

# COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY



SHAPING OUR  
FUTURE

## Preface

This Community Sustainability Strategy is one in a series of plans and strategies being prepared as part of the City of Abbotsford's Community Sustainability Planning Initiative (CSPI). The CSPI describes the City's ongoing effort with our community partners to grow and function in an integrated way to support the community's fiscal, economic, environmental and social needs today and in the future.

The intent of the CSPI is to develop high-level plans and strategies that support the community in moving toward sustainability. As high-level documents that identify sustainability opportunities and potential responses (i.e. initiatives, actions, policy, approaches, etc.), CSPI plans and strategies do not commit the City or community partners to specific actions or outcomes. Plan and strategy implementation will require participating organizations to consider a variety of factors (e.g. available resources, priorities, work plans, strategic plan alignment, timelines etc.) before committing to action.

The CSPI is guided by this Community Sustainability Strategy, which establishes Abbotsford's sustainability vision and supporting framework for integrating sustainability into City policy, plans, strategies, and decision-making, and supporting community sustainability efforts.

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Vancouver, BC

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This Community Sustainability Strategy is considered to be an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) as defined in the Gas Tax Agreement, in that it emphasizes comprehensive planning approaches such as long-term thinking, integration, collaboration, public education, community engagement, monitoring and evaluation.



# COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

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# Executive Summary

Community sustainability efforts are generally guided by a community sustainability plan or strategy. While sustainability plans will vary in each community, a common approach is the establishment of a vision with accompanying tools (e.g. resource guides, ideas, initiatives, actions, approaches, policy, etc.) to guide the community toward that vision. Currently, sustainability policy in the City of Abbotsford (City) is guided by principles of sustainability outlined in the City's 2003 Charter of Sustainability (Charter). The Charter's success in promoting sustainability is reflected in the frequency of sustainability related policy found within existing City master plans and strategies, and by examples of community (e.g. City planning & operations, individuals, businesses, organizations etc.) sustainability successes. While the Charter establishes principles of sustainability, it does not articulate a vision or outline a coordinated and comprehensive approach to enable the community to build on existing successes and take the next steps toward a more sustainable community. An enhanced sustainability approach will position the community to capitalize on Abbotsford's unique advantages, embrace emerging trends, leverage opportunities, attract partnerships, support growth and innovation, and contribute to the City's Official Community Plan (OCP) and Strategic Plan vision of a "liveable, sustainable and prosperous community".

In 2011, the City of Abbotsford initiated development of a Community Sustainability Strategy (CSS) where 'sustainability' is defined as 'supporting the community's fiscal, economic, environmental and social needs today and in the future'. The CSS will establish a sustainability vision and supporting framework for the integration of fiscal, economic, environmental and social sustainability into City policy, plans, strategies, and decision-making, and support community sustainability efforts.

The CSS expresses a sustainability vision through the following 'future states' that describe what a sustainable Abbotsford looks like:

- Our community is healthy and enjoys a good quality of life
- Our community's resources and assets are managed effectively and efficiently
- Our natural environment thrives
- Our local economy is prosperous
- Our community is compact, connected and complete



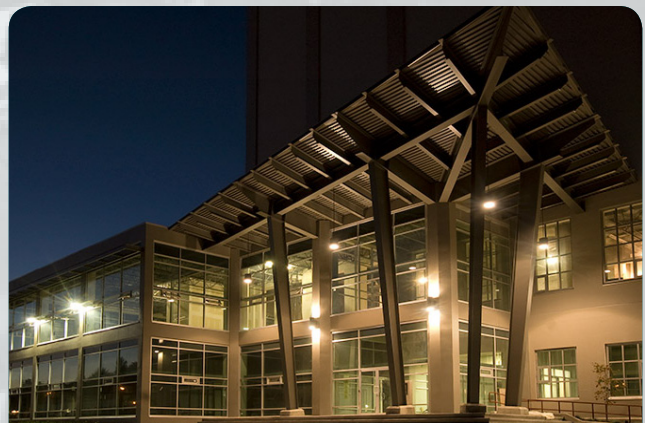
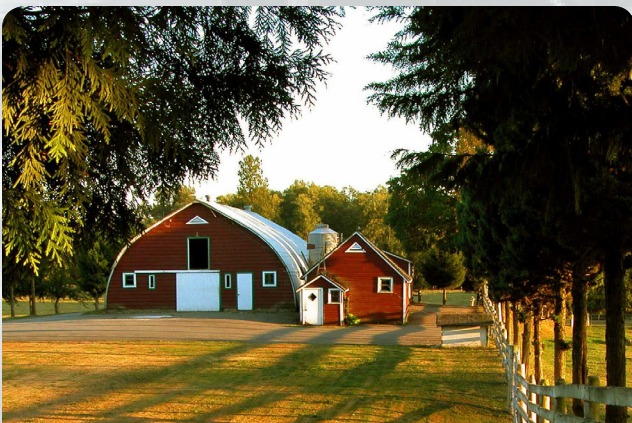
The CSS outlines a supporting framework for the community to take a coordinated and comprehensive approach to sustainability when and where needed. The supporting framework includes a number of long-term strategies that represent strategic directions involving many different actions and initiatives - a number of which the City and its partners are already doing. The strategies are:

