Child and Youth Friendly Abbotsford

Community Strategy

Live	Work	school
Play	Care
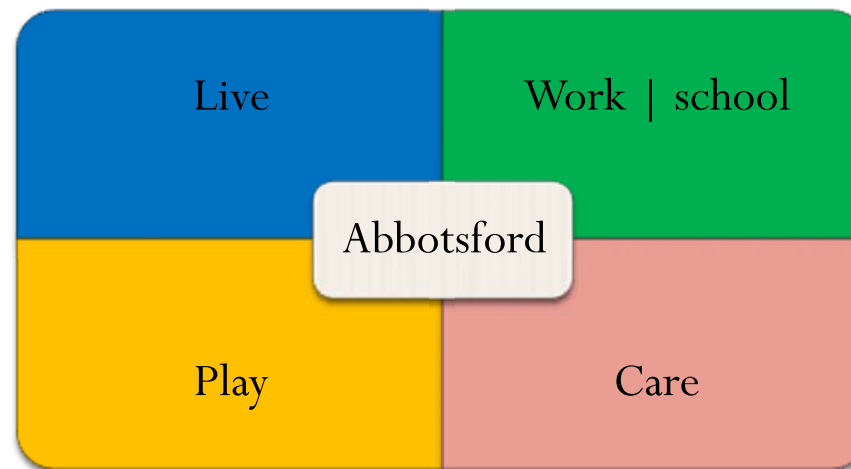
Abbotsford

Child and Youth Friendly Abbotsford Working Group
Authored by:
Lucie Honey-Ray, Community Development Consultant, Life Changes
Cherie Enns, Social Planning Consultant, City of Abbotsford

ABBOTSFORD

UNION OF
BRITISH
COLUMBIA
MUNICIPALITIES

CHILD AND YOUTH FRIENDLY ABBOTSFORD

Contents

Acknowledgements

Abbotsford School District No. 34	Abbotsford Youth Commission	Abbotsford Early Childhood Committee
Ministry of Children & Family Development	Abbotsford Community Services	Child and Youth Committee
Literacy Matters Abbotsford	Vibrant Abbotsford	BC Healthy Communities
Abbotsford Police Department	Impact	Parks, Recreation and Culture

> *A child and youth friendly community welcomes and involves children and youth and promotes their well-being and safety. It fosters social responsibility and the notion that 'it takes a village to raise a child'.* **Society for Children and Youth**

Executive Summary

The City of Abbotsford is one of the youngest and most family oriented communities in the Lower Mainland (2009 Abbotsford Community Profile). More than 39,000 families live in the community representing approximately 81% of the total population. According to the 2006 Census, young people aged 0 to 19 make up 27% of Abbotsford's total population. The *Child and Youth Friendly Abbotsford report* examines the community's child and youth friendliness and explore ways to enhance what already exists.

The report is divided into three key sections plus a brief introduction of the child and youth friendly concept. Section one provides a summary of the community consultation process; section two reviews child friendly policies for development and design guidelines and explores ways to incorporate young people's voices in decision making; section three introduces the child, youth and family friendly community strategy. This report is the culmination of nine months of consultations and community engagement. The report is the beginning of what promises to be a very rewarding journey for all of Abbotsford's citizens. Key community stakeholders and the City's continued influence and leadership are absolutely necessary to achieve the desired outcomes.

In a stakeholder interview, David Hull, Executive Director for the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce, stated 'Child and youth friendliness needs to be a community frame of mind in order to be successful'. That community mind-set is what the Child and Youth Friendly Abbotsford Working Group wants to achieve.

On November 9th, 2009 Abbotsford City Council, passed a motion to have Mayor George Peary sign a Child and Youth Friendly Abbotsford Statement of Intention. The signing of the document is set for Friday December 4th at City Hall. Many other community stakeholders and partners have been invited to sign the document. This is undeniably a huge milestone for the City of Abbotsford and a welcome for the families who make the community their home. The City is taking a leadership role in endorsing Child and Youth Friendliness in the community.

On November 9th, the City also agreed to prioritize the review of design and development guidelines to include a child and youth friendly lens. The Official Community Plan is under review and the City is in the final process of developing a new Strategic Plan; both of these documents will reflect the needs of young people and their families in Abbotsford. Children, youth, and families represent the largest proportion of Abbotsford's population. More needs to be done to ensure their needs are met within their neighbourhoods and within their means!

Introduction

The concept of child and youth friendliness is not new to Abbotsford's community leaders. The community's first social plan (2005) identified children and youth as one of five priority areas for planning. The Child and Youth Friendly Abbotsford Working Group, a sub group of the Abbotsford Social Development Advisory Committee, began meeting in 2007. In March 2008, the group hosted a Child Friendly Forum for Community Leaders in partnership with the University of the Fraser Valley's International Speaker's Series and School District 34. In addition to an international speaker, this forum provided an opportunity for young people to speak directly to community leaders about their concerns for their community. The results of community mapping completed by University of the Fraser Valley geography students with grade 5 to 8 students from a variety of schools was also presented. Thanks to the support of the Abbotsford School District, more than 300 young people attended the event filling Matsqui Centennial Auditorium. The feedback from community leaders inspired the working group to apply for a grant from the Union of BC Municipalities in November 2008 for the development of an Abbotsford Child and Youth Friendly community strategy. This report highlights the work completed with the $25,000 UBCM Community Health Promotion grant received in March 2009. The UBCM grant had five specific deliverables:

☑ An assessment of the child and youth friendly state of Abbotsford
☑ Child friendly policies and development designs and guidelines
☑ A child and youth friendly community strategy and action plan
☑ An increase in intergenerational activities
☑ A comprehensive assessment of the Clearbrook neighbourhood

This report covers the first three deliverables. The introduction provides a summary of the child and youth friendly city concept followed by the role of planning for child and youth friendly cities and ends with unique socio-economic characteristics of Abbotsford's families. Section One introduces the lens developed to assess Abbotsford's child and youth friendliness and presents highlights of community consultations. Section Two takes a look at child friendly policies for design and development and explores options to involve young people in decision-making processes. Section Three reveals the Abbotsford Child, Youth, and Family Friendly Community Strategy. A more detailed action plan will follow once key community stakeholders and partners have met to further discuss the strategy. The intergenerational activities deliverable has been successfully completed: $5,000 of funding was distributed in the community to increase activities that bring seniors and young people together. For a copy of the senior's Dialogue on Intergenerational Activities report contact City of Abbotsford Social Planning Department. The Clearbrook Neighbourhood Assessment is still in progress awaiting the results of the University mapping project with students from Clearbrook schools. This report and several others created for this initiative will be added to the Social Planning pages of the City's website www.abbotsford.ca .

Child and Youth Friendly City Concept

A Child and Youth Friendly City is a combination of policies and programs framed around responding to the needs of children and youth, and taking action to promote their healthy development.

- ☑ A Child and Youth Friendly City is actively engaged in fulfilling the right of every young citizen to participate fully in their community.
- ☑ It is a community that makes decisions in the best interests of children and youth, and respects their views in doing so.
- ☑ It is an environment that promotes the healthy development of all young people.

UNICEF defines a Child and Youth Friendly City as a community that respects and puts into practice the rights enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. It guarantees the right of all young citizens to:

- ☑ Influence decisions about their city;
- ☑ Express their opinion on the city they want;
- ☑ Participate in family, community and social life;
- ☑ Receive basic services such as health care, education and shelter;
- ☑ Drink safe water and have access to proper sanitation;
- ☑ Be protected from exploitation, violence and abuse;
- ☑ Walk safely in the streets on their own;
- ☑ Meet friends and play;
- ☑ Have green spaces for plants and animals;
- ☑ Live in an unpolluted environment;
- ☑ Participate in cultural and social events; and
- ☑ Be an equal citizen of their city with access to every service, regardless of ethnic origin, religion, income, gender or disability (UNICEF 2004).

Fundamentally, a Child and Youth Friendly City requires a shift in how children, and especially youth, are sometimes thought about. It is a shift from thinking in terms of addressing deficits and problems to building on strengths and assets.

Key strategies for creating a Child and Youth Friendly City include:

- ☑ Child and Youth Friendly policy and laws;
- ☑ City strategy or plan for children and youth;
- ☑ Department and/or staff for plan implementation;
- ☑ On-going impact assessment and evaluation;
- ☑ Funding for Child and Youth Friendly planning; and
- ☑ Integration of voices of children and youth.

The European Network of Child Friendly Cities observes five general guidelines and encourages national and local networks to translate these into specific local policies addressing local points of focus (2009):

Child friendliness requires a **holistic approach** and is representative of the entire city in all its aspects. It is not a quality limited to the development of specific provisions - it is not an aspect of provisions, nor is it an aspect that is determined by the number of provisions.

Child friendly policy requires an **integral approach** where all areas of life within the urban area should be child friendly: education, mobility, urban planning, care services, health, environment, leisure, sports and several others.

Child friendliness also requires an **intergenerational approach:** child friendliness *does not* imply that children require their own city but it *does* imply that children are recognized as citizens that are a part of the entire city. Children should not be socially isolated.

Child friendliness also recognizes the **importance of participation of children and youth.** Regardless of their age children and youth should be fully recognized as citizens who can contribute in their own way towards the quality of urban life. Their contribution should be stimulated, heard and included.

Child friendliness is a very **dynamic trade and a continuous challenge** with constant evolving new aspects. Rather than a permanent label or brand, child friendliness is above all a constant ambition that a city continuously endeavors to achieve.

A Google search of child and youth friendly results in more than 500,000 hits on the internet. The sheer volume further emphasizes the briefness of the summary above. It does seem overwhelming at first glance and truly must reflect community-wide engagement. It does take the entire community to make that difference. A city's role may be more specific to influencing |collaborating with community partners with the exception of the leadership role the City has in planning.

Planning for Child and Youth Friendly Cities

The planning profession is committed to representing and meeting the diverse needs of the community. Children are vulnerable to environmental stress and their physical, emotional and mental needs should be a planning priority. Planners have the ability to help create Child Friendly Cities and Communities that can contribute positively to the development of a child's, happiness and wellbeing (PIA 2005).

Creating Child Friendly environments generates broad economic, social and cultural benefits. It is an action and a policy end that serves the general community and is a long-term investment in the life of that community. As Canada's urban population continues to grow, its cities need to be designed with children's needs in mind. Planning with children and youth in mind will ensure that all urban environments provide positive advantages for their development. Cities provide a diverse range of services, experiences and opportunities and enhance the possibilities for a child's mobility and independence (PIA 2005).

Planners are key players in shaping and managing the built environment both at a metropolitan and a local scale. Planners are in a unique position to directly impact the creation of child friendly cities and communities. According to the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA), the following actions should be taken in the planning and application of Child Friendly community design (PIA 2005):

☑ Governments should give due recognition to the needs of children in policy, planning and service delivery and should encourage broader community awareness of the needs and concerns of children and youth. Within planning, and policy development generally, community consultation should include engagement with children and youth.

☑ Greater awareness in policy making of the relationship between a child's needs and the built environment, and prioritizing of needs such as addressing obesity, creating a sense of belonging and place, fostering social connectedness, enhancing freedom to explore, and encouraging engagement with the environment.

☑ Increase public and policy forums that raise the profile of the importance of Child Friendly Communities.

☑ Preparation of guidelines that ensure multi-purpose public spaces that includes opportunities for public and private spaces for children to play and socialize.

The City of Abbotsford's role is to create the infrastructure and policies that will support and encourage all stakeholders and community members to take action towards creating that best place to raise a family. To be successful in developing that place and feeling of child, youth, and family friendliness it is going to take the whole community! It takes a community to raise a child…AND TOGETHER we do make a DIFFERENCE! A successful Child and Youth Friendly Strategy will not only improve the quality of life for children and youth, but also affects positive change for all residents.

The final piece of the Introduction presents a socio-economic and demographic profile of Abbotsford's families.

