

Report No. EDP0153-2012
July 12, 2012
File No: 5280-10-01

Executive Committee

To: Mayor and Council
From: Rod Shead, Senior Sustainability Coordinator; and Mark Neill, Manager of Community Planning
Subject: Community Sustainability Strategy Update

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THAT Report No. EDP0153-2012, dated July 12, 2012, from the Senior Sustainability Coordinator; and the Manager of Community Planning, regarding the Community Sustainability Strategy Update, be received;
2. THAT the revised Sustainability Charter as attached as Appendix C to Report 0153-2012 be approved in principle; and
3. THAT staff be authorized to proceed with the next phase of the Community Sustainability Strategy which includes further consultation on the development of an implementation framework for Charter content.

BACKGROUND

Community Sustainability Planning Initiative

The City is undertaking a Community Sustainability Planning Initiative (CSPI) to move the community toward fiscal, economic, social, and environmental sustainability. For 2012 and 2013, the CSPI will see the completion of four (4) independent, but related, projects as follows:

- i. Community Sustainability Strategy;
- ii. Community Energy and Emissions Plan;
- iii. Sumas Mountain Environmental Management Study; and
- iv. Green Economic Investment Study.

The Community Sustainability Strategy is the subject of this report and other CSPI projects will be brought to Council separately.

Community Sustainability Strategy

The City of Abbotsford is developing a Community Sustainability Strategy (CSS) where 'sustainability' is defined as 'meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.' The CSS will become Abbotsford's long-term (25+ year) vision and 'road map' for the integration of fiscal, economic, environmental and social sustainability related goals into City policy, plans, strategies, and decision making.

The CSS is composed of two phases:

- i. Update the City's 2003 Charter of Sustainability (Appendix A) to include a renewed sustainability commitment and establish the future directions, or 'future states', for a sustainable community.
- ii. Develop an implementation framework to include recommendations for embedding sustainability internally in the organization, as well as a series of long-term strategies for the City and its partners to collectively move towards sustainability.

The final CSS document will consist of a revised Sustainability Charter along with plan for implementing Charter content. To date, work on the CSS has focused on the first phase, updating the 2003 Charter of Sustainability. This report summarizes the result of that work and briefly discusses next steps in development of the Community Sustainability Strategy.

ANALYSIS

Revised Sustainability Charter

The revised Sustainability Charter was developed by the project team (City staff, Stantec Consulting) with input from an External Advisory Group, Staff Advisory Group, Community Sustainability Strategy Steering Committee (see Appendix B for members), City Committees, stakeholders, and the public. The revised Sustainability Charter is attached as Appendix C.

The revised Sustainability Charter is organized into three sections: an introduction, a sustainability commitment, and a series 'future states' that support the sustainability commitment and establish a sustainability vision for the community. The following 'future states' were developed:

- Our community is healthy and enjoys a good quality of life
- Our community's resources and assets are managed effectively and efficiently
- Our natural environment is protected and preserved
- Our local economy is prosperous
- Our community is compact, complete and connected

The 'future states' are high level and visionary, and represent what the community wants the future to look like in Abbotsford. Detailed descriptions of 'future states' are provided in the Charter.

