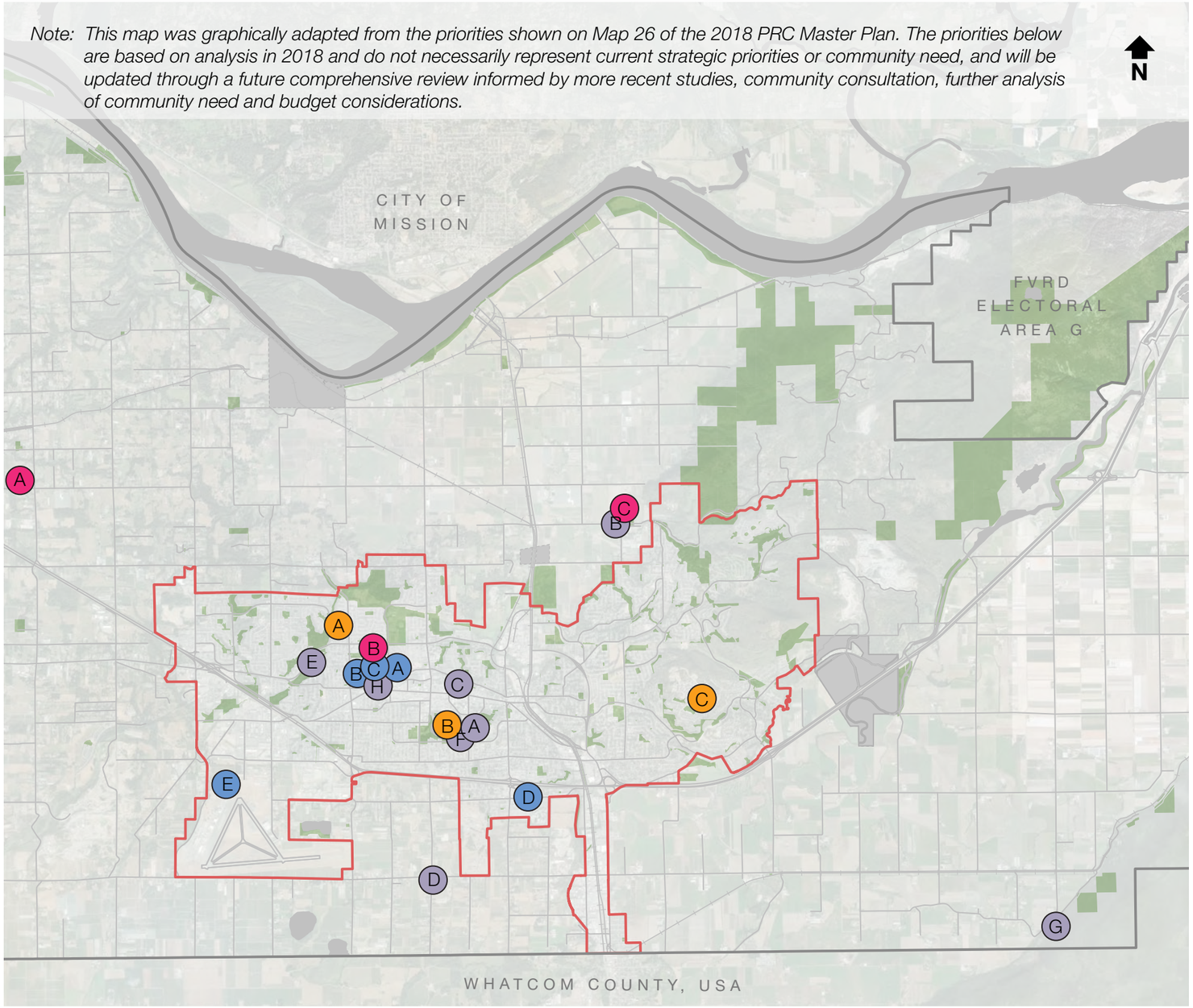
Existing City Facilities

A. The Reach Gallery
B. Matsqui Centennial Auditorium
C. Thunderbird Square
D. Abbotsford Centre
E. Tradex

Community Heritage Register Sites

A. Trethewey House
B. Clayburn School & Church
C. Gur Sikh Temple
D. Old South Poplar School
E. Former GNR Bridge and Embankment
F. Former Abbotsford Lumber Company Log Dump
G. Portion of New Westminster-Hope Wagon Road
H. Abbotsford Cenotaph

Note: This map was graphically adapted from the priorities shown on Map 26 of the 2018 PRC Master Plan. The priorities below are based on analysis in 2018 and do not necessarily represent current strategic priorities or community need, and will be updated through a future comprehensive review informed by more recent studies, community consultation, further analysis of community need and budget considerations.



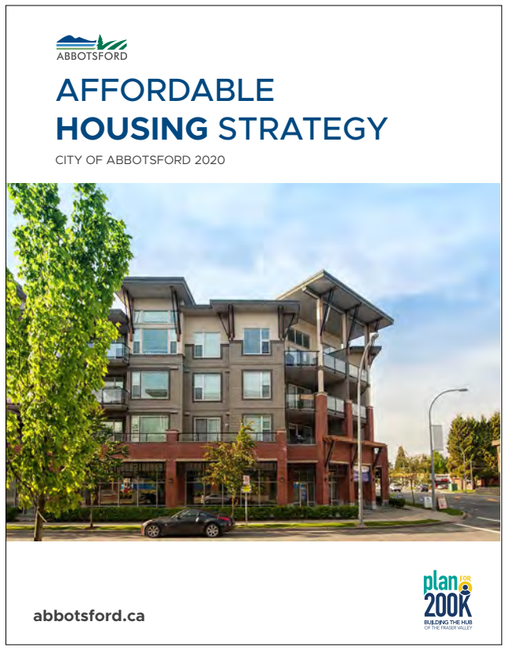
MAP 14: 2018 PRC MASTER PLAN | CULTURE: EXISTING ASSETS & FUTURE PRIORITIES (ADAPTED EXCERPT)

4.4 Housing

Affordable Housing Strategy (2020)

The vision for the Affordable Housing Strategy (2020) is to make Abbotsford a complete and vibrant community that has diverse and affordable housing options for all stages of life. Several principles support this vision:

- Build more affordable housing, specifically a range of housing that includes supportive and rent-geared-to-income housing for low income earners, affordable and near-market rentals for moderate earners, and market rental and entry-level ownership options for middle-income earners
- Diversify housing options that suit local neighbourhood character and needs, with complementary community amenities and supports such as childcare and cultural spaces to enhance liveability
- Preserve existing affordable housing stock by implementing consistent, clear and enforceable preservation policies, good housing conditions, and access to diverse rental and attainable housing options
- Build partnerships across the housing sector to foster innovative and responsive approaches to address housing issues, support the financial sustainability of the sector, and implement performance measurements to track progress
- Promote equity, inclusion, and accessibility through new housing options to support the development and sustainability of socially and economically diverse and vibrant neighbourhoods



Housing Needs Report (2021)

The City developed a Housing Needs Report (2021) to collect and analyze data identifying current and future housing needs. The BC Government introduced legislation in 2018 requiring all local governments to create a Report that is to be used to inform OCP policy. In November 2023, the Province introduced new legislation (Bill 44) to require local governments to update Housing Needs Reports every five years with anticipated housing needs for a 20-year period. In accordance with Bill 44, Official Community Plans must now be updated every five years with capacity for housing in-line with the 20-year projection established in the Housing Needs Report.

Housing costs are growing much faster than incomes in Abbotsford, making housing less affordable than in the past. This has pushed home ownership out of reach for many low and middle income households, increasing the reliance on a rental housing market that is also out-pacing incomes. Renters are more likely to struggle with rent payments compared to owners who make mortgage payments. The most vulnerable groups are renters in one-person and lone-parent households. The report also suggests that the cost and shortage of housing is contributing to a rising homeless population, which grew 22% between 2017 and 2020.*

The City is changing. Mirroring trends across Canada, Abbotsford is an aging community. The city also has a very diverse population that makes it unique among mid-sized Canadian cities.

* The most recent point-in-time Abbotsford homeless population count indicates a 22% increase from 2020 (333) to 2023 (406).[2]



Affordable Housing Strategy and Housing Needs Report Excerpt

4.5 Agriculture

Urban Development Boundary

The OCP defines an Urban Development Boundary (UDB), setting clear policy direction to concentrate growth and development inwards and upwards as Abbotsford's population increases. With approximately 72% of the City land base located within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), the UDB helps protect the long term viability of agricultural lands, and maintains lower densities in rural areas with limited infrastructure.

Agricultural Land Reserve

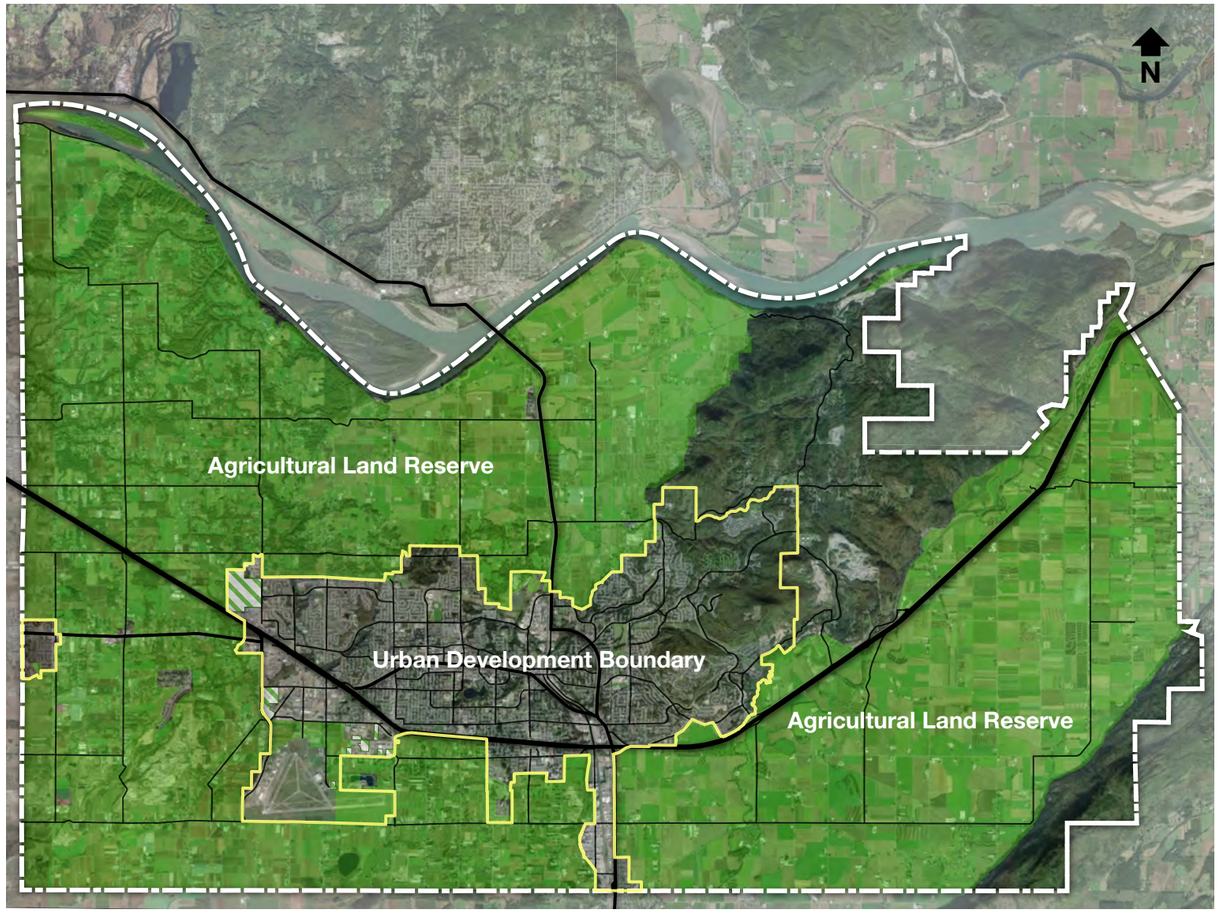
One of the 7 Big Ideas in the OCP is to enhance agricultural integrity. Agricultural areas are a long-standing pillar of the local economy and form a vital part of Abbotsford's identity. In coordination with the overall City growth vision, the ALR will be maintained as a place for agricultural growing, production and processing, and thriving livelihoods.

The Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) ensures that agricultural land is protected for agricultural use. The purpose of the ALC is to preserve agricultural land and farming within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and to support local governments in enabling farm uses within their plans, bylaws, and policies.

AgRefresh

In 2022, the City completed AgRefresh, a comprehensive update of Abbotsford's agricultural policies, bylaws and regulations. The resulting OCP and Zoning Bylaw updates implemented changes for a wide range of rural and agricultural uses, in coordination with Provincial legislation. As part of this process, Council adopted the Agricultural Areas Policy (2022), to support consideration of proposals for large farm residences, farm help housing, and large farm product processors in the ALR.

MAP 15: ABBOTSFORD'S ALR AND OCP URBAN DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARY



4.6 Summary of Major Plans & Strategies

The following table summarizes numerous City plans and strategies relevant to the OCP Update. As the planning process moves forward, these documents will inform new policy directions, OCP content updates, and in many cases require follow-up revisions to coordinate with OCP changes resulting from this OCP update process. Future planned initiatives are also included as a preview of future work.

Policy Document	Year	Comments
Planning & Development Services		
McKee Neighbourhood Plan	2023	A plan for the last greenfield community in Abbotsford, located on Sumas Mountain, that emphasizes compact development to preserve as much natural land as possible for recreational and natural uses.
AgRefresh, Agricultural Areas Policy C006-11 & Agriculture Strategy	2022 (2011)	The Agriculture Strategy and recent AgRefresh OCP and Zoning changes support the continued health and growth of agriculture through modernized regulation that considers changing industry needs and legislation, and with the aim of improving the viability of agricultural enterprise, increasing productivity, and enhancing the agricultural land base. The Agricultural Areas policy guides City staff review and recommendations for proposals for large single detached dwellings, full-time and temporary farm worker housing, and farm product processors that exceed zoning permissions.
Housing Needs Report	2021	Formulates a more complete picture of how changing community characteristics impacts current and future housing needs.
Affordable Housing Strategy	2020	A plan to provide more affordable ownership, rental, and supported housing including a variety of housing types for all stages of life, allowing people to stay in their neighbourhoods as they age.
City Centre Neighbourhood Plan	2019	A plan to create a City Centre that is the centre of public, economic, and cultural life.
Historic Downtown Neighbourhood Plan	2019	A plan for the historic neighbourhood of Abbotsford, reinforcing historic buildings, people centred streets, and vibrant public spaces.
UDistrict Neighbourhood Plan	2018	A plan to create a vibrant and distinct urban community that is walkable and transit-oriented, focused around an innovative university village.
Parks, Recreation & Culture		
Arena Services and Facilities Strategy	in-progress	The strategy will support effective planning and investment in future arena facilities. Arena services include the provision of recreation space for ice, dry-floor and curling activities.
Aquatic Services and Facilities Strategy	in-progress	The strategy will recommend actions for effective aquatic facility planning and implementation plan to ensure that community demand is met into the future.
Mill Lake Park Master Plan	in-progress	A comprehensive long-term plan for Mill Lake Park to provide a framework for the park's ongoing development, use and management.
Tree Protection Bylaw Update	in-progress	An update to the Tree Protection Bylaw to bring it in to alignment with the objectives of the Urban Forest Strategy, to improve protection, retention and replacement measures and to reflect current industry and arboricultural best practices.
Urban Forest Strategy	2022	The vision and goals summarized below reflect our community's aspirations for the management of Abbotsford's forest resource over the next 25 years.

Policy Document	Year	Comments
Culture Strategy	2022	Sets out the commitment and future plans for supporting and advancing culture locally over the next 20 years.
Parks, Recreation & Culture Master Plan	2018	A comprehensive and strategic program of investments over the next 25 years for parks, recreation, and culture.
Child & Youth Friendly Abbotsford Community Strategy	2009	Examines the community's child and youth friendliness and explores ways to enhance what already exists.
Arts and Heritage Master Plan	2004	A long range plan for the development of arts and heritage policies and initiatives.
Engineering & Regional Utilities		
Fishtrap Creek Stormwater Management Plan	in-progress	A plan to resolve some of the issues such as flooding, poor drainage, overgrowing vegetation, fish and wildlife habitat loss and poor water quality in the Fish Trap watershed.
Biosolids Master Plan	in-progress	This initiative will assess the City's current biosolids management practices and develop an optimal management strategy that meets the City's operational needs for the next 25 year.
Development Bylaw (No. 3620-2022)	2022	Regulates the engineering design and construction standards relating to subdivision developments and on off-site infrastructure improvements associated with building permits.
Water Efficiency Plan	2020	A plan that provides objectives, actions, establishes targets, and outlines implementation strategies and schedules. It strikes a balance between ensuring customers can use water they need while continuously improving efficiency.
Willband Creek Stormwater Management Plan	2019	A plan to allow for the continuation of viable development and redevelopment, while at the same time mitigating impacts to the environment and the existing drainage system and to plan for the effects of climate change.
Drainage Master Plan	2018	Allows the City to determine the required drainage infrastructure upgrades for the next 25 years.
Abbotsford-Mission Joint Wastewater Master Plan	2018	A plan to review the treatment facilities to support growth in the next 25 years in Abbotsford and Mission, and develop a capital growth program which is phaseable, affordable, resilient, sustainable, incremental, flexible and grantable.
Joint Abbotsford-Mission Water Master Plan	2018	A plan that outlines programs and capital projects to manage water in our region.
Transportation & Transit Master Plan	2018	A plan to guide transportation related decisions and investments to 2041. Coordinates City investment in transportation networks and infrastructure that is closely coordinated with land use and supports sustainability.
Clayburn Creek Integrated Stormwater Management Plan	2012	A plan to address lowland flooding of Clayburn Village, Clayburn Road and downstream agricultural areas, and develop guidance to mitigate the impacts of future upland development.
Downes Creek ISMP	2010	A plan to identify opportunities for drainage improvement to minimize agricultural low-land flooding, develop strategies to manage peak flow by implementing low impact development measures and water quality BMPs to address creek channel stability, sediment deposition in the channel, and improve fish habitat and environmental qualities.
Streamside Protection Bylaw (No. 1465-2005)	2005	Sets out to protect streams within the City that support fish habitat from harmful conditions associated with commercial, industrial, and residential development, and to preserve, protect, restore, and enhance the natural environment near streams that support fish habitat.

Policy Document	Year	Comments
Innovation, Strategy & Intergovernmental Relations		
Homelessness Action Plan	2022	Strategy document for City of Abbotsford actions to augment ongoing provincial efforts to manage increasing homelessness in Abbotsford.
Community Resilience & Recovery Strategy	2020	Sets out some shorter and longer term areas of focus for the Economic Development department as the community continues to build upon strengths, adapt, recover and learn from the COVID-19 pandemic.
Fire Rescue Services		
Fire Rescue Service Master Plan	2018	Outlines the future service model, which emphasizes the dual importance of incident prevention and incident response and guide the use of resources in the coming years.
Fraser Valley Regional District		
Solid Waste Management Plan	2015	Guides the FVRD and its member municipalities in their efforts to reduce and manage the region's solid waste over the next 10 years.

Future Studies & Plans

The following provides a preview of City initiatives anticipated to commence in the near future:

- Climate Resiliency Strategy
- City-wide Trail & Off-Road Cycling Strategy
- McKee Trail Strategy
- Cemetery Plan
- Sport Field & Court Strategy
- Parkland Acquisition Plan
- Park Classification, Standards & Signage Strategy
- Exhibition Park Master Plan
- Clayburn Park Master Plan
- Albert Dyck Memorial Park Master Plan

5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples & Communities

5.1 Local Indigenous Peoples & Communities

The following sections borrow from the 'Fraser Valley Future 2050" draft Regional Growth Strategy, recognizing the broad engagement associated with the draft content.

The Past

For approximately 10,000 years, the Fraser Valley has been home to Indigenous Peoples[3]; these communities have called this land, S'ólh Téméxw ("Our Land") in Halq'emeylem, since time immemorial. During the 17th century, the Indigenous population in the Fraser Valley numbered in the tens of thousands.[4] The intricate network of rivers, lakes, and mountains in the area held immense significance, serving as a vital means of communication and transportation that connected communities spanning from the Pacific Ocean to the heart of British Columbia. Even in present day, the Fraser River continues to hold great importance in Indigenous culture, acting as a profound link to the spiritual realm and a space for upholding cultural customs.

As European settlers arrived in the late 18th century, they brought with them smallpox, exposing Indigenous Peoples to a devastating epidemic. Historians estimate that nearly two-thirds of the Indigenous population in the Fraser Valley perished within just six weeks due to this outbreak.[5]

In years that followed, governmental policies and initiatives at both the federal and provincial levels led to the further disintegration of Indigenous communities through measures like the *Indian Act.*[6] This notably involved the establishment of bands, the assignment of reserves, and the implementation of the residential school system. The repercussions of these actions continue to reverberate to this day.

Governance

The present-day City of Abbotsford is located within the traditional territories of the Stó:lō Peoples & Stó:lō Nation, Semà:th (Sumas) First Nation, Mathxwí (Matsqui) First Nation, and Leq'a:mel First Nation. A number of these communities operate independently, while most manage services and programs through regional tribal councils and other types of self-defined organizational structures and authorities. Semà:th First Nation, Mathxwí First Nation, and Leq'a:mel First Nation each hold Federal Indian Reserve lands in Abbotsford (See Map 16).

Semá:th (Sumas) First Nation

Mathxwí (Matsqui) First Nation

Leq'a:mel First Nation

Stó:lō Nation

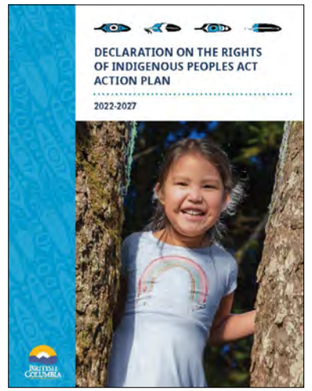
UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was adopted by the General Assembly on September 13, 2007. The UNDRIP is a comprehensive global agreement regarding the fundamental human rights of Indigenous Peoples universally. It outlines an extensive array of both collective and individual rights that establish the essential benchmarks for safeguarding Indigenous Peoples' rights and enhancing their sustenance, honour, and welfare. Additionally, it underscores the principle that Indigenous Peoples are free from all forms of discrimination and acknowledges the pressing requirement to uphold and advance the inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples.

On June 21, 2021, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* became law in Canada, demonstrating Canada's commitment to the declaration, and establishing a framework to advance federal implementation of its intent.

Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act

The *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (DRIPA) was passed into law by the Provincial government in November of 2019. The Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) establishes the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) as the Province's framework for reconciliation, as called for by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.



This Provincial Declaration aims to create a path forward that respects the human rights of Indigenous Peoples, while introducing better transparency and predictability when working with First Nations.

DRIPA includes the following key provisions:

S.3	Mandates government to bring provincial laws into alignment with UN Declaration
S.4	Requires Province to develop and implement an action plan, in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples, to meet the objectives of the UN Declaration
S.5	Requires regular reporting to legislature on progress of alignment of laws
S.6/7	Provides flexibility for Province to enter into agreements with a broader range of Indigenous governments and to exercise statutory decision-making authority together

Reconciliation

Reconciliation endeavours to facilitate the healing of historical injustices that have transpired and persist to this day. The City of Abbotsford acknowledges and honours the self-determination and self-governing authority of local Indigenous organizations as they endeavour to enhance their communities and pursue their visions of the future. The City of Abbotsford is committed to fostering stronger connections with the Stó:lo, Semà:th (Sumas), Mathxwí (Matsqui), and Leq'a:mel Nations.

Economy

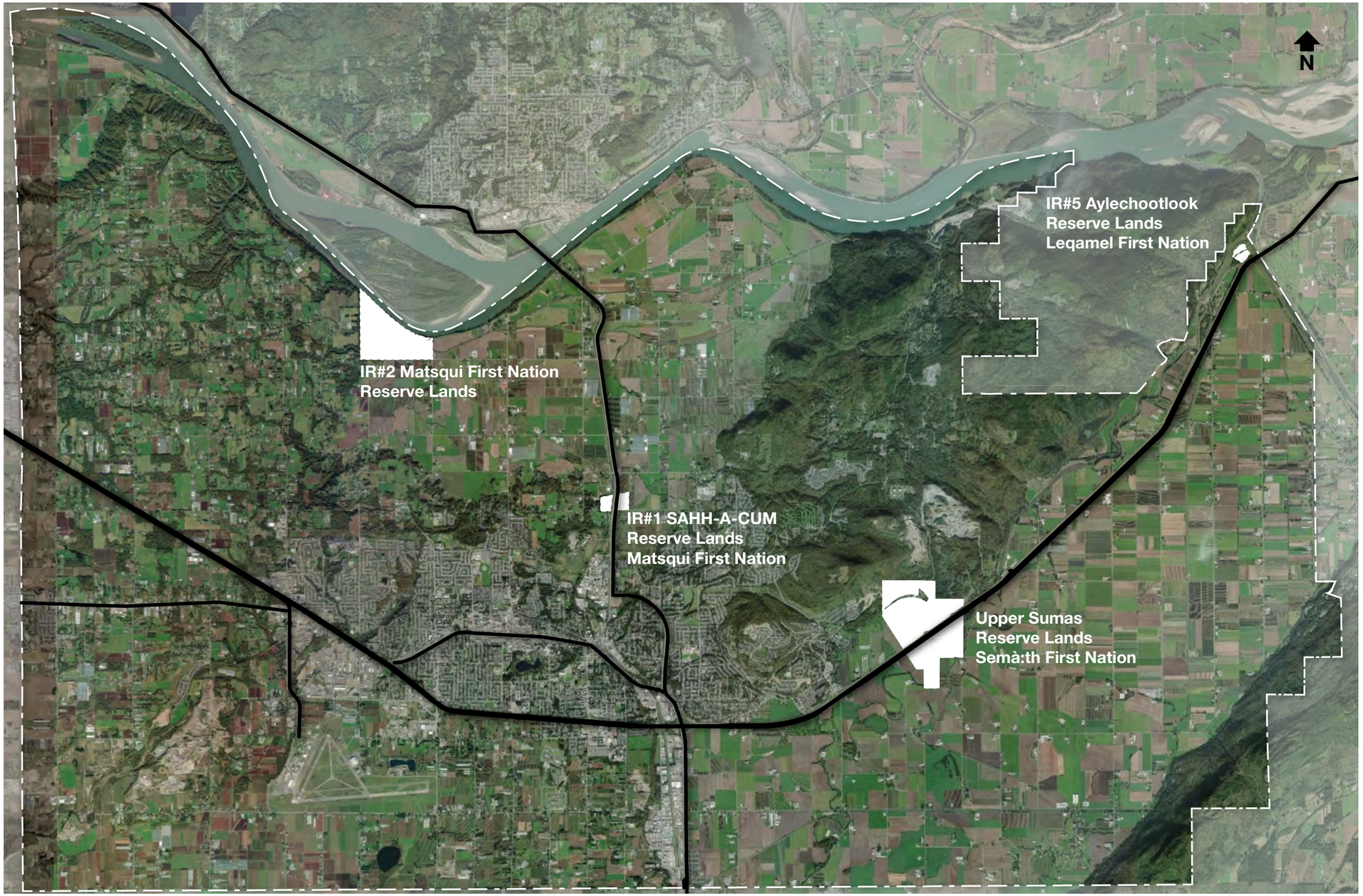
Indigenous communities participate in the local economy through various avenues, such as involvement in natural resource utilization, educational initiatives, economic collaborations, cultural tourism, and more. The extent of Indigenous economic engagement within Abbotsford mirrors the diverse array of economic prospects accessible and underscores the substantial potential for growth. Indigenous communities will play an important role in the continued economic growth for the city. Communities are proactively broadening and enriching their economic horizons.

Looking Forward

The City of Abbotsford is committed to investing in relationships as Abbotsford manages growth and the local economy into the future. More specifically, the 2022-2026 City of Abbotsford Strategic Plan sets a goal to create a First Nations Relations Strategy.



Public Art "Life Cycle of a Salmon" by R. Silver 2010 - Intersection of McCallum & Hawthorne



MAP 16: FEDERAL INDIAN RESERVE LANDS AND ABBOTSFORD

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

The OCP update process provides an opportunity to assess, understand, and improve the City's response to existing and emerging issues impacting quality of life in Abbotsford. Housing and climate change are two topics expected to be integral to the discussion of strengthened OCP policy. Additional challenges will likely emerge through the planning process.

6.1 Housing

Housing Pressures

The nation is experiencing significant housing pressures, and has been for quite some time. Unfortunately, the end does not appear to be in sight just yet. As Abbotsford continues to grow rapidly, the residents and the region as a whole are likely to continue to feel the impacts of diminishing housing affordability. There is an extreme demand for housing of all types, and very limited supply, creating an unattainable housing reality for many.

Similar to the rest of Canada, incomes are not keeping pace with the average costs associated with owning or renting a home in Abbotsford. As noted in section 2.2, increases in average rent costs (+41%) and average dwelling values (+69%) far out-paced median household income (+24%) between 2016 and 2021.



Rail District Townhomes, Abbotsford

These disproportionate cost-to-income increases, among other factors, have continued to exacerbate an already prevalent problem. Abbotsford's Housing Needs Report identified the two largest hurdles for owning a home as: (1) the ability to secure a down payment, and (2) finding suitable housing within an affordable price range.

Predictably, one-income households, such as lone-parents or seniors living alone, struggle the most.

Today, low to middle-income Abbotsford households cannot afford to purchase a single-detached home, and rely heavily on the rental market or purchasing homes that may not suit their needs. Rental vacancy rates reflect this dependency, as Canada has been operating at historically low rates for years. The vacancy rate for Canada was 1.9% in 2022[7], and Abbotsford's was 1.6%[8].