Let us put our heads together and see what life we will make for our children"
Sitting Bull, Lakota Leader

Abbotsford Community Profile – A Family Perspective

Age	Total	% of pop
0 to 4	7,880	6.4%
5 to 9	8,130	6.6%
10 to 14	8,890	7%
15 to 19	9,070	7%
Total 0 to 19	33,970	27%
65 to 85+	17,315	14%

"With a median age of 36.6 years, Abbotsford is one of the youngest and most family-oriented communities in the Lower Mainland" is a statement in the 2009 Abbotsford Community Profile produced by the City. A quick scan of Abbotsford's 2006 Census Profile (Statistics Canada – Community Profiles) provides evidence that a large proportion of Abbotsford's residents are children and youth aged 0 to 19. According to the Census, children and youth aged 0 to 19 represent 27% of Abbotsford's population. A quick review of a few sections of the City's current Official Community Plan (OCP) revealed more mentions of seniors than children and youth. The City is in the process of reviewing the Official Community Plan and developing a new strategic plan. The timing of this report will hopefully encourage more actions to enhance Abbotsford's child, youth, and family friendliness. The table on the left provides a population breakdown by age and percentage of children and youth in Abbotsford. Through community surveys parents suggested that early childhood programming and services were very strong while middle and teen years left wide gaps in services. Many alluded to '*a great community to raise kids till they become teenagers, then it's time to leave and go somewhere with more available*'. With the potential of close to 13% middle and teen aged children and youth, it might be a good investment for the city and community to collaborate and enhance opportunities for this age group.

The table on the right highlights characteristics that the Child and Youth Friendly Working Group identified as key and unique to Abbotsford. Abbotsford is home to a large multicultural and diverse population; close to 20% speak non-official languages, potentially low levels of education, and a large number of lone parent families, mostly headed by females. A high mobility rate, although part of complex social systems, is usually related to affordable housing availability. The average household income was $64,089 (2006 Census) and the average individual income was $31,733 (BC Statistics). Population estimated based on average family sizes show that more than 80% of Abbotsford residents live in families with children 0 to 19.

Characteristic			Estimated Population
# of Census families	34,575	Average 3/family	89,085
# Lone Parent families	4,880	Average 2.5/family	12,200
Non-Official Language	23,285	Spoken in home	19%
Immigrants	31,950		26%
Education	24,915	No post secondary	20%
Mobility Rate	33,490	Moved w/in 5 yrs	27%

Abbotsford is a very young community with recently enhanced cultural and recreational facilities. Even with the additions of The Reach, Abbotsford Entertainment and Sports Centre, and the work at the Matsqui and Abbotsford Recreation Centres, the city knows more can be done to increase family orientation. This snapshot of Abbotsford families concludes the introduction of this report. Section One follows with the details of the community consultations.

Section One

Assessment of Child and Youth Friendliness

A literature review of tools and indicators for child and youth friendliness was completed. The scope of child and youth friendly initiatives range from informal youth groups with web presences to larger movements usually associated with specific age groups. Some initiatives are specifically aimed at governance and structure while others attempt to measure too many indicators. A Google Search for Child and Youth Friendly initiatives returns with over 500,000 hits. The following is a select number of the initiatives which were consulted for this report:
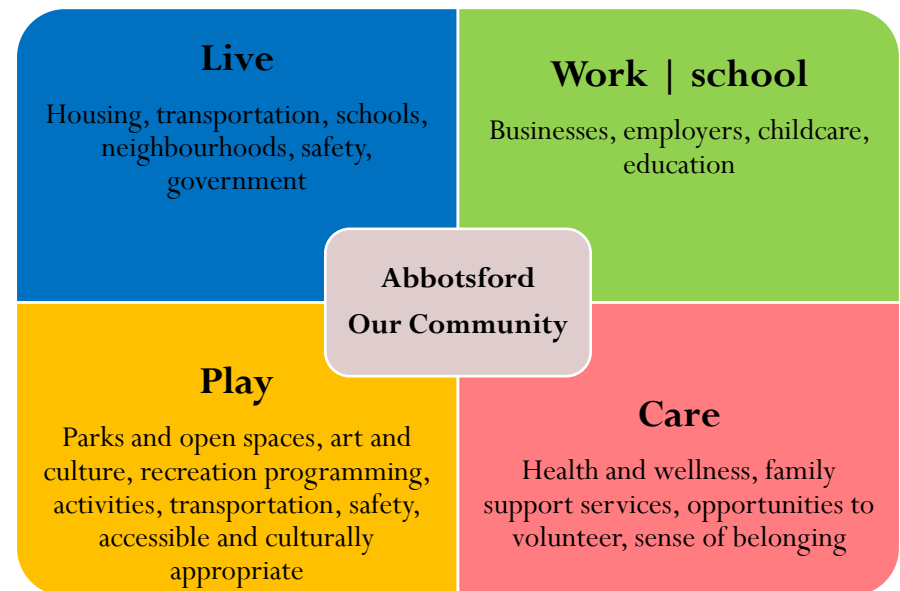
The Society for Children and Youth has a community lens and a municipal lens. The community lens measures 17 domains each with one or two pages of questions or observations. This tool would work well when assessing specifics in more details. The Society's municipal lens uses socio-economic characteristics to guide municipal investment.

The City of Edmonton's child and youth friendly initiative began with an internal / city hall approach with 5 indicators

Child Friendly Ottawa | Child Friendly Calgary are both funded partially by United Ways and/or operate within the non-profit sector
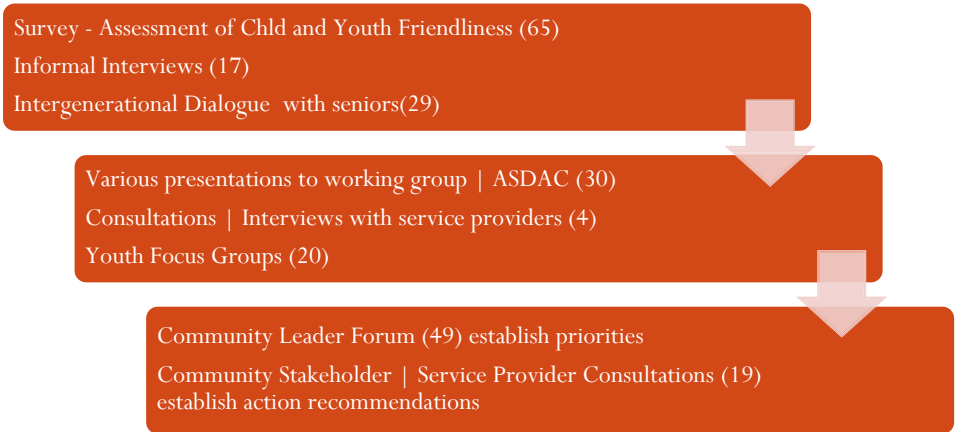
Stuttgart | European Cities provide an exciting look at what could be as they are leaders in the development of child friendly cities | this leadership is partially driven by low birth rates

Reviewing other initiatives assisted in the development of a child and youth friendly assessment tool for this project. It had to be Abbotsford driven and unique to the community. Going over city documents the following statement stood out and had been used in past marketing strategies: Abbotsford will be a liveable, sustainable and prosperous 'City in the country'. A liveable, sustainable and prosperous community is complete, compact, connected, safe, green, and inclusive. The vision of Abbotsford is one of balance, and applies to all of the components of the community: where I **live**, work, play and care. This graph illustrates the lens and influencing indicators which was developed from this statement to assess Abbotsford's child and youth friendliness and build the overall strategy. The lens was utilized for all community consultations.

Live

Housing, transportation, schools, neighbourhoods, safety, government

Work | school

Businesses, employers, childcare, education

Abbotsford Our Community

Play

Parks and open spaces, art and culture, recreation programming, activities, transportation, safety, accessible and culturally appropriate

Care

Health and wellness, family support services, opportunities to volunteer, sense of belonging

Community Consultations

More than 200 individuals and organizations have participated in this project. The chart on the right demonstrates the community consultative process utilized to build the strategy. The numbers in parenthesis illustrate the attendance or results of each step in the community process. Several consultations were held from April to October 2009: two youth focus groups, a community leaders' forum, a community stakeholders' forum, a seniors' dialogue on intergenerational activities, as well as individual interviews and a number of Child and Youth Friendly Working Group and ASDAC meetings. In addition, a survey was developed based on the four quadrants of the child and youth friendly lens. A copy of the survey is included in Appendix One. This section of the report provides highlights of the community consultations.

Survey - Assessment of Chld and Youth Friendliness (65)

Informal Interviews (17)

Intergenerational Dialogue with seniors(29)

Various presentations to working group | ASDAC (30)

Consultations | Interviews with service providers (4)

Youth Focus Groups (20)

Community Leader Forum (49) establish priorities

Community Stakeholder | Service Provider Consultations (19) establish action recommendations

Surveys were completed at community events during May and June. Surveys were also completed with the assistance of the Abbotsford Early Childhood Committee at various groups and drop-ins throughout the community. A total of 65 surveys and 17 interviews were completed: 69% of respondents were parents or caregivers. It was pointed out that the majority of surveys were completed at community events and as such it is possible that the responses are limited to citizens who possess a higher awareness of events. Although a common theme in responses was the perceived lack of communication of what's available, in particular in reference to youth and middle years' activities. Some surveys were not completed in their entirety – respondents felt the survey was too long. This was a common thread mostly for respondents at events.

Length of Residency	Total	%
Up to 3 years	11	22%
4 to 8 years	12	24%
9 to 12 years	9	18%
13 + years	19	37%

The table on the left indicates the respondents' length of residency in Abbotsford. The numbers were fairly distributed with the majority having lived in the community for 9 years or more.

Another question on the survey asked respondents where they got their information about activities for families, children and youth. The pie chart illustrates that most obtained their information from Abbotsford's Recreation Guide. More could be done to include fee for service and private service providers of activities to make the well-read guide even more representative of all that is available for children and youth in the community.

- Media — 1. 17. 22%
- School Newsletter — 2. 17. 22%
- Recreation Guide — 3. 31. 40%
- Other — 4. 13. 16%
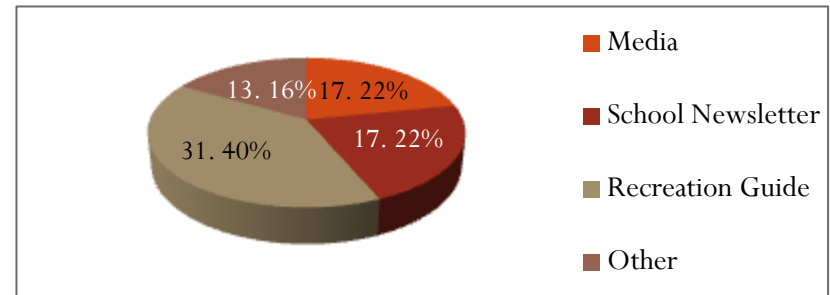
The survey's next section asks respondents to list their top five wishes for increased child and youth friendliness in Abbotsford. The following table represents an aggregated version of their wish list; capitalized ideas were repeated several times.

	Top Five Wishes for increased child and youth friendliness
1.	Better promotion of public activities Community non-competitive sports | age appropriate programs such as soccer at AFFORDABLE prices |ORGANIZED SPORTS| more programs and multicultural programs available for new moms, children, youth, families| keep kids active | MORE FREE EVENTS | affordable summer camps | more activities for children with parents that work | MORE SERVICES FOR TEENAGERS – SAFE HANG OUT SPACES FOR TEENS Traffic safety | safe environment | speed control bumps on Chehalis Drive | safer parks Have schools being used for community hubs
2.	More supportive neighbourhoods | cohesive neighbourhoods where people truly help each other and care More free events for families | programs that range in age | more low cost programs after school Hangouts for teens that are safe | keep kids out of trouble | more skate parks | teenage area at Mill Lake Child care in more public places such as gyms Public transit
3.	Less drug sales in family neighbourhoods A central place to get activity information Increased public transit evenings and weekends More parks | more basketball hoops, sports services where youth can play with free food and drink To arrange youth fairs | better and more spaces for teens to hang out More cultural activities | more day camps
4.	How to take care of each other and be responsible about each other Keep kids out of trouble More family friendly restaurants
5.	Low cost activities | more affordable and free events and things to do More washrooms in parks with change tables

The survey had a total of 42 questions and contains a lot of community input A complete survey summary report will be available on the City's website or by contacting the social planning department at City Hall. For the purpose of this report, key highlights are presented and summarized using the assessment lens.

