

CITY OF ABBOTSFORD 2019 SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

July 2020



ABBOTSFORD
CELEBRATING 25 YEARS
OF COMMUNITY



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Table of Contents

- 1. Introduction 5
- 2. Planning 7
- 3. Building & Lighting 9
- 4. Parks & Open Spaces 11
- 5. Solid Waste 13
- 6. Transportation 15
- 7. Water / Wastewater 17
- 8. Conclusion 19





1. Introduction

The City of Abbotsford is the fifth largest municipality in British Columbia, and the largest municipality by land mass. Abbotsford is a rapidly growing community with a diverse and vibrant population of over 140,000. Council's Strategic Plan envisions Abbotsford as the Hub of the Fraser Valley, with a mission to continually improve the quality of life within the community by delivering key services for current and future generations. The vision is supported by four cornerstones: Vibrant Economy, Complete Community, Fiscal Discipline and Organizational Alignment.

The City signed the Climate Action Charter in 2007, a provincial commitment to act on climate change by fostering a compact, complete and energy efficient community. Since then, the City has demonstrated leadership through initiatives that make progress towards such objectives.

The 2019 Sustainability Report highlights the City's climate action and environmental stewardship by presenting sustainability initiatives that the City has taken in six categories: Planning, Buildings and Lighting, Parks and Open Spaces, Solid Waste, Transportation and Water/Wastewater.





DID YOU KNOW

The City Centre neighbourhood will accommodate:



27,000 12,000 4,000

Visit www.abbotsford.ca to learn about this vision for a vibrant and distinct community.

2. Planning

Planning and its associated community and organizational impacts are a key component to implementing a successful municipal sustainability initiative. Planning lays the groundwork for GHG emissions reductions, including through city-wide plans such as the Official Community Plan, Master Plans, Neighbourhood Plans and Special Studies. Land use planning that focuses on Smart Growth principles (compact, complete, connected, centred) plays an especially important role in energy and GHG reductions. Through plan development and implementation, the City meets a key Strategic Plan Principle of being a complete community that values our connections with the environment.

2019 Highlights

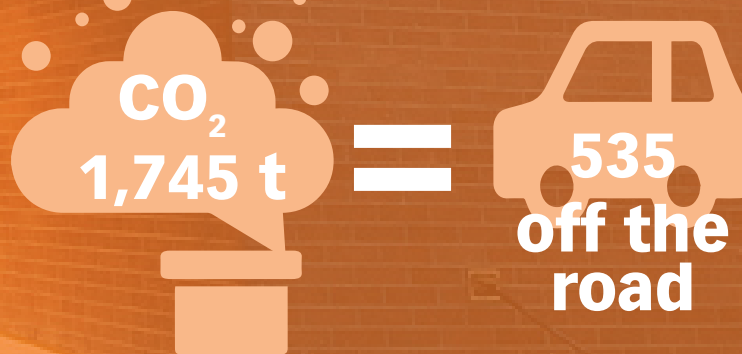
- Completed City Centre and Historic Downtown Neighbourhood Plans.
- Completed the Solid Waste Operations Master Plan, which will provide more efficient delivery of program services through a cart-based automated collection system. The new program will enable the City to transition to collection vehicles with alternative fuel sources which will provide environmental benefits and help the City meet its GHG emission reduction targets. The cart program will also allow the transition to reusable carts for recycling collection in place on single use plastic bags.
- Completed the Corporate Green Fleet Strategy, a living document that will guide efforts in reducing GHG emissions related to City vehicles.
- Completed the Urban Infill Study which refers to the Urban 3 – Infill land use designation in the Official Community Plan (OCP). This initiative applies to approximately 5,600 lots in existing neighbourhoods surrounding Abbotsford’s urban core and is intended to stimulate growth near urban centres.
- Continued progress on the AgRefresh and Water Source Supply studies as part of the Plan 200K initiative.
- Continued progress on the Urban Forestry Strategy. When complete, this document will provide a clear direction and long-term vision for managing the City’s urban trees for the next 15 years and beyond.



DID YOU KNOW

The JAMES Plant biomethane recovery system captures naturally-occurring biogas, which is then used in the water treatment process and to provide space heating at the plant.

Savings:



3. Buildings & Lighting

The City of Abbotsford manages 188 municipal buildings which include 3 ice surfaces, 6 pools with 460,000 gallons of water and 1,300,000 square feet of occupied area. The main goal of the City is to use the minimum amount of energy needed to provide comfort and safety and tap into renewable energy sources for heating, cooling and power. This category also includes initiatives with respect to energy efficient street lights and lights in parks or other public spaces.