Abbotsford's vacancy rate reached its lowest point ever in 2017 at 0.2%[9], and has been growing steadily since. A vacancy rate of 3% is considered an indicator of a healthy rental market.

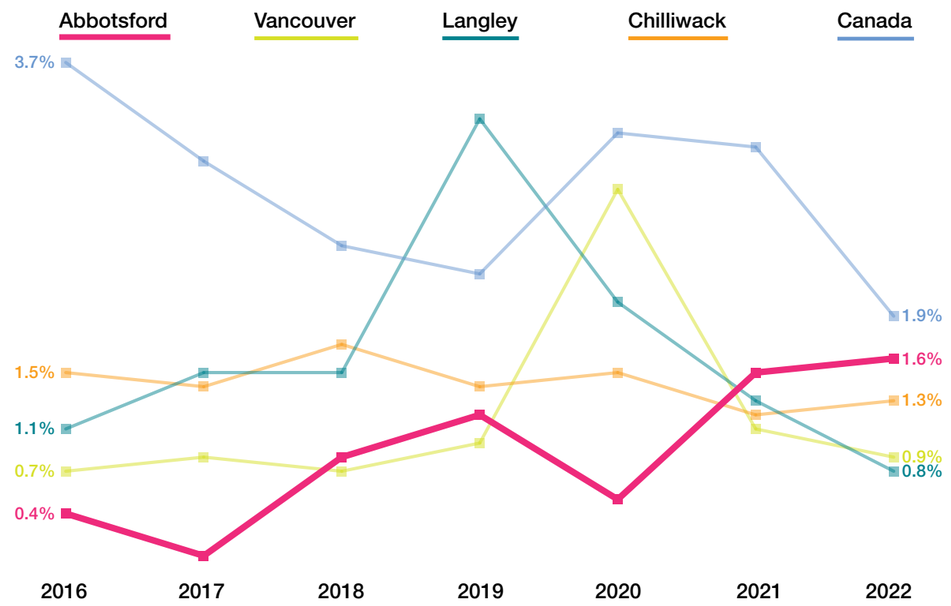


FIG. 32 RENTAL VACANCY RATES COMPARISON [APARTMENTS] (SOURCE: CMHC)

The lack of housing affordability and availability – a problem decades in the making, is a central topic of public discourse and a key priority for many policy makers. An 'all-hands-on-deck' approach from all levels of government' is crucial moving forward, and the City of Abbotsford has an important role to play in supporting the housing needs of residents on the path forward.

Abbotsford Context

Housing pressures are not unique to Abbotsford, however, there are some key factors the City needs to consider when implementing housing plans and programs, and updating the Official Community Plan.

Age

As the population ages over time, the senior population will continue to grow. The total number of people aged 65 years old or older grew by 15% between 2016 and 2021[10], twice as much as the 15-64 years old age group. Seniors, and also those with mobility issues should have access to housing that suits their needs. Reinforcing a community in which people at all stages of life, and all abilities can find a safe, suitable home will be key for programs moving forward.

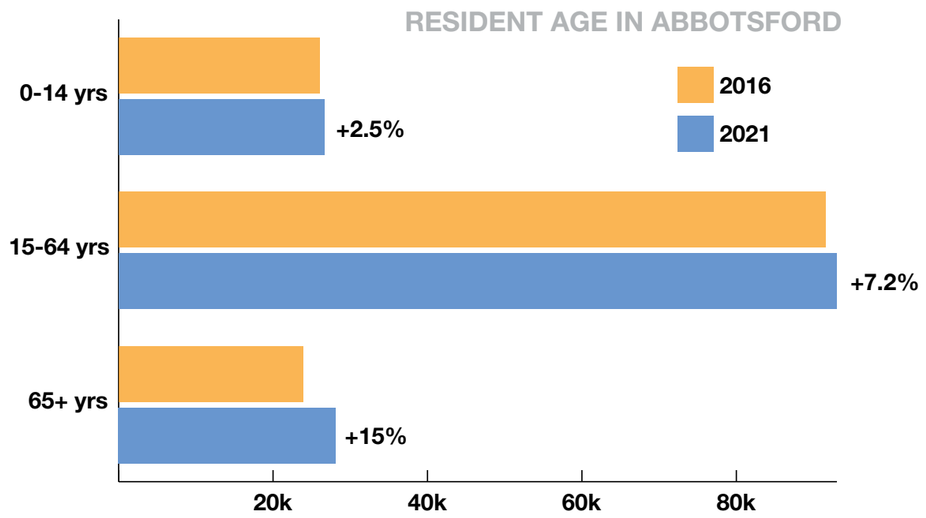


FIG. 33 AGE BREAKDOWN (source: Statistics Canada, 2016, 2021)

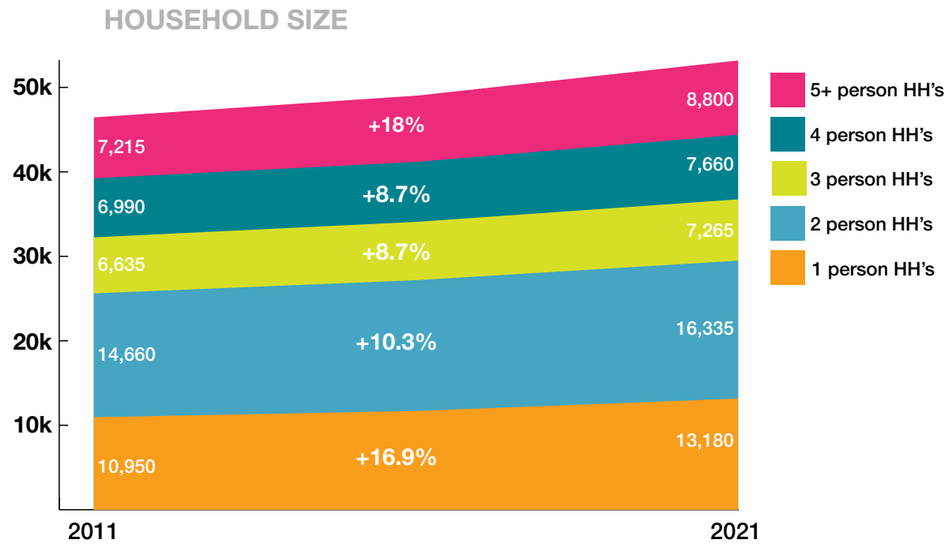


FIG. 34 BREAKDOWN OF HOUSEHOLDS (HH'S) BY SIZE OVER TIME (source: Statistics Canada, 2011, 2016, 2021)

Household Size

Household size is a somewhat unique characteristic of Abbotsford's demographic profile. The city has continued to see a rise in 4 and 5+ person households over the last decade. In fact, the number of 5+ person households has grown the greatest between 2011 and 2021 in comparison to other household sizes, increasing by 18%.[11] As well, the overall proportion of 5+ person households has increased by 1.0% over the same time period.[12]

This trend may be due to several factors. Most notably, many families are choosing to live in multi-generational homes, whether this is for affordability or cultural reasons. It is also common for students to live in a similar manner with room-mates, sharing a home while attending post-secondary education.

Homelessness

Abbotsford continues to see an increase in those experiencing homelessness, growing by 22% (+59) from 2017 to 2020 and a further 22% (+73) between 2020 and 2023.[13]

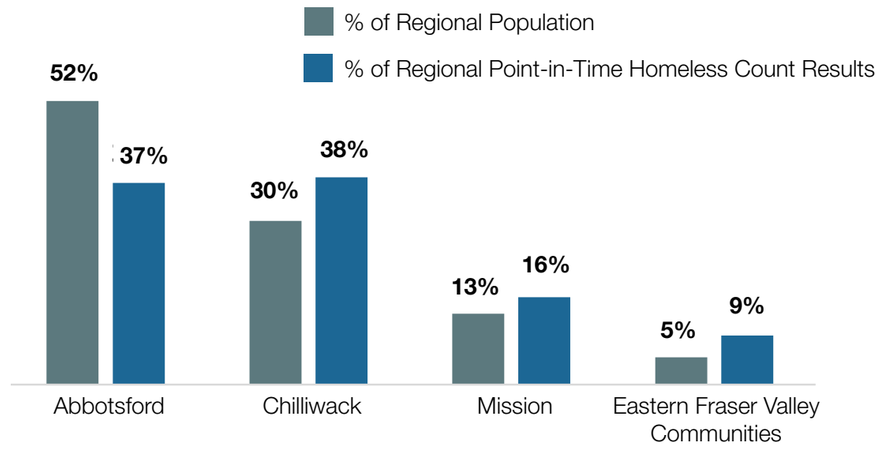
Figure 35 provides an excerpt from the *2023 Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD) Point-in-Time Homeless Count & Survey Regional Report*, summarizing the regional distribution of individuals experiencing homlessness in comparison to population. In 2023, Abbotsford made up 52% of the region's population and had 37% of the homeless population (2nd highest in FVRD).

The 2023 FVRD Report (p.18) identifies the following as key reasons respondents cited for experiencing homelessness in the Fraser Valley:

1. *Housing and financial issues:* Not enough income; rental support expired; unfit/unsafe housing; building sold or renovated; owner moved in; landlord/tenant conflict; guest policy; complaint; place not physically accessible; left the community/relocated.
2. *Interpersonal and family issues:* Conflict with spouse/partner; conflict with parent/guardian; conflict with other; abuse by partner/spouse; abuse by parent/guardian/caregiver; abuse by child/dependent; abuse by other; death or departure of family member; discrimination.
3. *Health Issues:* Physical health; mental health; addiction/substance use; hospitalization or treatment program; covid-19 pandemic.
4. *Incarceration:* Release from correctional facility, jail, or parole.
5. *Other issues:* Unique personal circumstances or events that do not fall into the above categories.

According to the FVRD Report, for nearly 50% of the respondents, their most recent loss of housing was due to issues or events that fall into at least two of the above categories. Categories with the most significant number of responses were health issues (34.4%), housing and financial issues (31.4%), and interpersonal and family issues (29.7%).[14]

FIG. 35 DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATIONS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS



(Source: FVRD 2023 Point-in-Time Homeless Count and Survey Regional Report



Cole Starnes Residence | Emergency Shelter, Riverside Rd. (Photo: Let's Talk BC Housing)

Emergency Shelters

162 beds/units

Group Homes for Adults with Mental/Physical Challenges or Developmental Disabilities

224 beds/units

Recovery Homes

116 beds/units

Supportive Housing

104 beds/units

Transitional Housing

220 beds/units

Youth Safe Houses

16 beds/units

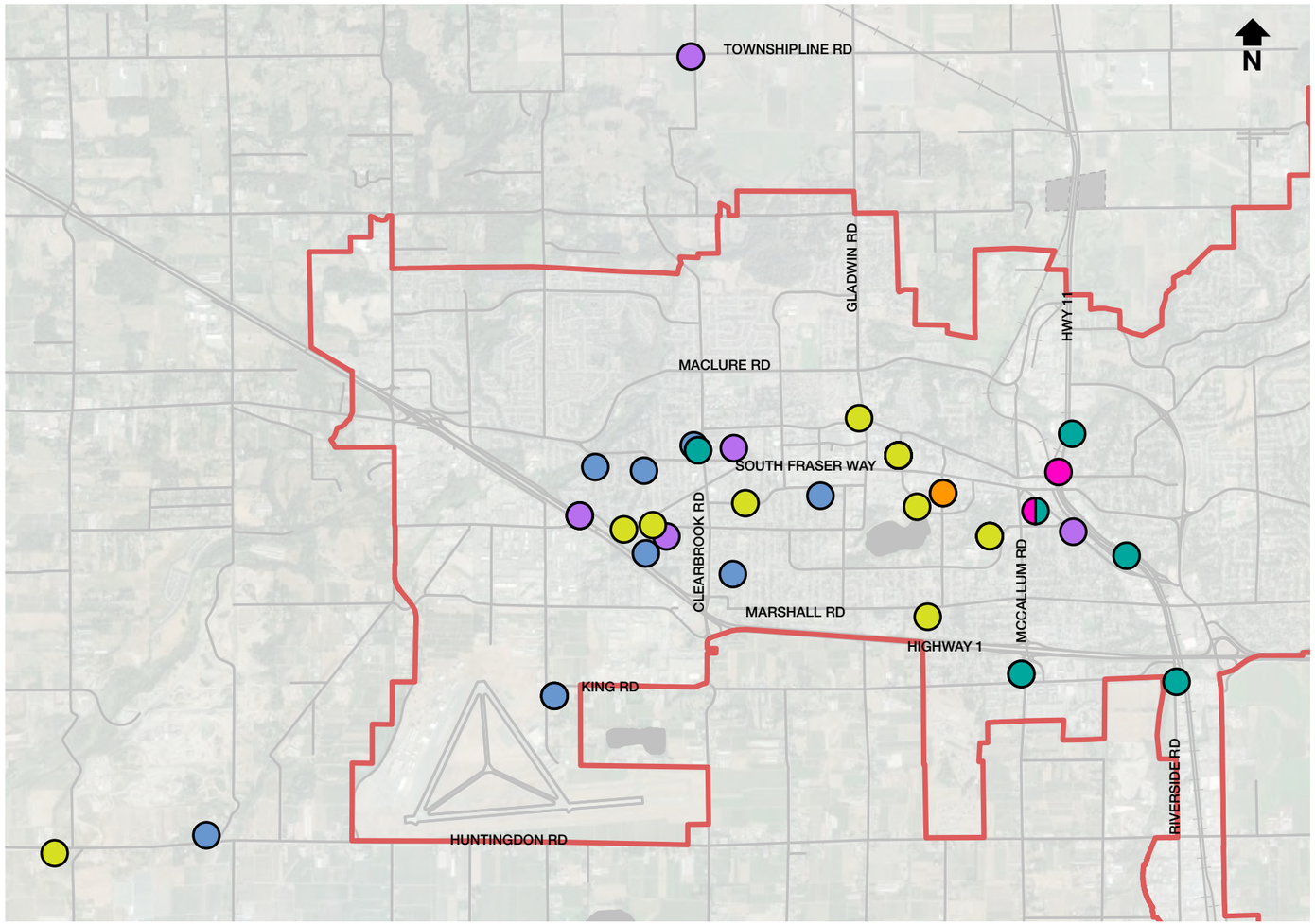
Total Emergency & Supportive Housing

842 beds/units*

Information current to October 2023.

Due to confidentiality, some facilities are not identified on the map.

MAP 17: EMERGENCY AND SUPPORTIVE HOUSING



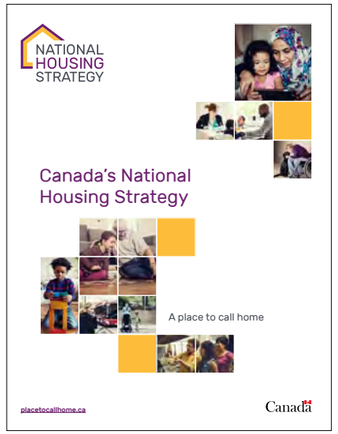
Federal Action on Housing

National Housing Strategy

In 2017, Canada introduced the first ever National Housing Strategy (NHS), a 10-year, $40 billion-dollar plan with ambitious targets aimed at addressing Canada's housing needs. The Strategy takes a rights-based approach and aims to create a new generation of housing in Canada.

The Strategy is founded on (1) People, (2) Communities, and (3) Partnerships, with the aim of coming together to promote diverse communities, and help build housing that is sustainable, accessible, mixed-income and mixed-use.

The Strategy requires significant partnerships between all levels of government; federal, provincial/territorial and local, as well as partnerships with First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation, and the private sector.



NHS TARGETS

530,000 people removed from housing need

100,000 new housing units built under federal programs

50,000 new community housing units

50% reduction in chronically homeless shelter users

300,000 households to receive Canada Housing Benefit

FIG. 36 NATIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY TARGETS (CANADA 2017, P. 6)

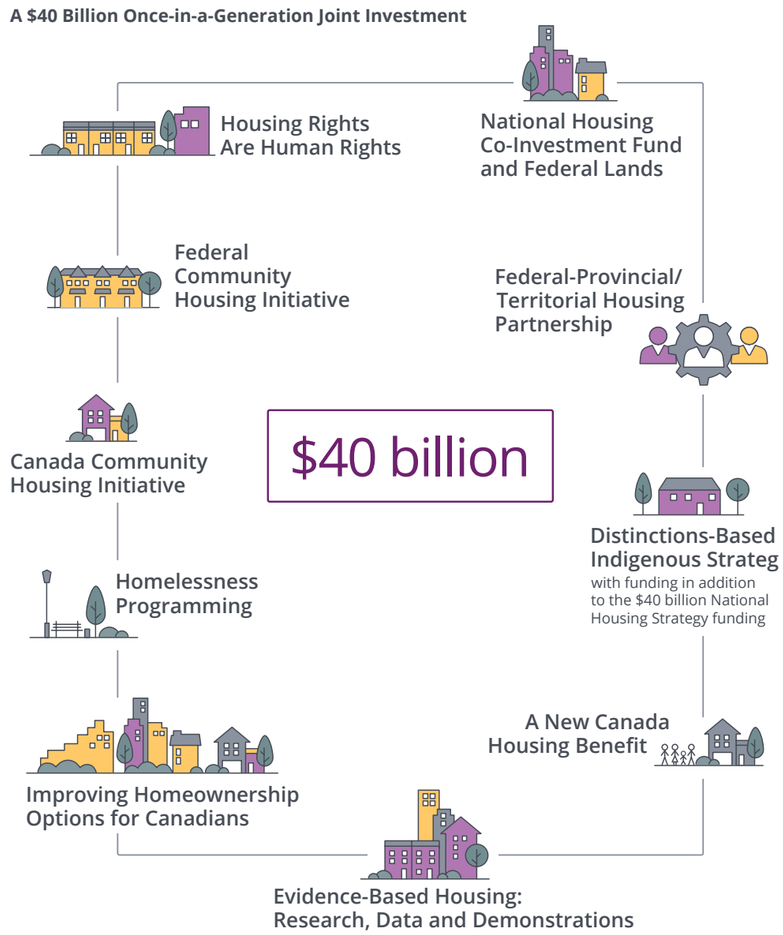


FIG. 37 NATIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY INVESTMENT - EXCERPT (CANADA 2017, P. 7)

Canada's Housing Action Plan

The Federal Government announced several house related actions in 2023, aimed at "building more homes faster". Initiatives include the following[15]:

1. ***More financing for apartment construction***

   2023 Fall Economic Statement announced an additional $15 billion in loan funding ($40 B total) to support rental apartment construction (Apartment Construction Loan Program).

2. ***Building more affordable housing***

   2023 Fall Economic Statement announced an addition $1 billion to the Affordable Housing Fund to support non-profit, co-op, and public housing providers build more new homes.

3. ***Removing the GST from new co-op rental housing***

   2023 Fall Economic Statement announced the removal of GST from new co-operative long term rental accommodation, subject to conditions (not applicable to ownership models).

4. ***Strengthening the Co-operative Housing Development Program***

   2023 Fall Economic Statement announced $309.3 million in new funding for the Co-operative Housing Development Program. CMHC target program launch in early 2024.

5. ***Repurposing more federal lands for housing***

   November 2023 announcement of six surplus federal properties to be developed in to 2,800 new homes (Edmonton, Calgary, St. John's, Ottawa).

6. ***Housing Accelerator Fund***

   A $4 billion Housing Accelerator Fund was launched in March 2023 to help reduce regulatory barriers ('red tape') and expedite the construction of new housing in partnership with Canadian municipalities. The City of Abbotsford has applied for funding through this program. More details on the application are provided later in this chapter.



Provincial Action on Housing | Recent Legislation Changes

Housing Supply Act (Bill 43, 2022)

On May 31, 2023, the BC Government brought the Housing Supply Act into force, which enables the Province to set housing targets for a total of 47 municipalities that are prescribed under the Housing Supply Regulation. The Province's Housing Targets Branch is committed to working with 10 municipalities at a time to understand municipal housing needs and to set housing targets.

The Province developed a Selection Index to rank municipalities according to housing pressures. Based on the Selection Index, Abbotsford was identified among the first cohort of 10 municipalities to receive a Ministerial Housing Target Order.

The City received the Housing Target Order on September 26, 2023. The order took effect on October 1, 2023 and will remain in effect until September 30, 2028.

Abbotsford's five year Provincial housing target

7,240 net (minus demolished units) **new completed housing units**

Reports to the Province are required each year, where the City will need to demonstrate progress towards the following cumulative thresholds:

	Net New Units	Running Total
Year 1	**+1,022**	1,022
Year 2	**+ 1,164**	2,186
Year 3	**+ 1,377**	3,563
Year 4	**+ 1,661**	5,224
Year 5	**+ 2,016**	**7,240 units**

The Province will evaluate actions taken by the City toward meeting the annual cumulative housing target. This may include updates to land use planning documents, such as the Official Community Plan, to align with housing targets and any other policy and/or regulatory interventions to help meet the targets.

Provincial Housing Target Guidelines for Abbotsford

The Province also provided the following Housing Target Guidelines for Abbotsford, identifying "... the different types of units to support delivering the right type of housing in each community, including a recommended number of below market rental units."

Total Units	Units by Size			Units by Tenure		Units by Rental Market Rate		Supportive Rental Units
	Studio/1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 or more bedrooms	Rental	Owned	Below Market	Market	
7,240	3,991	1,213	2,034	3,753	3,487	2,331	1,421	198

Summary Observations

- Studio/1 bedroom units are recommended as the highest need (55%), followed by 3 bedroom units (28%), and 2 bedroom units (17%)
- A roughly equal split is recommended for owned (48%) vs. rental units (52%)
- Recommendations suggest more below market rental (62%) than market rental units (38%)
- About 8% of below market rental units are recommended as supportive units



Examples of diverse housing options

Homes For People Plan

In Spring 2023, the Province released Homes for People, "an action plan to meet the challenges of today and deliver more homes for people, faster."

As outlined in Figure 38, the Plan is set on the four key pillars and several associated actions.

The Framework for Legislation Changes

The Provincial Homes for People initiative aims to unlock more homes, faster, by creating conditions that encourage accelerated housing construction and reduce development costs. The approach sets a framework for legislation changes and amendments to regulation and zoning at the local level. See more on the legislation changes on the following pages.

BC Builds

"BC Builds" is a program identified in the Homes for People Housing Action Plan that is dedicated to delivering more homes for middle-income households in British Columbia.

B.C. Builds brings together public lands, low-cost financing, faster provincial and municipal approvals, and innovative tools to help more households with middle incomes find homes that fit their needs.

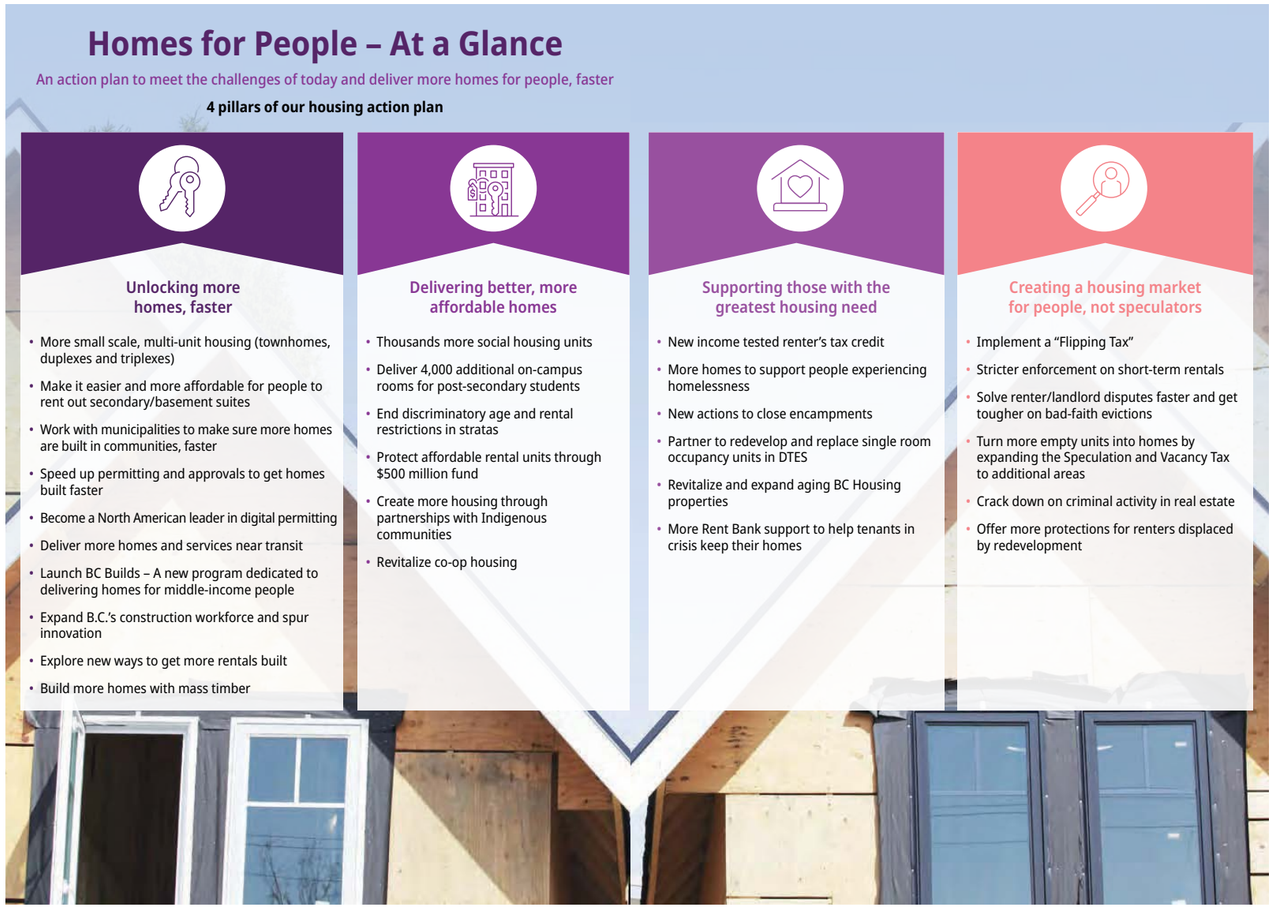


FIG. 38 EXCERPT FROM PROVINCIAL HOMES FOR PEOPLE ACTION PLAN (PPS 6-7)

‘Homes for People’ Provincial Legislation Changes

In November 2023, the Provincial government passed broad reaching changes to the *Local Government Act (LGA),* with the intent to increase housing supply in BC. The associated *Regulations* were released December 7, 2023, bringing several changes into force, setting a schedule for remaining provisions, and outlining specific requirements, metrics, and application areas.

Bill 44, 2023 Housing Statutes (Residential Development) Amendment Act

- *Local Government Zoning Bylaw Regulation 262/2023*

Bill 46, 2023 Housing Statutes (Development Financing) Amendment Act

Bill 47, 2023 Housing Statutes (Transit Oriented Areas) Amendment Act

- *Local Government Transit-Oriented Areas Regulation B.C. Reg. 263/2023*
- *Designation of Transit-Oriented Areas Regulation B.C. Reg. 266/2023*

On December 7, 2023, the Province released two policy manuals to support local government implementation of the legislated changes:

Provincial Policy Manual: Transit-Oriented Areas

Provincial Policy Manual & Site Standards for Small-Scale, Multi-Unit Housing

These manuals outline how cities should implement bylaw changes required to comply with the legislation. The Small-Scale, Multi-Unit Housing (SSMUH) Policy Manual & Site Standards also offers recommended ‘site standards” to inform the preparation of new zoning bylaw regulations.

Local governments are required to consider both policy manuals in preparing, amending, or adopting bylaws to permit the use and density prescribed for SSMUH and Transit-Oriented Areas.

Housing Needs Reports, OCP Updates, & Public Hearings

LGA & Regulation

- Housing Needs Reports must be updated every 5 years and must identify the housing required to meet the City’s 20-year need.
- Official Community Plans must be updated every 5 years in coordination with Housing Needs Reporting and must include the capacity to accommodate the 20-year housing need identified in the most recent Housing Needs Report.
- Public hearings must not be held for residential rezoning applications that are consistent with the Official Community Plan.

Requirement to Permit Small-Scale Multi-Unit (SSMU) Housing

LGA & Regulation

City zoning must be updated to permit the following:

Outside the Urban Development Boundary:

- at least one secondary suite and/or one detached accessory dwelling unit (e.g. coach houses, garden suites) on residential lots where zoning is limited to only single-detached dwellings.

Within the Urban Development Boundary:

- where zoning is limited to single-detached and/or duplex dwellings:
  - at least 3 dwelling units on lots less than 280 m^2 (3,014 ft^2)
  - at least 4 dwelling units on lots larger than 280 m^2
  - at least 6 dwelling units on lots larger than 280 m^2 and within 400 m of bus stops with frequent service*
- Exemptions from 3-6 Unit Requirement: land protected under sections 12.1(2) and 611 of the *Heritage Conservation Act*; land not connected to municipal water or sewer system; land zoned to permit minimum subdivision of 4,050 m^2 (1 acre); and parcels larger than 4,050 m^2 (1 acre).
- The City cannot require parking for SSMU Housing within 400 m of a transit stop with frequent service*. Parking is at developer discretion.

* The Province defines ‘frequent service’ as a route with bus arrival every 15 minutes between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m., Monday to Friday, and between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m., Saturday and Sunday.

Small-Scale, Multi-Unit Housing (SSMUH) Site Standards

Policy Manual

While local governments retain discretion over zoning regulations for SSMUH, they are expected to fully consider the Policy Manual & Site Standards when doing so.

