



# ABBOTSFORD

The Hub of the Fraser Valley.

## FEATURING:

What's New with Tourism  
"Abbywood" Highlights  
Meet your New Council



**INCLUSIVE & CONNECTED  
COMMUNITY**



**SUSTAINABLE  
& SAFE CITY**



**VIBRANT & GROWING  
ECONOMY**



**ORGANIZATIONAL  
EXCELLENCE & INTEGRITY**

**STAY CONNECTED:** [abbotsford.ca](http://abbotsford.ca) | [/CityOfAbbotsford](https://www.facebook.com/CityOfAbbotsford) | [@athecityofabbotsford](https://www.instagram.com/athecityofabbotsford) | [/city\\_abbotsford](https://www.twitter.com/city_abbotsford)



# ECONOMIC GROWTH IN ABBOTSFORD BUSINESS IN MOTION

[abbotsford.ca/economicdevelopment](https://abbotsford.ca/economicdevelopment) [econdev@abbotsford.ca](mailto:econdev@abbotsford.ca) 604-864-5586



## NEW FIVE-YEAR STRATEGY

Tourism Abbotsford has developed a new five-year strategic plan that builds on the wide range of tourism experiences available in Abbotsford – everything from outdoor pursuits and agri-tourism to sports, arts, culture, and heritage activities. “We will continue to celebrate everything that defines ‘Abbotsford’ and build awareness, excitement and intention to visit amongst visitors who stay longer, share their stories with their friends and return often,” says Craig Nichols, Executive Director Tourism Abbotsford. “We recognize the importance of working collaboratively with our community and all residents of Abbotsford.”

In addition to promoting the community to residents and travellers, Tourism Abbotsford works to share with residents and their elected representatives the contribution tourism makes to life in the community, and advocates for the industry’s needs and improvements to infrastructure and experiences enjoyed by visitors and residents alike.

[tourismabbotsford.ca/industry](https://tourismabbotsford.ca/industry)

## WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Don't want to miss events or things to do in Abbotsford? There's an app for that! Locals and visitors alike can stay up-to-date with the latest events, activities and local tourism news easily, and plan their next adventure from the palm of their hand. Not only is the app regularly updated with community events, but it's also filled with great ideas for things to do and experience, right in your own backyard! Find links to download the app for both Apple and Android devices.

[tourismabbotsford.ca/plan](https://tourismabbotsford.ca/plan)

## ABBOTSFORD GEOTOUR

The Abbotsford GeoTour was launched last summer, inviting people to touch and taste agriculture as they explored a selection of parks, businesses, and historical centres in our community. The tour saw people from all over the world participate. To date over 14,000 cache logs have been noted. This tour will continue until next summer and we look forward to attracting more locals and tourists to our fun GeoTour.

[abbotsford.ca/geocaching](https://abbotsford.ca/geocaching)

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

On October 26, the Economic Development Department participated in WorkBC's highly successful Job Fair held at the Clarion Hotel and Conference Centre in Abbotsford.

The Job Fair connected hundreds of job seekers with employers and employment support agencies to discover new career paths and training opportunities. The event included representatives from a wide range of local employers, post-secondary education, industry training associations and employment support agencies. Abbotsford Fire Rescue Service, BC Paramedic Service, the Industry Training Association, Ironworkers Local 97, and the University of the Fraser Valley were among the organizations taking part in the event.

[abbotsford.ca/investing#workforce](https://abbotsford.ca/investing#workforce)

## COMMUNITY SPECIAL EVENTS

In 2022, Abbotsford was home to over 160 community special events bringing in people from all over the world. A few of the major events this past year included Berry Fest, Canada Day, GeoWoodstock, Agrifair, Abbotsford Airshow and Nagar Kirtan.

[abbotsford.ca/events](https://abbotsford.ca/events)

## COMMUNITY EVENT TOOLKIT

To ensure safe and successful events, the City has provided free event equipment to over 25 events through the Community Event Tool Kit program. This equipment includes 10x10 tents, tables, chairs and a variety of other event supplies.

[abbotsford.ca/specialevents](https://abbotsford.ca/specialevents)

## CANADA DAY 2022

2022 was a very special year for our community as we gathered safely in-person for the first time since 2019 to celebrate Canada and our community.

**50,000+**

event attendance

**15,000+**

parade attendance

**20,000+**

fireworks spectators

VIEW 2022 HIGHLIGHTS:

[f /CityOfAbbotsford](https://www.facebook.com/CityOfAbbotsford) [@thecityofabbotsford](https://www.instagram.com/thecityofabbotsford)

## FRASER VALLEY ALLIANCE

The Fraser Valley Alliance (FVA) is a collaboration between Abbotsford, Chilliwack, Mission, Maple Ridge and Township of Langley working together to attract foreign direct investment to the region. The FVA has recently launched its new website, featuring information on the Fraser Valley's economy, demographics, workforce and transportation networks.