Where I live	Where I work
55% state it is not easy to find affordable housing	More than 30% find childcare hard to find
78% public transit available in neighbourhood	52% find childcare is not affordable
75% aware events occur in public schools	45% cannot use public transportation to get to work
City provides adequate opportunities for input	25% did not know if their employers had parental leave policies
35% yes and 42% no	One third disagreed or strongly disagreed that their employers held family events
85% know their neighbours	
Majority find it easy to locate programs and activities for children and youth, state there are age appropriate and cultural programs available	Majority of comments = access to public transportation
	"In order to have a job, a house, and pay childcare, a mother needs a minimum of $15/hr which is next to impossible to find."
Where I play	**Where I care**
68% opportunities for families to play	65% find it easy to meet and connect
46% bike racks accessible	About half agree children would be watched by neighbours while playing outside
54% community easy to walk around	
21% activities/programs not affordable	60% feel safe in their neighbourhoods
40% unaware of city subsidies	75% neighbours would help during late evening emergency
63% staff/facilities welcoming	71% feel a sense of ownership and caring
26% safe to bike 28% do not know	82% value a sense of belonging
52% range of arts and culture programs	
Most comments are around getting information in the hands of parents about programming available + MORE FOR YOUTH	

The next step in the community consultative process was to engage youth in focus groups. Focus groups were held at Abbotsford Recreation Centre and Matsqui Recreation Centre. The Abbotsford Youth Commission generously arranged the logistics and marketing for both events. When asked what they liked least, youth

indicated: high crime and the Bacon Brothers, fun and free stuff is always busy and overcrowded, too many motor vehicle accidents – what is up with our driving skills, cigarette and smoking being allowed in public spaces, and the lack of transportation to Chilliwack. The following are the results of the focus groups using the lens:

Live Youth centres open 24/7 Safer neighbourhoods More parks and open spaces Better lighting in neighbourhoods More safer family oriented places	**Work/Go to School** Increased funding for school equipment More options in school More security Peanut free zones rather than whole school
Play Affordable arcades Bigger/more skateboard parks BMX bike parks/track Youth centre open on weekends Affordable recreation More sports groups that are affordable Theme parks + more free things to do Better stores for shopping	**Care** Free care for everyone Place to find volunteer opportunities Adults that talk to us and care More FREE community events See people care more and not throw trash everywhere More places where we can show we really do care!

Live New buses | Buses pass more often Safer streets | Cleaner environment Schools New businesses | Houses Government should listen to youth Obama in Canada	**Work/Go to School** Cheaper costs for school/community sports Better food in cafeteria at school Junk food at school More job opportunities | More jobs More P.E. time | Longer lunch hours Less classroom hours | less homework Education
Play More skate parks | BMX track More programs for youth Cheaper prices at MRC/AYC Legalize fireworks Age appropriate play equipment in parks – youth would like equipment too Youth dances for grade 10s More parks and water parks	**Care** More programming for youth in the community More housing opportunities Government doesn't listen to youth Sense of belonging Less crime! Health | Support services More doctors and optometrists

The community input received through surveys, informal interviews, and youth focus groups was then aggregated and presented with demographic information at a Community Leader's Forum held October 1st at the Clearbrook Library. A combination of community leaders and youth attended the event which was intended

to set priorities. After a presentation on the results of consultations, individuals were asked to decide on one or two priorities for each of the lenses. Individuals formed groups and came to consensus on the following priorities.

Live	Work | Go to School
Housing for youth	Transportation improvements
Affordable housing for under 19 – close to services and shopping	Extended Bus services
Security and safety | community patrols	Better public transportation
Affordable, safe, and suitable neighbourhoods for families	Get to work without a car
Affordable housing	More balanced school day
Neighbourhood common spaces	More meaningful job opportunities
Youth clinic | mobile or connected to a youth centre	School open for informal community use after hours
Support close neighbourly relations	Fair wage | increase minimum wage
Mixed use | mixed income housing, for youth leaving care programs	More alternate education opportunities (even though what is there is great)
Play	**Care**
Another good skate park	Neighbourhood Development
More accessibility to youth centres/safe places	Walkable, safe neighbourhoods
Youth centered groups	Everyone has a spot/place to feel included
Youth advisory for development of parks and residential areas	Social assistance
Free organized sports	Sex ed. | access to birth control for youth community
More play spaces in more places	Better communication about all the great services we have
More $ / access to recreation	Accessible neighbourhood programs and informal drop ins

The following detailed charts record all of the ideas discussed at the forum organized in clusters. The top set of bullets reflects the above priorities and the bottom bullets all the individual ideas.

Where I live

Housing for youth	Access	Opportunities to express	Safety
• affordable housing • affordable housing for under 19 • close to services and shopping • affordable, safe, suitable neighbourhoods for families	• Better public transportation • extended bus service - hours, routes, cost • improvements to the bus system	• grafitti wall • better jobs | fun and flexible	• security and safety - community patrols • safety • security • walkable and safe neighbourhoods
• cheaper housing x4 • more workshop for life and independence program and AA and NA for youth • all renters should be allowed pets • affordable housing for single parents and youth • apartments or housing x2 • consistent, stable, affordable housing for families • suitable, affordable housing for families • housing located near practical shopping - can walk to x2 • continue neighbourhood development x2	• more transportation x3 • better bus system • bus system lighting - eg. Victoria • better transportation to Vancouver • have bus service hours extended x3 • greater subsidy for youth transportation • cheaper transportation • buses come more often • interesting neighbourhoods for me to walk in • easy to walk or bike to all the things I want to get and do x3 • public transport that is functional for school and work - especially early and late shifts • increased transportation options (bike lanes and bus routes)	• youth centres for activities • more activities x2 • places for kids to grafitti freely • more school options • more awareness of social issues at school • more youth centres • workshops for youth • counselors and treatment • combined SD 34 adn City Youth Council • encourage more youth safe zones! • increase green spaces that are youth friendly • 2 more youth centres - east and west	• community patrols • schools modelling great adult strengths • security - crime - gangs x4 • environment - litter x3 • safe place to live • increase police and youth interactions • safe community x2 • slower traffic on local streets - increased traffic calming • environmentally conscious practice at all government and public buildings/programs to model and inspire whole public • safe bike lanes • safer at night and in alleys - increased lighting

Where I play

Increased opportunities	Neighbourhood Development	Accessible to all	Safe spaces	Schools | youth input
• another good skate park (like the Forks in Winnipeg) • playgrounds / underground • talent shows / competitions • parks and activities for all ages • free arcades x2 • animal related things • skateboard parks x3 • BMX tracks • mroe play spaces and turf • subsidize companies to create free recreational activities that focus on after school time slot • culture - museums • better parks - cleaner and friendly x2 • more funding • sand lots • family recreation events • free parks and fun places • theme parks • concerts for families • more arts	• accessible neighbourhood programs and informal drop-ins • neighbourhood common spaces (open public 3rd spaces for mised ages/income) x2 • block parties | community gatherings • natural spaces • available in neighbourhoods - parks, programs, recreational activities • community projects that youth can get into after school and that are important and 'real' • sense of participation, ownership, belonging • neighbourhood affordability in programming • more informal neighbourhood sports programs and drop in places • neighbourhood parks with multigenerational focus - things for everyone to do	• free organized sports • more accessible recreation • more play spaces in more places • more social events for different age group • drop in sports • family recreation apart from swim/skate • family movie night affordable • free sports x2 • transporation - better system x2 • better training for new drivers (N longer) • more programming at an affordable price • less cost	• youth centered groups • stronger youth support networks • longer hours for youth centre • increased safety in parks for walks, family gatherings • girls groups • boys groups • homework club • youth centre x2 • Youth commission type programming (free) and places to hang • remove street disorder • 24 hour facilities to safely gather • open longer	• youth advisory re: development of parks / residential spaces • more field trips at school • rock band competitions • hippy fest • head bangers clean? • parent tutoring • ask youth what is needed

Where I work | Go to school

Transportation	Job opportunities	Accessible to all	Schools	youth advisory re: development of parks / residential spaces
• improvements - bike | walk | bus • able to get to work without a car • incentives to carpool • easy to get to work • increased transportation	• more meaningfuljob opportunities - not just coffee, burgers, and retaild • fair wage | increase minimum wage • more training for the employee • on site daycare and after school space at work • local employment - decrease commuting • work near my house • increased minimum wage and more jobs x5 • flexible work schedules • ongoing wellness programs in schools and work places	• greater cultural awareness • schools open for informal community use (drop-in) after hours • accessible, affordable child care that is available for what and when families need it x2 • welcome business to community - make it feel welcoming • more cheaper babysitters • cheaper school sports • no student fees • free childcare provided by youth volunteers / school groups	• more balanced school day • more alternate education even though what is there is great - alternate education opportunities for youth • schools need more help in classrooms x2 • one on one support • more hands on activities x2 • after school activities in schools • schools open for drop in during evenings • healthy variety of clubs in middle and high schools to keeps kids engaged • access to school facilities after hours • modify school system to allow other kids to attend • lower drop out rates by enhancing class opportunities for at-risk youth • education - flexibility in opportunities - intervention to youth • more choice for school programs • more play at school - lunch sports /specialty groups • homework club x4 • longer gym classes	• more support for youth friendly community activities • increased networking wtih community partners • prevention • artificial turf and more green spaces

Where I care

Youth Medical Clinic	Neighbouthood Development	Everyone has a spot | place to feel included	Social assistance	Awareness
• mobile or connected to a youth centre • free health clinics • youth outreach • sex education and access to birth control • cost of meds - less expensive • access to health • first aid • free counselling and mental health • medical care • better sex ed curriculum and subsidized birth control or morning after pills • free clinics for youth x9 • more doctors • counselling	• support close neighbourly relations • mixed-use, mixed-income housing, especially for youth leaving care programs • more caring, more clean environment, and caring for yourself and others • safe and secure community • neighbourhood development for youth and with youth in mind • mix up housing, stores, parks, gardens, make them closer together x4 • mix up income groups ina neighbourhood • increase street parties • nieghbourhoods that are truly neighbourly • share eat and talk together - cant force this but can create supportive atmosphere • housing that accomodates life change - singles, families, aged	• break down stereotypes • youth hub • more $ and access to recreation services • increased dollars for physical and recreation • more opportunities to engage in community - wellness programs and volunteering • individuals sense of belonging • places for young people to go to (kids who have no where to go because families are addicted) • more youth drop in space - supervised • quarterly free youth events • more shelters and more support for homelessness	• addictions • money • homelessness • young parents • child care • access to support services • more care for youth with kids • child support • clothes, money and safety • family support - foster care - too much and no support	• better communication about all the great services available for kids|youth|parents| seniors • family support and parenting programs • family centres for resources and services • parenting skills needed and services needed • strengthen parenting skills • effective support for families parenting skills • support for young parents including opportunities to meet other young parents

The insights and depth of thought at this forum provides a great deal of information for detailed recommendations and actions towards a child and youth friendly strategy. It is hoped that this information will continue to be referred to in upcoming years and when detailing out the action plan for the community.

It is interesting to note that the Child and Youth Friendly Forum held on March 11th 2008 which reflected a mapping project with approximately 9 classes of students from grades 6 to 8 throughout Abbotsford had very similar themes as priorities: safety, transportation – bus system for youth, more recreation, opportunities to participate | Youth City Council, more stores + coffee places, and green spaces. It was as a result of this event that the Abbotsford Child and Youth Friendly Working Group came up with the following 5 priorities when setting its objectives for the current year:

- ☑ Urban design in public spaces
- ☑ Recreation and community facilities – more entertainment
- ☑ Family support systems
- ☑ Social and justice services
- ☑ Neighbourhood security and policing + amenities closer to home

Following the Community Leader's Forum, a Community Stakeholders' event was held on October 16th. This event was intended to verify the research, identify potential gaps, and set specific action steps for the priorities identified at the Community Leader's event.