- Strategy 1: Encourage Neighbourhood-level Planning
- Strategy 2: Transform & Learn through Innovation
- Strategy 3: Integrate Asset Management & Land Use Planning
- Strategy 4: Manage Natural & Agricultural Assets
- Strategy 5: Water, Energy & Waste Management
- Strategy 6: Integrate Transportation Options
- Strategy 7: Motivate Champions to Lead by Example
- Strategy 8: Motivate Behaviour Change

The supporting framework also identifies elements that are common to successful sustainability programs and should be considered when undertaking detailed action planning in the pursuit of sustainability.

The CSS does not propose specific initiatives or actions or commit the City and community to specific actions or outcomes. What the CSS intends to do is to set the framework in place to guide and coordinate sustainability within more specific City plans, strategies and decision-making processes, and within various partnerships. As existing City policies, plans and strategies are updated, and new ones developed, they should seek to support and align with the sustainability vision outlined in the CSS where possible.

The CSS is intended to guide the community toward sustainability and will act as a resource to provide strategies for the community to embrace and act upon in their homes, businesses and every day lives. The development of this Strategy identified the vast potential that can be realized by working together. By drawing on our combined strengths, we will achieve our vision for a sustainable community. Simply put, “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts”. The City will continue its role as custodian of the Strategy with the broader community to facilitate and provide support towards its implementation. This cohesive working partnership will be integral in achieving success. Moving forward, staff will continually engage the community in seeking out opportunities and pursue funding opportunities. Staff, as directed by Council, will seek to implement the strategies as opportunities arise, and/or during annual budgetary planning sessions.





# 1 | INTRODUCTION

Sustainability is about supporting our community's, fiscal, economic, environmental and social needs today and in the future. 'Sustainable communities' are broadly described as those that maintain a reliable economic base; practice sound financial management; provide a stable environment for its citizens and businesses; and act as stewards of the land base and other environmental resources. The conversation and ongoing desire to live more sustainably is a critical part of our community's future. Sustainability is not an option – it is an imperative to support our society. Sustainability is not all about the future and we can all benefit from action now. It is not just about doing good things for the environment – it is about all the social, fiscal and economic aspects of our community and how they interact. Sustainability can be good for our environment, our people, our businesses, and our wallets.

## 2 | BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Benefits of a Community Sustainability Strategy

Community sustainability efforts are generally guided by a community sustainability plan or strategy. While sustainability plans will vary in each community, a common approach is the establishment of a vision with accompanying tools (e.g. resource guides, ideas, initiatives, actions, approaches, policy, etc.) to guide the community toward that vision.

Currently, sustainability efforts in the City of Abbotsford (City) are guided by principles of sustainability outlined in the City's 2003 Charter of Sustainability (Charter) in order to "provide the best possible quality of life for all its residents today, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs." The Charter's success in promoting sustainability is reflected in the frequency of sustainability related policy found within existing City master plans and strategies, and by examples of community (e.g. City planning & operations, individuals, businesses, organizations etc.) sustainability successes. While the Charter establishes principles of sustainability, it does not articulate a vision or outline a coordinated and comprehensive approach to enable the community to build on existing successes and take the next steps toward a more sustainable community. An enhanced sustainability approach will position the community to capitalize on Abbotsford's unique advantages, embrace emerging trends, leverage opportunities, attract partnerships, support growth and innovation, and contribute to the City's Official Community Plan (OCP) and Strategic Plan vision of a "liveable, sustainable and prosperous community".