2019 Highlights

- Continued to enforce Step 1 of the BC Energy Step Code for part 3 buildings, and initiated plans to implement Part 9 requirements in 2020.
- Initiated a partnership with FortisBC to support Step Code implementation in Abbotsford. The funding will be used to extend training to local builders and trades.
- In Partnership with BC Hydro, installed 8 electric vehicle charging stations dedicated to workplace charging.
- Continued the implementation of corporate energy reduction projects in partnership with BC Hydro, which resulted in 350,000 kWh savings.
- Continued partnering with BC Hydro through their Energy Manager Program.
- Joined FortisBC's Senior Energy Specialist Program, which funds a staff position dedicated to advancing Energy Step Code and energy efficiency.
- Encouraged development within the Urban Development Boundary in alignment with the OCP, with increased densification along the Primary Transit Corridor.



Abbotsford's Trail Network is

**400 kms
of trails**



**&
searchable
on our open
government
portal.**

**DID YOU
KNOW**

4. Parks & Open Spaces

Parks and open spaces refers to parks, greenways, boulevards, community forests, urban agriculture, and other naturally occurring areas. These spaces are among Abbotsford's defining features and support the environmental, physical, social and visual aspects of the City. Parks and open spaces play a key role in meeting the City's Complete Community priority identified in the corporate strategic plan.

2019 Highlights

- Expanded the Abbotsford Community Garden, which included planting an orchard and developing a tree nursery.
- Continued fostering community partnerships to undertake large tree plantings in park space, including over 500 tree plantings with WoMen Rise.
- Restored various park areas with volunteers and community partnerships, including the Fraser Valley Watershed Coalition, Fraser Valley Conservancy, Abbotsford Mission Nature Club, and the Abbotsford Ravine Park Salmon Enhancement Society.
- Partnered with the FVRD in their Invasive Weed Control Program targeting Wild Chervil, Tansy Ragwort, Giant Hogweed and Knotweed.
- Partnered with UFV on multiple projects through CityHub to address environmental issues and invasive plants; Gladwin Pond project and knotweed control.
- Partnered with FortisBC in a tree-planting initiative that will be implemented in 2020.
- Completed public consultation efforts, via Let's Talk Abbotsford and online surveys, to promote the expansion and strengthening of the tree canopy within City boundaries.



DID YOU KNOW



In 2019, residents looked up waste sorting information for over 75,000 items with the free Curbside Collection App and the Waste Wizard lookup.

Visit abbotsford.ca/wastewizard

5. Solid Waste

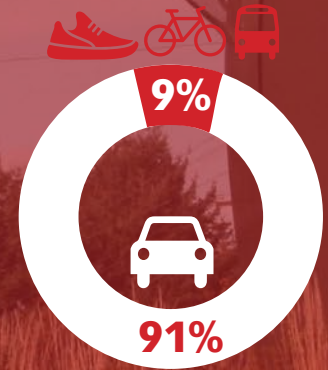
Sustainable solid waste management and service delivery are a priority for a sustainable community. Reducing, reusing, recycling, recovering and managing the disposal of the residual solid waste minimizes environmental impacts and supports greenhouse gas reductions, and improved air and water quality.

2019 Highlights

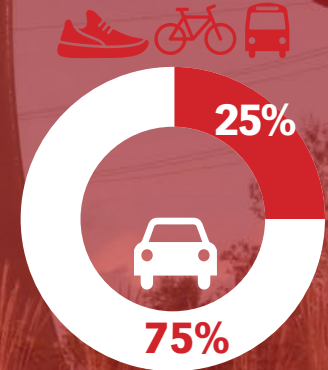
- Completed a curbside participation study intended to increase diversion and reduce contamination. Approximately 250 households were studied each week over a 2-month period to evaluate the amount of material being placed curbside, identify common forms of contamination found in recycling and compostables, and to collect other various information.
- Provided a City information booth regarding the curbside collection program and waste reduction at 33 public events. Hosted 16 waste sorting workshops, attendance exceeded 400 people.
- Completed a pilot project for waste sorting at public events over the summer of 2019. Waste stations and volunteers were provided by the City at four public events and the waste stations were also lent out to event organizers for use without volunteers at three additional public events. Each waste station allowed for the separate collection of recycling, refundables, compostables and garbage. Overall the pilot project achieved an average waste diversion of 72%.
- Partnered with Framework Education Society to offer a clothing fix-it and swap event where residents could attend for free and learn how to repair their items. Over 130 pounds of clothing was diverted at this inaugural event.
- Continued source separation of recyclables and compostables in the City's curbside collection program for single family homes and duplexes. In 2019, approximately 4,900 tonnes of recyclables and 12,100 tonnes of compostable waste were diverted from landfill through the curbside collection program, resulting in a curbside diversion rate of 64%.