The following table illustrates ideas for specific actions under each of the quadrant's lenses.

Live	Work/School
Affordable housing and public transportation • subsidy (like seniors access) – so not relegated to co-op or social housing complexes • less stigma • ensure criteria are manageable • support for youth in care to stay in foster home after 19 • ease plus education about assistance available • independent living arrangements more accessible • support for families in low income housing when youth are 19 • housing with life skills training for specific populations – Aboriginal suggested • conditions in housing complexes need to be liveable Youth Medical Clinic – mobile – after school (Maple Ridge and White Rock) Youth and family housing - Housing FREE Health Clinic and sex education	Transportation – use school facility • Industrial areas need bus access for jobs • Entertainment too – movie theatres/recreation facilities • Meaningful employment has transportation issues attached • Ask bus system to coordinate with employers for hours • Remote housing and reserves do not have transportation • Environmentally sensible to take steps to increase public transportation use and access Transportation • Pro d days free – free bus one weekend per month • Think about similar system to U Pass for youth • More public transit or on call transportation Transportation – safety at bus loops Use of classrooms after school – meetings /board games / sit and chat

Play	Care
Improve access to subsidies for recreation – information required/process/literacy level Grades 5 – free access to skate and pool and possibly have another year available at grade 10 Affordable programs and play opportunities – access for all Programs and services in accessible places Better slides at pool	Better community policing in some of the areas kids use already Coffee shops hold programs facilitated and supervised Expand neighbourhood hubs to older ages – programs and homework help Comprehensive guide detailing what is available in Abbotsford

This concluded the community consultation process towards the development of an Abbotsford Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy. Although this report and research might be viewed as limited due to 200 participants, there is a whole lot of great information and thought in the community input.

All of the information gathered for this project was given to a student at the University of the Fraser Valley to see about developing a one page visual that might capture all of this. Shana Roberts created the one page design to capture not only the community feedback but also the lens and influencing indicators, using the United Way of Ottawa's middle years' framework. The Abbotsford Child and Youth Friendly framework is located on the following page.

The report now moves from community consultations to the more direct role of policies and infrastructure development for child and youth friendly cities.

ABBOTSFORD YOUTH COMMISSION

ABBOTSFORD YOUTH COMMISSION

VISION

An Abbotsford community devoted to ensuring that all children and youth have the opportunity to meet their potential.

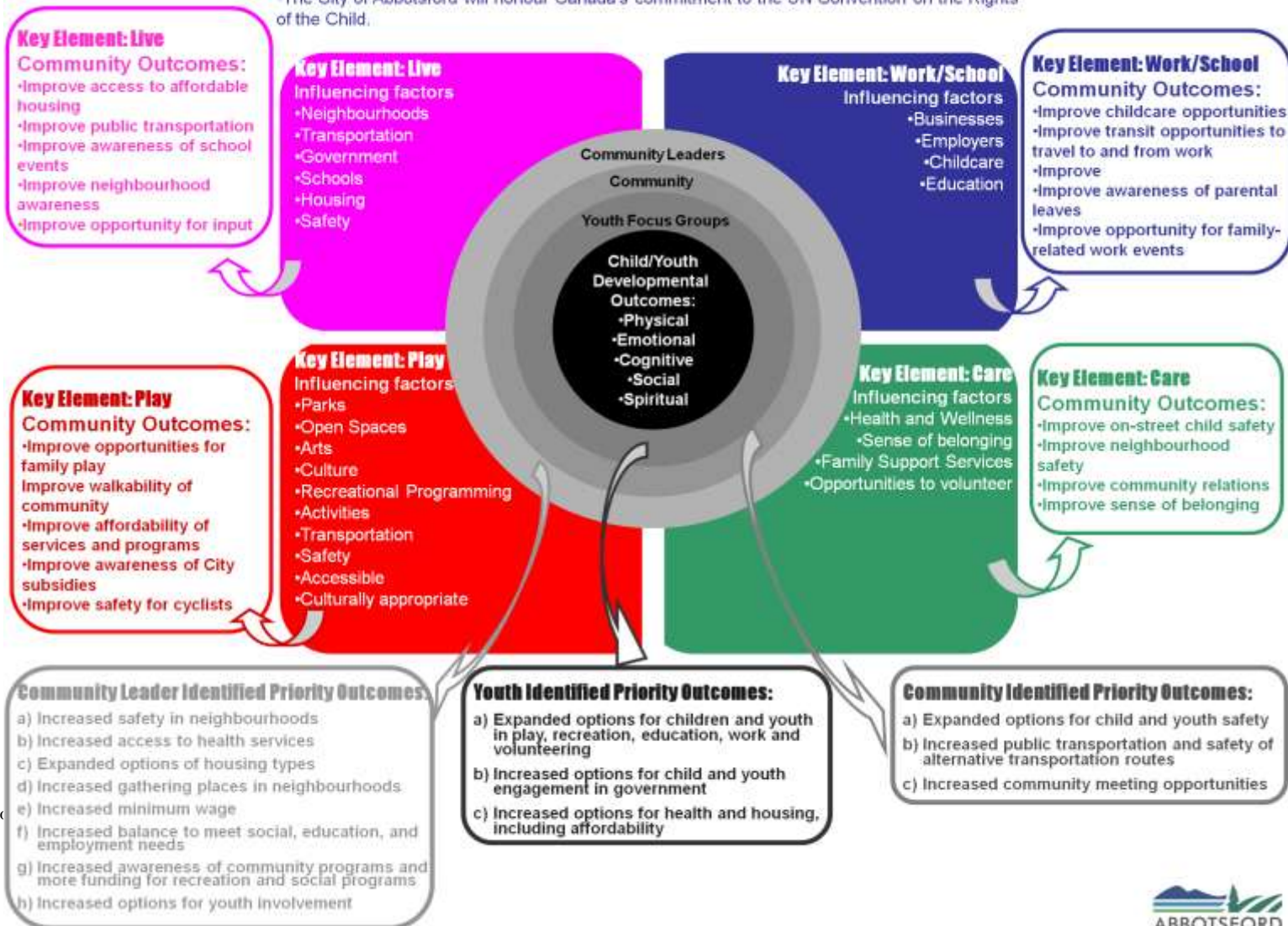**STATEMENT OF INTENTION FOR CHILD AND FRIENDLY DEVELOPMENT**

MISSION

To work together with families, community organizations, caregiver, to ensure the healthy development of the community's children and youth.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The work of Child Friendly Abbotsford Statement of Intention will be guided by the following principles:

We, the community of Abbotsford, recognize that…

- Our community benefits with child and youth participation
- Children (0-19 years) make up 27% of Abbotsford's population
- Young persons are individuals, citizens, and represent the seeds of our future
- The City of Abbotsford will honour Canada's commitment to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Key Element: Live

Community Outcomes:
- Improve access to affordable housing
- Improve public transportation
- Improve awareness of school events
- Improve neighbourhood awareness
- Improve opportunity for input

Key Element: Live

Influencing factors
- Neighbourhoods
- Transportation
- Government
- Schools
- Housing
- Safety

Key Element: Work/School

Influencing factors
- Businesses
- Employers
- Childcare
- Education

Key Element: Work/School

Community Outcomes:
- Improve childcare opportunities
- Improve transit opportunities to travel to and from work
- Improve
- Improve awareness of parental leaves
- Improve opportunity for family-related work events

Community Leaders

Community

Youth Focus Groups

Child/Youth Developmental Outcomes:
- Physical
- Emotional
- Cognitive
- Social
- Spiritual

Key Element: Play

Community Outcomes:
- Improve opportunities for family play
- Improve walkability of community
- Improve affordability of services and programs
- Improve awareness of City subsidies
- Improve safety for cyclists

Key Element: Play

Influencing factors
- Parks
- Open Spaces
- Arts
- Culture
- Recreational Programming
- Activities
- Transportation
- Safety
- Accessible
- Culturally appropriate

Key Element: Care

Influencing factors
- Health and Wellness
- Sense of belonging
- Family Support Services
- Opportunities to volunteer

Key Element: Care

Community Outcomes:
- Improve on-street child safety
- Improve neighbourhood safety
- Improve community relations
- Improve sense of belonging

Community Leader Identified Priority Outcomes:

a) Increased safety in neighbourhoods
b) Increased access to health services
c) Expanded options of housing types
d) Increased gathering places in neighbourhoods
e) Increased minimum wage
f) Increased balance to meet social, education, and employment needs
g) Increased awareness of community programs and more funding for recreation and social programs
h) Increased options for youth involvement

Youth Identified Priority Outcomes:

a) Expanded options for children and youth in play, recreation, education, work and volunteering
b) Increased options for child and youth engagement in government
c) Increased options for health and housing, including affordability

Community Identified Priority Outcomes:

a) Expanded options for child and youth safety
b) Increased public transportation and safety of alternative transportation routes
c) Increased community meeting opportunities

Abbo... ...onsulting

ABBOTSFORD

Section Two

Policies and Development Designs and Guidelines

Source: http://conference.europoint.eu/childinthecity/presenation/Karin%20Hoyland.pdf

This section of the report focuses on Child and Youth Friendly City initiatives in three areas: **Urban Environment,** Promoting mobility and inclusiveness through urban design and layout; **Decision-making:** Supporting the interests, needs and perspectives of children and youth; and **Civic Services:** Providing equal access to services.

"The state of the young in any city is the litmus test for the city's level of sustainability and vibrancy."

Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka, Executive Director of UN HABITAT

There is a notable similarity between principles of Child and Youth Friendly Cities and sustainability. Gleeson and Sipe note that a society that places children's needs at its centre must always look to the future and make provisions for it (2006). Therefore, sustainability puts the child at the centre. Roger Hart writes that, "If children were carefully considered and involved in the planning process, cities could become more environmentally and socially sustainable" (2005). Many of the key principles of Child and Youth Friendly Cities are the same that form the basis of a sustainable community.

Child and Youth Friendly City policies and practices can be organized into three areas: Child and Youth Friendly Urban Environments: Designing a City that physically supports the developmental needs of children and youth; Child and Youth Friendly Decision-Making: Young people's interests and voices being heard in decision-making and directly involving young people in civic affairs; Child and Youth Friendly Civic Services: Framing civic services around the development needs of children and youth. This section of the report addresses the three areas in more detail.

Urban Environment in a Child and Youth Friendly City

Urban environment refers to the physical design and layout of the community. Policies and practices that support Child and Youth Friendly Cities can be broken down into four main categories:

- ☑ Land use planning;

- ☑ Housing and housing developments;

- ☑ Transportation; and

- ☑ Play spaces.

California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights

Every child should have the opportunity to:
1. Discover California's Past
2. Splash in the water
3. Play in a safe place
4. Camp under the stars
5. Explore nature
6. Learn to swim
7. Play on a team
8. Follow a trail
9. Catch a fish
10. Celebrate their heritage

Source: http://calroundtable.org/cobor.htm

Transformation of a schoolyard in Rotterdam, Amsterdam Source: http://conference.europoint.eu/childinthecity/presenation/Josine%20van%20den%20Bogaard.pdf

Child and Youth Friendly Land Use Planning

The form that a community acquires influences the activities that take place in that community   In general, communities that isolate young people and restrict independent mobility are not Child and Youth Friendly. This isolation has a number of negative consequences. It discourages interaction and contact with the local neighborhood; increases exposure to the dangers associated with automobiles; and, contributes to a sedentary life style for children and youth (Gleeson and Sipe 2006).

Land use planning principles which are the foundation for Child and Youth Friendly neighbourhoods include mixed use zoning, nodal development and complete communities. Neighborhoods that have mixed uses provide opportunities for children and youth in their daily lives to experience independent access to the breadth of urban life (Freeman 2006).

Independent access to their neighbourhood is important for young people to develop physically and socially (Tranter and Pawson 2001; Hubsmith 2006).