The Community Sustainability Strategy establishes a sustainability vision and supporting framework for the integration of fiscal, economic, environmental and social sustainability into City policy, plans, strategies, and decision-making, and to support community sustainability efforts.



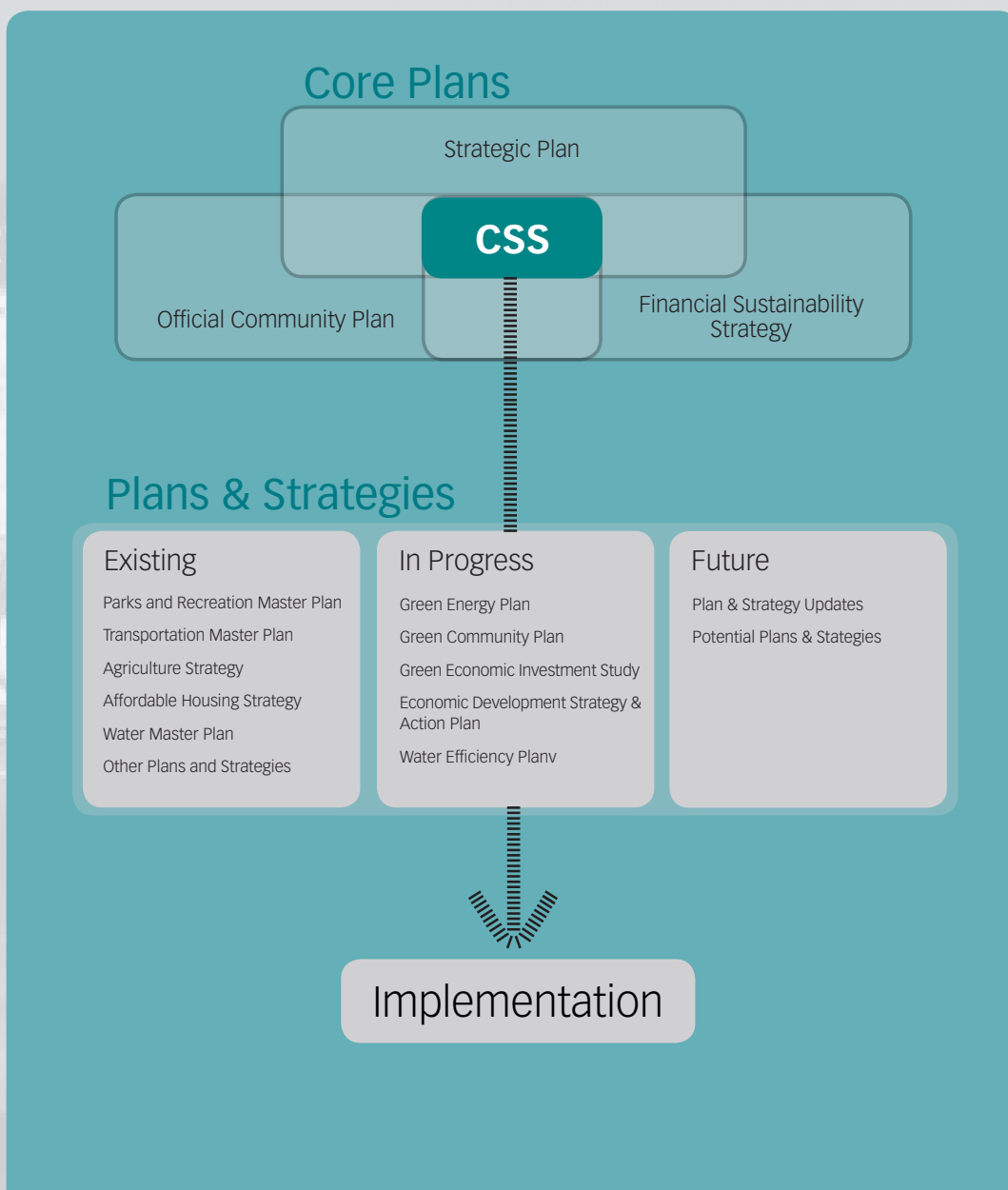
## 2.2 About the Community Sustainability Strategy

In 2011, the City of Abbotsford initiated the development of a CSS to support the community's fiscal, economic, environmental and social needs today and in the future. The CSS is comprised of two components:

1. The Sustainability Vision expresses a vision through a series of 'future states' that describe what a sustainable Abbotsford looks like in the future.
2. The Supporting Framework outlines strategies for a coordinated and comprehensive approach to sustainability and identifies key elements of successful sustainability programs.