DID YOU KNOW



Current Population



200K Population

As the city grows and is builds safe, accessible transportation networks, more people will make walking, cycling, and transit trips their first choice.

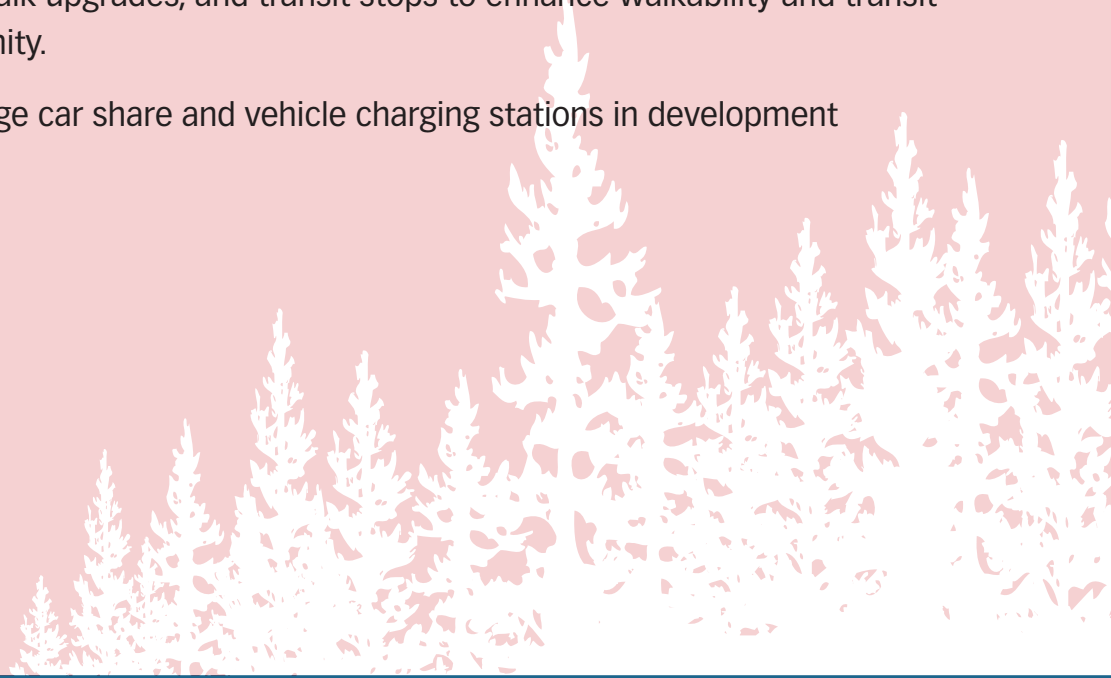
Transportation Master Plan

6. Transportation

Transportation plays a significant role in the development of sustainable communities. The City's 2007 GHG inventory shows transportation as being the highest contributor to GHGs. As such the OCP sets a target of 25% of all trips being made without a vehicle, within the lifespan of the plan. The City's transportation vision seeks to create and support a vibrant, livable, healthy and sustainable community for residents, businesses and visitors. Transportation actions that increase system efficiency, emphasize the movement of people and goods, and give priority to walking, cycling, ridesharing, and public transit, can contribute to reductions in GHG emissions and more livable communities.

2019 Highlights

- Began delivering the short-term priorities identified in the Transportation & Transit Master Plan.
- Completed construction on active transportation project (walking and cycling), and restructured our transit service to provide more service hours better reliability on the busiest routes.
- Maintained and serviced 412 km of sidewalks, 98 km of bicycle lanes, and 89 pedestrian crosswalks to enhance walking and cycling in the City.
- Completed 20 crosswalk upgrades, and transit stops to enhance walkability and transit access in the community.
- Continued to encourage car share and vehicle charging stations in development applications.





DID YOU KNOW



The Water Wise Portal is a free resource to track and monitor household and business water usage.

Visit abbotsford.ca/mycity

7. Water & Wastewater

Managing and reducing water consumption and wastewater is an important aspect of developing a sustainable built environment that supports healthy communities, protects ecological integrity, and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