Independent access: Leads to personal, intellectual and psychological development; Enables young people to access opportunities without being reliant on parents; and is important to the community itself - communities without children suffer because they lack youthful liveliness, creativity, and diversity. (Malone 2008)

> The Pearl District, Portland, Oregon
>
> Downtown Portland has become an attractive playground for both parents and children to explore.
>
> Families are interested in living in the central city but existing projects do not contain the right combination of unit types and prices to attract families with children over the long-term. One solution is to adapt floor plans to include spaces for children (e.g. turn the second bathroom into a child's bedroom).
>
> (Groc 2007)

What do places say to children? Do they sing in the soul? Or curse? "If children see their environment as a portrait of themselves, we might ask ourselves what our local environments tell them. If children learn by observing and participating, what does their daily routine teach them about the adult world? Our current built form may leave children and youth wondering if they are wanted in most public places." (Day 2007)

In 1992, **Vancouver, BC** adopted guidelines for providing family housing in high-density areas. One quarter of the units needed to meet family friendly design requirements and have at least two bedrooms (that are suitable for families). These guidelines also stipulated that developers needed to contribute to public amenities such as child care and parks.

Source: "High-Density Housing for Families with Children Guide-lines" City of Vancouver.

A Place to Call "Home" – Youth Friendly Housing and Housing Developments

Child and Youth Friendly residential areas are a combination of unit and neighbourhood design. Young people, especially very young children, spend a great deal of time in and around their home. The environment around young people's homes should be safe from traffic, pollution and other physical and social hazards (Cooper and Sarkissian 1986).

Housing Developments with the Needs of Children and Youth in Mind

Housing developments, be it an apartment complex or single family housing development, can be organized to be Child and Youth Friendly. A distinct visual identity through unique design and clear markings are important to help children navigate their neighbourhood safely and independently. "Clustered" housing units can help to retain trees and green space, and family oriented housing units clustered together can keep noise from bothering neighbours (Yates 2005). A semi-private "buffer zone" (such as a porch) between family private space and public space allows for increasing independence and supervision (Cooper and Sarkissian 1986).

Requiring a certain portion of housing in developments to be "family-friendly" can help ensure that there is sufficient supply.

Play Opportunities and Housing

Large houses on small lots do not provide the informal outdoor play environments that young people need as part of their healthy development (Yates 1995). A Child and Youth Friendly development ensures that children can access play areas in the vicinity of their home that they are able to reach by themselves.

Principles of Child Friendly Housing

City of Portland, Oregon

Bureau of Planning

The design of the unit should provide for a variety of uses that do not conflict with each other.

Provide creative architecture to accommodate different activities for different users, dividing space into activity zones that allow different user groups (small children, older children, adults) to pursue different activities, while minimizing conflicts.

(Furlong & Cunningham 2007)

Source:http://conference.europoint.eu/childinthecity/presenation/Josine%20van%20den%20Bogaard.pdf

Child and Youth Friendly Transportation

The transportation used by children and youth affects their health and development. A Child and Youth Friendly City protects children and youth from the negative health and social effects of a car-based society, reduces the need for motorized transport, and enables young people to use other transportation options (Tranter and Pawson 2001; Gilbert and O'Brien 2005).

Encourage Public Transit as a Viable Transportation Option

Transit hubs should be as close as possible to public spaces and young people's activities (Gilbert and O'Brian 2005). Encouraging young people to use transit increases overall use so it supports better levels of transit service (Gilbert and O'Brian). Reducing the amount of transfers that children and youth need to take to get to their destination will increase safety and ease of use of the transit system (Gilbert and O'Brian 2005). There are three broad categories of benefits for using public transit: mobility, equity and efficiency.

Mobility benefits result from increased travel options for children, youth and adults who do not have access or cannot use an automobile or are limited in travel due to age, disability or income. The expansion of accessible conventional transit further improves mobility. With an aging population and a greater emphasis on integrating persons with disabilities into the community, transit's accessibility role will become even more important.

Equity removes travel barriers by giving all citizens access to low-cost accessible transit. This provides access to jobs, services and housing throughout the City.

Efficiency benefits result from reduced motor vehicle use. This includes user savings, congestion reduction, parking cost savings, reduced accidents, local economic development, and environmental and social benefits.

As one of many growing communities in BC, Abbotsford faces major infrastructure and congestion costs as well as traffic control and enforcement costs associated with rapidly increasing automobile use. By diverting growth in automobile traffic to transit, particularly at peak travel times, significant savings can be realized.

Abbotsford is in the process of updating its strategic plan and revising the Official Community Plan and its Growth Management Strategies. Increased mobility and access to varying modes of transportation will be major themes in these plans. Public transit provides a travel alternative to the automobile and can also be an important tool in shaping land use patterns in communities. Investments in transit will increase the level of child friendliness in Abbotsford.

Current Bus Service Child Friendly

Many of the services offered by BC Transit in Abbotsford are child friendly. On fixed-route conventional transit a fleet of low-floor buses provide wheelchair and scooter accessible service on transit routes throughout Abbotsford, with extensions to Aldergrove and Mission. Low-floor buses are equipped with a ramp, have no entry steps and have a kneeling feature that lowers the entry level for passengers who have difficulty climbing stairs – these features contribute to the service's child friendliness. Buses with no entry steps are incredibly useful and friendly for parents with children in strollers.

Kids Ride Free Program
Between 6:00 p.m. Friday and the end of service on Sunday, adult passengers can bring two children who are aged 14 and younger on board the transit bus for free. The Program is offered to parents, family members and guardians paying valid cash fare, using monthly passes or BC Bus Pass. At all times of day children 5 years of age and under can ride the bus for free.

The **Safe Routes to School** program in the US is an initiative to encourage more young people to walk and bike to school. It is based on five components.

Evaluation: Surveys to understand attitudes around walking and biking to school, and what changes will help;

Engineering: Improvements to routes as a result of assessments and "walkabouts" to identify issues on routes;

Education: A comprehensive educational component that teaches bicycle and pedestrian safety in schools;

Encouragement: Providing incentives to walking and biking such as contests and events, such as a "bike to school day"; and

Enforcement: Working with police to vigilantly enforce traffic laws around schools.

(Hubsmith 2006)

The McGruff Bus: A Safe Place to Be

The Central Fraser Valley RCMP and transit staff joined forces to offer a safe place for children and others seeking help. The Transit Safe House Program is similar to the well-known Block Parent Program except that the buses are the "safe houses". A person in trouble can wave down a transit bus for help. Bus drivers are trained to assist people in trouble, and each bus is equipped to contact police and ambulance services if necessary.

Support Walking as a Viable Transportation Option

Creating communities in which children and youth can travel easily and safely by walking has health and social benefits. Destinations which children and youth travel to can be studied to create "complete routes" that are safe from dangers (Gilbert and O'Brien 2005). There is a Walking School Bus safety initiative in Abbotsford. More research is needed to find where this initiative is operating successfully in the community.

Encourage Cycling as a Viable Transportation Option

Cycling is low cost, increases the spatial range of activities that youth are able to access independently, and promotes exercise and play opportunities (Tranter and Pawson 2001).

A network of bike routes separated from traffic is ideal. Use tools to facilitate bike travel on roads, such as cyclist controlled lights and bike-priority waiting areas at intersections.

Bike racks at major community destinations and throughout a neighborhood will enable bicycles to be locked up safely in a location that is not a nuisance to others (Gilbert and O'Brien 2005).

Two examples of indicators that cities have used include:

The age at which children are given "license" by their parents to independently travel to school and back (Tranter & Pawson 2001).

The distance of dedicated bike and walking routes, and the number of children and youth using them (Centre for Sustainable Transportation 2004).

Source: http://conference.europoint.eu/childinthecity /presenation/Karen%20Malone.pdf

Play, Recreation and Built Environments

Play is a very important piece of childhood development. Children and youth "learn by doing", and play is the primary way that children become acquainted with their environment (Tranter & Pawson 2001; Furlong & Cunningham 2007). "Play is any non-school activity that has elements of choice, leads to satisfaction, and encourages progressive learning and enjoyment. Activities can include, but are not limited to, recreation, sport, leisure, arts, drama, dance, civic engagement, youth activism, volunteerism, social clubs and youth leadership." (Playworks 2005)

In a Child and Youth Friendly City, children and youth are able to play safely, spontaneously and freely throughout their community (Tranter and Pawson 2001, Walsh 2006). Children and youth need experiences that can only be found through participation in community life (Freeman 2006).

Provide Opportunities for "Open-ended" Play

"Open-ended" play is naturally adaptable, challenges age related skill development, and expands children's interests. It is play where the activity does not have a single purpose or outcome –for example wooden blocks (Furlong and Cunningham 2007; Walsh 2006).

Play and Green Space

Children use green space and nature for many different types of play. They can change their surroundings through activities such as building a fort, clearing the ground or building a dam in a stream. Especially in urban centers children and youth do not always have access to wild areas. Play outdoors leads to important social, physical and cognitive competency development (Karsten and van Vliet 2006; Cooper and Sarkissian 1986; Malone 2008.

Play is the last of the four key areas for practices and policies towards child and youth friendliness. The many ideas presented in this summary are not meant to be prescriptive but rather provide a menu from which opportunities to make Abbotsford more Child and Youth Friendly can be further explored. In addition to all the great ideas there needs to be a process or framework to ensure children and youth are given a voice in decision-making on topics that have the potential to affect them.

Parks can be "roughed up" though preserving urban wilderness, using wild grass, and planting robust species (Walsh 2006).

Preserving corners of developments or pieces of properties in a "natural" state provides children with access to a small amount of wild space (Yates 2005).

http://conference.europoint.eu/childinthecity/presenation/Tim%20Gill.pdf

New York City is building a highly engaging playground. The playground is a, "figure eight-shape landscape, with sloping wooden ramps that connect a zone of sand to a zone of water. A secure structure will house loose parts, including foam blocks, small boats and collections of tubings, elbows and gaskets for construction project, all to be maintained and overseen by the play workers –staff members who encourage children to interact with the pieces.

(Cardwell 2007; Groc 2007)

Decision-Making in a Child and Youth Friendly City

Child and Youth Friendly Decision-Making is defined as young people's interests and voices being heard in decision-making and directly involving young people in civic affairs. Based on explorations of models in other communities the following provides ideas for strategies that have been successful in achieving child and youth friendly decision-making.

Child and youth friendly decision-making can be broken down into three components:
- ☑ Support the inclusion of young peoples' interests, needs and perspectives in decision-making;
- ☑ Encourage the participation of children and youth in civic issues; and
- ☑ Supporting the Inclusion of Young People's Interests and Perspectives.

> The **City of Edmonton** has a "Child Friendly Corporate Committee" with representatives from each City department who share information, identify emerging opportunities, and facilitate actions within their departments to make their areas more child friendly.
>
> Source:
> http://www.edmonton.ca/for_residents/resident_services_programs/child-friendly-edmonton.aspx

> **The City of Surrey** currently has an Interdepartmental Child and Youth Friendly City Committee with representatives from Social Planning, Community Leisure Services, the Community Schools Partnership Initiative and Surrey Public Library. This committee meets approximately four times a year to share information and collaborate on child and youth initiatives.
>
> Source: http://www.surrey.ca/NR/rdonlyres/D3E49127-CE2B-4C10-BCD5-F83C76A3DCB4/46299/CreatingaCYFCityReport2009.pdf

A Coordinating Body across City Departments

An inter-departmental coordinating body can promote effective collaboration and information-sharing that supports the development of Child and Youth Friendly policies and practices (UNICEF 2004).

A coordinating body does not take over responsibility from city departments, but rather promotes inter-departmental collaboration on child and youth issues.

Child Impact Assessments and Checklists

A Child Impact Assessment is a systematic process of assessing the impact that decisions will have on children and youth, before the decision is made (UNICEF 2004). Projects and policies can be put through a "Child and Youth Friendly" lens to identify ways to improve results for young people.