The site standards recommend the following zoning provisions for SSMUH:

Building height (max)	11.0 m
Front Lot Line Setback (min)	2.0 m
Side Lot Line Setback (min)	1.2 m
Rear Lot Line Setback (min)	1.5 m
Lot coverage (max)	50%
On-Site Parking (max requirement)	1 stall per unit

Minimum Development Opportunities in Transit Oriented Areas

LGA & Regulation

- The City must pass a bylaw designating lands within 400 m of a prescribed transit station as 'Transit Oriented Areas'.
- Through the *Local Government Transit-Oriented Areas Regulation* released on December 7, 2023, the Province prescribed the Bourquin Crescent Bus Exchange as a transit station.
- Within a TOA, the City must not prohibit the following development minimums:
  - » if 200m or less from a bus exchange, at least 10 storeys and building floor area equal to 3.5 times the lot area
  - » if 201m to 400m from a bus exchange, at least 6 storeys and a building floor area equal to 2.5 times the lot area
- The City must not apply minimum residential parking requirements for development within Transit Oriented Areas.

Development Cost Charges (DCCs)

LGA

New legislation permits City collection and spending of DCCs on fire protection, police, solid waste/recycling facilities, and the City's share of highway facilities serving City and provincial interests (i.e. highway interchanges and exits).

Amenity Cost Charges (ACCs)

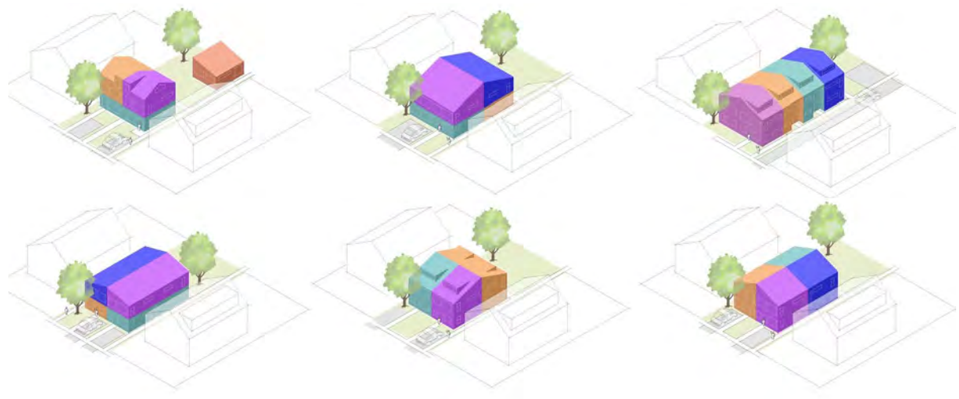
LGA

New legislation permits City collection of Amenity Cost Charges (ACC) for new development. This new financing tool allows the City to collect and allocate funds to cover the capital cost of amenities needed for growth, such as community/ recreation centres, daycare facilities, libraries, and public squares.

More to come in 2024

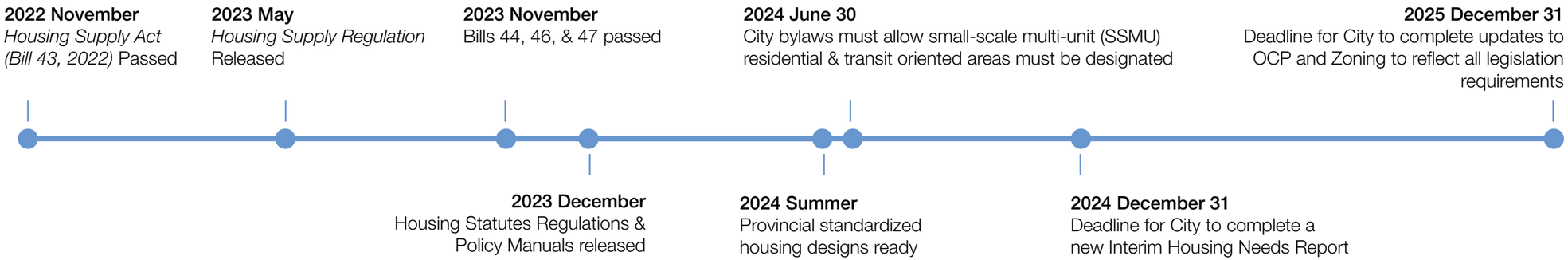
- Provincial guidance for completing Housing Needs Reports - expected early 2024
- Provincial Standardized SSMU Housing Designs - expected summer 2024

  On November 16, 2023, the Province announced the future release of up to 10 different housing designs that align with legislated SSMU options. The work will consider various lot sizes and configurations, with designs expected to be available to local governments by summer 2024. As per the Provincial press release, " These designs can be adopted by local governments and offered to builders and homeowners at a significantly below-market cost to expedite permitting and development... The designs will comply with the BC Building Code and are expected to be as close as possible to building-permit ready ..."



Graphic (partial) from Nov 16, 2023 Provincial News Release - Standardized Housing Design

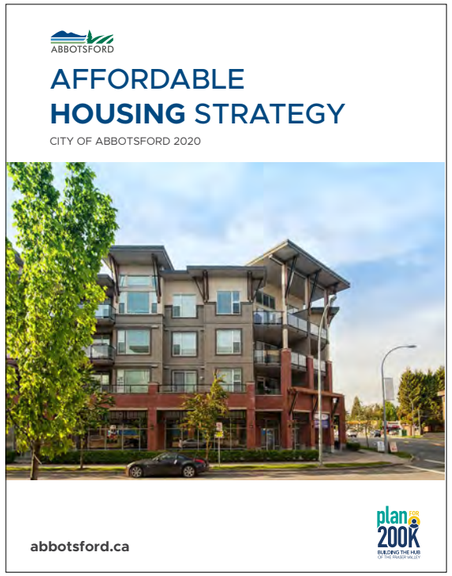
FIG. 39 PROVINCIAL LEGISLATION TIMELINE

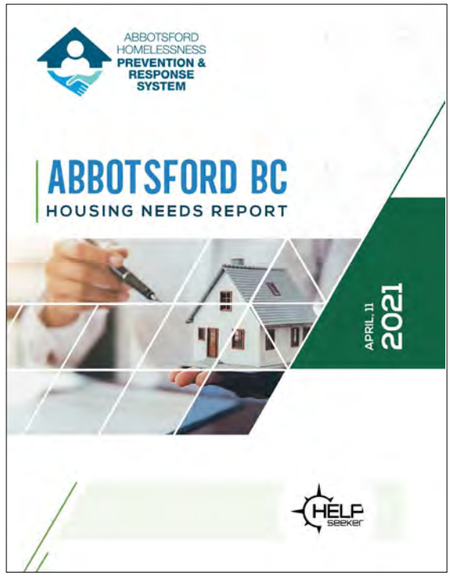


City Action on Housing

Affordable Housing Strategy

As summarized in Section 4.0, the City of Abbotsford adopted an Affordable Housing Strategy in 2020 and a Housing Needs Report in 2021.





Canadian Mortgage & Housing Corporation (CMHC)
Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF)

The Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) is a CMHC competitive grant program available to local governments across Canada. The primary objectives of the program are to increase housing supply at an accelerated pace and enhance certainty in the approvals and permitting process.

The City's application includes an action plan with seven initiatives aimed at increasing the rate of housing supply by a minimum of 10% over the next three years. The seven initiatives are presented below.

Abbotsford's 7 HAF Initiatives

1 **Expand** accessory unit permissions & legalize unauthorized suites

2 **Redesignate** land along arterial roads for ground-oriented, multi-unit development

3 **Facilitate** infill development, including 'missing middle' without the need for rezoning

4 **Enable** affordable housing on City-owned properties

5 **Broaden** Neighbourhood Centre land use designation density permissions

6 **Expand** Density Bonus Program and **allocate** revenue (35%) to affordable housing

7 **Conduct** a Development Application Process Review (DAPR)

If Abbotsford is a successful applicant, potential HAF funding will be subject to advancing the initiatives identified above and achieving the three-year housing targets identified below.

Total Units	Missing Middle Units	Apartment Units	Affordable Units
2,690	853	1,329	347

Abbotsford's Housing Progress Since 2016

While housing challenges are more acute than ever, the City has made progress since adoption of the 2016 OCP. Abbotsford's rental vacancy rate has increased to 1.6% (2022), from its lowest ever at 0.2% in 2017. An increased vacancy rate indicates positive progress towards boosting rental stock, but the City still has a ways to go before achieving a healthy rental market.

Furthermore, the percentage of those living in Core Housing Need has decreased slightly from 12.7% in 2016, to 10% in 2021.[16]

> *Core Housing Need refers to whether a private household's housing falls below at least one of the indicator thresholds for housing adequacy, affordability or suitability, and would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that is acceptable.*[17]

At a high level, a decrease in Core Housing Need indicates an increase in affordable housing stock in Abbotsford between 2016 and 2021. However, the proportion of renters living in core housing need has remained significantly higher than homeowners. Refer to section 3.0 for more information on progress the City has made towards housing since 2016.

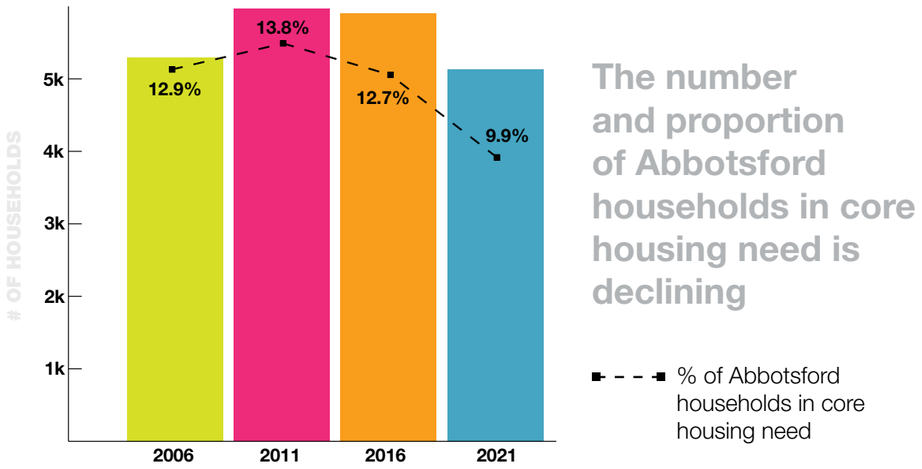
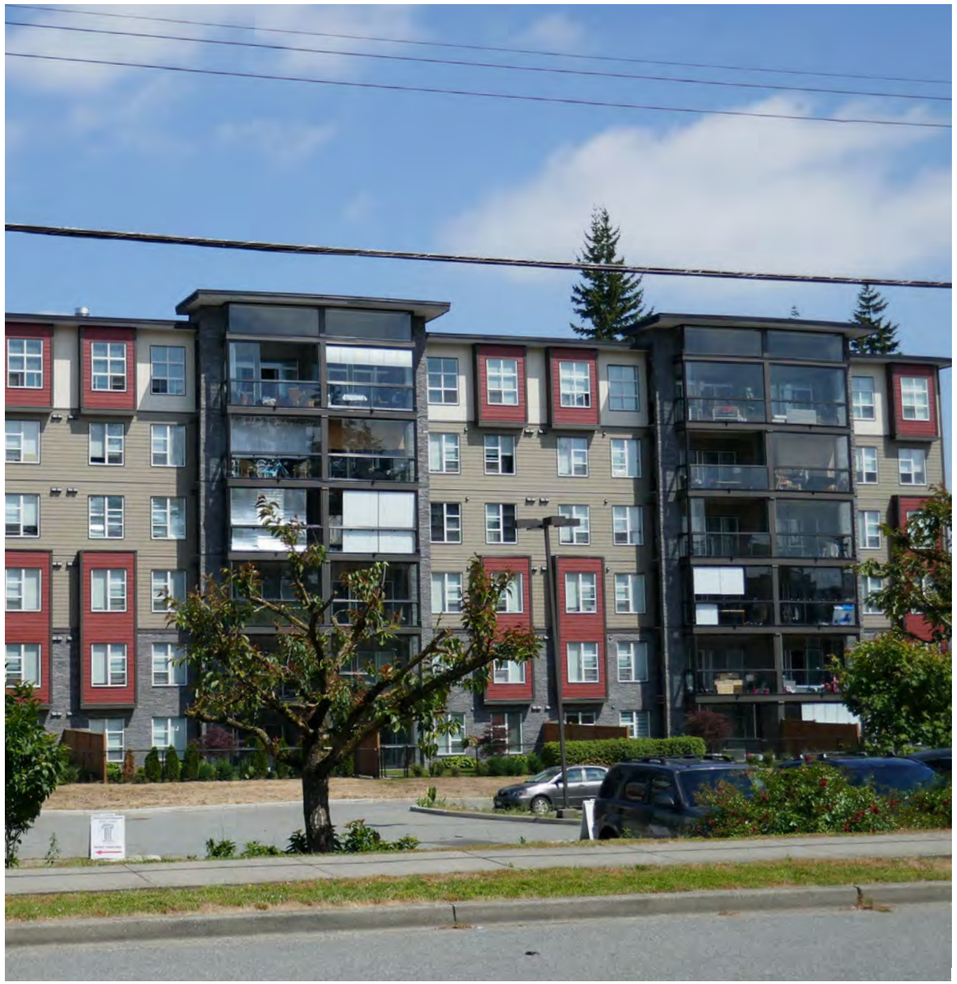


FIG. 40 TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS EXPERIENCING CORE HOUSING NEED AND % OF HOUSEHOLDS IN CORE HOUSING NEED (SOURCE: CMHC, 2006-2022)



Purpose built rental housing | Roberts Avenue, Abbotsford

Existing OCP Policies & Directions Supporting Housing

The following provides an excerpt of key OCP housing policies that inform neighbourhood planning, regulation updates, and overall decision-making (Part III, Chapter 2). The "Big Idea" icons highlight where each policy also relates to other plan goals.

2.1 Housing Diversity

Support diverse housing types for a variety of household sizes, incomes, tenures, and preferences, ranging from single detached homes and townhomes, to low, mid, and high rise residences, and distribute them across the city. Specific policies in this Plan include:

- Secondary suites in all single detached dwellings, subject to a certain criteria.
- Infill opportunities through single lot redevelopment, subject to a certain criteria.

LINKS 

2.2 Housing Affordability

Support mixed affordable housing options such as small homes and accessory units including secondary suites and detached units where appropriate, which can serve as mortgage helpers for owners while providing affordable options for renters or extended family members.

LINKS 

2.4 Family Friendly

Support the needs of households with children in multifamily developments by establishing the following requirements in the Zoning Bylaw:

- Minimum outdoor amenity space
- Minimum number of two and three bedroom units

LINKS 

2.5 Age Friendly

Incorporate age-friendly design that responds to the needs of older individuals and people with disabilities. Specifically, develop design criteria for accessible units, and establish a minimum number of units required to be accessible in the Zoning Bylaw.

LINKS 

2.6 Non Market Housing

Increase the amount of affordable and adequate accommodation for lower income households including by:

- Increasing the supply of non-profit rental social housing through partnership and collaboration;
- Identifying City-owned land with opportunities for non-profit housing, housing demonstration projects, and supportive housing for individuals with special needs;
- Supporting a range of affordable housing options using a housing first approach along the housing spectrum, including shelters and safe houses, transitional/temporary housing, supportive housing, and independent living options, especially in transit-accessible areas.

LINKS 

2.7 Mixed Use Centres

Through a mix of uses including retail, office, and residential, create a mix of uses that functions as a distinct neighbourhood. This includes focusing the highest densities and greatest mix of uses in the Urban and Neighbourhood Centres within individual neighbourhoods.

LINKS 

2.9 Residential Intensification

Focus residential intensification around the Urban and Neighbourhood Centres.

LINKS 

Summary

Housing pressures are at an all time high, and the City has an important role to play in easing the impacts for residents. While positive progress has been made under the 2016 OCP, there is a significant road ahead.

Incomes are not increasing at the same rate as the average costs of owning or renting a home in Abbotsford; this is an important reality to consider. Housing, of all types, is becoming increasingly less attainable and a major shift is needed to bring housing costs down and availability up. The OCP update provides an opportunity to strengthen progress on achieving the 'Big Ideas' and continue to prioritize housing.

The City worked closely with the CMHC to prepare an application for the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF), to help accelerate the pace of housing supply in Abbotsford. The City's HAF application includes an action plan comprised of seven initiatives which, in tandem with new Provincial legislation, will help shape more effective housing policies through the OCP update.

With federal and provincial governments assuming a more hands-on role when it comes to housing, a meaningful relationship with senior government will be crucial in moving the housing needle. It will be important to consider opportunities to partner with all levels of government, First Nations, stakeholders, and the private sector to deliver the housing Abbotsford needs.



Westerleigh townhouse project in the Townline neighbourhood

6.2 Climate Change

Climate Leadership

The City of Abbotsford has a unique opportunity to be a leader and partner in the effort to mitigate and adapt to climate change. With the ability to implement practical land use and transportation solutions, the City can help to proactively respond to climate challenges affecting the Fraser Valley and local residents.

Effective approaches to address climate change, or "climate action", include efforts to reduce carbon pollution (also known as mitigation of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions) in order to halt global temperature increase, as well as adapting to and preparing for the impacts of the changing climate. In collaboration with multiple levels of government, the City plays a proactive role in tackling climate issues with lenses of equity and resiliency, amplifying the collective response to this global challenge.

Local Climate Hazards

Flooding: In November 2021, atmospheric rivers flooded Abbotsford and recorded the highest rainfall ever received in one month. The flood event cost approximately $2 billion in damages and displaced over 1,000 people.[21]

Extreme Heat: In June 2021, amid drought conditions, a heat dome trapped hot air over British Columbia that was linked to nearly 450 deaths in the Lower Mainland.[22]

Wildfires: BC experienced its four most severe wildfire seasons on record within the past seven years (2017, 2018, 2021 and 2023). Wildfires scorched more than 10,000 km^2 of land in B.C. in three of the past seven seasons. Between 1919 and 2016, only three years saw more than 5,000 km^2 burn.

*Fraser Valley 2050 Climate Projections [23]

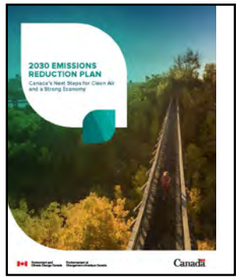
- 2.2°C to 4.3°C increase in annual average temperatures
- 12% decrease in average summer precipitation
- Average of 26 days over 30°C annually in Abbotsford (up from 7)
- 50% decrease in winter precipitation

* Pacific Climate Impacts Consortium: Comparison to 1961-1990 baseline period

Multi-Level Government Policy on Climate Change

Global

In December 2015, Canada signed the Paris Agreement at the UN Conference of the Parties (COP21). The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change with the overarching long-term goal to ensure the rise in global average temperature remains lower than 2°C above pre-industrial levels, yet strives to limit temperature rise to a maximum of 1.5°C.[19] The Paris Agreement facilitates a global, collective effort to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate global warming.

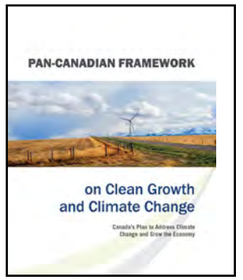


The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is the UN governing body for assessing and communicating the science related to climate change. IPCC prepares scientific, technical and socio-economic reports on climate change, and future risks, and options for reducing the rate of temperature increase. In alignment with the Paris Agreement, IPCC research indicates that crossing the 1.5°C temperature threshold risks triggering severe climate events and recommends that in order to limit global warming to 1.5°C, carbon pollution must peak before 2025 and decline 43% by 2030.[20]



Canada

In June 2021, the Canadian Government adopted the *Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act*, enshrining Canada's commitment to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 into law, per the Paris Agreement. This legislation builds on the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change (2016), the Strengthened Climate Plan (2020), and the 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan (2022), which provide national roadmaps for climate action. Canada has adopted carbon pollution reduction targets of 40 % below 2005 levels by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050, aligned with IPCC recommendations.



In 2023, Canada launched its first National Adaptation Strategy, aiming to reduce the risk of climate-related disasters, improve health outcomes, protect nature and biodiversity, build and maintain resilient infrastructure, and support a strong economy.

British Columbia

B.C. is advancing climate action through the CleanBC Plan, made up of the CleanBC Roadmap to 2030 with embedded GHG reduction targets, and the BC Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy. The Provincial government is committed to lowering climate-changing emissions 40% by 2030 and reaching net-zero carbon pollution by 2050.

Launched in 2007, the BC Climate Action Charter is a voluntary agreement between the BC government, Union of BC Municipalities, and each local government signatory to take action on climate change. In 2008, the Province enacted the *Local Government (Green Communities) Statutes Amending Act* ('Bill 27, 2008'). This legislation requires local governments in British Columbia to include GHG reduction targets in their OCPs, along with supporting policies.

Local

The City's OCP sets out corporate (absolute) and community (per capita) GHG reduction targets. The short-term community-wide target is 20% reduction per capita from 2007 levels by 2025, while the long-term target seeks a 40% reduction per capita by 2040. The City supports various climate action programs that reduce corporate and community GHG emissions, with the goal of creating compact, complete, and energy efficient communities.

Corporate Climate Action Highlights

- Continued implementation of the Green Fleet Strategy saw fleet related emissions decrease 11% vs. 2007 through the use of renewable diesel (RD) in heavy duty trucks and a shift to electric passenger vehicles.
- City building emissions have increased 2% since 2007. While most building categories show reductions, emissions related to the City's recreation facilities, which account for more than a third of total corporate emissions, increased due to expanded services and operating hours to meet community needs. Extreme winter weather also contributed to increased natural gas (NG) consumption.
- The Abbotsford Recreation Centre Heat Recovery & Optimization Project is expected to recover heat and optimize energy-sharing to reduce emissions by up to 70%. This is equivalent to eliminating carbon pollution from heating 125 homes in BC each year.
- The ARC HeRO Project and strategic purchasing of renewable natural gas (RNG) at specific City facilities will reduce carbon pollution to help the City reach GHG reduction targets.

City of Abbotsford Corporate Energy & Emissions

The City's 2022 corporate emissions totalled 4,439 tCO2e, representing a 17% reduction from 2007 levels (5,357 tCO2e).

COVID resulted in a unique and significant decline in both 2020-2021, however emissions have returned to pre-COVID levels, as operations have returned to normal. The City continues to lower operating carbon pollution through new and on-going initiatives.

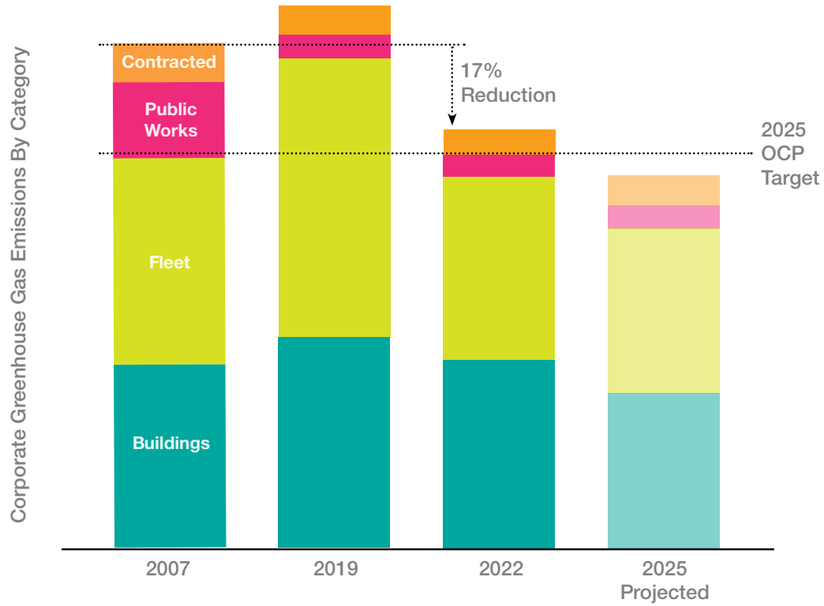


FIG. 41 CORPORATE EMISSIONS 2007 VS. 2022

Abbotsford Community Energy & Emissions

The City relies on the Province's Community Energy and Emissions Inventory (CEEI) to understand Abbotsford's community greenhouse gas emissions profile and progress towards reductions. 2020 data collection coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic (and drastic behaviour changes), preventing the useful comparison of emissions data to previous years. An additional limitation of CEEI information is the two-year lag on data release.

On January 10, 2024, the Province released the most recent CEEI data set for 2007-2021. After a 10-year period of omitting transportation data, this CEEI now includes important community-level transportation emissions. Staff will be reviewing this data release and assessing how it can be used for supporting or informing potential updates to OCP content.

Community Climate Action Highlights

- City installed 10 green cyclist conflict road markings, six Rapid Reflector Flashing Beams, and one overhead flashing light to increase safety at urban intersections and crosswalks.
- In 2022, City Council adopted Zoning Bylaw changes to establish electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure requirements for parking in all new residential buildings in Abbotsford. These requirements supports residents in accessing low-carbon transportation options.
- In 2021 and 2022, the City (in collaboration with BCIT and Canadian Home Builders' Association - Fraser Valley) organized more than 10 training sessions to educate key audiences about energy efficient, low-emissions building construction practices. Recent 'High-Performance Buildings Workshops' drew over 85 participants.
- The City secured a $4.7M grant for the JAMES Plant Biogas Upgrading Project to upgrade biogas to renewable natural gas (RNG) and produce enough RNG to heat 580 BC homes annually.

OCP Policies & Directions Supporting Climate Action

The OCP is centred on compact, efficient, and strategic growth that reduces carbon pollution, and builds resiliency to climate events and climate change impacts. Many policies provide benefits to both climate mitigation and adaptation outcomes. Overarching consideration of climate change, emissions, and sustainability is embedded throughout the OCP's policies, with special attention to the following categories:

1. Land Use & Communities

OCP land use and growth management policies are central to shaping Abbotsford's development, improving liveability, and supporting community carbon pollution reductions. The city's urban structure is organized around a hierarchy of mixed-use centres, supported diverse housing options and policies that focus most intensive growth along the primary transit corridor. The Urban Development Boundary sets an edge for future development, ensuring population growth is focused inward and upward, instead of outward.

Accommodating growth in compact, complete, and mixed-use neighbourhoods will reduce community GHG emissions, while improving the quality of life for residents with better transportation choice and convenient access to daily needs. (Policies: 2.1, 2.3, 2.12, 2.16, 5.2)

LINKS



Mixed Use Development on Gladwin Road

2. Transportation

OCP policy strives to provide diverse mobility choice and community connectivity by aligning land use and transportation approaches, redesigning streets, and rethinking parking. Over time, the envisioned transportation networks will build out, helping more residents conveniently shift to cycling, walking, and public transit for local trips. (OCP policies: 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 3.6, 3.10)

LINKS

Transportation policies have many co-benefits. For instance, with a strong active transportation network, people are more likely to shift their mode of transportation from a car to a bicycle or transit. This is a co-benefit because GHG emissions are reduced and transportation choices are expanded to facilitate active, safe, and enjoyable commutes or trips. Continued implementation of the OCP's active transportation policies is important for realizing reductions in transportation-related GHG emissions.



3. Buildings & Development

While the OCP generally supports environmentally conscientious development through OCP policy and Development Permit Guidelines, the more detailed building permit process provides the most direct regulation of building energy performance.

Developers are required to obtain building permits for new residential and commercial buildings to demonstrate compliance with the BC Building Code (BCBC). As part of on-going implementation of BC Energy Step Code, the BCBC was updated on May 1, 2023 to require 20% better energy efficiency for most new buildings, improving the performance of building envelopes and heating systems. A further increase in Provincial efficiency requirements is expected in 2027, with the ultimate target of net-zero energy-ready buildings by 2032.

LINKS

4. Conservation & Resilience

The OCP includes several policies and development permit provisions to support environmental protection, the preservation of ecosystems/habitat corridors, and sustainable infrastructure for municipal services. (OCP policies: 5.7, 5.8, 5.9, 5.11, 5.12)

LINKS

5. Parks & Natural Asset Protection

OCP policies help conserve, protect, and restore the natural environment through protecting street trees, enhancing the urban tree canopy, improving parks, and protecting sensitive ecosystems/riparian areas in development. Natural assets help the community absorb shocks and stressors brought about by climate change. (OCP policies: 4.4, 4.7, 4.8, Part V)

LINKS

6. **Utilities & Services:** The OCP includes policies for sustainable infrastructure and servicing that support the long term growth of the city. (See policies: 5.13-5.17)

LINKS

Summary | Climate Change

Abbotsford has a responsibility to understand the impacts and drivers of climate change and a responsibility to plan a new way forward that is equitable and strategic.

Effectively addressing climate change involves preparing and adapting to the changing climate while simultaneously reducing emissions to achieve low carbon resilience.

The OCP takes a long-term perspective, emphasizing sustainable planning and municipal infrastructure management. OCP policies meaningfully address challenges associated with climate change while balancing other global and local ecological issues.

The OCP update provides an opportunity to build on the momentum of the 7 Big Ideas by supporting policies that mitigate and adapt to the changing climate, and considering the science-based climate action goals and targets adopted by senior levels of government. Climate action policy is integrated throughout the urban growth and land use plan, and in each of the major policy directions, ranging from transportation and housing to natural areas and agricultural lands.

The City acknowledges the need to adapt and mitigate the changing climate to ensure everyone lives in a thriving and climate resilient community. To adapt, the OCP update provides an opportunity to enhance the City's understanding of local climate issues, integrate climate change adaptation into existing development processes and policies, and collaborate with regional, provincial, and national governments.

Blank for double-sided printing

7.0 Engagement Strategy

Pursuant to Section 475 of the *Local Government Act*, any amendment or update to the an Official Community Plan must include consideration of consultation with specific groups.

The purpose of this section is to outline the participation strategies, tasks, and activities that the City of Abbotsford will undertake to engage these groups and others. It is the City's intent to enable meaningful and timely discussions that will help update the Official Community Plan. The engagement activities will be targeted, inclusive and innovative, and incorporate various methods to reach out to identified groups and the community.