Next Steps

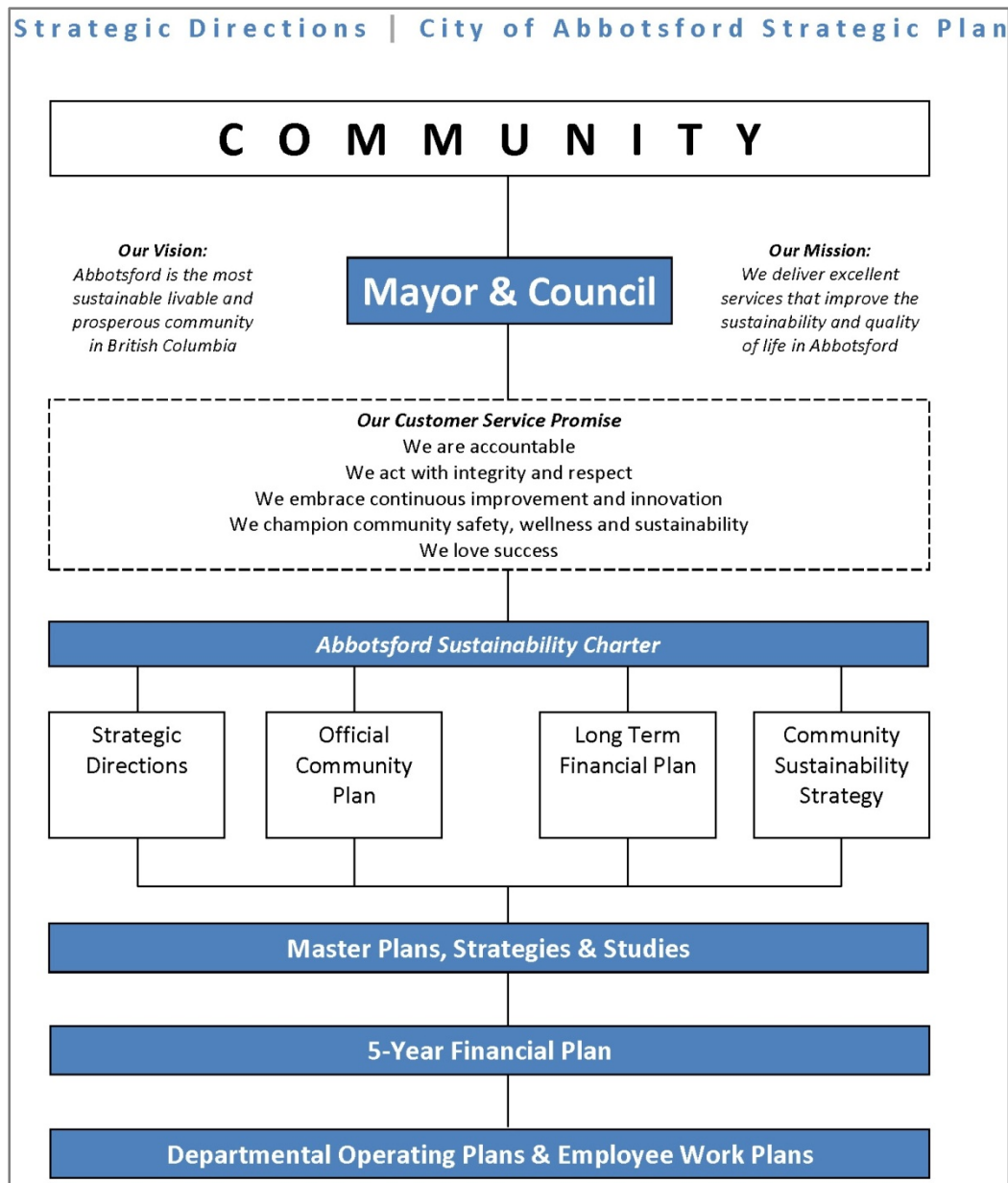
Should Council provide approval in principle for the revised Sustainability Charter, the focus of the Community Sustainability Strategy shifts to the development of an implementation framework to include specific recommendations for embedding sustainability internally in the organization, as well as a series of long-term strategies for the City and its partners to collectively move towards the Charter's 'future states'. The final version of Sustainability Charter will be included in the draft Community Sustainability Strategy that is anticipated to be presented to Council in fall 2012.

FINANCIAL PLAN IMPLICATIONS

The revised Sustainability Charter establishes a sustainability vision for the City and community and has no Financial Plan implications. Funding for development of an implementation framework has already been committed and there are no further implications for the Financial Plan.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The following graphic is an excerpt from the 2012 Strategic Directions document showing the relationship of the Charter with city plans and strategies.



In the above graphic, the Sustainability Charter is shown at the top of the hierarchy of plans and strategies, but the Charter isn't a 'plan', rather, it establishes the sustainability vision (i.e. 'future states') that City policy, plans, strategies and decision making should strive to align to. The Sustainability Charter will support the 2012 Strategic Directions fiscal/economic, environmental, and social strategic goals.

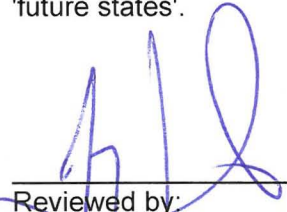
COMMUNICATION PLAN

Additional consultation with City committees, stakeholders and the public will continue through the second phase of the Community Sustainability Strategy. As with the first phase of the project, public consultation events will be advertised through newspaper ads and the City website.

SUMMARY

A draft Sustainability Charter has been developed with input from external and staff Advisory Groups, the Community Sustainability Strategy Committee, stakeholders, and the public. The revised Sustainability Charter is presented for Council's input and consideration for approval-in-principle.

The next phase of the Community Sustainability Strategy will focus on development of an implementation framework to facilitate a coordinated and systematic approach to ensure City policy, plans, strategies and decision making is consistent with the Charter's 'future states'.



Reviewed by:
Jay Feichroeb
General Manager, Economic
Development and Planning Services

Prepared by:
Rod Shead
Senior Sustainability Coordinator

Reviewed by:
Mark Neill
Manager of Community Planning

Attachments:

Appendix A: 2003 Charter of Sustainability
Appendix B: Advisory Group and Steering Committee Members
Appendix C: Revised Sustainability Charter

ABBOTSFORD CHARTER OF SUSTAINABILITY

PREAMBLE

The City of Abbotsford, in order to protect and enhance the unique and spectacular beauty of our City, recognizes that sustainable development requires a constant and equitable balancing of three major areas: Economic, Environmental and Social.

A strong and vibrant local economy is one of the core elements of a sustainable community. The citizens of Abbotsford must be able to provide for the basic necessities of adequate food and shelter for themselves and their families.