> The **City of Edmonton** recently adopted the Child Friendly Edmonton Strategy, which contains the building blocks of a child and youth friendly city. Included in this policy is a Child Impact Assessment (CIA) tool.
>
> A selection process decides which projects or policies are selected to undergo a CIA assessment. Program staff will comment on the impact of the program on children and youth. They will draw on information from a wide variety of sources (staff expertise, focus groups with youth, etc). Recommendations are made as to how to improve the outcomes of the policy for children and youth, and the relevant decision makers choose whether the recommendations can be used.(Yates 2005)

Visioning & Implementing a Child and Youth Friendly City

Denver, Colorado

Leadership and Governance: Be strategic about who you collaborate with on the initiative.
Community Mobilization: Recognize and value the strengths that different partners bring to the table and mobilize around assets.
Personal Interest and Growth: Relationships before resources and people before products.
Asset Mapping: Link desires and needs that support children and youth as actors that shape the city.
(Wridt 2008)

Develop Child and Youth Friendly Indicators

A set of indicators can help to set objectives, track and evaluative Child and Youth Friendly initiatives and changes in the community.

Building the Capacity of Municipal Staff

Training opportunities for staff members can help build understanding of the concepts of Child and Youth Friendly Cities, as well as the basics of working with children and youth.

Christchurch, New Zealand has created a training piece for staff members in all departments. It focuses on the concept of children as stakeholders, and the importance of their views in decision-making in a wide variety of issue areas. This training piece gives advice to staff who may not be accustomed to working with children. Source: www.ccc.govt.nz

Encouraging the Direct Participation of Children and Youth

Engaging children and youth is consistently identified as being the most important component of a Child and Youth Friendly City (McNulty 2004). There are many documented benefits of youth participation in municipal decision-making to youth, city staff, and the community itself.

Collecting Data about Children and Youth

Regularly collecting information on children and youth is useful for a number of reasons. It can provide evidence to help inform decision-making, evaluate child and youth friendly initiatives, and provide indicators to help track progress (UNICEF 2004; Play Works 2005).

Source: http://conference.europoint.eu/childinthecity/presenation/Tim%20Gill.pdf

Two examples of youth councils in Surrey:

The **Surrey Leadership Youth Council (SLYC)** is an initiative of the Planning & Development Department (Social Planning) and Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services (Community and Leisure Services) to develop a model for engaging youth in social and community planning.
The **Surrey Youth Council (SYC)** is a city-wide Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services youth council. Its goals include uniting a diverse range of youth in the community in an effort to offer broader opportunities, empowering youth and allow them to contribute to society in a variety of work, making youth activities more fun, and making youth more active.
Source: http://www.surrey.ca/NR/rdonlyres/D3E49127-CE2B-4C10-BCD5-F83C76A3DCB4/46299/CreatingaCYFCityReport2009.pdf

Youth Councils

Youth councils can be attached to the city as a whole, a city department, a specific civic facility, or a specific project or initiative. With proper support from city staff, a youth council can fulfill a variety of functions including information gathering, advisory or "hands-on" project based roles.

Youth on "Adult" Committees

Youth can be included on adult committees if the young people are properly supported with training and mentorship. Adjusting some practices to accommodate young people's participation is also necessary, such as the time and location of a meeting (Hamilton 2007).

Youth as Staff Members

Young people's participation is not limited to being volunteers. Many municipalities have hired young people as staff members.

The City of **Hampton, Virginia** created two part-time positions for youth in the City Planning Department. In this ongoing program, the teens were hired to work 15 hours a week for a two year-term. Highlights of the "youth planners" work has included:
Developing a handbook to help businesses and officials become more "youth friendly"
Worked with local transit agency to research better transportation options for youth.
Worked with parks/recreation department to give ideas for youth events.
Gathered information from peers.
(California Center for Community Participation 2005)

Consultations with Children and Youth

It is the right of children and youth to be consulted on any issue that affects them (UNICEF 2004). Almost any issue will have an effect on children and youth in some way, so there is really never a wrong occasion to consult with young people (Gilbert and O'Brien 2005).

Children and youth are the experts in their own lives, and their age and vulnerability gives them a unique perspective on the community (Lansdown 2005).

Successful consultation uses creative approaches to discussion, follows up with young people as to how the information was used, recognizes the distinct populations of young people, and reaches out to young people where they are.

Surrey Children's Voices workshops were conducted in 2007 with the support of Surrey Middle Childhood Matters Committee, and staff from the Community Schools Partnership Initiative and City of Surrey. These workshops used art activities to engage children (ages 6-12) in expressing their ideas about what it means to be healthy, what important connections they have to their community, and "presents" that they would give to improve their community.

Source: http://www.surrey.ca/NR/rdonlyres/D3E49127-CE2B-4C10-BCD5-F83C76A3DCB4/46299/CreatingaCYFCityReport2009.pdf

Building the Capacity of Children and Youth

It is important to provide training opportunities to build the capacity of young people. Young people do not always come pre-equipped with the skills to work in the complicated municipal environment, so it is important to prepare and support them

Christchurch, New Zealand has created a training program for children and youth who want to become involved in adult committees and organizations. Training is provided by a combination of a municipal youth group and community agencies that specialize in certain skills (for example, facilitation). Source:http://www.childfriendlycities.org/cgi-bin/cfc/main.sql?ProductID=488&file=search_simple_result.sql&lunga=Yes

Abbotsford Child and Youth Friendly Strategy

(http://www.surrey.ca/NR/rdonlyres/D3E49127-CE2B-4C10-BCD5-F83C76A3DCB4/46299/CreatingaCYFCityReport2009.pdf)

Dedicated staff can have a number of roles in the implementation of a strategy, which include: Coordinating discussion between city departments; Implementing programs outlined in the policy; Reviewing and documenting the progress of implementation; Acting as an advocate for children and youth's interests; and empowering young people to get involved in the implementation of the policy.

The ongoing evaluation of the implementation of a Child and Youth Friendly strategy helps to document its progress and identify successes and areas to improve on. In an environment of limited resources it is important that information exists that makes a case for the value of investing in Child and Youth Friendly policies.

Child and Youth Friendly Civic Services

The third area that makes a City Child and Youth Friendly is civic services. Child and youth friendly civic services refer to the framing of a City's services around the development needs of children, youth, and their families.

On November 9, 2009, Abbotsford City Council moved and passed a motion to accept the recommendations of a Child and Youth Friendly Report to council (Report No.SCP16-2009). The full report is attached as Appendix Two. The four recommendations which have been passed are:

- THAT the report No. SCP16-2009, dated November 9, 2009, from the General Manager, Strategic and Community Planning, and Social Planning Consultant, regarding Abbotsford's Child Friendly City Statement, be received;
- THAT council direct staff to arrange for the Mayor to sign the Child Friendly Statement of Intention on November 20, 2009. Universal Children's Day;
- THAT Council direct staff to develop an implementation plan based on the Statement of Intention, including a review of the OCP and Zoning Bylaw using a "child friendly lens"; and
- THAT the Mayor and Corporate Officer be authorized to execute all documents related to this matter.

What follows is the document Abbotsford City Council Approved and agreed to sign. This is a huge milestone for the City of Abbotsford. Board of Education, Chamber of Commerce, Ministry of Children and Family Development and all community stakeholders are being invited to sign on as well!

Child and Youth Friendly Abbotsford Statement of Intention Preamble

The **Child and Youth Friendly Abbotsford Statement of Intention** sets forth several actions that embody the **Convention on the Rights of the Child** (1989) at a municipal and community level, wherein children and youth's rights of inclusion in decisions that affect them is integrated within policies, laws, programs, budgets, and development. Additionally, the Statement of Intention conforms to the guidelines of inclusion as developed by UNICEF's **Child Friendly Cities Initiative** (1996). Moreover, the Statement of Intention outlines a variety of actions that promote child and youth inclusion and demarcates the duties of those individuals who endorse and support the actions therein.

Child and Youth Friendly Abbotsford Statement of Intention

(Accepted on 20th of November 2009)

The city of Abbotsford helps create an environment in which children and youth act on their ideas of creating a better Abbotsford. As a child and youth friendly city, all of the undersigned stakeholders, set the intention to honour, celebrate, engage, inspire, and support young people. We recognize that:

- Our community benefits with child and youth participation as they are individuals who contribute to social fabric;

- Children and youth (0-19 years) make up 23% of BC's population and 27% of Abbotsford's population;

- Young persons are individuals, citizens, and represent the seeds of our future;

- That by ratifying the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Canadian government (at all levels) accepted responsibility for the implementation of the right of every child and youth to participate in the decisions that affect them physically, mentally, spiritually, and that may affect their moral and social development;

We attain our goal of being a Child and Youth Friendly Abbotsford by:

1. **Being inclusive - include youth at different levels of participation, include the diverse population, include children of different abilities, ages, socio-economic background, and cultures.**

2. **Providing opportunities for young people to learn by doing and by teaching one another.**

3. **Creating opportunities to hear what young people, their caretakers, and families, want and need and by providing opportunities to take action upon their ideas, thereby enhancing their voice in the community.**

4. **Recognizing children and youth's contributions within the community and by developing opportunities for them to contribute and by increasing awareness of their contributions.**

5. **Being responsive to the needs of children and youth, and families in such areas as safety and welfare, education, health, mobility (including alternative and active transportation), and importance to play.**

6. **Creating a broader vision for child and youth recreation and by including them within the design and implementation of programs, facilities, etc. and by understanding their multifaceted levels of recreational needs (such as social gathering places, technological and physical activity needs etc).**

7. **Working collaboratively with children/youth, families, and child and youth service providers, educators, community groups, aboriginal and cultural representatives, business, industry, and governments to plan, design, implement and provide programs suited to their diverse needs and to develop child and youth friendly projects that create a "best practice" approach and enhances the sense of community.**

8. **Bringing a child/youth voice to planning and development of policies and practices by incorporating them in the processes, wherever possible.**

References: http://www.cayfo.ca/english/philosophy.php; http://www.cyfc.ca/inform/about.aspx; http://www.childfriendlysaskatoon.sk.ca/MissionStatment.html; http://www.scyofbc.org/qs/page/761/0/43; http://communities.mysudbury.ca/Sites/3168/Terms%20of%20Reference/Community%20Research%20Network%20TOR%202008.pdf; http://www.heartwood.ns.ca/approach_models_community.shtml

Section Three

Child, Youth, and Family Friendly Community Strategy | Action Plan

Section One of this report presented all the information gathered at community consultations and Section Two introduced strategies for municipal and City driven policies and practices towards Child and Youth friendliness for Abbotsford. Section Three presents the overarching Abbotsford Child, Youth and Family Friendly Community Strategy. Abbotsford is known as a community rich in social human capital, meaning there are a large number of caring people who continue to volunteer and work towards creating a better community for all of its residents. This strategy supports diverse initiatives and their outcomes and has no intention of duplicating any of the ongoing and successful efforts in the community. The Child and Youth Friendly Strategy leadership recognize the work of the following initiatives:

- Measuring Up Initiative – under the leadership of the accessibility and inclusion working group of ASDAC, this initiative has positively affected children and youth with disabilities in our community by creating a recreation position and programs within the City and working towards enhanced mobility on major routes which benefits families navigating the community with strollers
- Abbotsford Early Childhood Committee – uses Early Development Instrument results to mobilize the community around families with children up to the age of 6 – the Committee offers annual grants through the Success By Six initiative and works closely with the city and school district to enhance opportunities for all children
- Abbotsford Youth Commission – the voice of youth in our community provides services and programs for youth aged 12 to 18 in Abbotsford and operates two youth centres at MRC and ARC
- Vibrant Abbotsford – hosted by the United Way of the Fraser Valley this initiative focuses on poverty reduction throughout the community and has goals that incorporate families and single parents with children
- Literacy Matters – a joint community and school district initiative concerned with literacy in its entirety including matters such as financial literacy for families
- School District 34 – has created a full time position, Manager of Community Development and also completed a Developmental Asset Survey of youth in middle and high schools – the use of the Developmental Asset Survey will be made clear in a future community plan
- There are many more initiatives in the community that deserve mention and support from this strategy – to name them all would fill pages and pages and furthermore make evident any that may have been missed – an inventory of all that is available is part of the wish list for parents and caregivers!