Investment sector attraction priorities for the FVA include agri-technology, advanced manufacturing, information and communications technology, aerospace and clean technologies.

[investfraservalley.ca](https://investfraservalley.ca)

## CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP

The recently created Corporate Partners Program allows opportunities for the business community to engage in enhancing City programs in Abbotsford, while reducing costs. In 2022, corporate sponsorship brought in \$35,500 in paid sponsorships, and \$21,000 in services provided. Sponsors for Canada Day benefited with record breaking attendance of 50,000 people, 18,000 web page views and increased social media recognition. By tracking digital marketing statistics, we can provide benefits to future sponsors, and enrich programs and activities for the residents of Abbotsford.

[abbotsford.ca/economicdevelopment](https://abbotsford.ca/economicdevelopment)

## FOCUS ON SAFETY

There has been a noticeable increase in attendees at community special events, and a massive job turnover that was triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic. This has meant a lot of new staff and/or lack of staff for event suppliers to support special events and incidents at public events appear to be on the rise. Now, more than ever, the City is focused on safety at community special events and continues to work together with event organizers on appropriate venue selection and to review and revise safety and emergency management plans to ensure continued success of safe and fun events in Abbotsford.

[abbotsford.ca/specialevents](https://abbotsford.ca/specialevents)



## Taste of Abby Fall Food Festival

Tourism Abbotsford hosted the inaugural **Taste of Abby Fall Food Festival** showcasing the wide variety of farm-to-table and agri-tourism experiences that Abbotsford offers. Events included a Night Market at Jubilee Park, the Abbotsford Downtown Business Association Art & Wine Walk, Abby Food and Farm Awards in partnership with the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce, the premiere screening of Rails, Jails & Trolleys in partnership with the University of the Fraser Valley, an Indigenous Picnic in partnership with Sema:th First Nations, special restaurant menu items and picnic packs, and a video series on food sustainability and food security.

This year, Taste of Abby will run September 15-24, 2023.





**2022** FILMING STATS  
IN ABBOTSFORD

**70** FILM PRODUCTIONS  
IN ABBOTSFORD

**05**

FEATURE  
FILMS

**44** MOVIES OF THE WEEK

**04**

INDEPENDENT  
FILMS

**10** SERIES

**7** COMMERCIALS



APPLICATIONS OPEN MARCH 1<sup>ST</sup>

**148** FILM INQUIRIES

**\$2.61M**  
ECONOMIC  
IMPACT

BUSIEST  
FILMING  
MONTH:

**Q3**

JULY - SEPTEMBER 2022

**160** FILMING  
LOCATIONS

**330** FILMING  
DAYS

TOP FILMING DESTINATIONS:  
MT LEHMAN NEIGHBOURHOOD AND  
HISTORIC DOWNTOWN ABBOTSFORD



**Make a difference.  
Let us help.**

Did you know Abbotsford is hosting the BC 55+ games this year? Seniors are an integral part of our community, making up 18.3% of Abbotsford residents. We invite you to create opportunities for connection and unique experiences for Abbotsford seniors through the **Neighbourhood Small Grants** (NSG) program. If you have an idea for a project supporting seniors visit [abbotsford.ca/grants](http://abbotsford.ca/grants) to learn more.

**Tips to get started!**

- 1 APPLY:** Applications open on **MARCH 1**. Submit your application by **APRIL 15**.
- 2 COMMITTEE REVIEW:** Applications will be reviewed in **MAY**.
- 3 ORIENTATION & FUNDING:** Work with the NSG coordinator to set up a time to meet and collect funding.
- 4 EVENTS & REPORTING: JUNE 1 - NOVEMBER 1** Organizers host events and take photos/videos. Organizers are asked to send stories, photos and videos to the NSG coordinator for the NSG website.
- 5 CELEBRATE & WRAP UP!**



**2022**

EVENT STATS  
IN ABBOTSFORD

**74** OUTDOOR  
COMMUNITY EVENTS

**175**

EVENT DAYS

**432,890**

IN ATTENDANCE

**29** EVENT TOOL KITS UTILIZED

APPROXIMATE IN-KIND VALUE OVER **\$12,000**

TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT:

**\$14,364,880**



JOIN THE SMALL GRANTS RESIDENTS COMMITTEE

[abbotsford.ca/grants](http://abbotsford.ca/grants)



Are you passionate about building connections within your community?

Do you enjoy being part of a team? If so, we are looking for residents of Abbotsford to become members of our **Neighbourhood Small Grants Residents Committee**.