Figure 1 shows the relationship of the CSS to other City plans and strategies. The graphic depicts the CSS at the top of the hierarchy of plans along with the three 'core' City plans and strategies, (i.e. OCP, Strategic Plan, Financial Sustainability Strategy). The CSS establishes a sustainability vision (i.e. 'future states') at the highest level from where it can inform other City policies, plans, strategies and decision-making. As existing City policies, plans and strategies are updated, and new ones developed, they should seek to support and align with the sustainability vision outlined in the CSS where possible.

Figure 1



## 2.3 Community Sustainability Strategy Planning Process

### Project Team

In March 2012, the Project Team (i.e. City staff and Stantec Consulting) started the process of preparing the CSS. To assist the Project Team, a Community Sustainability Strategy External Advisory Group (External Advisory Group), comprised of community members representing various community interests and expertise (e.g. social sustainability, commerce, land development, conservation, etc.) was established. While many External Advisory Group members are associated with various organizations, they were selected to bring specific individual expertise/perspective to the table and not to represent a particular organization. Additionally, a Community Sustainability Strategy Staff Advisory Group (Staff Advisory Group) representing various City departments and functions was established. As per February 2012 Council direction, a Community Sustainability Strategy Steering Committee (Steering Committee) was established to guide the development of the Community Sustainability Strategy. The Advisory Group and Steering Committee members are listed in Appendix D.

### Draft Sustainability Vision for Consultation

The first draft of the sustainability vision was completed in April 2012 based on a review of the 2003 Sustainability Charter, select City master plans and strategies, input from the External Advisory Group, Staff Advisory Group and Steering Committee, and consideration of current and emerging sustainability trends and practices.

The first draft of the sustainability vision was presented to a number of City committees for input, including the Agriculture Advisory Committee, Area H Advisory Committee, City Industry Development Advisory Committee, Economic Development Advisory Committee, Environmental Advisory Committee, Mission Abbotsford Transit Committee, Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission, and Social Development Advisory Committee

The draft sustainability vision was presented to members representing a number of Community Associations and presented at a public Open House. Opportunity for input was also provided through the Community Sustainability Strategy web page where the draft Vision and online comment form were posted.

In April 2012, a Community Sustainability Survey was launched both online and in print. The survey included questions specific to the draft sustainability vision while providing survey participants an opportunity to provide additional comments.

### Supporting Framework Development

A number of pieces contributed to the development of the long-term strategies identified in the CSS supporting framework. Firstly, in April 2012, a high-level review of City plans was completed to identify how the various plans and documents aligned with the draft sustainability vision. This inventory of policies and initiatives (Appendix C) was a first step in identifying areas of improvement and opportunity.

The Internal and External Advisory Groups discussed sustainability opportunities and areas for improvements, and provided input on long-term strategies that should help the City and its community partners move towards the Vision's 'future states'.

During the public and stakeholder consultation process a number of suggestions for action were made. These actions were reviewed and helped inform development of the supporting framework.



# 3 | SUSTAINABILITY VISION

## 3.1 Context

The City's Official Community Plan (OCP) and Strategic Plan (SP) outline a vision of a "liveable, sustainable and prosperous" community. 'Sustainability' is a broad term and its meaning can shift depending on who is using it and how it is being used. Fundamental to successful sustainability efforts is a clear definition of "sustainability" and once established the pursuit of sustainability is strengthened. Through public and stakeholder consultation, the CSS defines 'sustainability' in the context of Abbotsford and expresses a sustainability vision through the following 'future states' that describe what a sustainable Abbotsford looks like.

The City's Sustainability Charter is found in Part 3 (Policy Directions) of the OCP. As part of a future OCP update the Charter will be updated to reflect the CSS vision. A revised Sustainability Charter for inclusion into the OCP is attached as Appendix B.

