

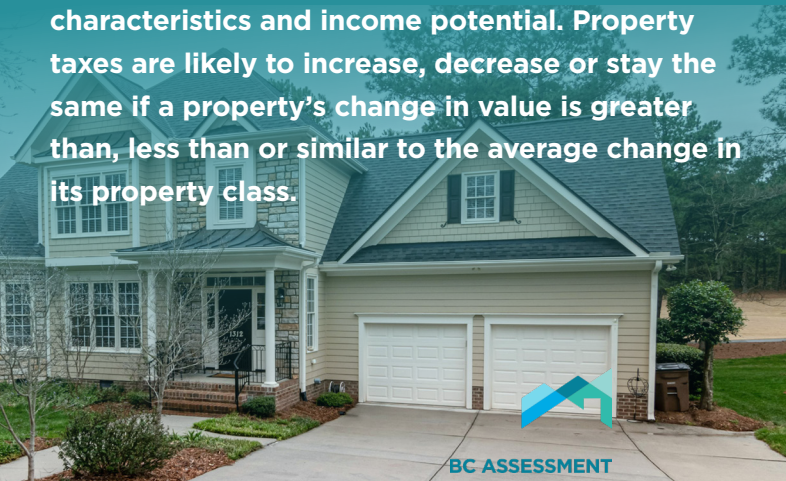
BC Assessment gives presentation to Council

On February 13, a representative from BC Assessment came before City Council to provide an update on property values in Abbotsford and later took questions about how those values are established and communicated.

The presenter shared with Council that for the 2024 assessment, 50,518 Abbotsford properties were assessed, which is an increase of 0.8% from last year, and the total value of those properties is \$62.7 billion, up 1.5% from 2023. There is also \$1.05 billion in new construction in our community, which is a 56% jump over last year. Collectively, our community's residential properties were valued at \$45 billion. Province-wide, total property values grew by 3%, but new construction only grew by 18%.

When broken down by property type, Abbotsford's residential single-family properties saw a typical value change of -10% to +10%, while residential strata property values only fluctuated between -5% and +5%. Commercial and industrial properties saw their values stay the same or increase by up to 10% and 20%, respectively.

The report noted that market value is affected by location, land use controls, land and building characteristics and income potential. Property taxes are likely to increase, decrease or stay the same if a property's change in value is greater than, less than or similar to the average change in its property class.



Council advances Public Art Policy and Program Review to Stage 2

On February 13, Council directed staff to proceed to Stage 2 of the Public Art Policy and Program Review, the "exploring options" phase.

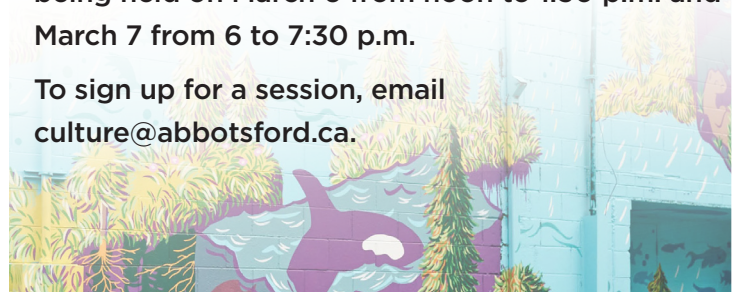
In their presentation, staff mentioned that the 2022 Culture Connect Strategy identified the need to update the City's cultural policies, starting with the Public Art Policy, to better reflect the city's diversity. The Culture Connect Strategy is also a priority in Council's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan.

The scope of the Public Art Policy and Program Review includes the creation of a public art maintenance and inspection plan for the City's existing collection, the development of a public art program plan and policy revisions for Council's consideration.

The report highlighted the key findings from the community consultation. From this engagement the three main themes that the community identified as priorities for future public art were nature, history and diversity.

Residents can share their input and ideas at one of two online Public Art Community Conversations being held on March 6 from noon to 1:30 p.m. and March 7 from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

To sign up for a session, email culture@abbotsford.ca.



TAKE THE SURVEY
PUBLIC ART CONSULTATION

CITI/SEEN (2020)
"A Breeze Through the Seas and Trees"
Sean Karemaker, Dona Park, Jay Rettich,
Chantelle Trainor-Matties, Natalie Scott

Council moves Accessibility Plan development to next stage

On February 27, City Council directed staff to proceed with the community consultation process of the City's Accessibility Plan.

In their presentation, staff shared how the Accessibility Plan will outline how the City will identify, remove and prevent barriers to individuals in or interacting with the City, while taking into consideration principles like inclusion, adaptability, diversity and collaboration. Additionally, the City will consider any comments received from the community, consult with its accessibility committee, and the plan must be reviewed and updated at least once every three years. This process will be guided by the City's new Accessibility and Equity Advisory Committee.

This proposal adheres to the requirements of the Accessible Canada Act and Accessible British Columbia Act.

Public engagement sessions will be held online and in-person this spring. Potential topics for discussion include transportation; housing; public roads and walkways; public facilities, parks and trails; and financial aid programs.

Residents can find more information on the Let's Talk Abbotsford page including the dates and locations of the engagement sessions.



Council applies to UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund

On February 27, Council directed staff to apply for \$14,769 through the Union of BC Municipalities Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (EPF).

In her presentation, Abbotsford Fire Deputy Chief Charlene Jordan-Jones proposed applying for the fund to support more equipment and advanced training for volunteers. This follows the BC Ombudsperson and the updated Emergency Disaster Management Act both recommending a more modernized, efficient and streamlined delivery of local emergency support services for all municipalities.

The grant will allow for the purchase of additional tablets, which will allow emergency support service volunteers to efficiently meet the needs of those displaced and seeking aid. The funding will also continue to support ongoing volunteer training and provide collaboration opportunities with First Nation and farming communities as well as Abbotsford's urban population.

