



NEWS RELEASE

3 New Park Improvements open for Abbotsford Residents

ABBOTSFORD –June 23, 2020: Abbotsford residents can now enjoy enhanced outdoor recreation opportunities with the completion of three park improvement projects, announced Mayor Henry Braun today.

Hoon Park Adventure Playground

In the existing Hoon Park neighbourhood, a new Natural Adventure Playground has opened through investment from the City of Abbotsford, Archway Community Services, Saputo Inc., and the Grayross Foundation held at the Vancouver Foundation.

This playground will provide a space for children to grow, connect, and appreciate nature while developing physical, cognitive, and social skills.

Hoon Park Adventure Playground is the first natural playground in Abbotsford and integrates creative and natural elements for children of all skill and abilities levels to play; providing opportunities to use their imagination, encourage creativity, and provide a gathering space for children and their caregivers as the neighbourhood grows.

Grant Park Sports Field Redevelopment:

The Grant Park Sports Field Redevelopment was undertaken in partnership with the Abbotsford Angels Baseball Association to improve the City's baseball facilities. The City received funding through a \$100,000 Field of Dreams grant from the Blue Jay's Jays Care Foundation and \$37,000 from the 2016 BC Summer Games Legacy Fund.

In 2018 the City developed a new Masterplan for parks, recreation and culture – this project is one example of that plan being realized and it features two Under 9 (“U-9”) baseball fields with dug outs and one baseball field with synthetic turf, designed for participants with unique abilities.

Grant Park is now completely accessible to all users and includes 8 additional accessible parking spots in closer proximity to the facilities, a new accessible washroom building for families and people with disabilities, an accessible picnic shelter, and an inclusive playground for all ages of children.

The fields also feature an efficient irrigation system utilizing ground water from well and rain gardens. Bioswales have also been designed to infiltrate stormwater into the ground so as to not overload the City's infrastructure.

Willband Creek Connector Trail

This new connector trail provides access to the south end of Willband Creek Park, previously only accessible from the north at Bateman Road. It acts as a “satellite loop trail” to the Trans Canada Trail and provides additional connectivity for Abbotsford's 31 kilometres of Discovery Trail.

This project received funding from “The Great Trail” who provided a \$30,000 grant. Trees planted along the edges of the trail were provided by donations and volunteer labour from the “Environment UC”, a collective of the United Church, a local Scout group and other local volunteers.

Quotes:

“With the completion of these 3 major park improvements across our community, Abbotsford has been able to enhance recreation opportunities for many of our residents. Not only do these projects encourage people to get outside and stay physically active, they represent many partnerships with our local not-for-profits and sporting groups. As Abbotsford continues to grow, projects such as these will be valuable assets that build on resident’s quality of life.”

*Henry Braun
Mayor, City of Abbotsford*

“Archway’s vision is “justice, opportunities and equitable access for all.” So for our 50th anniversary last year, we chose to leave a legacy gift for the entire community; one which can be enjoyed by many for generations to come. Archway imagined a space where families, children and all generations can come together and learn through creative play in unstructured, sensory ways, regardless of socio-economic status or cultural backgrounds. The Archway Legacy team is proud to say that, in partnership with the City of Abbotsford, Grayross Foundation held at the Vancouver Foundation and Saputo, this dream has become a reality. We invite all of Abbotsford to come and enjoy the revitalized Hoon Park: a place where kids and kids-at-heart can have an immersive experience with nature and imagination.”

*Rod Santiago
Executive Director, Archway Community Services*

Background:

The City’s Parks, Recreation and Culture masterplan was adopted by Council in 2018 to address the needs of Abbotsford as it grows from its current population to 200,000 residents. The new PRC Plan represents a comprehensive and strategic program of investments over the next 25 years and positions the City to be proactive and responsive to the diverse needs of an equally diverse population, while continuing to help build a prosperous and vibrant city, today and into the future.

Associated Links:

Willband Creek Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tVT1frLipgl&feature=youtu.be>

Hoon Park Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xaeSBNdHFeg&feature=youtu.be>

Grant Park Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LpPhEAZy9m0&feature=youtu.be>

For more information, contact:

Alex Mitchell
Public Affairs Officer
E: amitchell@abbotsford.ca
T: 604 751 3092