## 3.2 Vision & Future States

### Vision

Abbotsford will grow and function through an integrated approach where the community's fiscal, economic, environmental and social needs are met today and in the future. We will be innovative in working towards sustainability and will monitor progress and continuously adapt to what we learn along the way.

Together, the City, residents, businesses and community organizations, as well as our neighbours and partners in the region have a shared responsibility in becoming a sustainable community and achieving a future where:

- Our community is healthy and enjoys a good quality of life
- Our community's resources and assets are managed effectively and efficiently
- Our natural environment thrives
- Our local economy is prosperous
- Our community is compact, connected and complete

### Future States

The 'future states' below support the sustainability vision and describe in more detail what we want our future to look like.

### Our community is healthy and enjoys a good quality of life

#### A sustainable Abbotsford means:

Every individual in Abbotsford is able to meet their basic needs, through access to clean drinking water and air, affordable housing and living costs, ample employment opportunities, healthy affordable food, as well as quality education, health care and social support. We have a strong sense of community and a 'giving culture'. People are friendly and have opportunities to engage in civic matters. We are a welcoming, inclusive, and accessible community with dedicated volunteers and responsive protective services. Our neighbourhoods are walkable, cohesive and safe. There is strong support for arts, cultural diversity, heritage and education. We have pleasant, accessible, and inviting public places along with vibrant community events and programs.

#### What influences our quality of life?

- Housing
- Food
- Clothing
- Air Quality
- Drinking Water
- Employment
- Sanitation
- Safety & Security
- Arts & Culture
- Recreation
- Heritage & Diversity
- Transportation
- Education & Training
- Health & Well Being
- Natural Environment
- Civic Engagement

## What are the components of the community's resources & assets?

- Hard Infrastructure & Assets
- Municipal Revenue & Capital
- Human Resources
- Energy
- Water Use
- Waste
- Ecosystem Services

## What influences the integrity of our natural environment?

- Recreation
- Land Development
- Mineral Extraction
- Terrestrial Habitats
- Food & Agriculture
- Air Quality
- Aquatic Habitats
- Water Quality

## What influences our economy?

- Local Employment
- Economic Diversity
- Food & Agriculture
- Energy
- Transportation
- Education & Training
- Arts & Culture
- Tourism
- Aerospace

We recognize and preserve our heritage and celebrate our creative and diverse community. We have access to formal and informal sport, recreational opportunities and green space which keep us healthy and connected to our community and nature.

## Our community's resources and assets are managed effectively and efficiently

### A sustainable Abbotsford means:

We plan responsibly in a transparent manner and deliver municipal services efficiently. This results in reduced pressures on property taxes and a tax base that is balanced among commercial, industrial and residential users. We manage our resources efficiently. Energy consumption and carbon emissions are minimized and we are innovative in using our waste as a resource stream. We continue to invest in the infrastructure and assets that support our community with a priority on sustaining what we already have. Densification has enabled us to be more efficient with the infrastructure and assets that service and support our community.

## Our natural environment thrives

### A sustainable Abbotsford means:

We are responsible stewards of the environment and are sensitive to our environmental impacts. We integrate our needs with that of the local and regional ecosystems that support thriving fish and wildlife populations. We value the services provided by our ecosystems exemplified by the clean air we breathe and water we drink. Innovations in our agricultural, resource extraction and land development practices have allowed us to enhance our natural environment and biodiversity. We continue to enjoy our natural areas for recreational purposes which contribute to improving our health, well-being and our overall quality of life.

## Our local economy is prosperous

### A sustainable Abbotsford means:

Agriculture continues to thrive and grow as the foundation of Abbotsford's diversified economy, providing local jobs, food and other agricultural products for local, regional and global markets. Industries and businesses are thriving in our community and are socially and environmentally responsible. Significant commercial and industrial investment is occurring and there is a wide range of high quality jobs in the city. A growing number of businesses and industry are contributing to a resilient and innovative economy in sectors such as aerospace, agri-business, health care, manufacturing, renewable energy, finance, green buildings, real estate, recreation, tourism, arts and culture, water and waste management and other supporting services. The University of the Fraser Valley plays a key role in building a creative, skilled and successful workforce, and being a centre in applied research excellence. Community members, businesses, industries and institutions are well connected locally,

to the region and the global marketplace through efficient and cost effective transportation and communication infrastructure.