Particular attention will be paid to using different types of engagement tailored to each Stage of the process. A more detailed engagement plan will be included in each stage's staff report for the subsequent stage.

7.1 Who we will engage

The following is a preliminary list of stakeholders who may have an interest in an update to Abbotsford's Official Community Plan.

This list will serve as a starting point to help inform the creation and delivery of engagement activities. This will be reviewed and supplemented throughout the process.

General Public

- City of Abbotsford residents
- Abbotsford businesses and property owners
- Individuals who work, shop, or recreate in the City of Abbotsford

City of Abbotsford

- City Council
- Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
- Staff Technical Advisory Group (TAG)
- Accessibility & Equity Advisory Committee (AEAC)
- Business, Innovation & Public Affairs Advisory Committee (BIPAAC)
- Community, Culture & Environment Advisory Committee (CCEAC)
- Development, Transportation & Infrastructure Advisory Committee (DTIAC)
- Agriculture Advisory Committee (AAC)

Special Interest Organizations

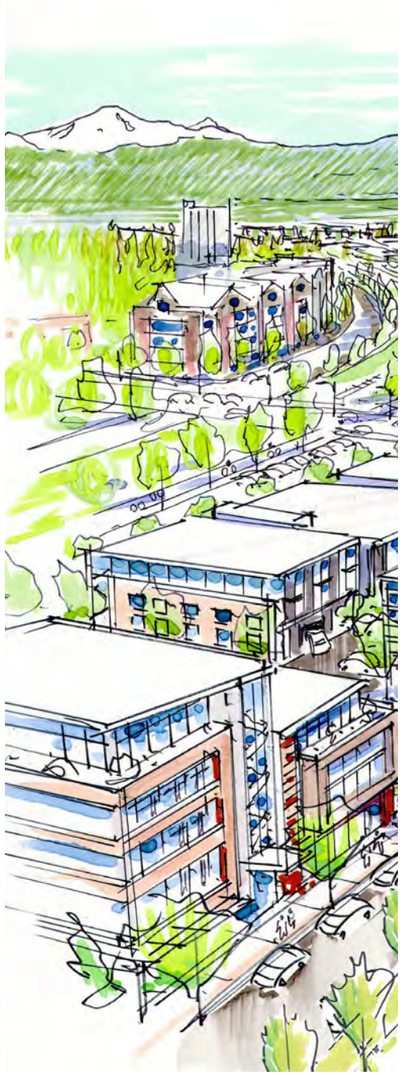
- Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce
- Fraser Valley Indo-Canadian Business Association
- Abbotsford Downtown Business Association
- Fraser Valley Real Estate Board
- Urban Development Institute (Fraser Valley Chapter)
- Tourism Abbotsford
- Fraser Basin Council
- Fraser Valley Land Conservancy

Local First Nations

- Leq'á:mel First Nation
- Mathxwí (Matsqui) First Nation
- Semá:th (Sumas) First Nation
- Stó:lō Nation

Government Agencies

- School Districts
  - » No. 34 (Abbotsford)
  - » No. 93 (Conseil Scolaire Francophone)
- Regional Districts & Adjacent Municipalities
  - » Fraser Valley Regional District
  - » Metro Vancouver
  - » City of Chilliwack
  - » Township of Langley
  - » City of Mission
- Provincial Ministries & Agencies
  - » Ministry of Agriculture
  - » Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
  - » Ministry of Environment
  - » Agricultural Land Commission
- Fraser Health Authority
- University of the Fraser Valley



7.2 How we will engage

Engagement will be broad and inclusive, incorporating a combination of in-person and online methods to reach out to the identified groups and the community.

This section outlines a high-level engagement framework, with the intent to assess detailed engagement needs and refinements at each stage as key issues and ideas are better understood.

Engagement Goals

The OCP update will employ the following four general levels of engagement, similar to the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2). Each level will be applied throughout the process differently, depending on the target group and planning stage:

1. **Inform** - provide balanced and objective information for better understanding the project
2. **Consult** - obtain feedback
3. **Involve** - work to ensure concerns and aspirations are understood and considered
4. **Collaborate** - partner in the development of alternatives and solutions.

Engagement & Outreach Methods

Various tools and engagement methods will be used throughout the process. The following examples will be used, tailored or supplemented based on the needs of each stage.



Online - Inform & Engage

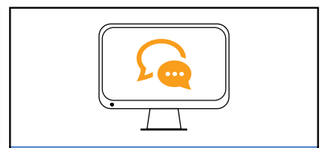

In-Person Project Events



Council Stage Reports

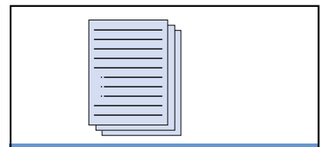


Social & Print Media


Direct Contact (written)


Meetings/Workshops


Council Committees


Formal Referrals


Public Hearing

STAGE 1

Background Research

Overview

Stage 1 focused on preliminary research and analysis to inform the project scope and identify some of the key challenges and opportunities to be considered during the OCP Update. Given the research focus of Stage 1, engagement was largely internal. This stage seeks Council direction to proceed with the proposed work plan/ engagement strategy.

	Audience	Engagement Actions	Progress
	SLT & TAG	• Meetings/workshops	• Analyzed relationship of the OCP to recent master plans and strategies • Identified preliminary OCP gaps, issues, opportunities for improvement • Evaluated the performance and progress of the 2016 OCP • Monitored and assessed Provincial housing legislation changes
	First Nations	• Connection & dialogue	• In-person meetings to raise awareness of project and understand First Nation engagement preferences. Feedback highlights are provided below.
	Mayor & Council	• Strategic Plan identified OCP Update • Receive Background Research Report • Consider Project Work Plan & Engagement Strategy • Direct staff to begin Stage 2	• Proposed work plan, engagement strategy, and preliminary project scope ready for Council consideration • Background Research Report ready for Council: summarizes OCP progress, early issues, and potential new directions for further discussion in Stage 2
Engagement Feedback	Semá:th (Sumas) First Nation 2023 Nov 17 Staff-to-Staff Meeting	• Appreciate City contact/dialogue early in the process • Seeking collaborative approach/involvement throughout OCP process; want voice to raise concerns/values and seek meaningful response • Key contact: Governance & Natural Resources Manager - flexible engagement as project proceeds; will advise/help coordinate in each stage • Staff-to-staff, community, Chief/Council	
	Mathxwí (Matsqui) First Nation 2023 Nov 28 Staff-to-Staff Meeting	• Looking for inclusion, open communication, voice in the process • Want both City and Matsqui looking out for what's best for the land we are sitting on • Key contact: Economic Development Officer - will advise/help coordinate engagement in each stage • Staff-to-staff, Matsqui Lands Committee, Governing Body (Chief and Council)	
	Leq'á:mel First Nation 2023 Nov 28 Staff-to-Staff Meeting	• Seeking early dialogue and meaningful engagement • Want to see Leq'á:mel presence in OCP outcomes; Aylechootlook (IR5) land is a key interest • Key contact: Director of Lands & Natural Resources Governance - will advise/help coordinate engagement in each stage • Staff-to-staff, Leq'á:mel Family Advisory Committee, Chief/Council, community	
	Stó:lō Nation via PRRO	• Staff-to-staff meeting with the People of the River Referrals Office (PRRO) is planned for early 2024	

STAGE 2

Explore New Directions

Overview

Stage 2 shifts into public facing stages of the OCP update and will introduce the project, share the background research, and seek community and stakeholder input on key issues, challenges, and opportunities. Building on the baseline of the Background Research Report, engagement will seek to validate the preliminary issues, identify additional challenges/opportunities, and seek feedback on preliminary 'New Directions' to strengthen Abbotsford's path forward as a City.

Who	Activities May Include	Key Objectives & Messaging
Council	• Receive Stage 2 Report • Direct staff to proceed to Stage 3	• Share Stage 2 engagement results/feedback and outline a set of proposed new directions to guide detailed policy development in Stage 3 • Request Council direction to proceed to Stage 3
Local First Nations	• Staff-to-staff dialogue on content and engagement details • Connection with committees, Chief/Council • Share Stage 2 Report at end of stage	• Recap project purpose, process, background research • Input on key issues, considerations, and draft high-level new directions
Community	• Let's Talk Abbotsford • In-Person Event/Open House • Social/print media • Share Stage 2 New Directions Report	• Outline project purpose, process, and opportunities to stay involved/informed • Share background research findings & preliminary new directions for discussion • Seek input on key issues and opportunities for Abbotsford • Solicit feedback on preliminary new directions for the OCP update • Background research and Stage 2 input will inform high-level 'New Directions' that will guide the preparation of more specific draft policy in Stage 3. This will be summarized in a Stage 2 New Directions Report for Council
City Committees	• Meetings/presentations	
Special Interest Organizations	• Direct contact (email) • World Cafe Workshop	
Government Agencies	• Direct contact • Meetings (as needed) • Share Stage 2 New Directions Report	• Highlight the OCP update process underway and options to provide feedback • Outline ways to find project information online (Let's Talk) • Welcome the opportunity to meet to discuss the project
SLT & TAG	• Meetings/workshops	• Solicit interdepartmental input to review and refine New Directions • Seek SLT/TAG advice on New Directions prior to presenting to Council

STAGE 3

Prepare New Policy

Overview

Stage 3 engagement will seek community and stakeholder feedback on draft OCP policies prior to refinement and preparation of bylaws for Council consideration. The details of in-person engagement will be defined at the end of Stage 2

Who	Activities May Include	Key Objectives & Messaging
Council	• Meeting(s) • Receive Stage 3 Draft Policy Report • Direct staff to proceed to Stage 4 and prepare OCP Amendment Bylaws	• Share Stage 3 engagement results & proposed revisions to draft policy • Request Council direction to advance to Stage 4 and prepare amending bylaw
Local First Nations	• Staff-to-staff dialogue on content and engagement details • Connection with committees, community, Chief/Council • Share Stage 3 Report at end of stage	• Present draft policy changes for feedback • Highlight the connection between project input and proposed policies • Assess potential need for supplementary engagement in light of feedback • Use feedback to revise and refine draft OCP policy • Stage 3 Report will summarize engagement results and outline recommended OCP amendments for bylaw preparation
Community	• Let's Talk Abbotsford • In-Person Event/Open House • Social/print media • Share Stage 3 Policy Report	
City Committees	• Meetings and presentations	
Special Interest Organizations	• Direct email contact • Meetings (as needed)	
Government Agencies	• Direct contact • Meetings (as needed) • Share Stage 3 Policy Report	• Share draft policy changes for feedback & discussion • Welcome meetings & requests for additional information • Stage 3 Report will be shared as a summary of engagement and policy recommendations
SLT & TAG	• Meetings/workshops	• Review and test draft policies • Consider implications of policies and identify post-plan needs

STAGE 4

Adopt New Policy

Overview

Stage 4 engagement is guided by the technical legislated steps for considering adoption of OCP amendment bylaws.

Who	Activities May Include	Key Objectives & Messaging
Council	• Consider OCP bylaw readings • Public Hearing • Consider OCP bylaw adoption	• Council considers readings and adoption of OCP amendment bylaw • Technical analysis and engagement input received throughout process used to prepare OCP amendment bylaw
Community City Committees Special Interest Organizations	• Public Hearing	• Opportunity to directly address Council on proposed OCP amendments • Final opportunity to comment on proposed OCP amendments
Local First Nations Government Agencies	• Formal OCP bylaw referral • Public Hearing	• Council considers written feedback as part of the Public Hearing • Opportunity to directly address Council on proposed OCP amendments • Public Hearing is final opportunity to comment on proposed OCP amendments • Obtain Provincial statutory bylaw approvals, if required
SLT & TAG	• Meetings/workshops	• Review/refine the OCP amendment bylaw prior to Council consideration • Identify interdepartmental post-plan needs

Blank for double-sided printing

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

This section is intended to reflect on existing OCP approaches and 'jump-start' community dialogue on potential new avenues for strengthening the OCP's response to key challenges, opportunities, and Provincial housing legislation.

The ideas in this section are not intended as "proposed policy" at this early stage, but rather possible "new directions" to explore through the OCP planning process. These ideas are not intended to represent all potential options for OCP improvement, recognizing the important role of engagement in understanding the range of issues and potential policy improvements.

Each 'early idea' identified in this section includes graphic icons linking to the OCP's "Big Ideas" and the goals of Council's Strategic Plan.

Several new ideas are introduced for the first time through this chapter, however, some are directly linked to the City's Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) initiatives and legislated Provincial requirements recently introduced through the Provincial Homes for People Plan. Icons are used to note the connection to these higher level initiatives.

8.1 The Big Picture

Affirm the OCP's 7 Big Ideas

Confirm that the existing "Big Ideas" continue to represent the central goals that should guide more detailed policies, growth and decision-making for Abbotsford.

Rationale

The 7 big ideas form the foundation of the OCP by clearly setting out the key ingredients for shaping Abbotsford's future. At the highest level, this is what the Plan is trying to achieve. Each Big Idea represents an overarching category for organizing more detailed goals and policies.



LINKS TO

Strategic Plan

Reinforce Abbotsford as the Hub of the Fraser Valley

Explore opportunities to reinforce Abbotsford as the Hub of the Fraser Valley through policies and directions aimed at strengthening relationships that facilitate alignment.

Rationale

The Strategic Plan envisions Abbotsford as the cultural and economic centre of the region, and the home to centralized services and agencies including health care, court services, transportation, university, airport, provincial and federal government, entertainment and cultural facilities, and commerce.



LINKS TO

Strategic Plan

VISION +

Confirm the Urban Structure & hierarchy of centres

Review the “Urban Structure” to confirm that it continues to represent the desired growth structure, hierarchy, and priority growth areas.

Rationale

The hierarchy of mixed-use centres, the primary transit corridor, and the Urban Development Boundary play a critical role in supporting well coordinated decision-making with the entire City in mind. It is a foundational element of the OCP.

LINKS TO

OCP Big Ideas

Strategic Plan

Evaluate the reach of ‘centres’ for all urban residents

Analyze the proportion of residents that can walk or cycle to one of the City’s mixed-use centres for daily needs. Evaluate gaps and opportunities.

Rationale

Complete communities include convenient access to shopping, services, and amenities that support the daily needs and well-being of residents. The proximity of homes to retail and/or mixed-use areas, and the quality of connections, can have real impacts on transportation choice, equitable access to services, and quality of life.

LINKS TO

OCP Big Ideas

Strategic Plan

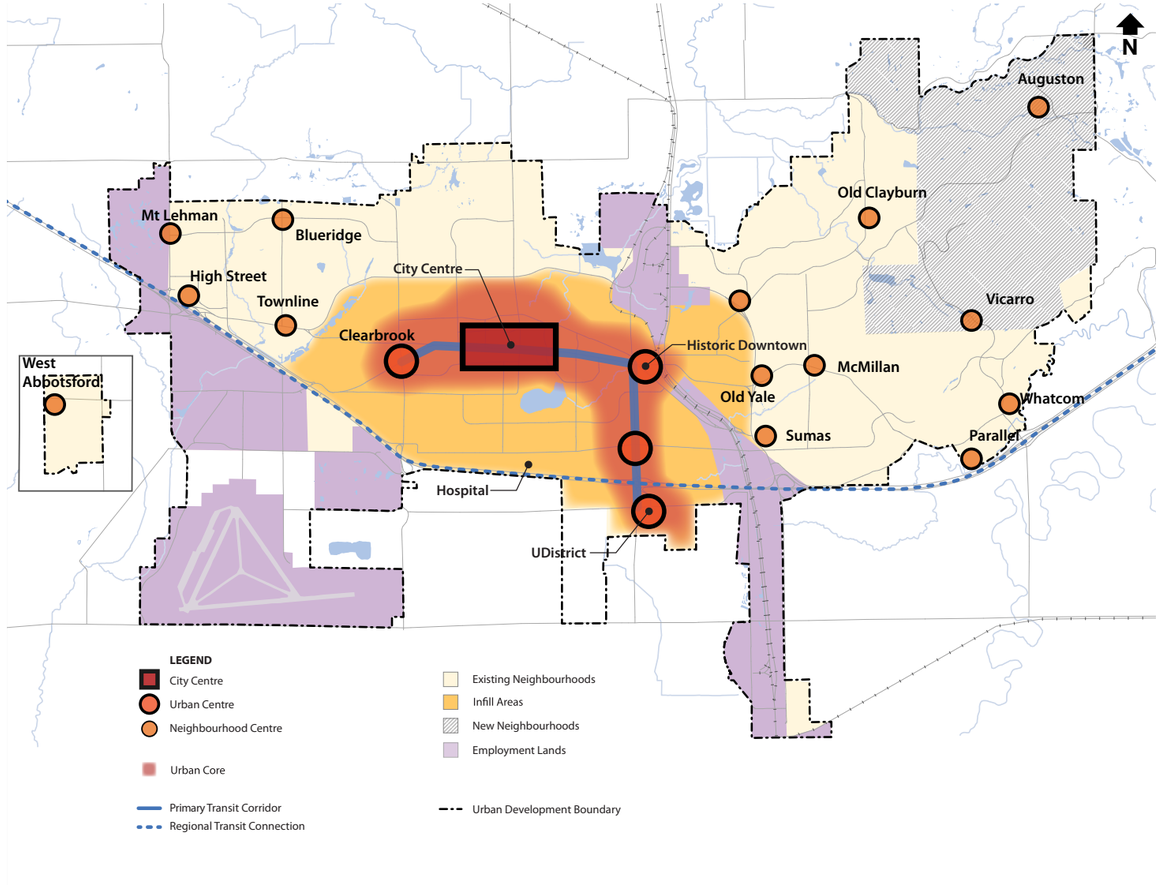


FIG. 42 CURRENT OCP URBAN STRUCTURE: PART II - 1- 2

Extend the Primary Transit Corridor to High Street

Improve regional connections to and from Abbotsford by aligning the OCP's Primary Transit Corridor with Transportation Master Plan Rapid Transit Phase 2, linking Clearbrook to High Street.

Rationale

The 2018 Transportation and Transit Master Plan identifies a Phase 2 extension of Rapid Transit from Clearbrook to Highstreet to strengthen regional transit connections to Lougheed Skytrain station (via route FVX) for residents and businesses. This change would better align the OCP and Transportation and Transit Master Plan. It will be important to evaluate this potential change in consideration of land use implications.

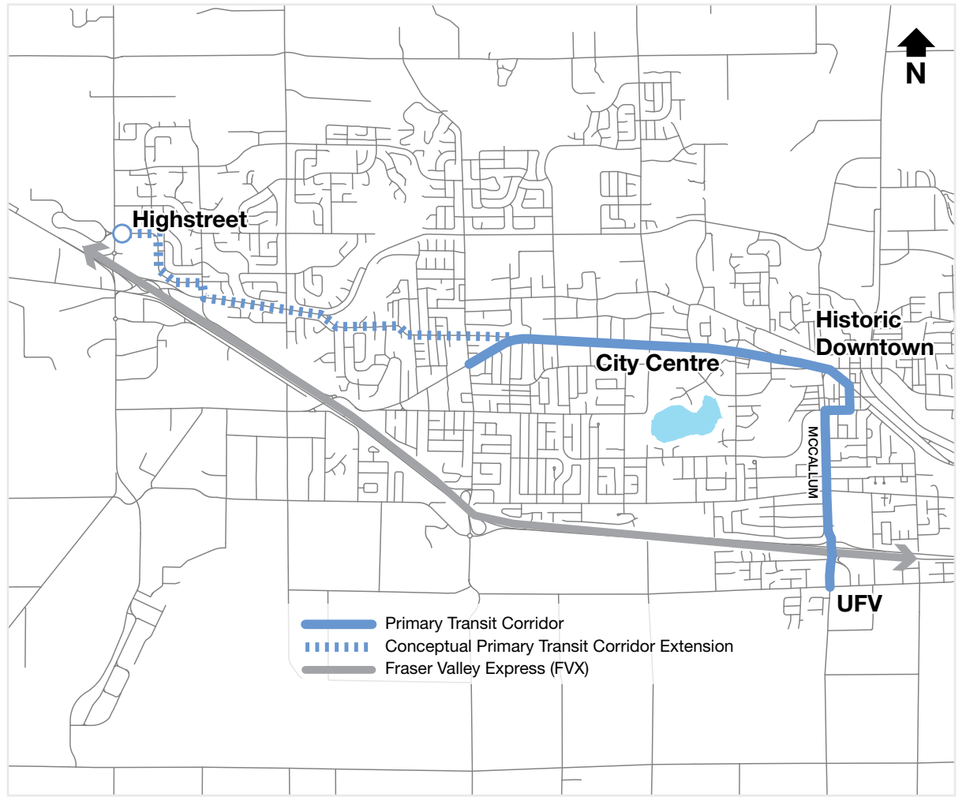
LINKS TO

OCP Big Ideas



Strategic Plan





MAP 18: CONCEPTUAL PRIMARY TRANSIT CORRIDOR EXTENSION

8.2 Bold steps to increase housing supply

Increase development potential around transit exchange sites

In alignment with Provincial requirements, review and update land use policy, building height and density permissions within 400 m of transit exchanges. Consider related policy needs.

Rationale

The *Local Government Act* requires the City to formally identify a 'Transit-Oriented Area' within 400 m of the Bourquin Crescent transit exchange, and enable residential development:

- up to 6 storeys and floor area up to 2.5 times the lot area, within 400 m
- up to 10 storeys and floor area up to 3.5 times the lot area, within 200 m

LINKS TO

OCP Big Ideas



Strategic Plan



Legislated

HOMES FOR PEOPLE

Increase Urban 1 Mid-rise density

Consider increasing the maximum building floor area of ‘Urban 1 - Midrise’ to improve the feasibility of mid-rise apartment development.

Rationale

OCP Urban 1 Midrise policy currently allows extra density for sites that are 2,500 m^2 or smaller, often creating an unintended incentive to avoid lot consolidation. This can complicate opportunities for sharing underground access/parking, and amenity areas between neighbouring sites. A consistent Urban 1 density limit, with supporting design guidance (e.g., max building length, minimum building separations), will improve development outcomes.

LINKS TO

OCP Big Ideas



Strategic Plan



Increase residential opportunities in neighbourhood centres

Explore changes to Neighbourhood Centre OCP policy to broaden residential development opportunities in close proximity to services, transportation options, and amenities.

Rationale

There are Neighbourhood Centres distributed across the city that provide services and amenities close to where people live. These Neighbourhood Centres enable a mix of uses, including residential and commercial. Broadening the density permissions in these areas may support an increase in housing supply and diversity in parts of the city that have been historically characterized by low density single-detached housing.

LINKS TO

OCP Big Ideas



Strategic Plan



Federal Funding



Expand density bonusing opportunities

Explore opportunities to expand the density bonus program to new areas.

Rationale

Bonus density is currently available in the City Centre Core, City Centre Residential, and Civic Institutional land use designations. Exploring opportunities to expand the program to other strategic areas could help stimulate development interest and more housing.

LINKS TO

OCP Big Ideas



Strategic Plan



Federal Funding



Explore new or expanded areas for apartment development

Explore suitable and strategic locations for new apartment development.

Rationale

With housing in short supply, there may be additional areas of the city well-positioned for apartment residential development. This idea would explore new or expanded areas for Urban 1 Mid-Rise (6 storey) development.

LINKS TO

OCP Big Ideas



Strategic Plan



Allow townhouses on select arterials

Redesignate low density residential lots on select arterial roads to the Urban 2 - Ground Oriented land use designation to enable options for ground-oriented multi-unit residential development.

Rationale

There is currently about 41 hectares of land designated for single detached housing along arterial roads in Abbotsford. Redesignating strategic areas for ground-oriented multi-residential development could support missing middle housing in proximity to amenities, infrastructure, and public transit, promoting sustainable, efficient, transit-oriented development.

LINKS TO

OCP Big Ideas

Strategic Plan

Federal Funding

HAF

Explore options for non-profit sites to address unique housing needs

Explore policy changes that enable consideration of affordable, non-market housing on sites owned by not-for-profit organizations, such as place of worship properties.

Rationale

The economics of not-for-profit owned sites, such as 'places of worship' (often large and under long-held ownership), may provide a unique opportunity to deliver non-market, affordable, multi-unit housing. Creative delivery of non-market housing will fulfil an important community need and may align with the broader mission of some faith-based organizations.

LINKS TO

OCP Big Ideas

Strategic Plan

Influence

HOMES FOR PEOPLE

Implement provincial requirements for 3-6 units in single-detached areas

Update OCP land use and housing options for single-detached dwelling neighbourhoods, in alignment with recent changes to the *Local Government Act*. (see section 6.1)

Rationale

In April 2023, the Province released its "Homes for People Plan" highlighting the high cost of single-detached homes and the short supply of small scale multi-unit housing, like townhouses, triplexes, and duplexes. Legislation was introduced in November 2023, requiring land zoned for single-detached or duplex housing to permit up to 4 units, with permission for up to 6 units in areas well served by transit. The OCP update provides an opportunity to align with mandated housing permissions applicable to Abbotsford.

LINKS TO

OCP Big Ideas

Strategic Plan

Legislated

HOMES FOR PEOPLE

Explore suitable minimum lot size for 4 units in single-detached areas

Explore updates to minimum subdivision size in response to Provincial changes requiring permission for 3-4 unit development on lots in existing single-detached dwelling neighbourhoods.

Rationale

As noted, legislation introduced in November 2023 requires cities to update regulations in urban areas zoned for single-detached or duplex housing to permit up to 4 units, and up to 6 units in areas well served by transit. The City's existing subdivision regulations did not contemplate space requirements needed to support four dwelling units, particularly on lots without lane access.

LINKS TO

OCP Big Ideas

Strategic Plan

Influence

HOMES FOR PEOPLE

Allow secondary suites in all single detached dwellings

Review and update City regulations to allow secondary suites in all single detached dwellings, as required through recent changes to the *Local Government Act*. (see section 6.1)

Rationale

The City's existing regulations enable secondary suites, as of right, on approximately 81% of lots zoned for single detached housing. Recent legislation changes now require local governments to permit a secondary suites in all single detached dwellings. Increasing the prevalence of secondary suites will generate more rental supply, improve affordability, and add diversity in the housing stock throughout existing neighbourhoods.

LINKS TO

OCP Big Ideas

Strategic Plan

Legislated

HOMES FOR PEOPLE

Federal Funding

HAF



8.3 Strategic Policy Updates

Improve policy for new institutional uses

Enhance and clarify OCP policy guidance for considering new institutional uses, such as places of worship or school sites.

Rationale

The OCP includes criteria for considering new place of worship sites, but provides little guidance for considering new schools and campuses outside of a neighbourhood planning process. Broadening and coordinating institutional location criteria to better address schools would resolve a policy gap.

LINKS TO

OCP Big Ideas

Strategic Plan

Review and modernize OCP direction for Special Study Areas

Affirm special study areas as priority areas for future industrial and recreation land uses, integrating modernized language and refined boundaries reflecting recent City work on industrial land supply.

Rationale

Modernizing agriculture and strengthening food security through agritech investment have come into sharp focus in recent years. The 2019 BC Food Security Task Force's 2019 "Findings & Recommendations" report acknowledges the potential role of the ALR for agritech success. Updating Special Study Area intent statements to include agritech will align with Council's Strategic Plan and recent AgRefresh policy changes. The City's 2017 Industrial Land Supply Study and subsequent ALR application provide a valuable reference for potential boundary adjustments.

LINKS TO

OCP Big Ideas

Strategic Plan

Update park and open space OCP directions

Review and update park and open space OCP directions in the context of new land use and growth patterns that emerge through the update.

Rationale

Planning for accessible parks and open space supports liveability and well-being. It will be important to consider park/open space needs as land use changes are considered, providing guidance for future Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan updates.

LINKS TO

OCP Big Ideas



Strategic Plan



Improve design requirements for multi-unit development

Update the Multifamily Development Permit Guidelines to better meet design objectives for liveable, high quality apartment and ground-oriented housing.

Rationale

As “missing-middle” ground-oriented and apartment housing becomes a high priority for accommodating growth, the OCP update provides an opportunity to strengthen the City’s development permit guidelines to support liveability through well designed internal roads, functional amenity spaces, and design that creates a neighbourly interface with adjacent streets and sites.

LINKS TO

OCP Big Ideas



Strategic Plan



Update regulations for development on or near steep slopes

Update the Steep Slope Development Permit Area Guidelines to ensure new development is safe and responds appropriately to local conditions.

Rationale

In 2016, the City introduced development permit guidelines to better manage and direct new development in steep slope areas. Following seven years of use, staff experience has helped identify a range of considerations for strengthening implementation and better meeting the objectives of these regulations. Early ideas for consideration include updated mapping, clarified application requirements, review of exemptions, and a holistic understanding of geological and related hazards.

LINKS TO

OCP Big Ideas



Strategic Plan



Update regulations for development near natural areas

Update the Natural Environment Development Permit (NEDP) Area Guidelines to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and implementation.

Rationale

Currently, the City uses NEDP guidelines in combination with a City Streamside Protection Bylaw (2005) and the Provincial *Riparian Areas Protection Regulation* (RAPR). The City is one of few remaining BC local governments using a Streamside Protection Bylaw along with Development Permit Area Guidelines and RAPR. Experience using the current approach has highlighted potential opportunities to improve efficiency and implementation by exploring approaches of other local governments. Early ideas for consideration include updated mapping, clarified application requirements, review of exemptions, and review of processes/mechanisms.

LINKS TO

OCP Big Ideas



Strategic Plan



9.0 Next Steps

Presentation of the Background Research Report to Abbotsford City Council marks the completion of Stage 1 of the OCP Update process.

The research completed in Stage 1 sets a foundational understanding of Abbotsford's current planning context and will support community dialogue in the next Stage.

