



# REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

THE HUB OF THE FRASER VALLEY

# 2023

## MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



As we look back on our first year together as a Council, we are pleased with the progress we've made and the great collaboration and teamwork that has taken place in our City over the last year. While there was a steep

learning curve for me as Mayor, and some of my new Council colleagues, we quickly found our stride and 2023 was very positive. We got to work right away with the development of our 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, and with the incredible support of City staff, we have already made significant advancements towards several of our goals and priority actions, which you can read more about in this report.

Like Councils in neighbouring communities, we have

had some challenging issues to address, including homelessness, affordable housing, the impacts of mental health and substance use crises in our region, the effects of inflation, high interest rates and rising prices, to name a few. These issues remain important areas of focus and advocacy for us, and we will continue pushing for more resources and supports to help the most vulnerable among us, and to keep Abbotsford a great place to live, now and in the future.

Abbotsford has been growing rapidly. With this growth comes a new set of challenges, but also a stronger economy and the opportunity to enhance how we guide change and new development in our City. To support this growth, and all that is to come over the next 25 years, we will soon begin the process

of updating our Official Community Plan, and in the spring will be engaging with residents and businesses to hear what's important to you and what your vision is for the future of our community.

Abbotsford is an amazing city, one that we on Council are proud to call home. With our diverse population and economy, our rural/urban mix and our vibrant community connections, we have gained a reputation as a desired location to grow a solid and sustainable future. While this first year has been very successful, as a Council, we know there's still a lot of work ahead of us, and we look forward to continuing to serve this wonderful community and working together to build a brighter future for all as the cultural and economic Hub of the Fraser Valley.

**Ross Siemens, Mayor**

## 2022-2026 ABBOTSFORD CITY COUNCIL

**OUR MISSION:** We strive to continually improve the quality of life within our community by delivering key services for current and future generations.



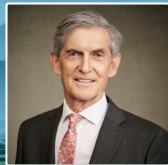
COUNCILLOR  
LES BARKMAN



COUNCILLOR  
KELLY CHAHAL



COUNCILLOR  
PATRICIA DRIESSEN



COUNCILLOR  
SIMON GIBSON



COUNCILLOR  
DAVE LOEWEN



COUNCILLOR  
PATRICIA ROSS



COUNCILLOR  
DAVE SIDHU



COUNCILLOR  
MARK WARKENTIN

## 2023 STRATEGIC PLAN COMPLETED PRIORITIES



### INCLUSIVE & CONNECTED COMMUNITY

- Secured funding for Montrose Transit Exchange
- Advanced park amenities
- Developed Community Amenity Contributions and Density-Bonus policy
- Introduced McKee Neighbourhood Plan
- Implemented Culture Connect Strategy
- Advocated (BC Transit/Translink) to extend transit to Skytrain in Langley



### SUSTAINABLE & SAFE CITY

- Reviewed Council Committees
- Applied to receive additional Federal Reach Home Funding
- Implemented Urban Forestry Strategy
- Advocated for funding for the Flood Mitigation Strategy
- Implemented Homelessness Action Plan
- Implemented Affordable Housing Strategy



### VIBRANT & GROWING ECONOMY

- Advocated and supported Agritech investment opportunities
- Continued to develop Abbotsford International Airport
- Explored revenue generating opportunities
- Updated Intergovernmental Advocacy Strategy



### ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE & INTEGRITY

- Developed a Retention Strategy
- Continued to modernize City services
- Enhanced community engagement and access to information
- Reviewed resource needs for organization

## STAY CONNECTED

### SOCIAL MEDIA

- FACEBOOK** /CityofAbbotsford | /AbbotsfordPRC
- X** @City\_Abbotsford | @yxxairport **INSTAGRAM** @TheCityOfAbbotsford | @AbbotsfordPRC
- YOUTUBE** /cityofabbotsfordbc **LINKED IN** @cityofabbotsford
- WEB** [abbotsford.ca](http://abbotsford.ca) | [abbotsfordairport.ca](http://abbotsfordairport.ca) | [ourwatermatters.ca](http://ourwatermatters.ca)

### COUNCIL MEETINGS

Information from the latest City Council meetings is available every week on the City's website at [abbotsford.ca](http://abbotsford.ca).

City Council Meetings are scheduled on Tuesdays. The full Council Meeting Schedule can be found online at [abbotsford.ca/councilagenda](http://abbotsford.ca/councilagenda).

# 2023 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Our 2023 accomplishments, set out under four Guiding Principles in the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, give a high-level view of what the City was focussed on over the past year.