## Our community is compact, connected and complete

### A sustainable Abbotsford means:

Development needed to support our community's growth is directed into neighbourhoods within the Urban Development Boundary resulting in a high density, mixed use urban form that promotes efficient use of infrastructure. Agricultural land is appreciated and is enhanced. Community development efforts focus on a complete community, maximizing local employment opportunities, short commutes and convenient access to community services and vibrant public places. The transportation network provides convenient and safe connections between home, work, services, and other destinations. It results in walkable, cycle-friendly neighbourhoods supplemented with user friendly transit service and strategic regional transportation improvements that recognize Abbotsford as a critical node in the region.

### What influences the development of a compact, connected and complete community?

- Transportation
- Infrastructure
- Economic Development
- Built Form
- Community Services
- Land / Natural Area Protection

## 4 | SUPPORTING FRAMEWORK

### 4.1 Context

The pursuit toward sustainability is ongoing, incremental and always evolving - sustainability is a journey, not a destination. The CSS supporting framework outlines strategies for a coordinated and comprehensive approach to sustainability when and where needed, and identifies key elements of successful sustainability programs.

The supporting framework does not identify specific actions and outcomes with associated resource requirements, lead agencies, timelines, etc. Action planning to guide and coordinate ongoing action within the more specific City plans and within various partner mandates is the next step and the focus here is to assist the community to take that next step by considering:

- How do we embed sustainability in our organizational structure?
- What long-term strategies will set the community up for success?
- How will we define community-wide actions?
- How will we monitor and communicate progress?





## 4.2 Long-term Strategies

A high-level review of City plans was completed with the intent to identify where the various plans and documents aligned with the 'future states' of the Sustainability Vision. This review identified over 400 policies and initiatives (Appendix C) that supported the 'future states', indicating that the City is already doing a lot of things to be sustainable. This information, along with the suggested actions and strategies identified by the public, stakeholders and Advisory Groups, were reviewed with the intent of identifying areas of improvement and opportunity.

Based on the review and discussions, eight long-term strategies were identified to respond to areas of improvement and opportunity. These strategies represent strategic directions involving many different actions and initiatives - a number of which the City and its partners are already doing. These strategies can guide short-term actions and priorities and should be reviewed from time to time as priorities and opportunities evolve.

### Strategy 1: Encourage Neighbourhood-level Planning

Neighbourhood planning is an essential element in managing the land use of a growing city. While the OCP sets out the overarching objectives and policies for the city, Neighbourhood Plans speak to the specific needs and desires of the various neighbourhoods within the context of the City-wide OCP.

To empower and engage citizens in the vision for their neighbourhood, it would be beneficial to delineate identifiable neighbourhoods and to institute a Neighbourhood Land Use Planning process. This process would facilitate local neighbourhood dialogue and create strong visuals for development and redevelopment with clear directions and guidelines around land use, character, form, public realm, etc. This would provide greater certainty for the development community, public, and Council. It would also allow for the unique qualities of each neighbourhood to be recognized more effectively and it would bring together the broader needs of the community with the local knowledge of neighbourhood residents.



## Strategy 2: Transform & Learn through Innovation

Abbotsford is a community in transition. With population growth, economic development, demographic shifts, the attitudes and physical form of the city is slowly transforming. Yet, things cannot all change at once – nor should they. To focus resources, it is recommended that the City continue and strengthen its practice of identifying key, strategic innovation projects and initiatives such as it has done with Harmony flex housing, various water conservation initiatives and residential curbside compost collection. The purpose of an innovation project is to identify areas where new approaches/strategies are applied and tested so that the community can collectively learn how to do things better. These projects could be small scale projects on a given property, or larger scale in a specific neighbourhood. Some good ideas are often neglected because the magnitude of implementing something on a City-wide basis is complicated and overwhelming. Innovative projects and initiatives can help to shift attitudes and market demands by demonstrating alternatives on a smaller scale, for example:

- energy efficiency technologies and programs (e.g. district energy, electric vehicles)
- water efficiency technologies and programs
- alternative road and servicing standards
- alternative forms of housing and tenure arrangements
- various building types for increased density

## Strategy 3: Integrate Asset Management & Land Use Planning

Traditionally, municipal planners, engineers, financial officers and decision-makers have been working separately resulting in a disconnect between infrastructure planning, land use planning, parks planning, engineering operations and financial management processes. Financial management and land management are connected. How local governments choose to grow has a fundamental impact on their financial costs and revenues. While development may pay for the initial capital costs incurred with providing new infrastructure, it is the local government (i.e. the taxpayer) that carries the long-term liability for maintaining, operating and ultimately replacing the infrastructure.