As previously mentioned in Section Two, On November 9, 2009, Abbotsford City Council passed a motion to accept the recommendations of a Child and Youth Friendly Report to council (Report No.SCP16-2009). The full report is attached as Appendix Two. The four recommendations which have been passed are:

- THAT the report No. SCP16-2009, dated November 9, 2009, from the General Manager, Strategic and Community Planning, and Social Planning Consultant, regarding Abbotsford's Child Friendly City Statement, be received;

- THAT council direct staff to arrange for the Mayor to sign the Child Friendly Statement of Intention on November 20, 2009. Universal Children's Day;

- THAT Council direct staff to develop an implementation plan based on the Statement of Intention, including a review of the OCP and Zoning Bylaw using a "child friendly lens"; and

- THAT the Mayor and Corporate Officer be authorized to execute all documents related to this matter.

City Council's motion to accept and move forward on the statement of intention prior to Children's Day means the City will be recognized by UNICEF as a Child and Youth Friendly City in Canada. The statement and other recommendations formalize the City's commitment to a Child, Youth, and Family Friendly City. This commitment includes the monitoring and assessment of a City-wide Child and Youth Friendly Plan with an implementation strategy. This is a milestone for the City of Abbotsford and a welcome to the more than 39,000 families who live here. It is hoped that many community organizations | agencies will co-sign the Child and Youth Friendly Abbotsford Statement of Intention, further formalizing key relationships between the City and its community partners.

The Abbotsford Child, Youth and Family Friendly Community strategy and action plan follows. The strategy and plan is divided into three sections: the first section presents follow up outcomes to ensure the strategy continues to grow and becomes embedded in the community; the next section presents short term (1 to 2 years) outcomes and the last section introduces long term (3 to 5 years) outcomes. The short and long term outcomes are organized according to the child and youth friendly lens: live, work|school, play, and care. Each outcome includes recommended actions from the community input, followed by spheres of influence. The actual responsibility and accountability for actions will require that community partners and the City meet to decide on specific actions and accept leadership roles

	FOLLOW UP OUTCOMES	STRATEGIES | ACTIONS	INFLUENCE
	Community stakeholders and leaders have met to discuss the strategy, identify specific actions, and specify areas where they are willing to take leadership roles.	Host stakeholders meeting Create detailed action plan with accountability and time lines	City
	A communication strategy | plan is developed and implemented to assist in creating a child, youth, and family friendly mind set throughout the community	Communication plan developed Press releases | regular columns in local media Columns with research results in Chamber Newsletter	City
	Seek opportunities for further funding to continue the development of this plan with dedicated human resources.	Research funding opportunities for child and youth friendly initiatives and write proposals	City

	The City has taken steps to ensure the Child and Youth Friendly Abbotsford Statement of Intention is acted upon.	Internal committee for child and youth friendliness established with terms of reference and mandate	City
	Child and Youth Friendly Statement of Intention is signed by numerous community partners and displayed at City Hall	Dec 4th – statement signature event	City
LENS	**SHORT TERM OUTCOMES** **1 to 2 years**	**STRATEGIES | ACTIONS**	**INFLUENCE**
LIVE	Mechanisms and a framework are in place for Abbotsford's children, youth, and families to provide input and feedback to the City of Abbotsford Council and the Board of Education on issues and planning that affects their well-being	Youth council Websites | Blogs Mentorship in civic duties	
	The City's development guidelines include a youth and family friendly lens to provide adequate affordable housing in high urban areas with access to services and public transportation		
WORK | SCHOOL	Abbotsford has increased alternate transportation options for access to industrial and commercial areas of high employment that reflects employers and employees needs.	Chamber of Commerce has agreed to provide a short 6 or 8 question survey through their software to businesses.	
	Community stakeholders include employment assistance for youth to access to meaningful job opportunities and connecting them to volunteer opportunities	Partner with High Schools/ current youth employment centre/Chamber of Commerce/Volunteer Abbotsford Display and reward children/youth contributions to the community and have a youth leadership activity for volunteering therein	
PLAY	Abbotsford has increased opportunities for children, youth, and families to explore creative expression	Talent shows | competitions | art classes Businesses offer chalkboard walls or graffiti walls	
	Abbotsford Parks, Recreation and Culture uses an intergenerational lens, including consultations with varied age groups, for all green space development	Observe and study children of all ages at playgrounds and consult with youth	

	Clearbrook Neighbourhood Associations are growing, strong, and providing measurable results.	Reduced criminal activity | reduced police and emergency vehicle time |	
	The City of Abbotsford has guidelines and instructions for neighbourhoods wanting to hold block parties	Street closures, equipment for park clean up, etc	
	The Abbotsford Youth Commission and its centres at ARC and MRC continue to offer more for youth	Support | network opportunities | groups	
CARE	Further research is completed and a plan has been developed for an Abbotsford Youth Medical Clinic		
	The City of Abbotsford development guidelines include increased opportunities for mixed income and mixed use housing, especially for youth		
	The City of Abbotsford in collaboration with service providers and community stakeholders develops one tool to create increased awareness of the great services available for children, youth, and families		
	Abbotsford offers a wide range of volunteer opportunities for children, youth, and families and ease of access to the information		
	Neighbourhood hubs expand to include older aged children providing community spaces for homework help and programs		
LENS	**LONG TERM OUTCOMES (3 TO 5 YEARS)**	**STRATEGIES | ACTIONS**	**INFLUENCE**
LIVE	Abbotsford has a transportation plan with extended hours and routes that reflects the needs of children, youth, and families and increases use	Movie / recreation passes and access Free on pro-d days or one Friday per month?	
	The city of Abbotsford 's neighbourhood development plan includes infrastructure that increases walkability and safety	Lighting, walkways, sidewalks, paths, etc	
	The city of Abbotsford has strategies in place for youth housing		
WORK|	There is an increase in use of schools for informal community	Drop – ins	School District

SCHOOL	gatherings	Support groups	Community
		After hours	Neighbourhood groups
	Abbotsford further enhances its reputation for excellence in alternate educational opportunities.	City influence?	School District UFV
PLAY	Abbotsford has a new award winning skate/BMX park that incorporates opportunities for intergenerational activities	Forks in Winnipeg Host a forum for active participation by children/youth/families in the community to design the park	
	The City of Abbotsford and community partners have collaborated to create more opportunities for children of all ages to play in neighbourhoods	Free organized sports Try it out team sports event Subsidies for recreation Have children, youth, and families evaluate their neighbourhoods for needs and implement actions for development based on their needs	
CARE	Abbotsford has a highly functional and utilized youth medical clinic		
	Community patrols are in place at bus loops for increased safety for all riders.		

Bibliography

Amsden, J., and R. VanWynsberghe (2005). "Community Mapping as a Research Tool with Youth." *Action Research* 3(4): 357-381.

California Center For Community Participation (2004). *Youth Voices in Community Design: Handbook.*

California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights (2007). http://calroundtable.org/cobor.htm

The Centre for Community Enterprise (2000) The Community Resilience Manual   www.cedworks.com

The Centre for Sustainable Transportation. (2004). Child Friendly Transport Planning. http://www.centreforsustainabletransportation.org/downloads/Child_friendly.pdf

The Centre for Sustainable Transportation (2009) Child and Youth-Friendly Land-Use and Transport Planning Guidelines for British Columbia www.kidsonthemove.ca

Child and Youth Friendly Ottawa. www.cayfo.ca

Chawla, L. (2002). Growing Up in an Urbanizing World. UNESCO.

Christensen, P. and Margaret O'Brien (2003). Children in the city: introducing new perspectives. In "Children in the City: Home, neighbourhood and community. RoutledgeFalmer, New York.

City of Denver, Colorado. www.denvergov.org

City of Vancouver Youth Awards. www.vancouveryouth.ca

Cooper, C. M., and W. Sarkissian (1986). Housing as if People Mattered: Site Design Guidelines for Medium-Density Family Housing. *University of California Press.*

Crowhurst, Suzanne and Lennard, Henry (2000) The Forgotten Child, A Gondolier Press Book, IMCL Council

Day, C. (2007). Environment and Children: Passing Lessons from the Everyday Environment. Oxford: Architectural Press.

Driskell, D. (2002). Creating Better Cities with Children and Youth: A Manual For Participation. UNESCO/Earthscan Publications, London.

Enns, C. (2004). Township of Langley Child Friendly Impact Assessment and Development Approval Procedures.

European Network of Child Friendly Cities. (2009). EN CFC Guidelines Child Friendly Cities. http://www.childfriendlycities.eu/EN-CFC/Guidelines-Child-Friendly-Cities/page/2940/

Freeman, C. (2006). In B. Gleeson, and N. Sipe (Eds). *Creating Child Friendly Cities*. London: Routledge.

Furlong, T., and B. Cunningham (2007). Principles of Child Friendly Housing. City of Portland, Bureau of Planning.

Gilbert, R., and C. O'Brien (2005). Child-and-Youth-Friendly Land Use and Transport Planning Guidelines. The Centre for Sustainable Transportation, Ontario.

Ginsler and Associates Inc. (1998) Working Together: Maximizing the Impact of Community Services

Gleeson, B. and N. Sipe, eds. (2006). *Creating Child Friendly Cities,* London: Routledge.

Groc, I. (2007). Family Friendly: Parents with young children say 'yes' to living downtown. http://www.cudenver.edu/Academics/Colleges/ArchitecturePlanning/discover/centers/CYE/Projects/Child-FriendlyCities/ChildYouthFriendlyDenver/Documents/FamilyFriendly.pdf

Hart, R. (2005*).* Children as the makers of a new geography, in L. Karsten, T. Bongertman, G. de Haan, G. van der Straaten, and I. Tom (Eds). *Buidling Identities: gender perspectives on children and urban space.* Amsterdam: Institut voor Sociale Geografie, Universiteit van Amsterdam.

Hamilton (2007). Youth Engagement 101 For Community and Social Service Workers in Hamilton.

Hertzman (2004) EDI, Understanding the Early Years, Human Early Learning Project, UBC.

Hubsmith, D. (2006). Safe Routes to School in the United States. *Children Youth and Environments* 12(1).

Imagine Canada (2006) Building Blocks for Strong Communities. Canadian Policy Research Networks

Inter-agency Inquiry Group (2000) Becoming a Collaborative Community, Reflecting on and Transforming Our Work. UBC Press

Karsten, L. and W. van Vliet (2006). "Increasing Children's Freedom of Movement: Introduction." *Children, Youth and Environments* 16 (1).

Lansdown, G. (2005). "Can you hear me? The right of young children to participate in decisions affecting them." Working Paper 36. Bernard van Leer Foundation, The Hague: The Netherlands.

Malone, K. (2008). How Child Friendly is my Community?. Presented at *Child in the City Conference 2008*. Rotterdam, Netherlands. http://conference.europoint.eu/childinthecity/presenation/Karen%20Malone.pdf

McNulty, L. and D. Ragan (2004). "Vancouver Working Group Discussion Paper." The World Urban Forum 2006.

Olds, A. (2001). Child Care Design Guide. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Orsini, A. F., and C. O'Brien (2006). "Fun, Fast and Fit: Influences and Motivators for Teenagers Who Cycle to School." *Children, Youth and Environments* 16(1): 121-132.

Planning Institute of Australia (PIA). (2005). Child Friendly Communities. http://www.planning.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=648&Itemid=584

Play Works (2005). Youth Friendly Communities: Good Practices 2005.

Pittman, K.; quoted in Putting Positive Youth Development into Practice: A Resource Guide (2007). National Clearing House on Families and Youth.

Provincial Health Services Authority (2008) Indicators for a Healthy Build Environment in BC
Rasmussen, K., and S. Smidt (2003). Children in the neighourhood: the neighbourhood in the children, In *Children in the City: Home, neighbourhood and community*. RoutledgeFalmer, New York.

Riggio, E. (2002). "Child friendly cities: good governance in the best interest of the child." Environment & Urbanization 14(2).

Sadler (2006). City of Surrey.