2019 Highlights

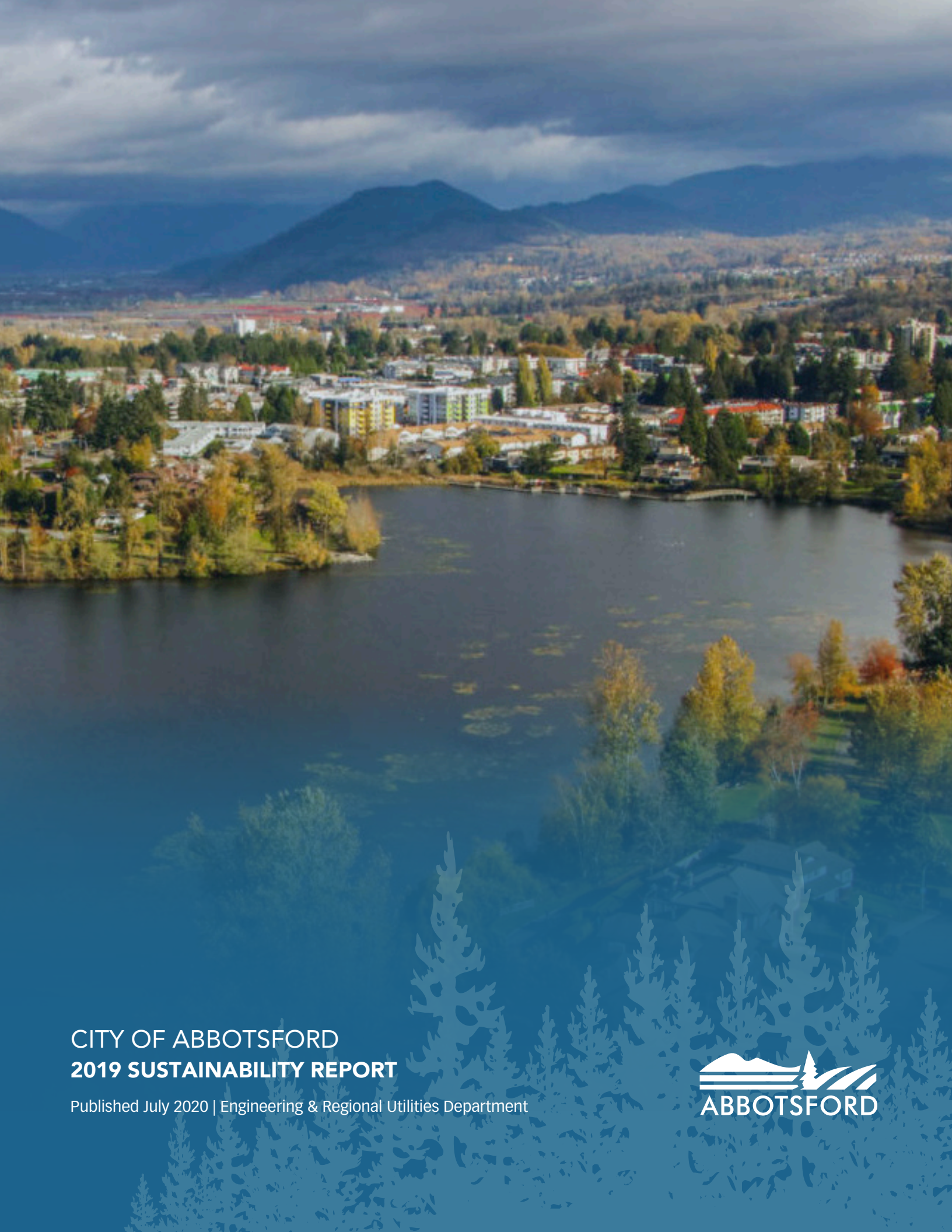
- Continued water conservation program including the implementation of ongoing water restrictions from May 1st to September 30th. The different stages of water restrictions are based on the Dickson Lake water level and are outlined in the City's Water Shortage Response Plan.
- Continued to work with residents and business owners to identify and resolve water leaks. In 2019, processed 2,683 water leak notifications (based on 10L/hr over 3 days) and sent approximately 1,281 final meter reads.
- Continued partnership with BC Hydro to provide a clothes washer rebate program to reduce home water use and electricity. In 2019, 104 rebates were issued to homeowners who replaced their less efficient (water and electricity) washer for a new efficient model.
- Issued 229 toilet rebates to homeowners that replaced old toilets with a low-flow toilet to reduce residential water use.
- Continued use of a rainwater harvesting at the Operations Yard, Tradex, Abbotsford Centre and the Operations Yard Native Plant Nursery.
- Contracted beneficial reuse of 4,200 tonnes of biosolids through land application.
- Continued methane capture for space and process heat production at the JAMES Wastewater Treatment Plant.



8. Conclusion

The City is committed to sustainability and climate action. Each year, this commitment is demonstrated by the multitude of actions undertaken in all service areas. While the annual Sustainability Report highlights the most relevant activities in the environmental pillar of sustainability, efforts to balance social, environmental and economic benefits occur every day. The City is proud to instill a culture of conservation and strives to preserve Abbotsford's natural assets for generations to come.





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Published July 2020 | Engineering & Regional Utilities Department