Applications close on  
**April 1, 2023**. Learn more at  
[abbotsford.ca/grants](http://abbotsford.ca/grants)

# Meet your new council

## 2022-2026 ABBOTSFORD CITY COUNCIL

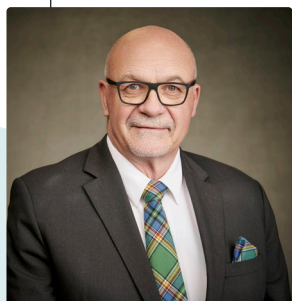
Abbotsford City Council was sworn in on November 5, 2022 and will serve the community of Abbotsford until the next municipal election in October 2026. Our Mission: We strive to continually improve the quality of life within our community by delivering key services for current and future generations.



## Ross Siemens

### MAYOR

Ross was elected Mayor of the City of Abbotsford after serving on Abbotsford City Council as a Councillor from 2014 - 2022. Ross was born and raised in Abbotsford and previously served on the District of Abbotsford Council from 1986 to 1990. While serving on the District Council, he helped initiate the Business Improvement Area legislation that established the Abbotsford Downtown Business Association. Ross is an outdoor enthusiast and an avid runner.



## Les Barkman

### COUNCILLOR

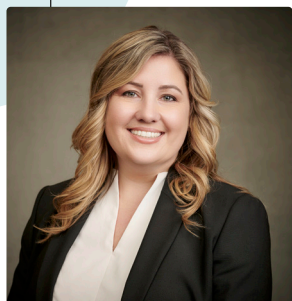
Les started work with the District of Matsqui in the Parks and Recreation Department and served the District of Matsqui/City of Abbotsford for 44 consecutive years. Les was elected to Council in 2008. As a city councillor, Les' goal is to be a significant voice representing all residents in Abbotsford.



## Kelly Chahal

### COUNCILLOR

Kelly has been a community advocate for the past 30 years. Kelly has her Masters in Criminal Justice, for 23 years has worked for the Ministry of Justice as a Probation Officer and is currently enrolled in a Doctorate of Social Sciences Program. She is passionate about social justice issues and her career has encompassed race relations, criminal justice, training and education as well as being an Independent Chairperson in Federal Institutions for 10 years.



## Patricia Driessen

### COUNCILLOR

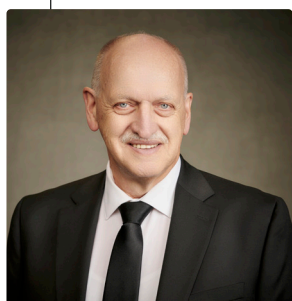
Patricia has lived and invested in Abbotsford her entire life. She received a Marketing & Sales Certificate and Public Relations Certificate from the University of the Fraser Valley and an Event & Conventions Management Diploma from Thompson Rivers University. In 2011, she launched her company, Perfect Sense Events. Patricia likes to squeeze in a spin class or hike in between attending community events.



## Simon Gibson

### COUNCILLOR

Simon returns to Council after serving two terms as an area Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA). He previously served on Abbotsford Council for three decades. Simon taught at the University of the Fraser Valley and Trinity Western University (TWU) in business, communications and leadership. He runs regularly and also enjoys gourmet cooking, travel, reading, long distance running, cycling, and automobile literature.



## Dave Loewen

### COUNCILLOR

Dave was born and raised in Abbotsford and has served on Council since 2005. Dave is a retired teacher/administrator, having taught two years in Australia, three in Manitoba, and 32 at MEI, in Abbotsford. Trained as a Social Science teacher, his career began as a German teacher and ended as an English teacher. Dave has a keen interest in family history and genealogy and he enjoys travelling and the outdoors (snowshoeing and canoeing), as well as swimming and cycling.



## Patricia Ross

### COUNCILLOR

Patricia has served as a City Councillor since 1994 and fully embraces sustainability principles in her work, considering the environmental, social and economic impacts in all decision making. She is a Fellow of Leadership for Environment and Development (LEAD) International, a research and training program dedicated to fostering worldwide sustainability. She is currently chair of GroYourBiz Fraser Valley, an occasional guest speaker and lecturer, and enjoys traveling to experience different cultures.



## Dave Sidhu

### COUNCILLOR

Dave was born and raised in Abbotsford and has been focused on community outreach from an early age. Through his family's business, he has been involved with various fundraising efforts over the years and is the General Manager for The Patrika, North America's first Punjabi-English newspaper. Dave enjoys spending time with loved ones, being outdoors and around animals, and taking family trips.



## Mark Warkentin

### COUNCILLOR

Mark is a lawyer, with a special interest in public service, effective board governance, and collegial decision-making. Mark is a founding partner of Linley Welwood LLP, a full-service law firm. His past service to the community includes 6 years on the Abbotsford Police Board and 2 years as President of the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce. He is a fourth generation resident who enjoys trail running, vintage cars, travel, and motorcycling.