Framed by this background research, Stage 2 will engage the community to validate key issues and discuss possible ideas for strengthening the OCP as Abbotsford grows over the next 25 years. Stage 2 will prepare a set of high level 'new directions' that will inform the preparation of specific policies in Stage 3.

10.0 Sources

1 Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0142-01 Population estimates, July 1, by census subdivision, 2016 boundaries

2 Fraser Valley Regional District, 2023, Point-in-Time Homelessness Count & Survey Regional Report

3 Carlson, K., *A Stó:lo-Coast Salish Historical Atlas*, (Douglas & McIntyre, 2001) ,as referenced in the FVRD draft Regional Growth Strategy

4 *Ibid*

5 *Ibid*

6 *Ibid*

7 *CMHC. Housing Market Information Portal. 2016-2022*

8 *Ibid*

9 *Ibid*

10 Statistics Canada. 2016 & 2021 Census Profiles

11 Statistics Canada. 2011 National Household Survey & 2016 & 2021 Census Profiles

12 Statistics Canada. 2011 National Household Survey & 2016 & 2021 Census Profiles

13 Fraser Valley Regional District, 2023, Point-in-Time Homelessness Count & Survey Regional Report

14 *Ibid*

15 Government of Canada, Department of Finance. Canada's Housing Action Plan
https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2023/11/canadas-housing-action-plan.html

16 CMHC. Housing Market Information Portal. 2016-2022

17 Statistics Canada. Core Housing Need of Private Household. 2021

18 Government of Canada, Department of Finance. Canada's Housing Action Plan
https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2023/11/canadas-housing-action-plan.html

19 United Nations. Paris Agreement 2015.
https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf

20 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Press Release. "The Evidence is Clear: The Time for Action is Now. We Can Halve Emissions by 2030." April 4, 2022.
https://www.ipcc.ch/2022/04/04/ipcc-ar6-wgiii-pressrelease

21 Hopes, Vikki. "Abbotsford Flood One Year Later: Timeline of A Disaster" The Abbotsford News. November 17, 2022.
http://abbynews.com/news/abbotsford-flood-one-year-later-timeline-of-a-disaster

22 Slepian, Katya. "Nearly 600 People Died Due to Summer Heat Waves: BC Coroner Service" The Abbotsford News. November 1, 2021.
https://abbynews.com/news/nearly-600-people-died-to-to-summer-heat-waves-bc-coroners-service

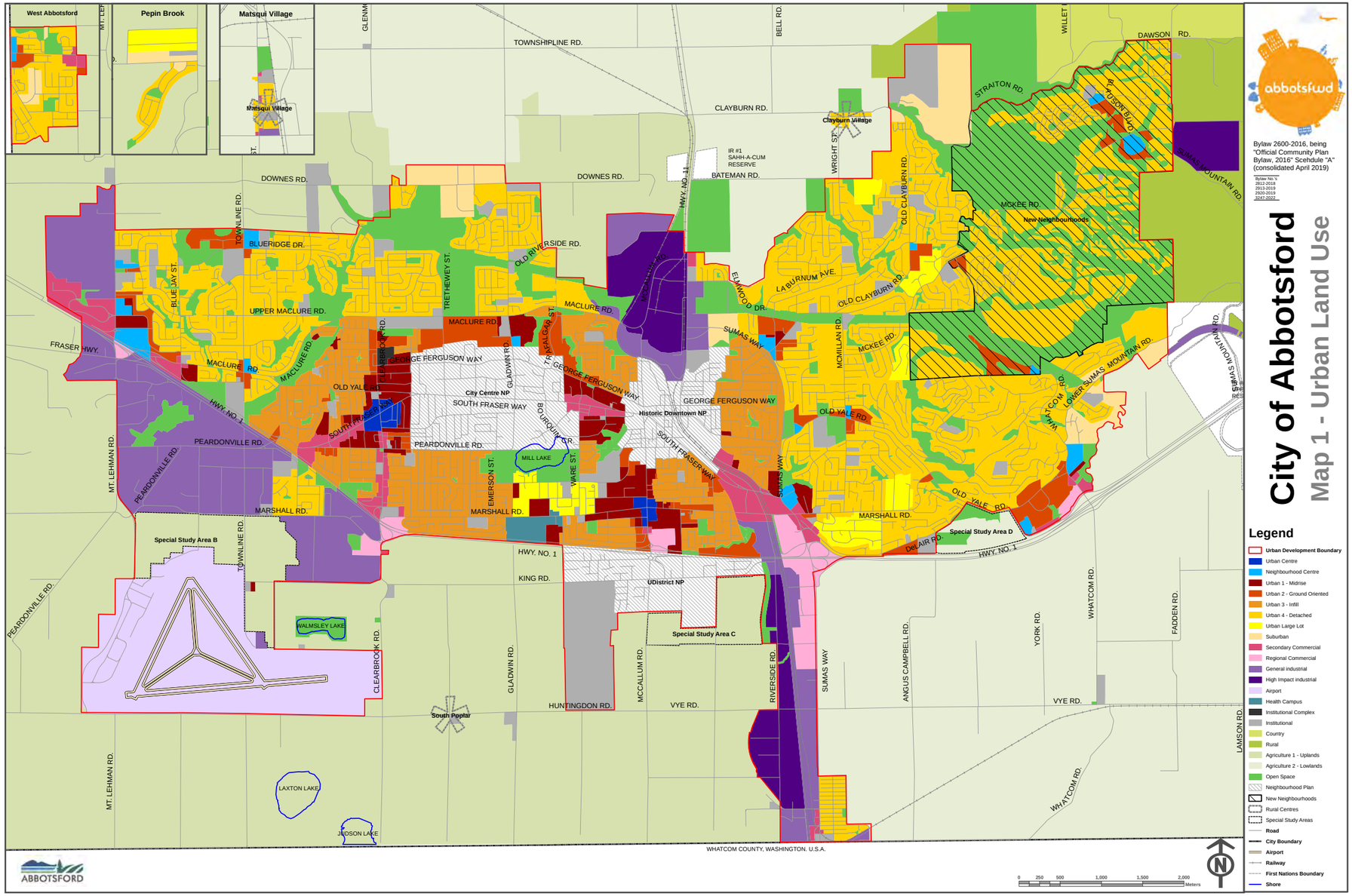
23 Pacific Climate Impacts Consortium via Climate Change Adaptation Program. "Fraser Valley: Climate Projections and Top Issues". Viewed September 7, 2023.
https://www.bcclimatechangeadaptation.ca/regional-adaptation/fraser-valley/#Climate_projections_and_top_issues

11.0 Appendices

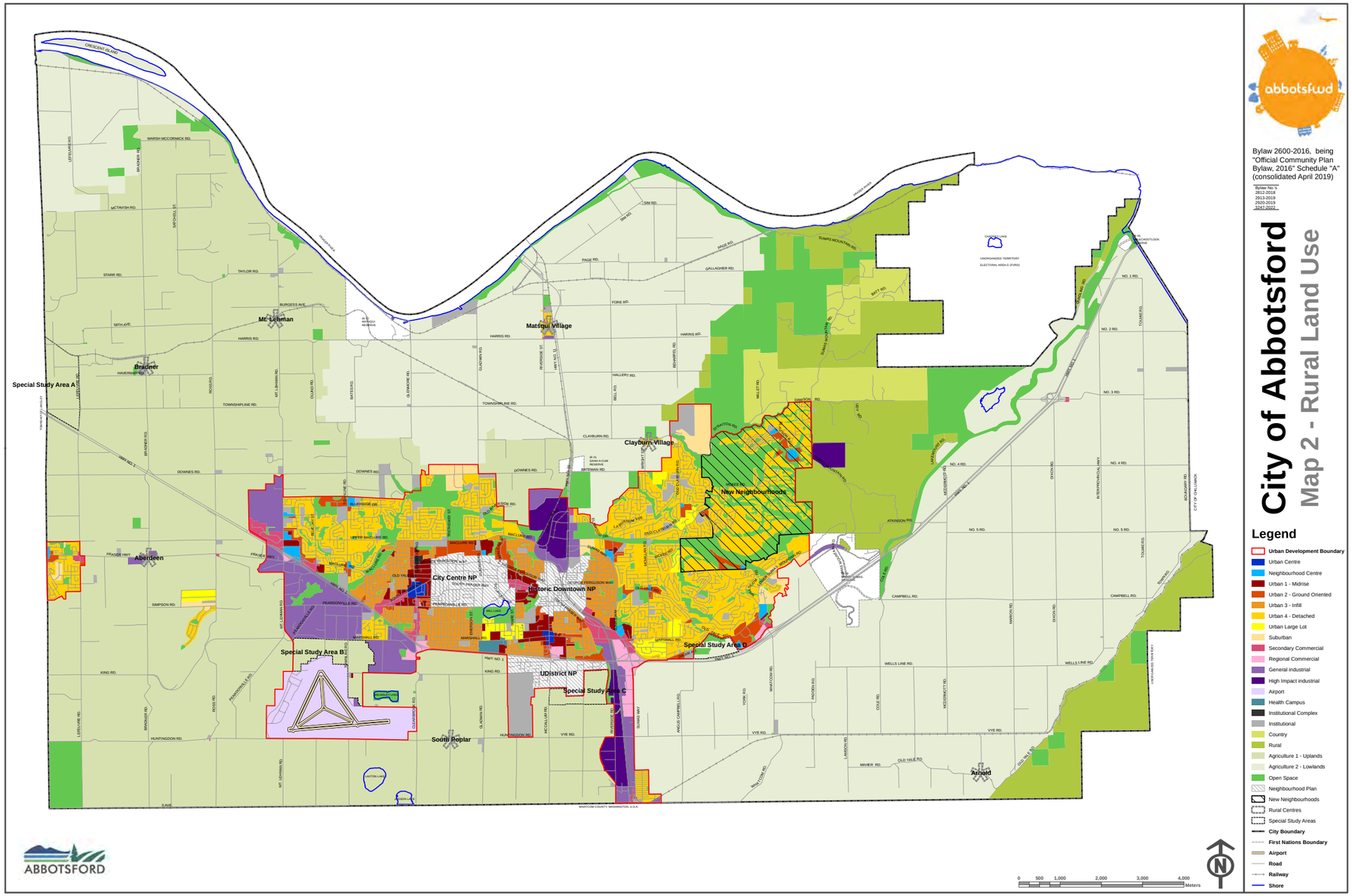
1. Existing OCP | Urban Land Use - OCP Map 1
2. Existing OCP | Rural Land Use - OCP Map 2
3. Existing OCP | City Centre Land Use Plan
4. Existing OCP | UDistrict Land Use Plan
5. Existing OCP | Historic Downtown Land Use Plan
6. Existing OCP | McKee Land Use Plan

Blank for double-sided printing

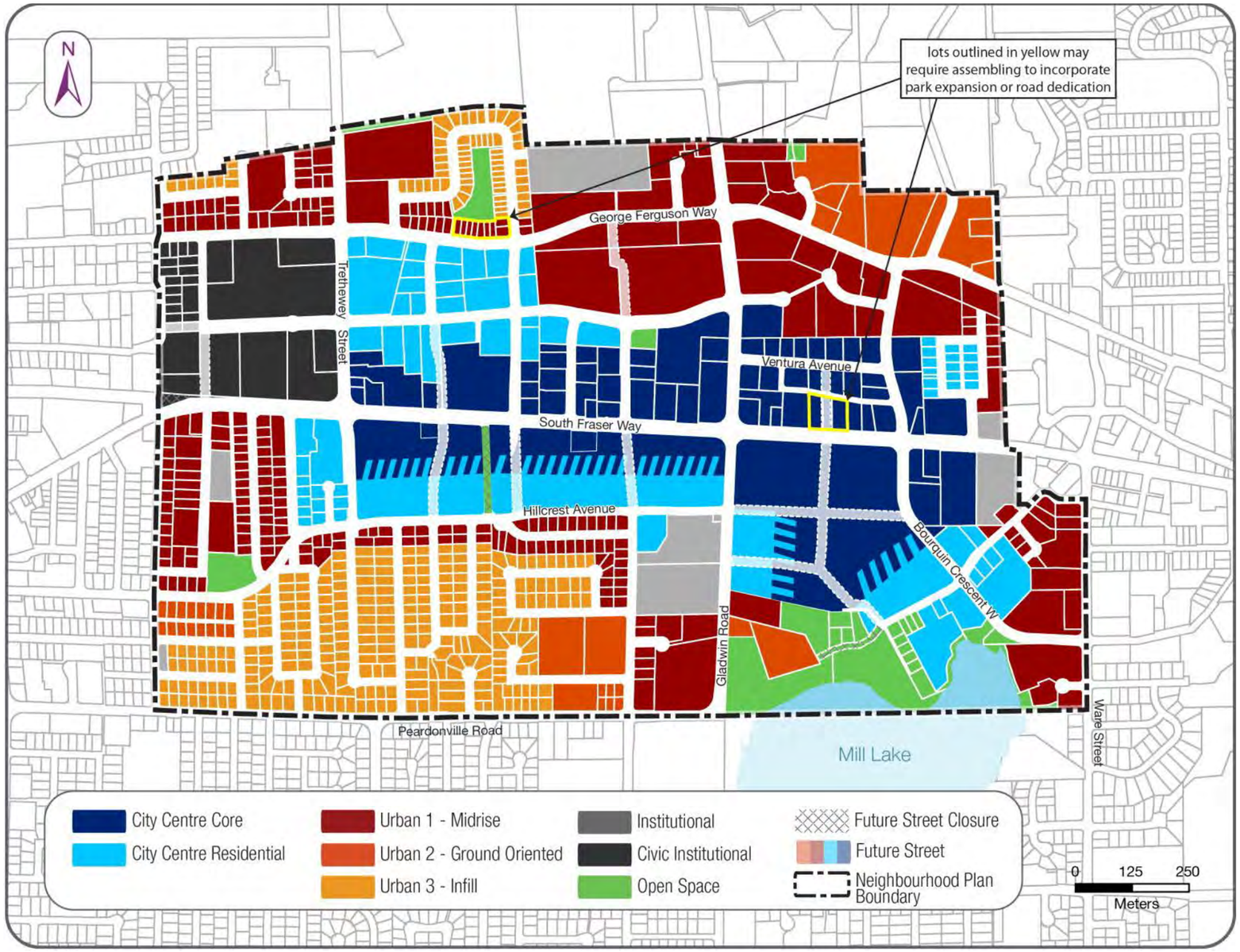
11.1 Existing OCP | Urban Land Use



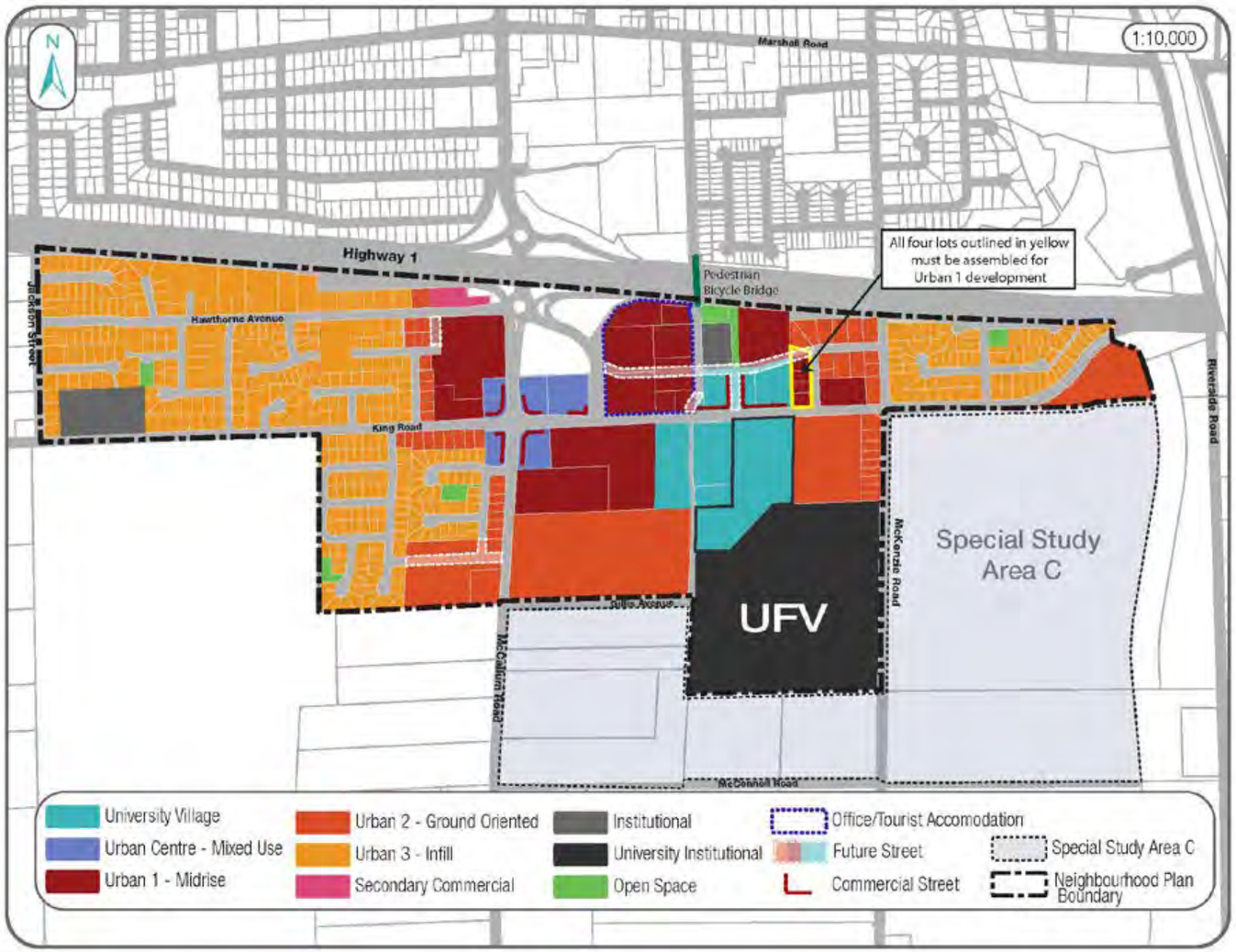
11.2 Existing OCP | Rural Land Use



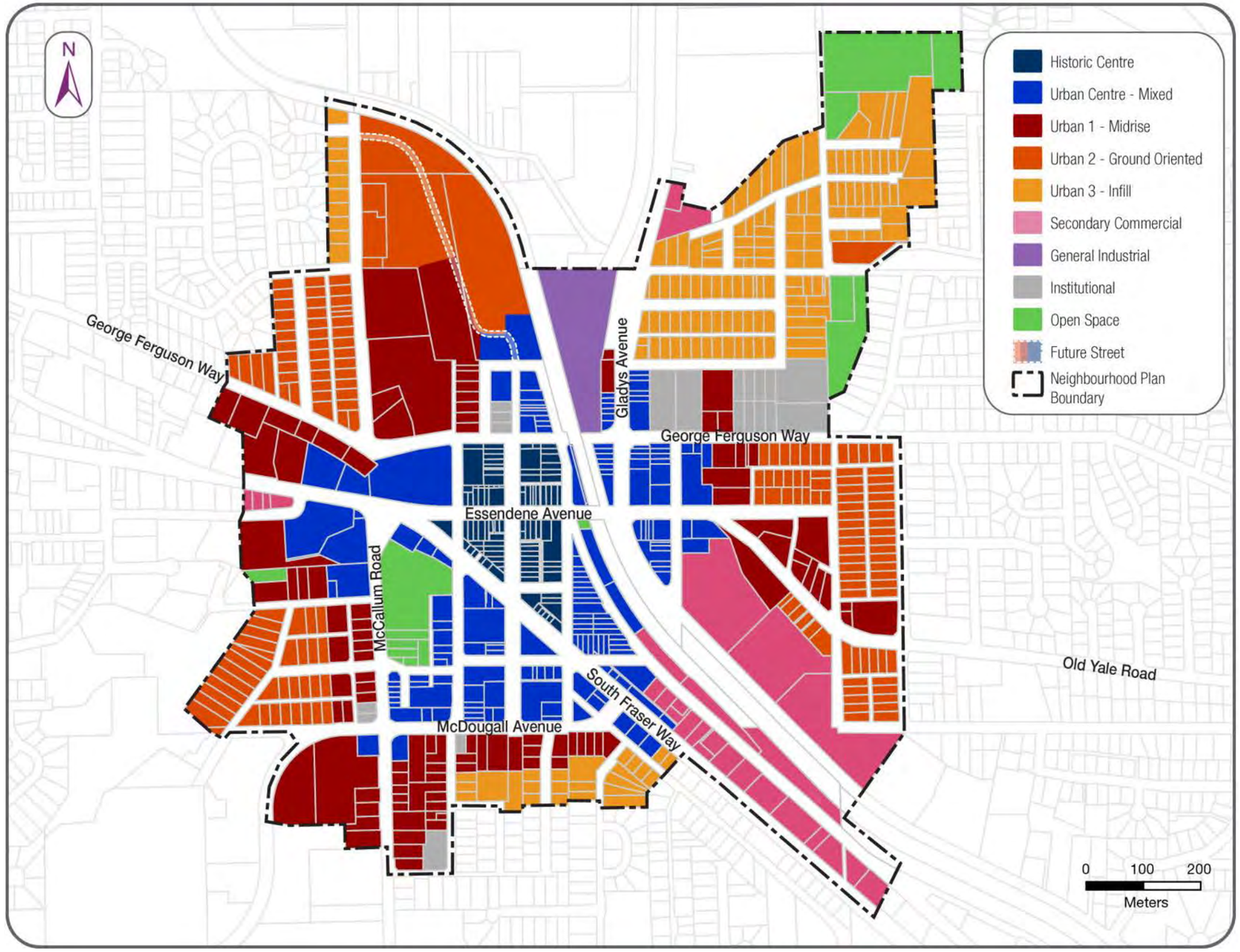
11.3 Existing OCP | City Centre Land Use Plan



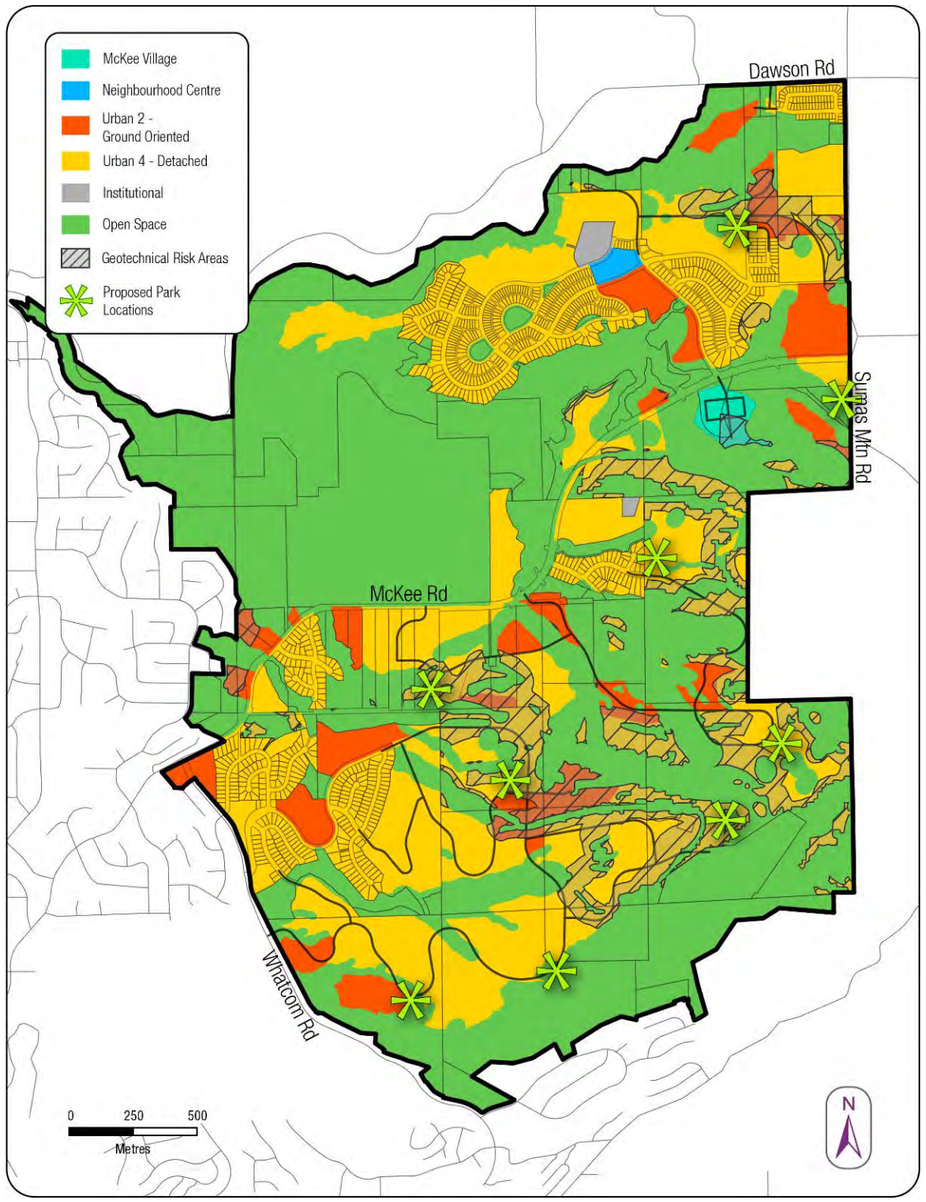
11.4 Existing OCP | UDistrict Land Use Plan



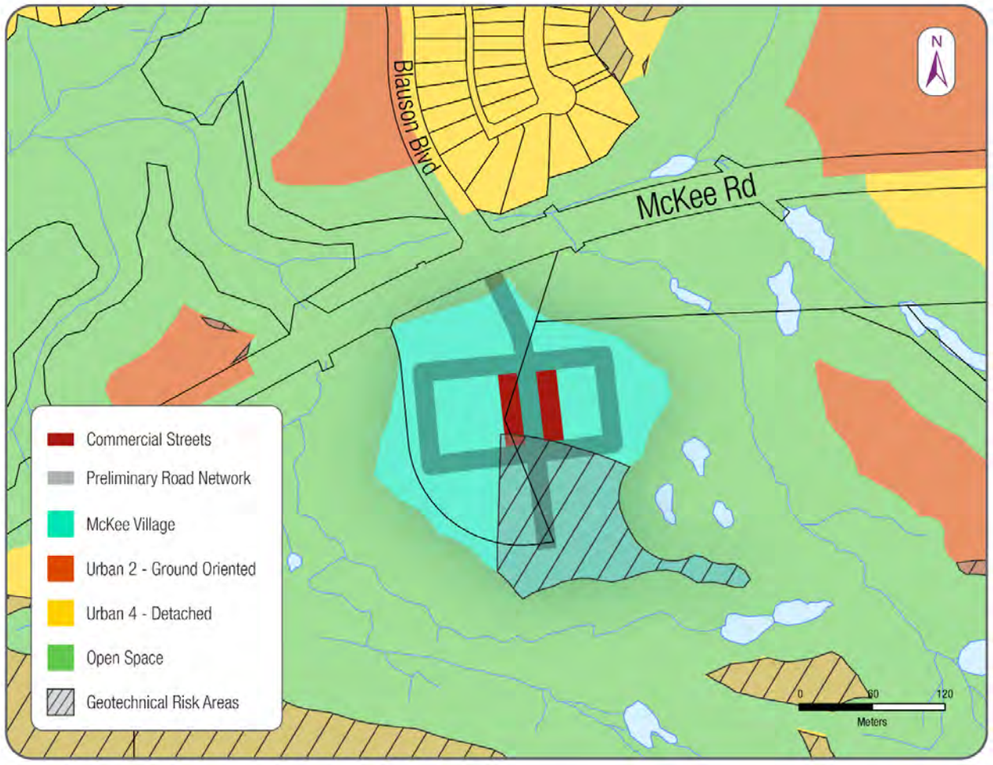
11.5 Existing OCP | Historic Downtown Land Use Plan



11.6 Existing OCP | McKee Land Use Plan



Map 3. Land Use Plan



Map 4. Commercial Streets

Blank for double-sided printing

abbotsfwd 2050

letstalkabbotsford.ca/OCP

ABBOTSFORD

abbotsfwd 2050

Official Community Plan Update | Stage 1

Regular Meeting of Council | January 30, 2024

Planning & Development Services

ABBOTSFORD

PURPOSE

- Present OCP Update Stage 1 Background Research Report
- Seek endorsement of project Work Plan & Engagement Strategy
- Request Council direction to move to Stage 2: New Directions

OUTLINE

1 Background

2 Process

3 Branding

4 Background Research Report

5 Next Steps

6 Recommendations

BACKGROUND



Why update the OCP?

- Rapidly growing city (+11.3% population 2016-2021)
- OCPs typically updated every 5-10 years (we're at 8)
- Council Strategic Plan priority
- Ensure alignment with Master Plans & Strategies
- Ensure OCP responds to current context and issues
- Build on the successes of existing plan
- Address policy gaps and/or short-comings
- Respond to recent Provincial legislation changes

BACKGROUND



Why update the OCP?