## PRINCIPLE 1 Inclusive and Connected Community

- Launched the Activity Search Tool on the City's website, a custom program guide for residents that allows customers to customize their recreation program search to their preferences
- Completed Stage 1 of the Aquatic Services & Facilities Strategy and completed Stage 3 of the Arena Services & Facilities Strategy
- Delivered over 50 "Go Play Outside" recreation and culture events, reaching over 10,000 participants
- Introduced Summer Camp Support Positions to provide additional support to children and increase accessibility to summer camps
- 7,171 active volunteers contributed 92,169 volunteer hours to various programs and events through the City's Volunteer Program. The estimated value of the City of Abbotsford's volunteer activity is \$2,304,225
- Received TD Tree Days Grant of \$13,545 and over 70 volunteers came out to Fish Trap Creek Park to install over 825 trees in an area for reforestation
- Over 3,500 residents participated in Community Clean up Day and helped pick litter up around their workplace, school, parks, trails and streets
- Received \$25,000 from New Horizons for Seniors for creating and printing seniors resource guides in Punjabi and English (expected March 2024)
- Completed park and playground renewals including the Dave Kandal picnic shelter enclosure, Delair Park Tennis Courts, Homestead Park playground, Berry Park playground and the Albert Dyck beach/volleyball courts and parking lot upgrades
- Completed Hogan Park playground renewal with the Rotary Club
- Installed new information map kiosks at each cemetery
- Created the "Connect with the City" card that is handed out to the public for different services available to the public
- Maintained roughly 200km of trails throughout the City to keep them safe and passable
- Implemented a "New Tree Coming Soon" sign initiative with a QR code link to our website for more information
- Hosted a successful Family Night at the Fire Halls as part of Fire Prevention Week with over 1600 residents in attendance
- Completed the Fraser Highway - Phase I Improvement Project, improving the safety and efficiency of the corridor

## PRINCIPLE 2 Sustainable and Safe City

- Hosted 4 large information and networking events through Abbotsford ACCESS providing valuable information and resources to our service organizations
- Successfully renewed our Federal Reaching Home Designated Community grant funding for an additional 2 years
- Worked with BC Housing to increase shelter beds and supportive housing for our community
- Adopted the McKee Neighbourhood Plan
- Started construction of the Barrowtown Pump Station Standby Generator project and began work on the Barrowtown Pump Station Resiliency Project
- Submitted a \$1.6 billion Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund (DMAF) application for the Sumas River Watershed Flood Mitigation, and continued to advocate for additional funding to improve flood protection for the community

## PRINCIPLE 3 Vibrant and Growing Economy

- Digitized building permitting and inspection services resulting in faster turn-around times for builders and developers
- Completed construction of the Vye Road overpass and Highway 11 expansion project in partnership with the Provincial and Federal governments, improving public safety and enhancing economic competitiveness by connecting people and businesses with international markets
- Started construction of the Marshall Road corridor improvement project, providing a safe and efficient route for alternate modes of transportation such as walking, cycling and transit
- Started construction of the Montrose Transit Exchange, which will support the future transit network, accommodate increased service levels and improve customer experience
- Abbotsford International Airport welcomed over 1.2 million passengers in 2023
- Completed the terminal expansion at Abbotsford International Airport
- Approved and coordinated over 50 film permits with \$2.4M in economic impact to the community
- Processed more than 75 Special Event permits, with a total economic impact of over \$14M
- Launched the new Abbotsford International Airport website to better serve the growing airport and ensure reliable access to information for residents and visitors
- Continued working with the Province and Sumas First Nation on Fraser River bank stabilization and flood mitigation

## PRINCIPLE 4 Organizational Excellence and Integrity

- Bargained a new Collective Agreement between the City and CUPE Local 774
- Continued construction of the Abbotsford Police Department Headquarters Upgrade, a project that will meet the safety needs of the City as it grows to a population of 200,000
- Abbotsford Fire Rescue Services responded to over 14,000 incidents
- Completed the 5<sup>th</sup> annual Employee Engagement Survey to gain feedback from our employees toward making the City of Abbotsford a great place to work
- Completed our internal Certificate of Recognition (COR) Safety Audit with a 90% success rating
- Developed an Employee Retention Strategy Framework
- Managed the recruitment process for more than 300 positions
- Delivered GIS based mobile applications for our community including Tree Risk Assessment and Trail Inspections
- Implemented the Automated License Plate Reading system which enhances business patronage by optimizing parking availability in busy areas