The current infrastructure deficit experienced by communities across Canada is a major threat to community sustainability. Traditional land use planning and infrastructure planning approaches has resulted in large portfolios of infrastructure assets that are a challenge to sustain over the long-term.

Integrated asset management that considers the lifecycle of infrastructure investment alongside land use planning decisions and financial management, is a key strategy for the City of Abbotsford's sustainability – not just fiscally, but also socially and environmentally. Existing infrastructure assets and investments need to be managed so that they are sustainable and resilient in the long-term. The City already recognized the importance of this issue and has appointed a dedicated Asset Manager who can manage the infrastructure assets. It is important that this continues in an integrated way with planning, parks, engineering and financial staff.





## Strategy 4: Manage Natural & Agricultural Assets

The agricultural lands and natural areas in and around the community are part of the community's identity and are key community assets. These features provide natural ecosystem functions, economic potential, recreation opportunities, local food security, etc. The long-term significance and community-wide benefit of natural and agricultural areas should be considered in planning and decision-making.

## Strategy 5: Water, Energy & Waste Management

Water, energy and waste management are key elements of a sustainable future. Water is the lifeblood of the planet and without a steady supply of clean, fresh water, all life, including human, would cease to exist. It is a critical resource that needs to be managed for future generations. The perception is that our province has an abundance of fresh water. This has led to misuse and abuse of the resource, which begins at home. In many cases society pays less than the actual cost of processing and delivery, threatening the long-term viability of the water system.

As Abbotsford grows, the supply of secure drinking water and conservation of available water resources will continue to be high priority. The City should continue to play a significant role in water conservation through incentives and programs for efficient water use, while also managing land uses and its impact on water quality.

The potential impacts of climate change are far-reaching, affecting our economy, infrastructure, health, and the landscapes around us. In Canada, 80% of total national greenhouse gas emissions are associated with the production or consumption of fossil fuels for energy purposes. The type and amount of energy used in our buildings and transportation is key to managing not just energy use, but emissions affecting climate change and air quality. In 2010, the City identified emission reduction targets in its OCP. A subsequent plan that identifies strategies towards meeting this reduction target is the first step toward managing energy and emissions.

To manage waste effectively, the community has to aggressively address the 3R's (i.e. Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle) and continue to introduce effective waste management programs such as the City's residential curbside compost collection program.





## Strategy 6: Integrate Transportation Options

As with many growing cities surrounded by suburban development, transportation is a topic of great importance. In the attempt to move from a fossil-fuel based, car-oriented community, transit, biking, walking and transportation demand measures become critical. Abbotsford has many of the key elements in place to support transit and non-motorized transportation modes and these growing networks should be carefully considered within the regional context and in the context of land use decisions and travel patterns.

Ongoing collaboration with BC Transit on the Transit Future Plan is a critical step. It is key that the transit system effectively integrates with land-use planning, that it connects people to their key destinations, that the various transportation modes integrate seamlessly and that it addresses transportation demand management. An integrated, effective, sustainable transport system can make a positive contribution to the environmental, social and economic sustainability of the city. Undertaking neighbourhood level planning will provide opportunities for walkable, cycle-friendly neighbourhoods supplemented with user friendly transit service.

## Strategy 7: Motivate Champions to Lead by Example

While the City of Abbotsford and other corporations/agencies are not each individually responsible for the community's overall sustainability, it should maintain and strengthen its role as champions in the community-wide effort. The City is a 'corporation' of sorts in the community - employing people, operating buildings and fleets. In this way it plays an important role in "leading by example" alongside its other corporate partners. As a champion of sustainability that encourages and motivates others to take ownership and do their part, it is essential that the City continues to strive to set an example and that it rewards and recognizes the leadership of others.

## Strategy 8: Motivate Behaviour Change

Ultimately, citizens' behaviours will play a key part in how much and how fast the community progresses towards its sustainability ambitions. Good planning and sustainability policies mean very little if the community doesn't actually change behaviours.