- Rapidly growing city (+11.3% population 2016-2021)
- Typically updated every 5-10 years (we're at 7)
- Council Strategic Plan priority
- Ensure alignment with Master Plans & Strategies
- Ensure OCP responds to current context and issues
- Build on the successes of existing plan
- Address policy gaps and/or short-comings
- Respond to recent Provincial legislation changes
  - » Small-Scale, Multi-Unit Housing (3-4 units per lot)
  - » Requirements for 'Transit Oriented Areas'
  - » Housing Needs Report every 5 years (determine 20 yr need)
  - » Align OCP & Zoning Bylaws, as needed

Short-Term Provincial Deadlines (Bill 44, 2023)

December 31
Interim Housing Needs Report

December 31
OCP & zoning updates must be complete

December 31
New Housing Needs Report

2024 | **2025** | **2028**

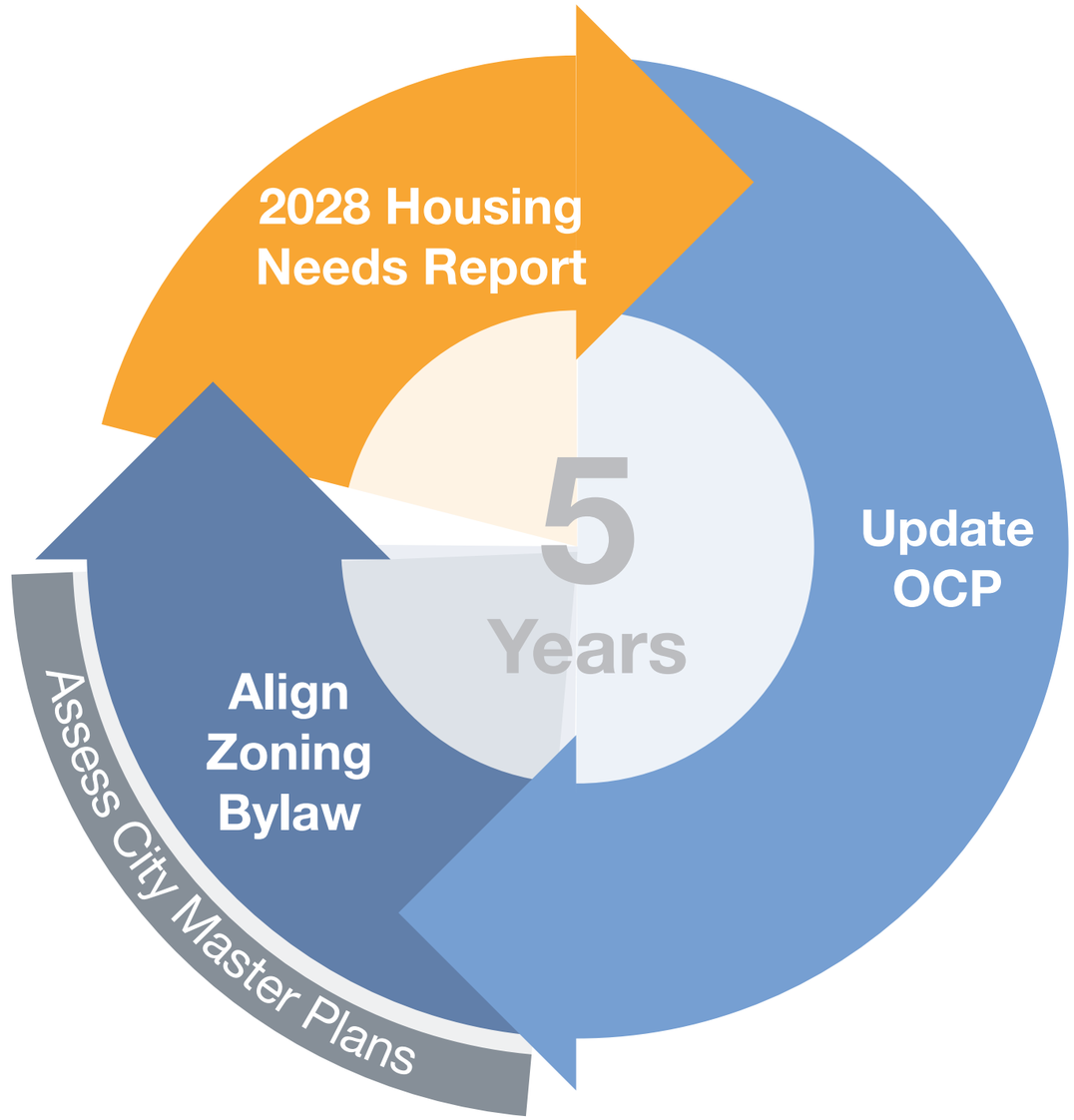


June 30

- City zoning must allow up to 4 units in single-detached areas
- City must designate ‘Transit Oriented Areas’



On-Going Provincial Requirements | Starting 2028



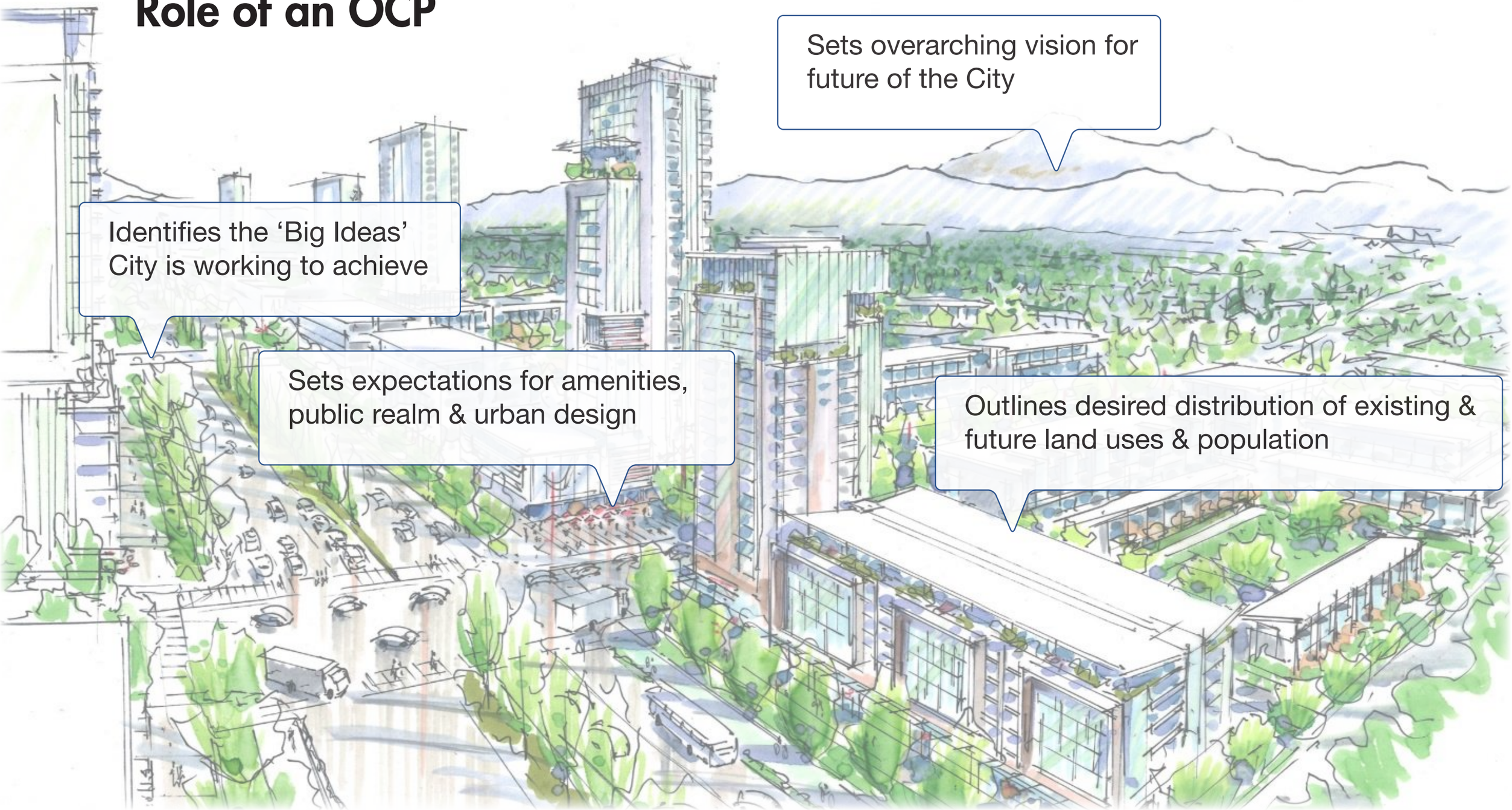
BACKGROUND



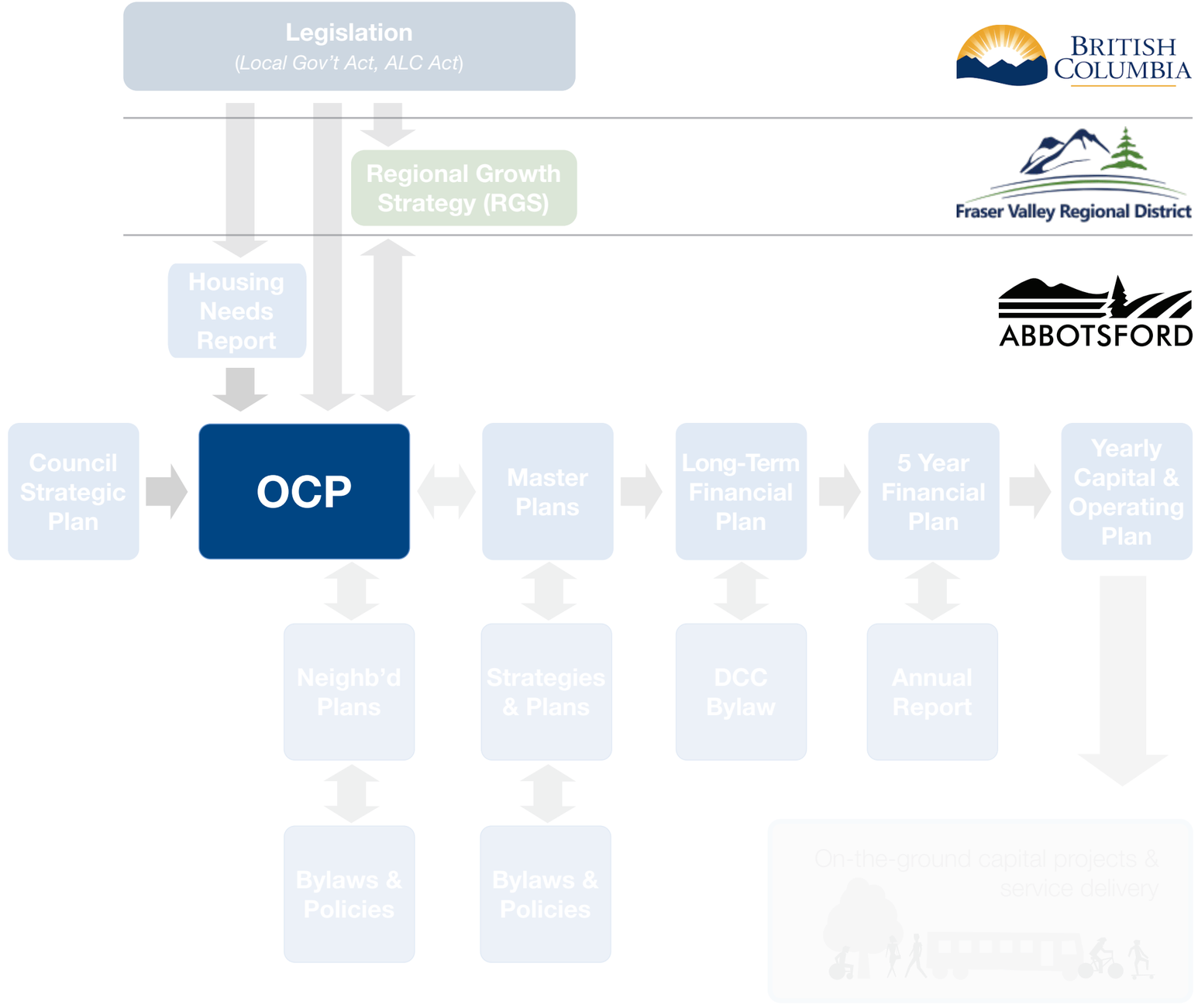
OCP Update Deliverables

- New and updated OCP policies
- Updated Development Permit Guidelines
- Updated OCP maps
- Zoning Bylaw recommendations/updates

Role of an OCP



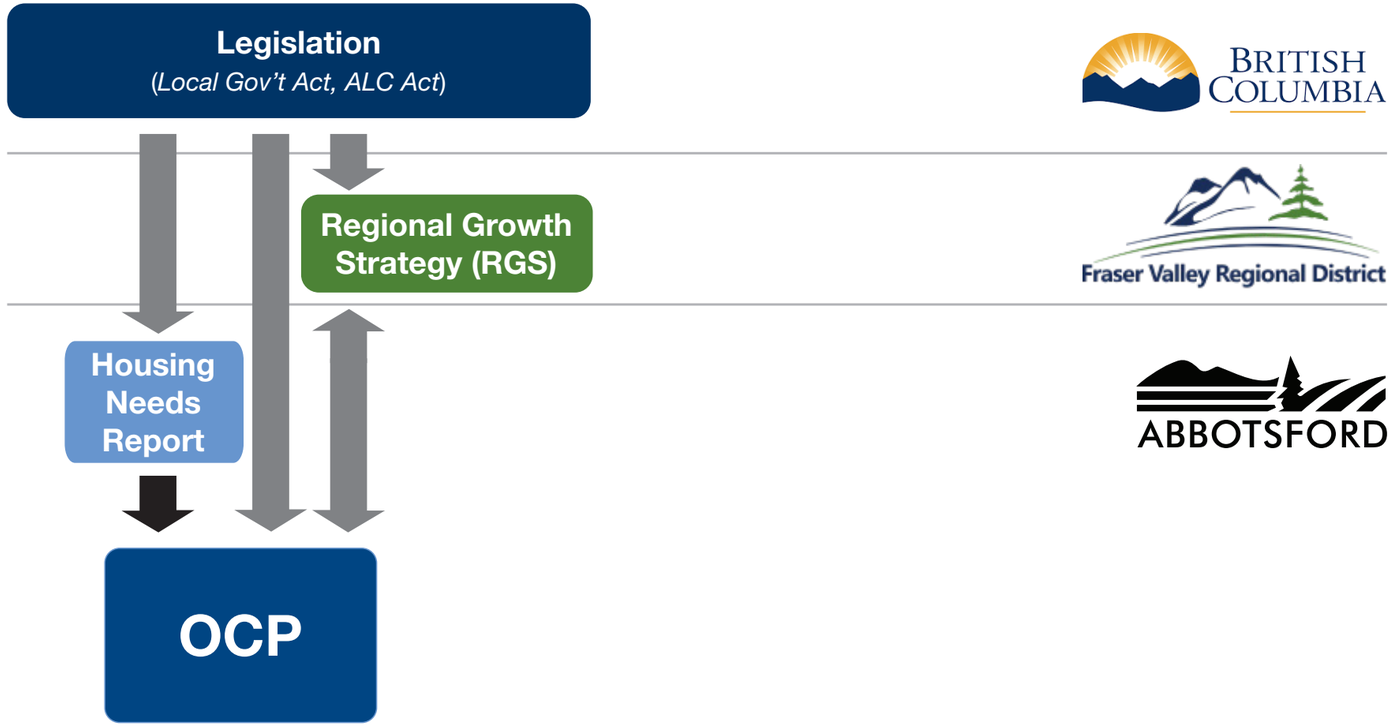
Relationship of OCP to Legislation and other Plans & Strategies



BACKGROUND

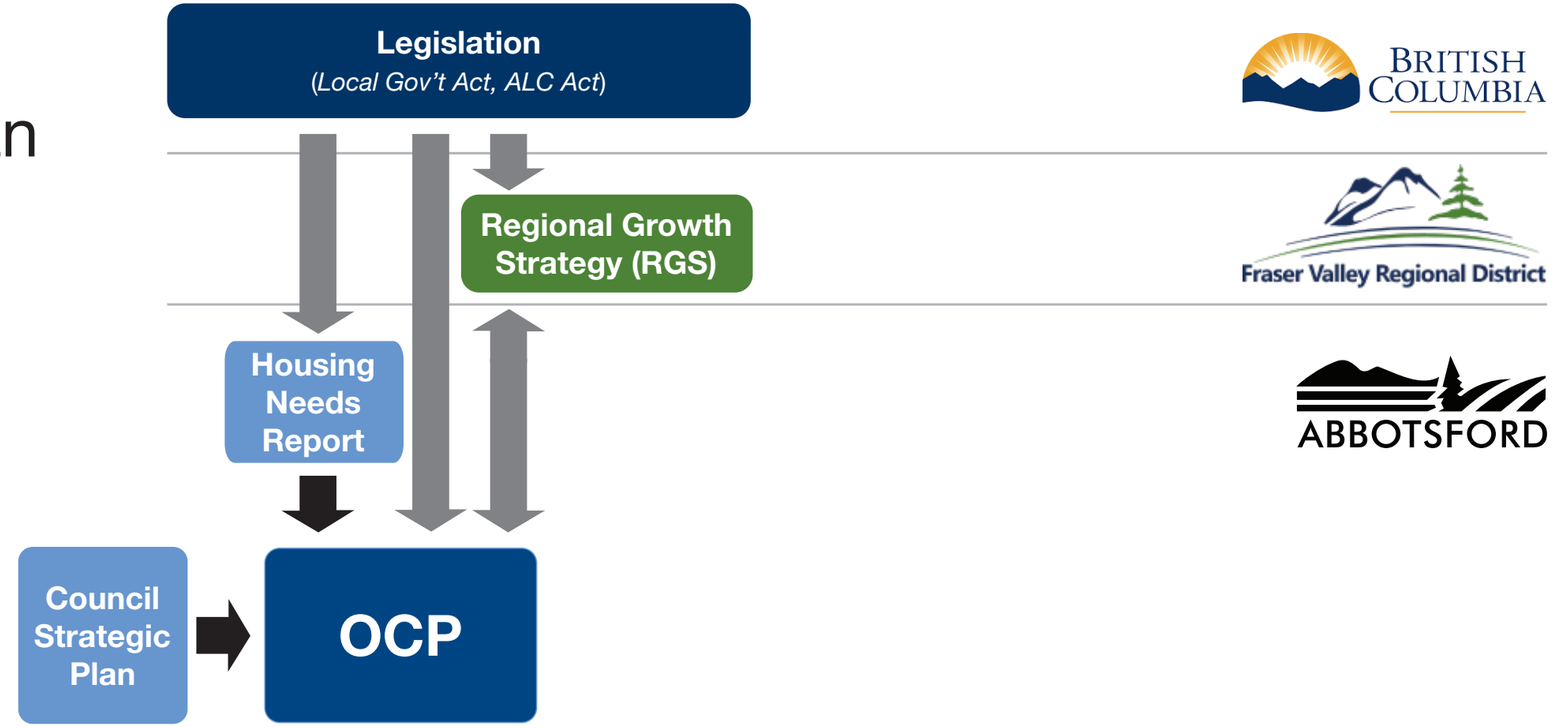
Legislation identifies:

- ‘Must’ & ‘may’ content
- OCP update timing (new)
- Information that must be considered (HNR)
- Coordination with RGS
- Required engagement



BACKGROUND

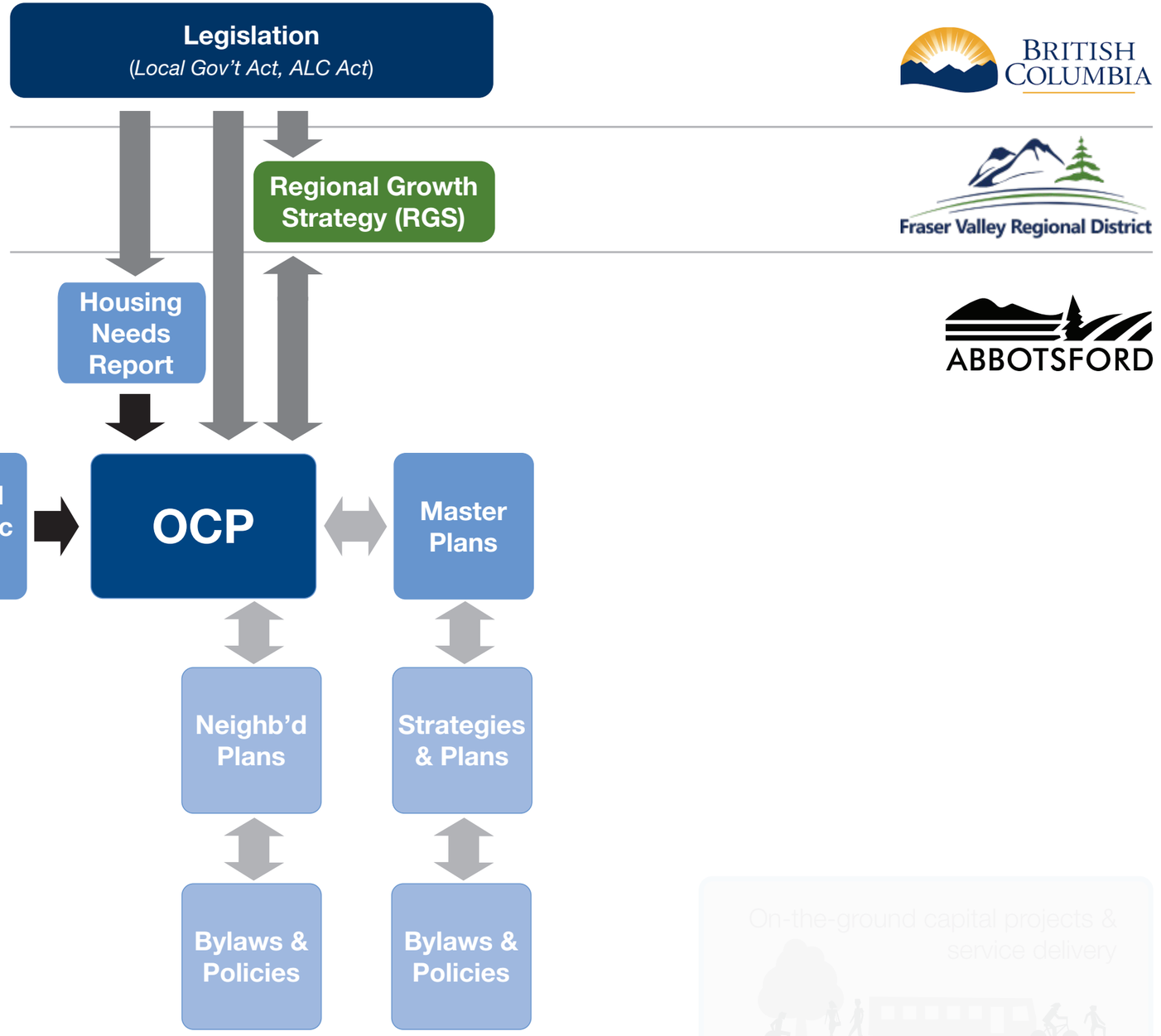
OCP is aligned with Council's Strategic Plan



BACKGROUND

OCP informs & informed by other City plans:

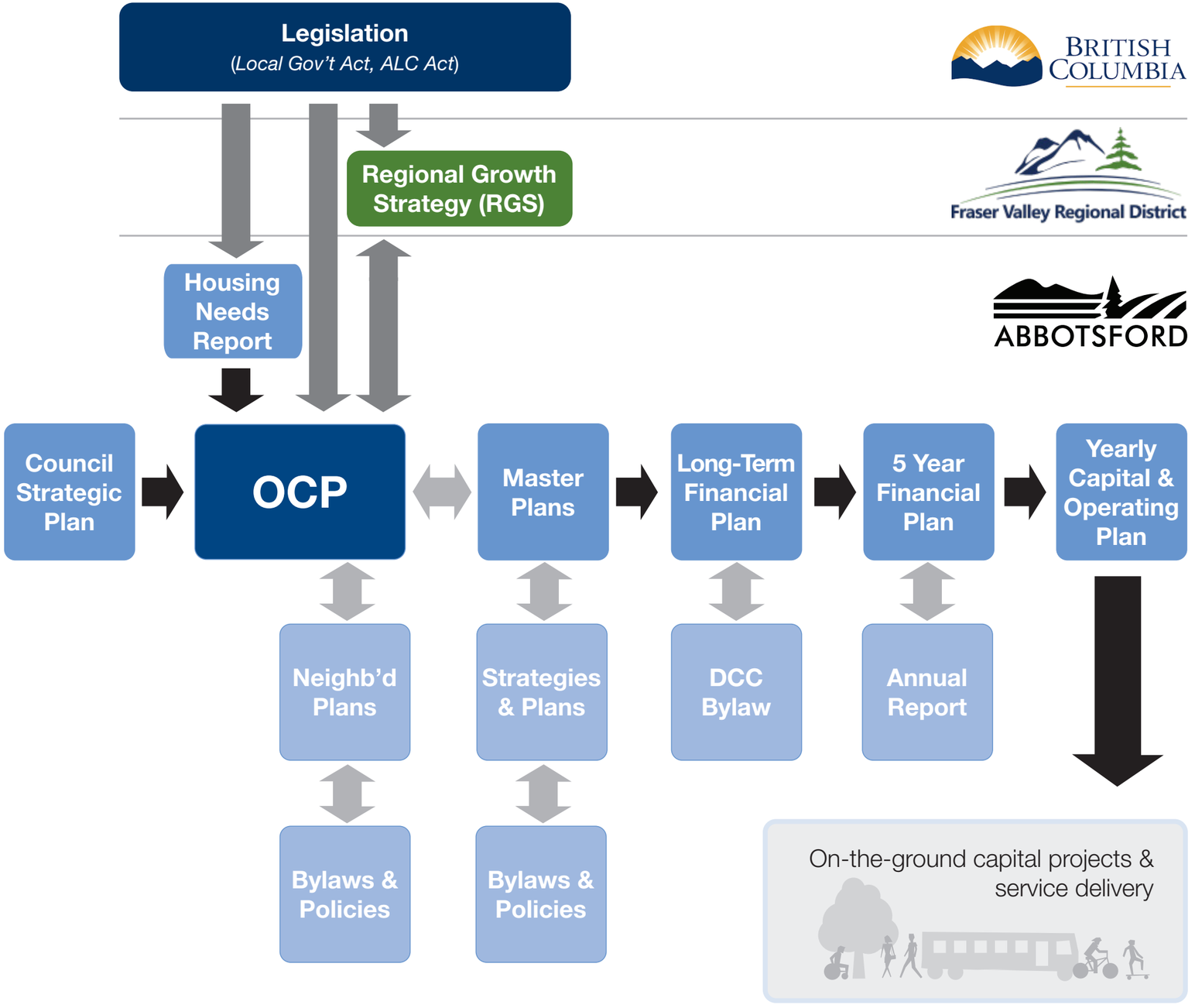
- Master Plans & Strategies implement (details) OCP ideas
- Master Plans & Strategies inform OCP updates



BACKGROUND

OCP vision & policy is implemented through:

- New development
- Financial planning, capital projects + service delivery



EXAMPLE

1 OCP

Policy 5.2 Urban Forest and Tree Canopy

Expand and strengthen a healthy and diverse tree canopy to improve air quality, carbon capture ...

- Establish a tree canopy coverage target



2 PRC Master Plan

Service Delivery

Take efforts to increase the extent, health and diversity of the tree canopy ...

Policies, Plans & Studies

- Prepare Urban Forest Management Strategy
- Update Tree Protection Bylaw

3 Urban Forest Strategy

- 40% canopy cover by 2045
- Develop City tree policy
- Develop biodiversity strategy
- Strengthen tree protection & replacement
- Others ...