Schonert-Reichl, K. (2007). Middle Childhood Inside and Out. University of British Columbia/United Way of the Lower Mainland.

Sipe, N. and B. Gleeson (2006). Creating Child Friendly Cities: Reinstating Kids in the City. London: Routledge.

Smart Growth BC (2009) Creating Healthy Communities, Tools and Actions to Foster Environments for Healthy Living. www.smartgrowth.bc.ca

Tranter, P., and E. Pawson (2001). "Children's Access to Local Environments: a case-study of Christchurch, New Zealand." Local Environment 6(1): 27-48.
Yates, B. (2005). "Building a Child Impact Assessment Tool for the City of Edmonton." *Children, Youth and Environments* 15(2): 371-377.

Yates, R. A., (2005). Child Friendly Housing: A Guide for Professionals. The Society for Children and Youth of British Columbia.

UNICEF (2004). Building Child Friendly Cities: A Framework For Action. International Secretariat for Child Friendly Cities. UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre: Florence.

United Way of Ottawa, United Way of Canada – Centraide Canada (2005) Middle Childhood Matters www.unitedwayottawa.ca
Walsh, P. (2006) http://www.playconsulting.com

Wridt, P. (2008). *Visioning & Implementing a Child-and-Youth-Friendly City: Organization, Strategy and Findings from Denver.* University of Colorado Denver: Children, Youth and Environments Center for Research and Design.

Zeiher, Helga (2003). Shaping Daily Life in Urban Environments. In *"Children in the City: Home, neighbourhood and community*. Routledge Falmer, New York.

Images/Text Boxes

California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights

http://calroundtable.org/cobor.htm

Child in the City Conference

http://conference.europoint.eu/childinthecity/presenation/Karin%20Hoyland.pdf

http://conference.europoint.eu/childinthecity/presenation/Josine%20van%20den%20Bogaard.Pdf

http://conference.europoint.eu/childinthecity/presenation/Tim%20Gill.pdf

Child Friendly Edmonton

http://www.edmonton.ca/for_residents/resident_services_programs/child-friendly-edmonton.aspx

City of Christchurch, NZ

http://www.ccc.govt.nz

City of London

http://www.london.gov.uk/gla

City of Surrey – Report on Creating a Child and Youth Friendly City: What Does it Mean?

http://www.surrey.ca/NR/rdonlyres/D3E49127-CE2B-4C10-BCD5-F83C76A3DCB4/46299/CreatingaCYFCityReport2009.pdf

Portland Courtyard Housing Design Competition

http://www.courtyardhousing.org/images_common.html

Project for Public Spaces

http://www.pps.org/great_public_spaces/one?public_place_id=99#

http://www.childfriendlycities.org/cgi-bin/cfc/main.sql?ProductID=488&file=search_simple_result.sql&lunga=Yes

http://www.stuttgart.de/sde/global/images/mdb/publ/10252/9879.pdf

APPENDICES

Appendix One –Survey

Abbotsford…where I live, work, play, and care!

Background: The City of Abbotsford received a grant from the Union of BC Municipalities to create a plan to make our community more child and youth friendly. This survey is one of the methods we are using to receive feedback on the current state of the City's child and youth friendliness. Thank you for taking the time to complete our survey.

We define child and youth friendliness as: "A child and youth friendly community welcomes and involves children and youth and promotes their well-being and safety. It fosters social responsibility and the notion that 'it takes a village to raise a child'". Society for Children and Youth (SCY)

	Top Five Wishes for increased child and youth friendliness
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

We plan to map responses by neighbourhoods – please share your postal code:

Please identify yourself:
 	
       Grandparent
 	
       Parent/caregiver
 	
       Teen
 	
       Child

If you are a child or a teen, please let us know your age:
How long have you resided in Abbotsford?

Where I live…

It is easy in Abbotsford to find affordable housing for families?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A
Does your neighbourhood or housing complex provide easy access to outside play areas?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A
Is public transit available in your neighbourhood?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A
Do you find public transit affordable?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A
Is public transit designed for stroller accessibility?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A
Is public transit available for youth later in the evening?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A
Are public schools available within walking distance?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A
Do school facilities encourage after hour use?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A
Would you consider schools in Abbotsford as hubs of community activities?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A
Are you aware of public spaces that encourage children, youth, and adults to gather socially?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A
Does Abbotsford provide adequate access to local health practitioners?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A
Are there public spaces where young people can gather safely and without harassment?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A
Does the City provide adequate opportunities for input into planning?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A
Do you know your neighbours?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A
Is it easy to locate and access community supports outside of what the city offers?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A
Is it easy to locate and access a range of services that support children, youth and parents needs?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A

Are culturally appropriate programs and activities available?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A

Comments

Where I work…

Rate questions on a scale of 1 to 5.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Unknown or N/A
	1	2	3	4	5	6
My employer provided assistance in finding child care	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My employer supports job sharing and flexible working hours	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There are parental leave policies at my place of employment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My employer holds family events	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It was easy to find work in Abbotsford	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can use public transportation to get to work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My place of employment is child and youth friendly	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comments

Where I play…

Rate questions on a scale of 1 to 5.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Unknown or N/A
	1	2	3	4	5	6
There are opportunities for families to play locally	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There are opportunities for inter-generational and multi-family activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Abbotsford has parks that cater to youth	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Bike racks are accessible in public spaces	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Abbotsford is an easy community to walk around in	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There are a range of recreational programming and services available for youth	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There are a range of recreational programming and services available for children	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Recreational staff and facilities are welcoming	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
A family can safely bike ride in Abbotsford	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is a range of arts and culture programming	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Youth have opportunities to take on leadership roles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There are spaces where children and youth can play informal sports safely and without complaint	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comments

Where I Care…

Do you find it easy to meet and connect with neighbours?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A
If your children are outside playing, would your neighbours watch them as their own?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A
Do you feel safe in your neighbourhood?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A
If you had an emergency late at night, would one of your neighbours help?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A
Do you feel a sense of ownership and caring about our City?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A
Is having a sense of belonging important to you?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A

Comments

Recommendations and ideas

Please share any ideas you have to help us make Abbotsford the best place for children, youth, and families to live.

COUNCIL REPORT

Report No. SCP16 - 2009 **Executive Committee**

November 9, 2009

File No: 4710-00

To: Mayor and Council

From: Don Luymes, General Manager of Strategic and Community Planning and Cherie Enns, Social Planning Consultant

Subject: Child and Youth Friendly Abbotsford Statement of Intention Approval

---

RECOMMENDATIONS

1.   THAT Report No. SCP16-2009, dated November 9, 2009, from the General Manager, Strategic and Community Planning, and Social Planning Consultant, regarding Abbotsford's Child Friendly City Statement, be received;

2.   THAT Council direct staff to arrange for the Mayor to sign the Child Friendly Statement of Intention on November 20, 2009, Universal Children's Day;

3.   THAT Council direct staff to develop an implementation plan based on the Statement of Intention, including a review of the OCP and Zoning Bylaw using a "child friendly lens"; and

4.   THAT the Mayor and Corporate Officer be authorized to execute all documents related to this matter.

BACKGROUND

Abbotsford is a community that increasingly attracts families. In November 2008 (SCP02-2008) the Union of British Columbia Municipalities approved the City of Abbotsford's Child and Youth Matters initiative. Funding for $25,000 was received from UBCM to achieve the following project goals:

- To explore models of child and youth friendliness in other communities, including Victoria, Edmonton, Stuttgart, and elsewhere;
- To bring diverse child and youth groups together to strengthen the community's capacity for working collaboratively;
- To develop a child and youth action plan;
- To develop a child and youth friendly lens;
- To work with the School District to explore how to adopt an asset-based approach; and
- To organize intergenerational activities (neighbourhood walks, tutoring, etc) as proposed in recent seniors' dialogues held about neighbourhood associations.

The City committed to providing $16,000 in-kind resources (meeting space and project management and leadership).The City of Abbotsford, in partnership with a number of community agencies, is committed to building a healthy community by creating a child and youth friendly community. *Child and Youth Matters* is bringing together key stakeholders in Abbotsford to develop a comprehensive community strategy and action plan for encouraging child and youth friendliness

Creating Child Friendly environments generates broad economic, social and cultural benefits. It is an action and a policy end that serves the general community and is a long-term investment in the life of that community. As Canada's urban population continues to grow, its cities need to be designed with children's needs in mind. Planning with children and youth in mind will ensure that all urban environments provide positive advantages for their development. Cities provide a diverse range of services, experiences and opportunities and enhance the possibilities for a child's mobility and independence.

Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy documents include elements such as:

- Value statements and vision statements of a Child and Youth Friendly City;
- Goals and priorities;
- Programs or processes that will be implemented;
- Roles and responsibilities of involved parties; and
- A plan for review and evaluation of its implementation.

The purposed of this report is to receive council approval in principle for the Abbotsford Child Friendly Statement of Intention (see attached).   The statement as outlined has been reviewed by several stakeholder groups including ASDAC and is currently being

reviewed by School District #34. The plan is to revise the statement based on feedback from Council and School District #34, and then arrange a signing ceremony November 20th (Universal Children's Day). Staff would then continue to add additional stakeholders and work towards the implementation of each statement area. A primary area of City focus would include the planning, design and development of the City of Abbotsford.

ANALYSIS

Cities are key players in shaping and managing the built environment both at a metropolitan and a local scale. Planners are in a unique position to directly impact the creation of child friendly cities and communities. According to the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA), the following actions should be taken in the planning and application of Child Friendly community design:

- Governments should give due recognition to the needs of children in policy, planning and service delivery and should encourage broader community awareness of the needs and concerns of children and youth.
- Within planning, and policy development generally, community consultation should include engagement with children and youth.
- Greater awareness in policy making of the relationship between a child's needs and the built environment, and prioritizing of needs such as addressing obesity, creating a sense of belonging and place, fostering social connectedness, enhancing freedom to explore, and encouraging engagement with the environment.
- More public and policy forums that can raise the profile of the importance of Child Friendly communities.
- Preparation of guidelines that ensure multi-purpose public spaces that includes opportunities for public and private spaces for children to play and socialize.

The Abbotsford Statement of Intentions includes a preamble, diagram, statement and then a list of possible actions and strategic outcomes.

Child Friendly Abbotsford Statement of Intention Preamble

The **Child Friendly Abbotsford Statement of Intention** sets forth several actions that embody the **Convention on the Rights of the Child** (1989) at a municipal and community level, wherein children's rights of inclusion in decisions that affect them is integrated within policies, laws, programs, budgets, and development. Additionally, the Statement of Intention conforms to the guidelines of inclusion as developed by UNICEF's **Child Friendly Cities Initiative** (1996). Moreover, the *Statement of Intention* outlines a variety of actions that promote child inclusion and demarcates the duties of those individuals who endorse and support the actions therein.

As previously noted, several stakeholder groups have had the opportunity to provide feedback and suggestions with respect to content of the statements. Environments that work against children and youth have many consequences including providing an opportunity for increased crime. Policies related to sustainable development and the protection of the environment have also been shown to work better for child development.

FINANCIAL PLAN IMPLICATION

There are no direct financial implications.

COMMUNICATION PLAN

Several communities in across Canada British Colombia are in the process of adopting or have adopted similar statements or declaration. UNICEF Canada is working very closely with cities and regions across Canada. They are also willing to promote City of Abbotsford as a 'Child and Youth Friendly Community' on their website and as part of their national communication strategy. If the statement is signed on November 20th 'Universal Children's Day' a small press conference would be arranged.

SUMMARY

The City of Abbotsford, in partnership with a number of community agencies, is committed to building a healthy community by creating a child and youth friendly community. *Child and Youth Matters* and the proposed Child Friendly Statement of Intention would bring together key stakeholders in Abbotsford to develop a comprehensive community strategy and action plan for encouraging child and youth friendliness.

Don Luymes

General Manager, Strategic and Community Planning

Cherie Enns

Social Planning Consultant

ATTACHMENTS - Appendix 1   Child and Youth Friendly Cities Draft Statement of Intent