A key part of the success lies in understanding citizen behavior and analyzing why and how citizens do or do not incorporate sustainability behaviours into their lives. Adopting sustainable behaviours is certainly not a straightforward task as individual behaviours are deeply rooted in social and institutional contexts, regardless of people's best intentions. In partnership with others, the City can play the role of educators, analyze barriers and incentives, and promote behavioural change.



## 4.3 Elements of Successful Sustainability Programs

Key elements of successful sustainability programs are summarized below and should be considered when undertaking detailed action planning in the pursuit of sustainability.

### Coordinated Action Planning

While the City would act as a custodian of the Strategy, sustainability is not solely the responsibility of the City and it requires an ongoing, coordinated, community-wide effort. Coordinated action planning should identify top priorities from the collective perspective and urge partners to consider suggested actions and commit to actions based on their work planning processes, resources, priorities, etc.

### Communication Strategies

Celebrating progress, engaging and recognizing partners, and informing the community about what is happening are all integral to a successful CSS. A strong communications framework is important. Otherwise, partners may become disengaged and citizens and decision makers may question the strategy's value over time. Among other things, the communications framework should identify sustainability reporting, community partner and stakeholder recruitment and retention, networking opportunities for partners to share learning and maintain a dialogue, strategies for celebrating successes and profiling partners, informing and engaging citizens and stakeholders and opportunities to promote behavioural change.

### Track and Communicate Follow-through on Actions

It is important to track progress on community-wide actions and to compile the information for communication purposes. This might take the form of an Annual Report or a website interface that indicates progress. A reporting system is critical to maintaining the momentum of action planning, ensuring accountability and for making adjustments to actions along the way. The annual reporting should outline the actions taken by the City and its other partners. It provides an opportunity to celebrate successes and profile partners.

### Measure & Communicate Overall Impacts

In addition to tracking actions, it is also important to measure the long-term, overall impacts of our actions on the 'future states'. This might be similar to what is traditionally known as a 'State of the Community' report. The challenge with this type of reporting is that it does not give a lot of instant feedback. It mainly measures progress at the macro-scale which is typically slow-changing. Consistent monitoring is important so that trends can be established and analyzed. Nonetheless, this type of monitoring is fundamental to understanding impacts and targeting actions in key areas. While the City might lead this endeavour, it could also rely on community partners to take the lead.





## 5 | MOVING FORWARD

The CSS is intended to guide the community toward sustainability and act as a resource to provide strategies for the community to embrace and act upon in their homes, businesses and every day lives. The development of this Strategy identified the vast potential that can be realized by working together. By drawing on our combined strengths, we will achieve our vision for a sustainable community. Simply put, “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts”. The City will continue its role as custodian of the Strategy with the broader community to facilitate and provide support towards its implementation. This cohesive working partnership will be integral in achieving success. Moving forward, staff will continually engage the community in seeking out opportunities and pursue funding opportunities. Staff, as directed by Council, will seek to implement the strategies as opportunities arise, and/or during annual budgetary planning sessions.

## 6 | CONCLUSION

The City of Abbotsford’s Community Sustainability Strategy establishes a sustainability vision and supporting framework for integrating sustainability into City policy, plans, strategies, and decision-making and supporting community sustainability efforts.

The CSS builds upon the OCP and Strategic Plan vision of a “liveable, sustainable and prosperous community” and expresses a sustainability vision through a series of ‘future states’ that describe what a sustainable Abbotsford looks like. Additionally, the CSS outlines a supporting framework for the community (e.g. City planning and operations, residents, businesses, organizations, other levels of government, etc.) to take a coordinated and comprehensive approach to sustainability within more specific City plans, strategies and decision-making processes, and within various partnerships. The CSS does not propose specific initiatives or actions or commit the City and community to specific actions or outcomes.





## 7 | APPENDICES

Available in a supporting document

**APPENDIX A**  
**2003 Charter of Sustainability**

**APPENDIX B**  
**Revised Sustainability Charter**

**APPENDIX C**  
**Inventory of City Plans and Policies**

**APPENDIX D**  
**Advisory Group & Steering Committee Members**





For more information on the City of Abbotsford's  
Community Sustainability Strategy contact:

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