4 Implementation

- Tree Protection Bylaw
- Development Bylaw
- Streamside Protection Bylaw
- Development Permit Areas
- Financial planning
- Capital projects/service delivery

PROCESS



OCP Update (18-24 months)

1 Background Research

2 Explore New Directions

3 Prepare New Policy

4 Adopt an Updated Plan



OCP Update

1 Background Research

2 Explore New Directions

3 Prepare New Policy

4 Adopt an Updated Plan

- Understand what's changed since 2016 OCP update (e.g. population, new plans, legislation)
- Evaluate progress under existing OCP
- Identify key challenges and early ideas for discussion

Stage 1: Background Research Report (today)



OCP Update

1 Background Research

2 Explore New Directions

3 Prepare New Policy

4 Adopt an Updated Plan

- Validate & understand key issues/opportunities
- Undertake engagement framed by research, legislation, early ideas
- Prepare high-level ‘New Directions’ to guide Stage 3 policy work

Stage 2: New Directions Report



OCP Update

1 Background Research

2 Explore New Directions

3 Prepare New Policy

4 Adopt an Updated Plan

- Prepare and test new policies based on New Directions
- Seek community input on draft OCP changes
- Refine OCP changes

Stage 3: Draft Policy Report



OCP Update

1 Background Research

2 Explore New Directions

3 Prepare New Policy

4 Adopt an Updated Plan

- Finalize OCP policies
- Prepare OCP bylaw for Council consideration

OCP Amendment Bylaw presented for Council consideration

ABBOTSFORD



Background

City hired marketing consultants in 2014 to prepare a brand strategy for the 2016 OCP Update

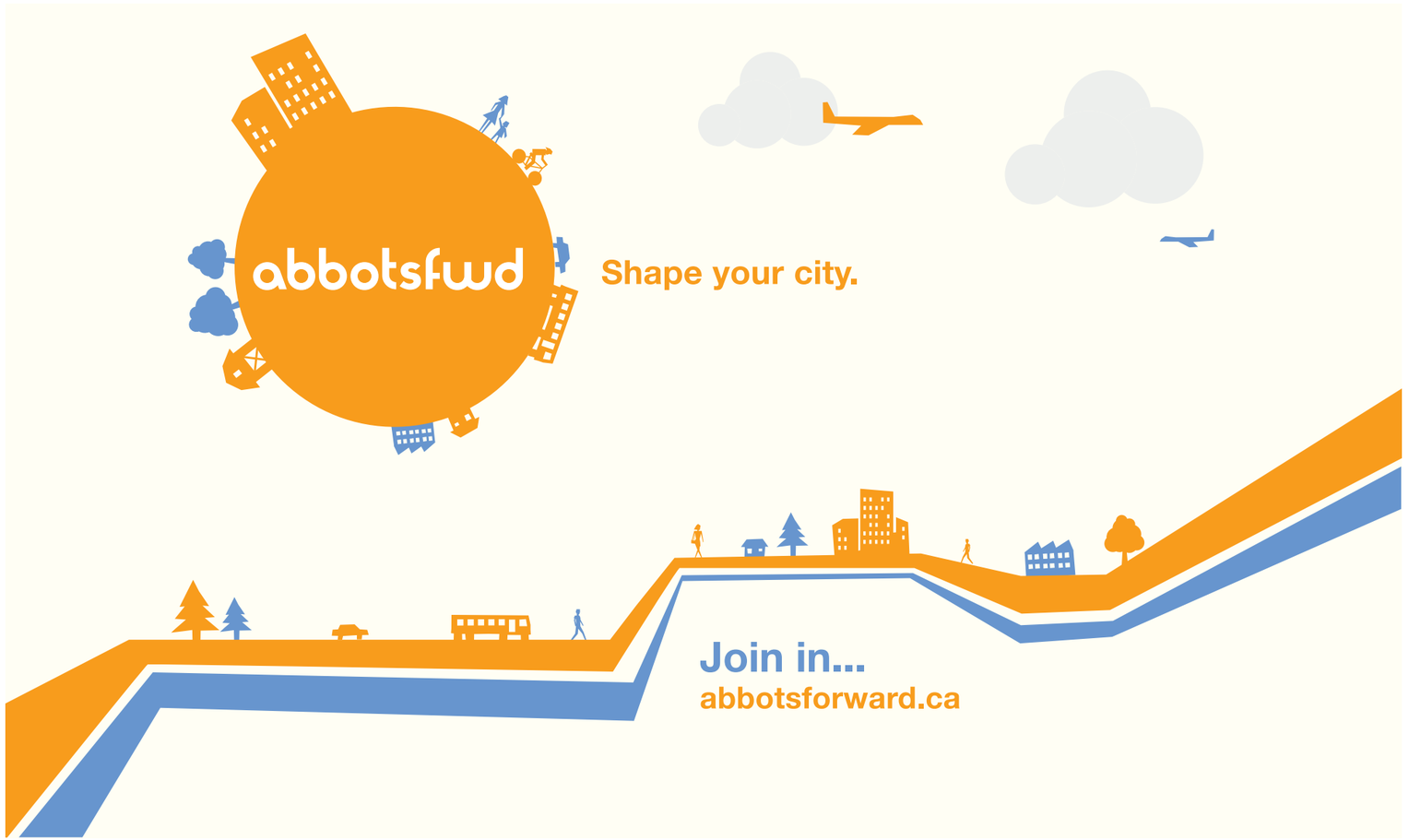
abbotsfwd

BRANDING



Background

- Established recognizable **abbotsfwd** project name, graphic elements, & “**Shape your city**” tagline
- Aimed to capture community aspirations for future



BRANDING



Background

- Established recognizable **abbotsfwd** project name, graphic elements, & “**Shape your city**” tagline
- Aimed to capture community aspirations for future





2023 OCP Update

- Opportunity to build on existing brand recognition
- 2016 Abbotsforward OCP marked significant turning point for City
- Intent: signal that update builds on existing plan, but is substantive



2023 OCP Update

abbotsfwd 2050

- 25 years is a common OCP growth horizon
- 2025 project completion + 25 years = 2050
- Aligns with **Fraser Valley Future 2050 | RGS**

abbotsfwd 2050

STAGE 1 BACKGROUND RESEARCH REPORT

ABBOTSFORD

Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps



Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps

1.1 What is an Official Community Plan

The OCP is Abbotsford's roadmap for the future. It provides comprehensive and coordinated guidance on how neighbourhoods and employment areas will grow and change within the City.

More specifically, an OCP sets the strategic vision for the community, addressing land use, housing, transportation, economic growth, and environmental preservation. The OCP serves as a framework for making decisions about zoning, development permits, and infrastructure investments.

The process to update an OCP involves public input to ensure the community's aspirations and needs are considered. By clearly outlining goals ('Big Ideas'), the location of land uses, policies, and guidelines, the OCP aims to create a vibrant, sustainable, and cohesive community, aligning development with the values and preferences of its residents, while adhering to regulatory frameworks.

Legislated Requirements

Local governments in British Columbia are granted the authority to adopt an OCP under the *Local Government Act* (LGA), which stipulates what must or may be included the Plan.

Provincial legislation also sets out OCP consultation requirements and Council OCP bylaw adoption procedures. Most recently, the Province enacted the *Housing Supply Act* (Bill 43, 2022) and several housing-related changes to the *Local Government Act* (Bills 44, 46, 47, 2023), which are expected to have a notable influence on this OCP update process.

This report outlines a work plan and engagement strategy aligned with legislation.

1.2 Why update the OCP?

With the 2023 global population surpassing 8 billion and pushing Canada over 40 million, growth pressures and related impacts are evident throughout the country. Within this context, Abbotsford is a high-growth municipality that experienced an 11.3% population increase between 2016 and 2021 (according to 2023 Statistics Canada Population Estimates), exceeding the growth rate of the Lower Mainland and the province overall.

Abbotsford's growth and evolution brings many exciting positive changes, new opportunities, and a stronger local economy, but there are also broader-reaching challenges that need to be considered as Abbotsford matures into a larger city. Issues related to housing supply, affordability, and climate change have become more visible and acute since the last OCP update (2016), impacting local residents and the Canadian population as a whole.

This OCP update process was identified as a priority in Council's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, providing an opportunity to build on the successes of existing OCP policy, while ensuring land use policies respond to changing needs and pressures, both today and into the future.

1.3 Planning Process

The OCP update will be completed through the following four stage process over a period of approximately 18-24 months:



FIG. 1 ABBOTSFORWARD 2050 PLANNING PROCESS



abbotsfwd 2050

Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

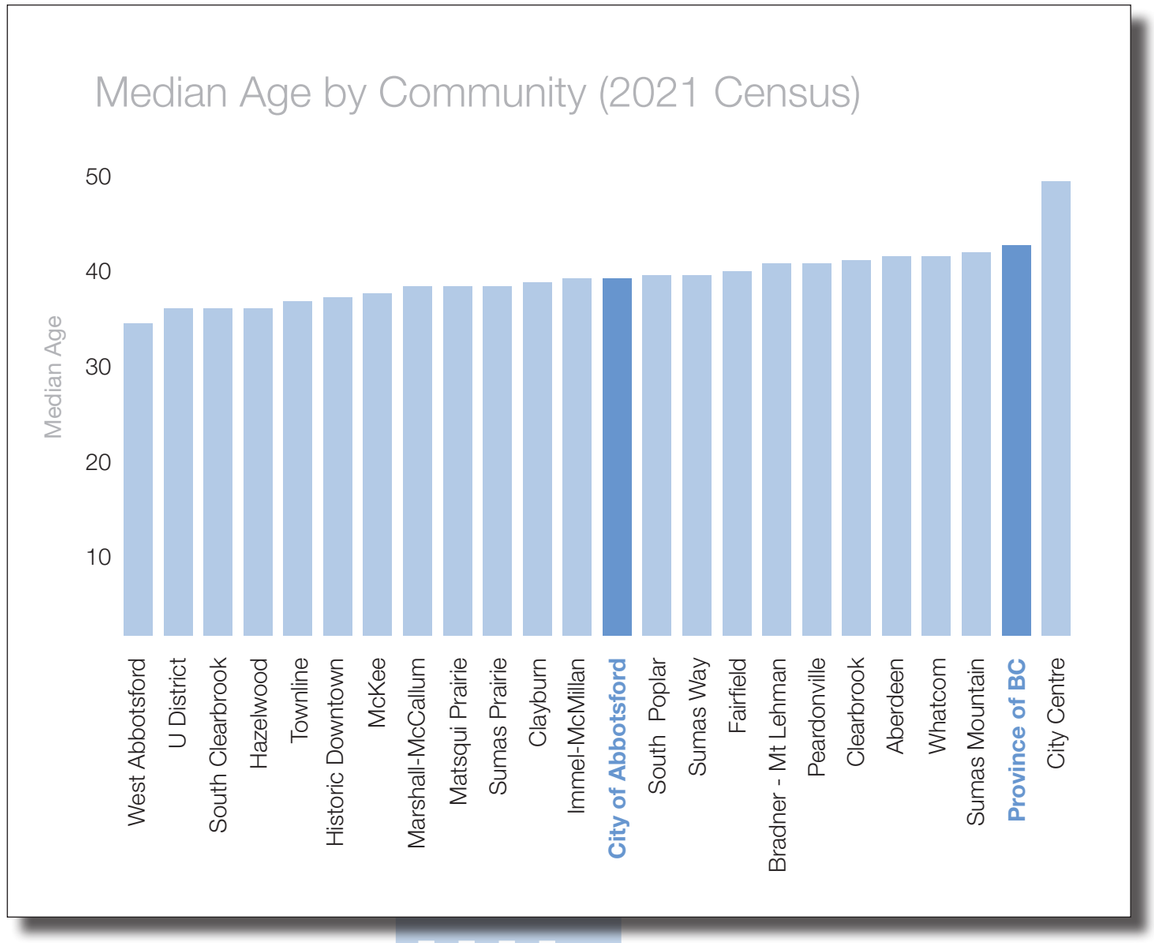
5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps



Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

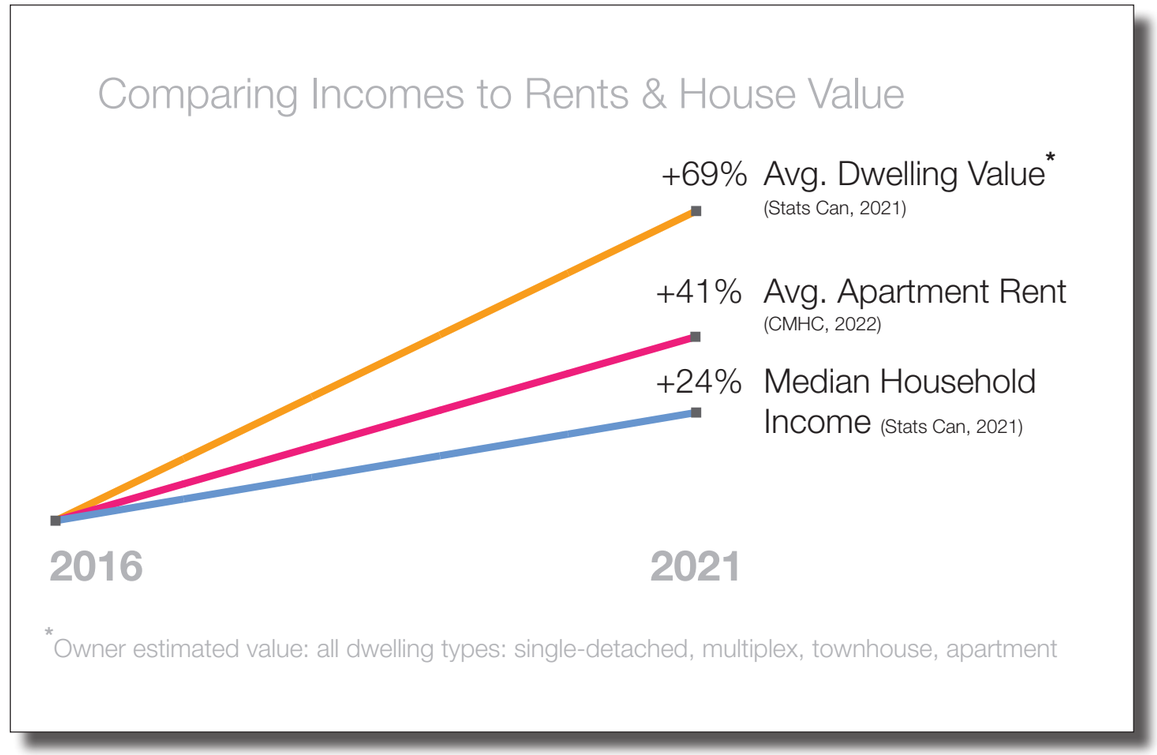
5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps





Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

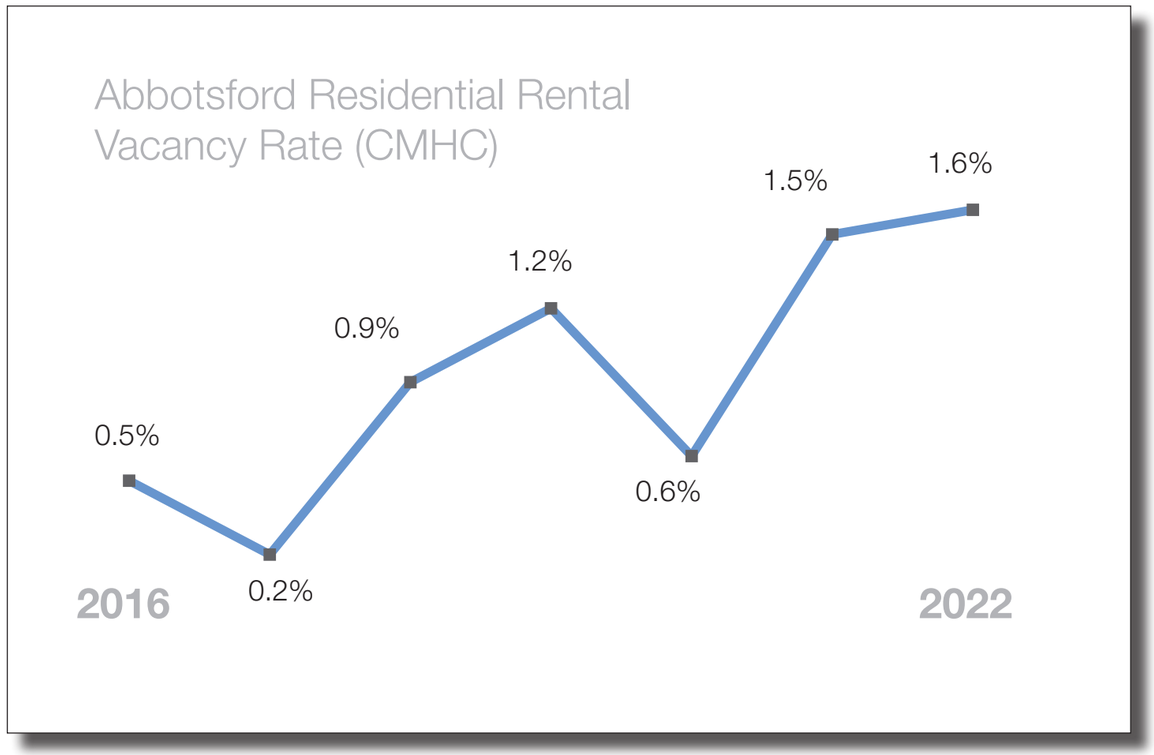
5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps





Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

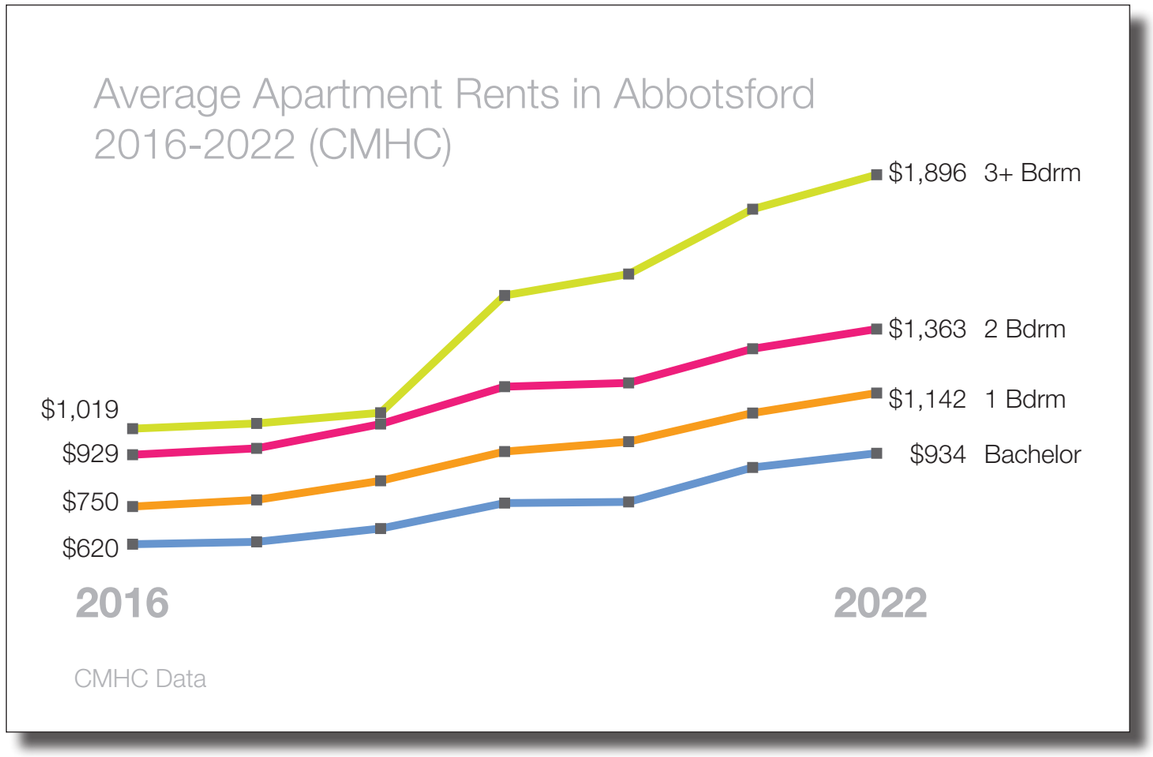
5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps





Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps

3.3 **Big Idea** | Establish Distinct + Complete Communities

The 2016 OCP prioritizes complete communities where residents can work, play, and access daily needs all within close to proximity to home. To support this vision, the OCP identifies the following 'Big Picture' objectives:

- Housing Options
- More People to Support Neighbourhood Retail
- Neighbourhood Main Streets



Cinema District, townhouse and apartment project in the UDistrict Neighbourhood

How are we doing?

Big Picture | Housing Options

The City approved over 3,700 residential units between 2016 and July 2022. Of these, 65% are apartments, 25% are townhouses, and 10% are single detached dwellings.

Abbotsford's housing stock is getting progressively more diverse. Since 2011, the proportion of detached dwellings in the city has decreased from 44% to 37% while attached housing and apartment units have increased (Figure 28).

FIG. 27 CITY-WIDE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT APPROVALS 2016-2022

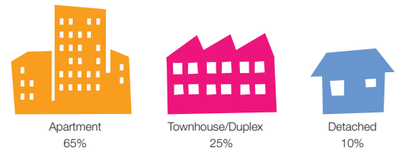
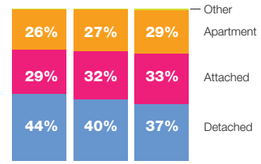


FIG. 28 HOUSING STOCK 2011-2021 CENSUS





Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

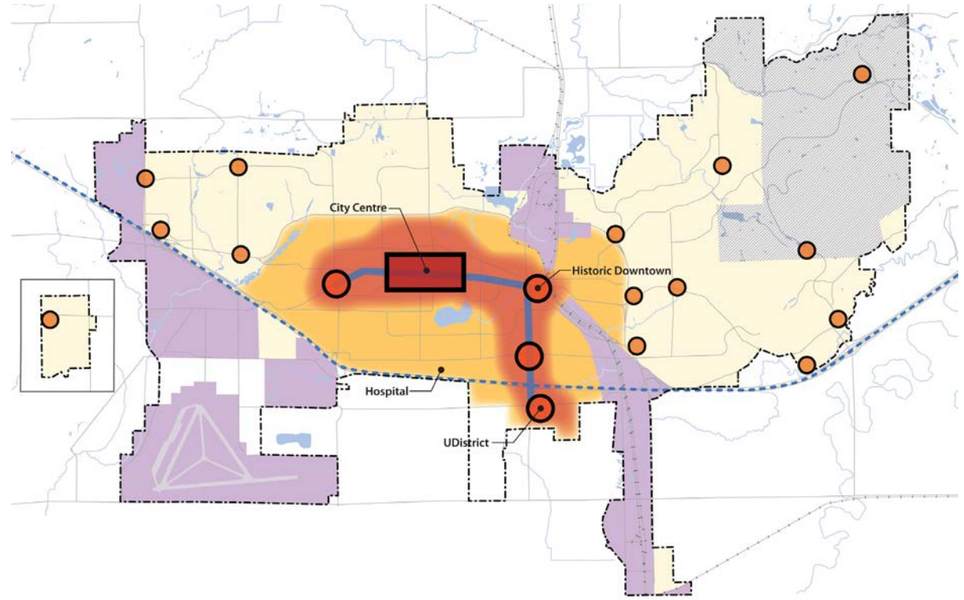
6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps

Urban Structure | Where is growth going? (2016-2021)



Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

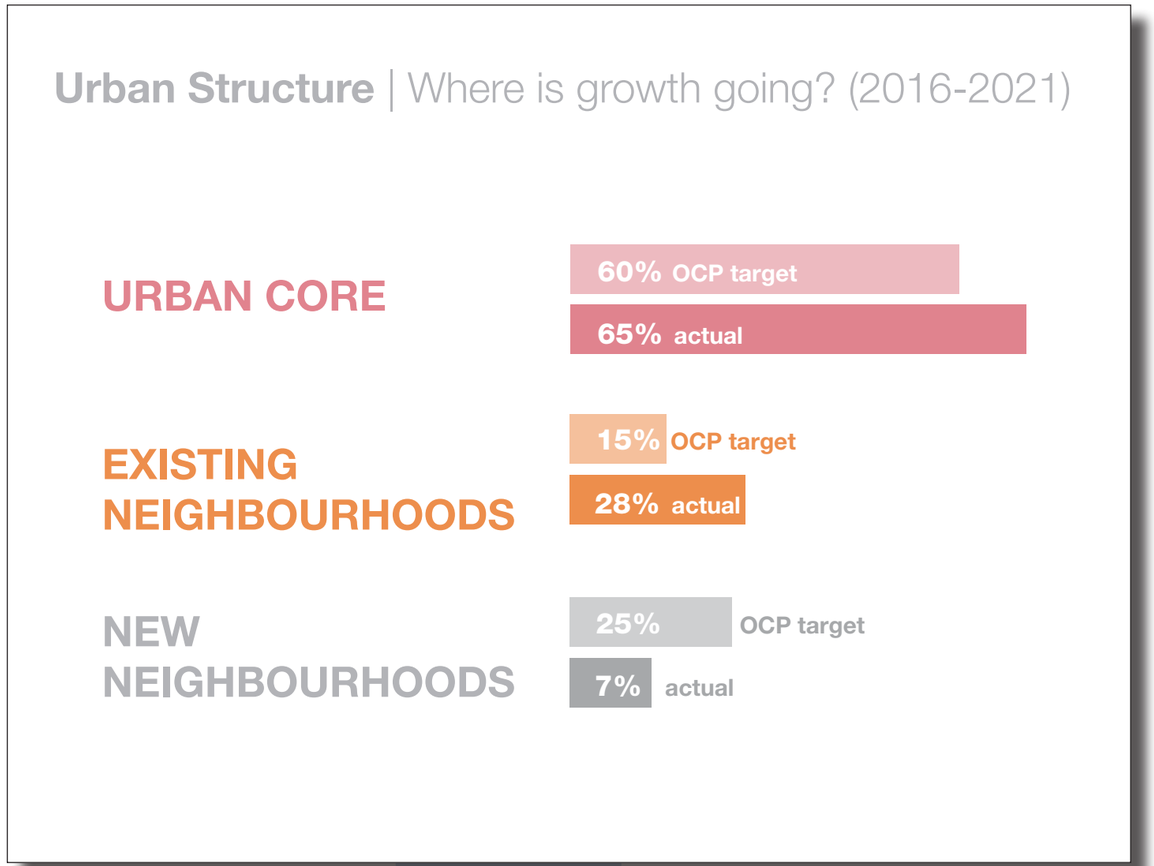
5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps





Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps

What was approved 2016 to 2021? (citywide)



Apartment	Townhouse/Duplex	Detached
65%	25%	10%



Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

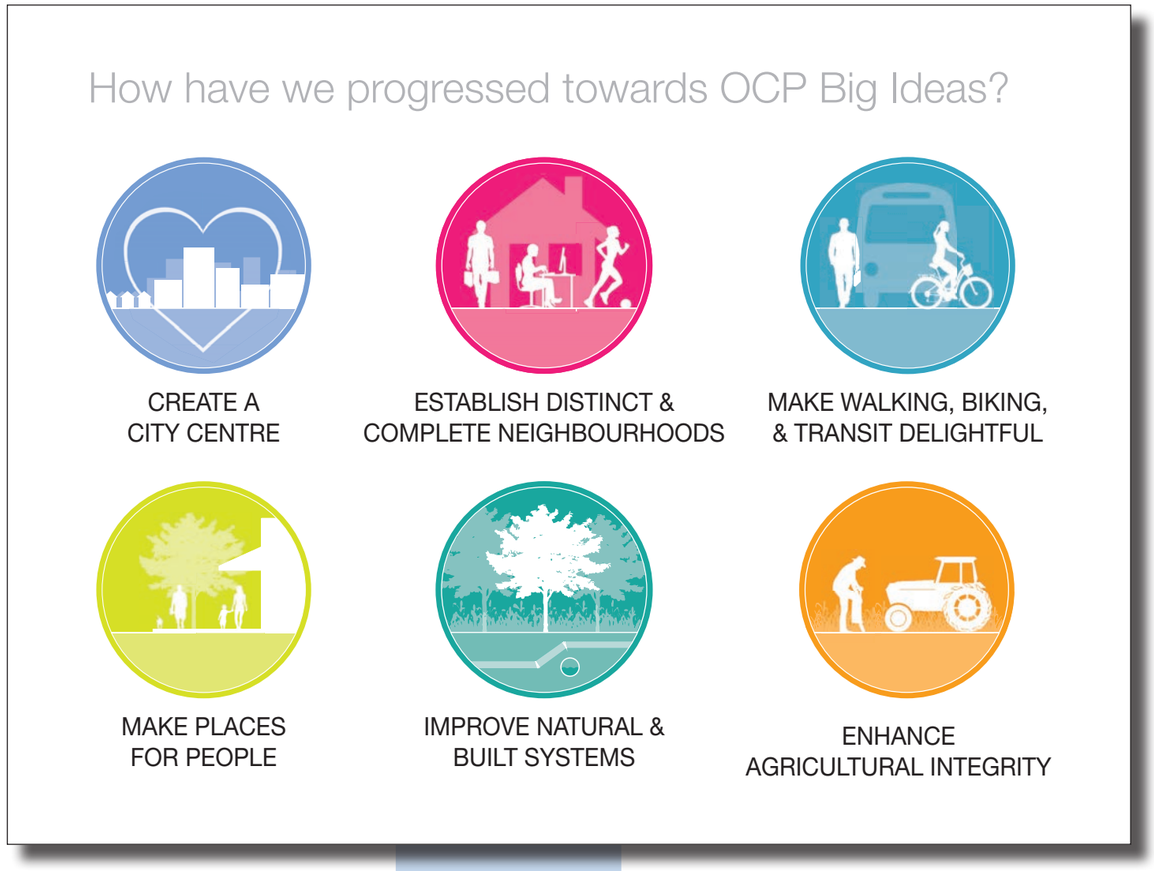
5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps



Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps

4.2 Water, Sanitary Sewer, Stormwater, & Waste

Sanitary Sewer

The City's sanitary sewer system includes two components: wastewater collection and treatment.

Wastewater from urban residences and businesses is collected by a series of pipes and pump stations and conveyed to the Joint Abbotsford Mission Environmental System (JAMES) Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) before being discharged into the Fraser River. The treatment process ensures the protection of public health, and marine and aquatic life.

Wastewater Collection System

The wastewater collection system (34 pump stations and ~575 km of sewer mains) serves Abbotsford and Sumas, Washington. In 2017, following adoption of the OCP, the City completed a Wastewater Collection Master Plan. The Plan analyzed the impact of the OCP on the collection system and identified the improvements necessary to support the envisioned population of 200,000 by 2041, in addition to new industrial, commercial and institutional growth.

The Master Plan identifies long term capital costs, timing and investment priorities, providing guidance to optimize and upgrade the sewer system in consideration of risks, resiliency and climate change impacts (e.g. severe storms). The plan projects $38 million in infrastructure upgrades by 2041, and $28 million for system maintenance, renewal and improvements.

Since adoption of the 2017 Master Plan, the City has completed several capacity building and renewal projects to keep pace with growth (e.g. new Gladwin and Downes Road siphon chamber, Queen Street Pump Replacement).

Wastewater Treatment Plant

The JAMES Plant treats wastewater collected in the urban areas of Abbotsford, Mission and Sumas, WA. Originally constructed in 1981, growth has driven several facility expansions over the years. Future expansion to the east and west of the existing site is proposed in response to building code and seismic requirements, and to prepare for climate change.

The Joint Wastewater Master Plan was adopted in 2018 and estimates capital expenditures of ~$260 M by 2041. Of this total, $88 M is expected to go towards flood-proofing and ground improvement, with $124 M estimated for expanded treatment capacity. Importantly, the City is not expected to be the sole funding source for future improvements. Grants from higher level of governments will be pursued to facilitate major projects within the Capital Program.



Wastewater collection improvements



James Wastewater Treatment Plant (Abbotsford-Mission Joint Wastewater Master Plan 2018)



Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps

5.1 Local Indigenous Peoples & Communities

The following sections borrow from the "Fraser Valley Future 2050" draft Regional Growth Strategy, recognizing the broad engagement associated with the draft content.

The Past

For approximately 10,000 years, the Fraser Valley has been home to Indigenous Peoples[3]; these communities have called this land, S'ólh Téméxw ("Our Land") in Halq'emeylem, since time immemorial. During the 17th century, the Indigenous population in the Fraser Valley numbered in the tens of thousands.[4] The intricate network of rivers, lakes, and mountains in the area held immense significance, serving as a vital means of communication and transportation that connected communities spanning from the Pacific Ocean to the heart of British Columbia. Even in present day, the Fraser River continues to hold great importance in Indigenous culture, acting as a profound link to the spiritual realm and a space for upholding cultural customs.

As European settlers arrived in the late 18th century, they brought with them smallpox, exposing Indigenous Peoples to a devastating epidemic. Historians estimate that nearly two-thirds of the Indigenous population in the Fraser Valley perished within just six weeks due to this outbreak.[5]

In years that followed, governmental policies and initiatives at both the federal and provincial levels led to the further disintegration of Indigenous communities through measures like the *Indian Act*.[6] This notably involved the establishment of bands, the assignment of reserves, and the implementation of the residential school system. The repercussions of these actions continue to reverberate to this day.

Governance

The present-day City of Abbotsford is located within the traditional territories of the Stó:lō Peoples & Stó:lō Nation, Semá:th (Sumas) First Nation, Mathxwí (Matsqui) First Nation, and Leq'a:mel First Nation. A number of these communities operate independently, while most manage services and programs through regional tribal councils and other types of self-defined organizational structures and authorities. Semá:th First Nation, Mathxwí First Nation, and Leq'a:mel First Nation each hold Federal Indian Reserve lands in Abbotsford (See Map 16).

Semá:th (Sumas) First Nation

Mathxwí (Matsqui) First Nation

Leq'a:mel First Nation

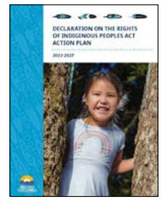
Stó:lō Nation

UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was adopted by the General Assembly on September 13, 2007. The UNDRIP is a comprehensive global agreement regarding the fundamental human rights of Indigenous Peoples universally. It outlines an extensive array of both collective and individual rights that establish the essential benchmarks for safeguarding Indigenous Peoples' rights and enhancing their sustenance, honour, and welfare. Additionally, it underscores the principle that Indigenous Peoples are free from all forms of discrimination and acknowledges the pressing requirement to uphold and advance the inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples.

On June 21, 2021, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* became law in Canada, demonstrating Canada's commitment to the declaration, and establishing a framework to advance federal implementation of its intent.

Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act



The *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (DRIPA) was passed into law by the Provincial government in November of 2019. The Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) establishes the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) as the Province's framework for reconciliation, as called for by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

This Provincial Declaration aims to create a path forward that respects the human rights of Indigenous Peoples, while introducing better transparency and predictability when working with First Nations.

DRIPA includes the following key provisions:

- **S.3** Mandates government to bring provincial laws into alignment with UN Declaration
- **S.4** Requires Province to develop and implement an action plan, in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples, to meet the objectives of the UN Declaration
- **S.5** Requires regular reporting to legislature on progress of alignment of laws
- **S.6/7** Provides flexibility for Province to enter into agreements with a broader range of Indigenous governments and to exercise statutory decision-making authority together



Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps

6.1 Housing

Housing Pressures

The nation is experiencing significant housing pressures, and has been for quite some time. Unfortunately, the end does not appear to be in sight just yet. As Abbotsford continues to grow rapidly, the residents and the region as a whole are likely to continue to feel the impacts of diminishing housing affordability. There is an extreme demand for housing of all types, and very limited supply, creating an unattainable housing reality for many.

Similar to the rest of Canada, incomes are not keeping pace with the average costs associated with owning or renting a home in Abbotsford. As noted in section 2.2, increases in average rent costs (+41%) and average dwelling values (+69%) far out-paced median household income (+24%) between 2016 and 2021.



Rail District Townhomes, Abbotsford

These disproportionate cost-to-income increases, among other factors, have continued to exacerbate an already prevalent problem. Abbotsford's Housing Needs Report identified the two largest hurdles for owning a home as: (1) the ability to secure a down payment, and (2) finding suitable housing within an affordable price range.

Predictably, one-income households, such as lone-parents or seniors living alone, struggle the most.

Today, low to middle-income Abbotsford households cannot afford to purchase a single-detached home, and rely heavily on the rental market or purchasing homes that may not suit their needs. Rental vacancy rates reflect this dependency, as Canada has been operating at historically low rates for years. The vacancy rate for Canada was 1.9% in 2022[7], and Abbotsford's was 1.6%[8].

Abbotsford's vacancy rate reached its lowest point ever in 2017 at 0.2%[9], and has been growing steadily since. A vacancy rate of 3% is considered an indicator of a healthy rental market.

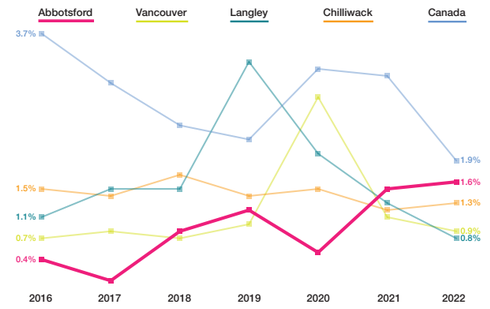


FIG. 32 RENTAL VACANCY RATES COMPARISON [APARTMENTS] (SOURCE: CMHC)

The lack of housing affordability and availability – a problem decades in the making, is a central topic of public discourse and a key priority for many policy makers. An 'all-hands-on-deck' approach from all levels of government' is crucial moving forward, and the City of Abbotsford has an important role to play in supporting the housing needs of residents on the path forward.



Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps

Provincial Action on Housing | Recent Legislation Changes

Small-Scale, Multi-Unit Housing (SSMUH) Site Standards

Policy Manual

While local governments retain discretion over zoning regulations for SSMUH, they are expected to fully consider the Policy Manual & Site Standards when doing so.

The site standards recommend the following zoning provisions for SSMUH:

Building height (max)	11.0 m
Front Lot Line Setback (min)	2.0 m
Side Lot Line Setback (min)	1.2 m
Rear Lot Line Setback (min)	1.5 m
Lot coverage (max)	50%
On-Site Parking (max requirement)	1 stall per unit

Minimum Development Opportunities in Transit Oriented Areas

LGA & Regulation

- The City must pass a bylaw designating lands within 400 m of a prescribed transit station as 'Transit Oriented Areas'.
- Through the Local Government Transit-Oriented Areas Regulation released on December 7, 2023, the Province prescribed the Bourquin Crescent Bus Exchange as a transit station.
- Within a TOA, the City must not prohibit the following development minimums:
  - » if 200m or less from a bus exchange, at least 10 storeys and building floor area equal to 3.5 times the lot area
  - » if 201m to 400m from a bus exchange, at least 6 storeys and a building floor area equal to 2.5 times the lot area
- The City must not apply minimum residential parking requirements for development within Transit Oriented Areas.

Development Cost Charges (DCCs)

LGA

New legislation permits City collection and spending of DCCs on fire protection, police, solid waste/recycling facilities, and the City's share of highway facilities serving City and provincial interests (i.e. highway interchanges and exits).

Amenity Cost Charges (ACCs)

LGA

New legislation permits City collection of Amenity Cost Charges (ACC) for new development. This new financing tool allows the City to collect and allocate funds to cover the capital cost of amenities needed for growth, such as community/recreation centres, daycare facilities, libraries, and public squares.

More to come in 2024

- Provincial guidance for completing Housing Needs Reports - expected early 2024
- Provincial Standardized SSMU Housing Designs - expected summer 2024

On November 16, 2023, the Province announced the future release of up to 10 different housing designs that align with legislated SSMU options. The work will consider various lot sizes and configurations, with designs expected to be available to local governments by summer 2024. As per the Provincial press release, " These designs can be adopted by local governments and offered to builders and homeowners at a significantly below-market cost to expedite permitting and development... The designs will comply with the BC Building Code and are expected to be as close as possible to building-permit ready ..."



Graphic (partial) from Nov 16, 2023 Provincial News Release - Standardized Housing Design

Graphic (partial) from Nov 16, 2023 Provincial News Release - Standardized Housing Design



Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps

6.2 Climate Change

Climate Leadership

The City of Abbotsford has a unique opportunity to be a leader and partner in the effort to mitigate and adapt to climate change. With the ability to implement practical land use and transportation solutions, the City can help to proactively respond to climate challenges affecting the Fraser Valley and local residents.

Effective approaches to address climate change, or "climate action", include efforts to reduce carbon pollution (also known as mitigation of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions) in order to halt global temperature increase, as well as adapting to and preparing for the impacts of the changing climate. In collaboration with multiple levels of government, the City plays a proactive role in tackling climate issues with lenses of equity and resiliency, amplifying the collective response to this global challenge.

Local Climate Hazards

Flooding: In November 2021, atmospheric rivers flooded Abbotsford and recorded the highest rainfall ever received in one month. The flood event cost approximately $2 billion in damages and displaced over 1,000 people.[20]

Extreme Heat: In June 2021, amid drought conditions, a heat dome trapped hot air over British Columbia that was linked to nearly 450 deaths in the Lower Mainland.[21]

Wildfires: BC experienced its four most severe wildfire seasons on record during the past seven years, in 2017, 2018, 2021 and 2023. Wildfires scorched more than 10,000 km² of land in B.C. in three of the past seven seasons. Between 1919 and 2016, just three years saw more than 5,000 km²

*Fraser Valley 2050 Climate Projections [22]

- 2.2°C to 4.3°C increase in annual average temperatures
- 12% decrease in average summer precipitation
- Average of 26 days over 30°C annually in Abbotsford (up from 7)
- 50% decrease in winter precipitation

* Pacific Climate Impacts Consortium: Comparison to 1961-1990 baseline period

Multi-Level Government Policy on Climate Change

Global

In December 2015, Canada signed the Paris Agreement at the UN Conference of the Parties (COP21). The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change with the overarching long-term goal to ensure the rise in global average temperature remains lower than 2°C above pre-industrial levels, yet strives to limit temperature rise to a maximum of 1.5°C.[18] The Paris Agreement facilitates a global, collective effort to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate global warming.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is the UN governing body for assessing and communicating the science related to climate change. IPCC prepares scientific, technical and socio-economic reports on climate change, and future risks, and options for reducing the rate of temperature increase. In alignment with the Paris Agreement, IPCC research indicates that crossing the 1.5°C temperature threshold risks triggering severe climate events and recommends that in order to limit global warming to 1.5°C, carbon pollution must peak before 2025 and decline 43% by 2030.[19]

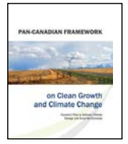
Canada

In June 2021, the Canadian Government adopted the *Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act*, enshrining Canada's commitment to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 into law, per the Paris Agreement. This legislation builds on the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change (2016), the Strengthened Climate Plan (2020), and the 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan (2022), which provide national roadmaps for climate action. Canada has adopted carbon pollution reduction targets of 40 % below 2005 levels by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050, aligned with IPCC recommendations.

In 2023, Canada launched its first National Adaptation Strategy, aiming to reduce the risk of climate-related disasters, improve health outcomes, protect nature and biodiversity, build and maintain resilient infrastructure, and support a strong economy.







Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps

7.1 Who we will engage

The following is a preliminary list of stakeholders who may have an interest in an update to Abbotsford's Official Community Plan.

This list will serve as a starting point to help inform the creation and delivery of engagement activities. This will be reviewed and supplemented throughout the process.

General Public

- City of Abbotsford residents
- Abbotsford businesses and property owners
- Individuals who work, shop, or recreate in the City of Abbotsford

City of Abbotsford

- City Council
- Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
- Staff Technical Advisory Group (TAG)
- Accessibility & Equity Advisory Committee (AEAC)
- Business, Innovation & Public Affairs Advisory Committee (BIPAAC)
- Community, Culture & Environment Advisory Committee (CCEAC)
- Development, Transportation & Infrastructure Advisory Committee (DTIAC)
- Agriculture Advisory Committee (AAC)

Special Interest Organizations

- Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce
- Fraser Valley Indo-Canadian Business Association
- Abbotsford Downtown Business Association
- Fraser Valley Real Estate Board
- Urban Development Institute (Fraser Valley Chapter)
- Tourism Abbotsford
- Fraser Basin Council
- Fraser Valley Land Conservancy

Local First Nations

- Leq'á:mel First Nation
- Mathxwí (Matsqui) First Nation
- Semá:th (Sumas) First Nation
- Stó:lō Nation

Government Agencies

- School Districts
  - No. 34 (Abbotsford)
  - No. 93 (Conseil Scolaire Francophone)
- Regional Districts & Adjacent Municipalities
  - Fraser Valley Regional District
  - Metro Vancouver
  - City of Chilliwack
  - Township of Langley
  - City of Mission
- Provincial Ministries & Agencies
  - Ministry of Agriculture
  - Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
  - Ministry of Environment
  - Agricultural Land Commission
- Fraser Health Authority
- University of the Fraser Valley



Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps

Who we will engage

- **General Public**
- **City**
  - » Council
  - » Committees
  - » Staff
- **Local First Nations**
- **Special Interest Organizations**
- **Government Agencies**
  - » School Districts
  - » Regional Districts & Adjacent Cities
  - » Provincial Ministries & Agencies
  - » Fraser Health Authority
  - » University of the Fraser Valley

* This list will be reviewed and supplemented throughout the process.

Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

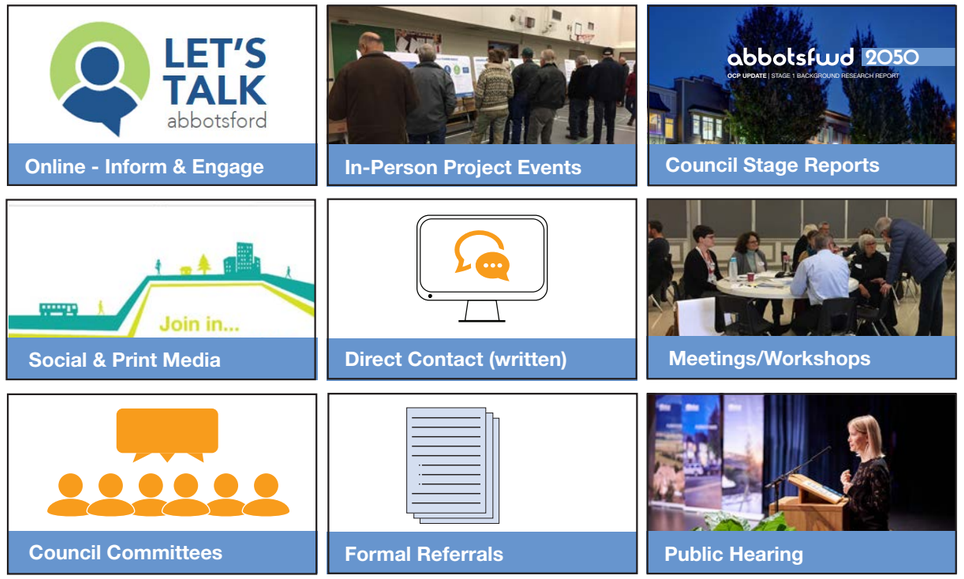
6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps

How we will engage



STAGE 2

Explore New Directions

Overview

Stage 2 shifts into public facing stages of the OCP update and will introduce the project, share the background research, and seek community and stakeholder input on key issues, challenges, and opportunities. Building on the baseline of the Background Research Report, engagement will seek to validate the preliminary issues, identify additional challenges/ opportunities, and seek feedback on preliminary 'New Directions' to strengthen Abbotsford's path forward as a City.

Who	How	Objectives/Key Messages

Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

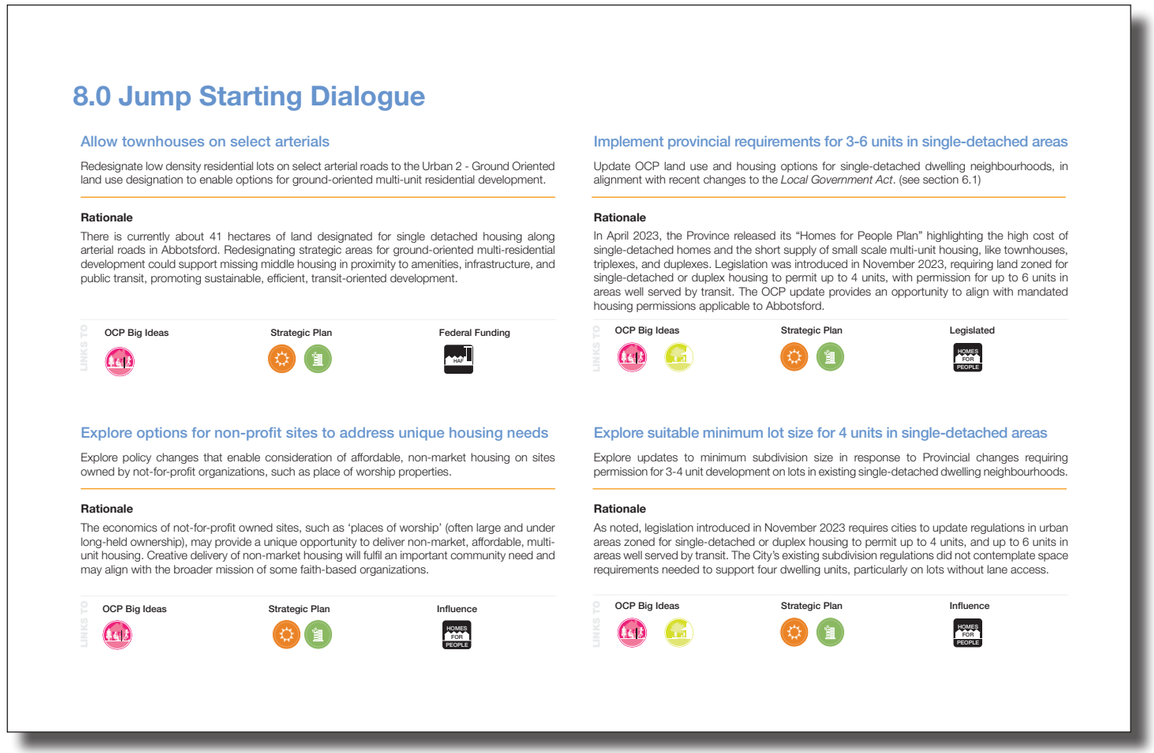
5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps



8.0 Jump Starting Dialogue

Allow townhouses on select arterials

Redesignate low density residential lots on select arterial roads to the Urban 2 - Ground Oriented land use designation to enable options for ground-oriented multi-unit residential development.

Rationale

There is currently about 41 hectares of land designated for single detached housing along arterial roads in Abbotsford. Redesignating strategic areas for ground-oriented multi-residential development could support missing middle housing in proximity to amenities, infrastructure, and public transit, promoting sustainable, efficient, transit-oriented development.

LINKS TO: OCP Big Ideas; Strategic Plan; Federal Funding

Implement provincial requirements for 3-6 units in single-detached areas

Update OCP land use and housing options for single-detached dwelling neighbourhoods, in alignment with recent changes to the *Local Government Act*. (see section 6.1)

Rationale

In April 2023, the Province released its "Homes for People Plan" highlighting the high cost of single-detached homes and the short supply of small scale multi-unit housing, like townhouses, triplexes, and duplexes. Legislation was introduced in November 2023, requiring land zoned for single-detached or duplex housing to permit up to 4 units, with permission for up to 6 units in areas well served by transit. The OCP update provides an opportunity to align with mandated housing permissions applicable to Abbotsford.

LINKS TO: OCP Big Ideas; Strategic Plan; Legislated

Explore options for non-profit sites to address unique housing needs

Explore policy changes that enable consideration of affordable, non-market housing on sites owned by not-for-profit organizations, such as place of worship properties.

Rationale

The economics of not-for-profit owned sites, such as 'places of worship' (often large and under long-held ownership), may provide a unique opportunity to deliver non-market, affordable, multi-unit housing. Creative delivery of non-market housing will fulfil an important community need and may align with the broader mission of some faith-based organizations.

LINKS TO: OCP Big Ideas; Strategic Plan; Influence

Explore suitable minimum lot size for 4 units in single-detached areas

Explore updates to minimum subdivision size in response to Provincial changes requiring permission for 3-4 unit development on lots in existing single-detached dwelling neighbourhoods.

Rationale

As noted, legislation introduced in November 2023 requires cities to update regulations in urban areas zoned for single-detached or duplex housing to permit up to 4 units, and up to 6 units in areas well served by transit. The City's existing subdivision regulations did not contemplate space requirements needed to support four dwelling units, particularly on lots without lane access.

LINKS TO: OCP Big Ideas; Strategic Plan; Influence



Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps

Intent

Reflect on existing policy, senior government initiatives, and legislation to ‘jump-start’ dialogue on new ideas to strengthen OCP

Affirm existing policies & introduce new ideas related to:

- **Big Picture** (Big Ideas, Urban Structure)
- **Bold Steps to increase housing supply**
- **Strategic Policy Updates**



Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps

Example

Allow townhouses on select arterials

Redesignate low density residential lots on select arterial roads to the Urban 2 - Ground Oriented land use designation to enable options for ground-oriented multi-unit residential development.

Rationale

There is currently about 41 hectares of land designated for single detached housing along arterial roads in Abbotsford. Redesignating strategic areas for ground-oriented multi-residential development could support missing middle housing in proximity to amenities, infrastructure, and public transit, promoting sustainable, efficient, transit-oriented development.

LINKS TO

OCP Big Ideas

Strategic Plan

Federal Funding



Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps

Example

EARLY IDEA

Allow townhouses on select arterials

Redesignate low density residential lots on select arterial roads to the Urban 2 - Ground Oriented land use designation to enable options for ground-oriented multi-unit residential development.

Rationale

There is currently about 41 hectares of land designated for single detached housing along arterial roads in Abbotsford. Redesignating strategic areas for ground-oriented multi-residential development could support missing middle housing in proximity to amenities, infrastructure, and public transit, promoting sustainable, efficient, transit-oriented development.

LINKS TO

OCP Big Ideas

Strategic Plan

Federal Funding

HAF



Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans & Strategies

5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps

Example

Allow townhouses on select arterials

Redesignate low density residential lots on select arterial roads to the Urban 2 - Ground Oriented land use designation to enable options for ground-oriented multi-unit residential development.

RATIONALE

Rationale

There is currently about 41 hectares of land designated for single detached housing along arterial roads in Abbotsford. Redesignating strategic areas for ground-oriented multi-residential development could support missing middle housing in proximity to amenities, infrastructure, and public transit, promoting sustainable, efficient, transit-oriented development.

LINKS TO

OCP Big Ideas

Strategic Plan

Federal Funding



Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans

5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps

Example

RELATES TO

Allow townhouses on select arterials

Redesignate low density residential lots on select arterial roads to the Urban 2 - Ground Oriented land use designation to enable options for ground-oriented multi-unit residential development.

Rationale

There is currently about 41 hectares of land designated for single detached housing along arterial roads in Abbotsford. Redesignating strategic areas for ground-oriented multi-residential development could support missing middle housing in proximity to amenities, infrastructure, and public transit, promoting sustainable, efficient, transit-oriented development.

LINKS TO

OCP Big Ideas

Strategic Plan

Federal Funding

HAF



Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans

5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

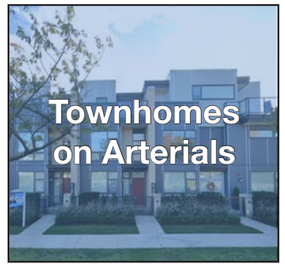
7.0 Engagement Strategy

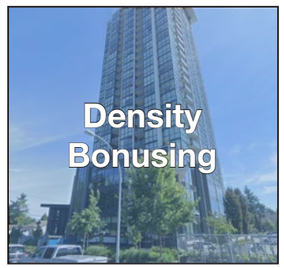
8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps

OCP RELATED | HOUSING ACCELERATOR FUND ACTIONS









Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans

5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

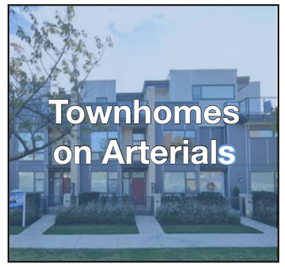
7.0 Engagement Strategy

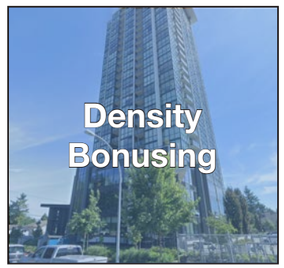
8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps

OCP RELATED | HOUSING ACCELERATOR FUND ACTIONS













OCP RELATED | LEGISLATION

Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans

5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps

OCP RELATED | HOUSING ACCELERATOR FUND ACTIONS

ALIGN









ALIGN





OCP RELATED | LEGISLATION

Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans

5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

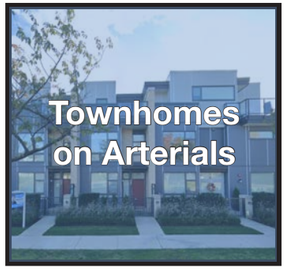
6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

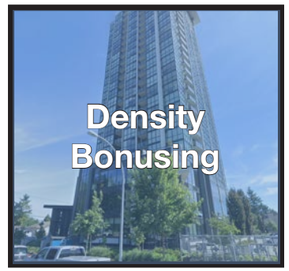
7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps

OCP RELATED | HOUSING ACCELERATOR FUND ACTIONS







ADDRESS

OCP RELATED | LEGISLATION

Background Research Report

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Abbotsford Today

3.0 OCP Progress Report

4.0 Existing City Plans

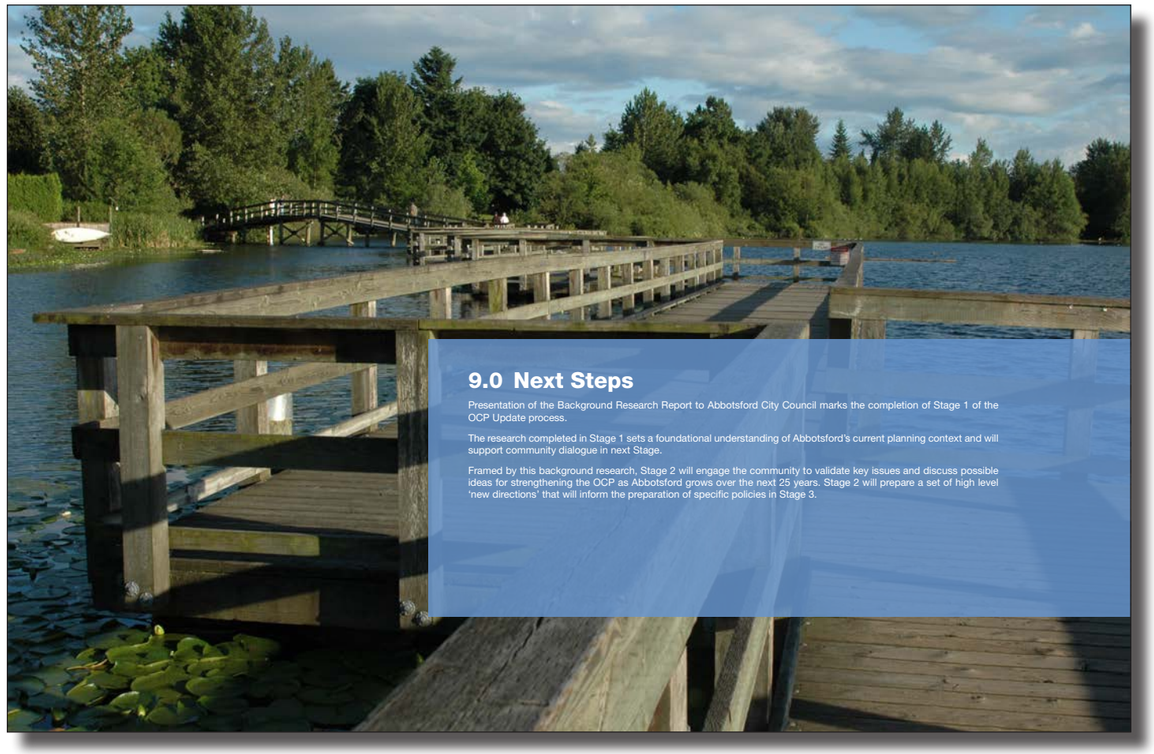
5.0 Local Indigenous Peoples

6.0 Challenges, Change & Opportunity

7.0 Engagement Strategy

8.0 Jump-Starting Dialogue

9.0 Next Steps



9.0 Next Steps

Presentation of the Background Research Report to Abbotsford City Council marks the completion of Stage 1 of the OCP Update process.

The research completed in Stage 1 sets a foundational understanding of Abbotsford's current planning context and will support community dialogue in next Stage.

Framed by this background research, Stage 2 will engage the community to validate key issues and discuss possible ideas for strengthening the OCP as Abbotsford grows over the next 25 years. Stage 2 will prepare a set of high level 'new directions' that will inform the preparation of specific policies in Stage 3.

NEXT STEPS



Stage 2 | Exploring New Directions

January 30	Begin Stage 2 (with Council direction)
February 1	Launch Let's Talk page
Feb - March	Prepare for outreach & engagement
Spring	In-person/online community engagement
Summer	Prepare New Directions
Fall	Present Stage 2 New Directions Report

RECOMMENDATION



1. That Council endorse the Official Community Plan (OCP) Update Work Plan, as attached to this report;

2. That Council endorse the OCP Update Engagement Strategy, as outlined in the Abbotsforward 2050 Stage 1 Background Research Report, pursuant to Section 475 of the *Local Government Act*; and

3. That Council direct staff to begin Stage 2 of the Official Community Plan Update.