Each member of our community must share the stewardship of our numerous environmental treasures. Clean air, pure water and uncontaminated soil are crucial to the well being of the City's entire economy and the health and quality of life of its citizens.

The City and its citizens create and foster a quality of life as reflected in the diverse expressions of the human spirit. We commit ourselves to creating a community with strong law enforcement coupled with equally strong community and civic leadership which works together towards eliminating poverty, ignorance and fear.



Principles for Sustainable Community Development

The City of Abbotsford defines sustainable development as that which strives to balance the Economic, Environmental and Social needs of the City in order to provide the highest possible quality of life for all its residents today, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

In order to meet our ongoing and ever-changing challenges, the City of Abbotsford, Council and staff, will adhere to the following principles and work with all organizations, businesses and residents to assist them to do likewise:

Responsible Growth

1. Vigorously promote the creation of environmentally and socially responsible economic growth by creating policies and infrastructure that support profitable industrial, commercial, agricultural and residential activities.
2. Streamline policies and regulations directed at protecting and improving the quality of air, water, land, and other natural resources.
3. Focus on development that will maintain a vibrant local economy in order to sustain the conditions for continued growth, competitiveness and job creation that will provide a reasonable quality of life for all citizens of Abbotsford.
4. Provide people with choices about how and where they live, present the public with transportation choices, build neighborhoods and encourage healthy communities to flourish.

Pollution Prevention and Resource Conservation

1. Focus on proactive measures for pollution prevention and resource conservation.
2. Enable the "Three R's" of waste management (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) and composting.
3. Aggressively promote the efficient use of all renewable and non-renewable resources in order to reduce the demand for additional resource consumption, and support renewable, non-polluting energy infrastructure.
4. Discourage the development of facilities that will increase the level of harmful greenhouse gases and other toxic emissions in an already fragile air shed.

Social Well-being

1. Ensure that a broad range of social programs, cultural activities and recreational opportunities are reasonably accessible to all citizens.
2. Facilitate and encourage the development and sustainability of responsive community-based organizations.
3. Promote community caring and responsibility for individuals, families and community well being.
4. Commit to provide public information, education, advocacy and opportunities to participate in community decisions that affect the quality of life for all citizens.

Shared Responsibility

1. Consider the long-term economic, environmental and social consequences and benefits equally in all decision-making processes.
 2. Continuously improve and enhance co-ordination and communication between city departments and citizens to ensure that sustainable development principles are applied with streamlined procedures across City operations and throughout the community.
 3. Ensure that no one group or geographic area is unduly burdened by negative economic, environmental or social impacts.
 4. Develop strategic alliances and partnerships with other jurisdictions, agencies, organizations and the private sector to advance sustainable development goals.
 5. Foster an ethic of stewardship by urging all members of the community to assume personal responsibility for sustainability by adopting best management practices and by increasing their knowledge of economic, environmental and social issues.
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Community Sustainability Strategy - External Advisory Group		
	Name	Association
1.	Aeriol Alderking	Fraser Valley Conservancy
2.	Dave Algra	Algra Brothers
3.	Dan Bourgeois	University of Fraser Valley (UFV) - Student
4.	Stacy Corriveau	Resident
5.	Maureen Enser	Urban Development Institute
6.	Marilyn Hamilton	Imagine Abbotsford
7.	Patrick Harrison	UFV Chair of the Centre for Environmental Sustainability
8.	Kevin Koopmans	Community Futures
9.	Lenore Newman	UFV Canada Research Chair in Food Security & Environment
10.	John Vissers	Environmental Advisory Committee
11.	Marion Robinson	Fraser Basin Council
12.	Rod Santiago	Abbotsford Community Services
13.	Doris Woodman-McMillan	Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce

Community Sustainability Strategy - Staff Advisory Group		
	Name	City Department
1.	Amy Anaka	Economic Development & Planning Services
2.	Tanya Bettles	Economic Development & Planning Services
3.	Darren Braun	Economic Development & Planning Services
4.	Rick Daykin	Parks, Recreation & Culture
5.	Mike Dickinson	Economic Development & Planning Services
6.	Pauline Favero	Economic Development & Planning Services
7.	Sue Federspeil	Parks, Recreation & Culture
8.	Tamaka Fisher	Parks, Recreation & Culture
9.	Rob Isaac	Engineering
10.	Reuben Koole	Economic Development & Planning Services
11.	Tracy Kyle	Engineering
12.	Med Manzanal	Parks, Recreation & Culture
13.	Mark Neill	Economic Development & Planning Services
14.	Bill Ozeroff	Economic Development & Planning Services
15.	Mike Veenbaas	Finance & Corporate Services
16.	Shawn Welles	Finance & Corporate Services

Community Sustainability Strategy - Steering Committee		
	Name	Title
1.	Jim Gordon	General Manager, Engineering & Regional Utilities
2.	Frank Pizzuto	City Manager
3.	Patricia Ross	Council Member
4.	Pat Soanes	General Manager, Finance & Corporate Services
5.	Mark Taylor	General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Culture
6.	Jay Teichroeb	General Manager, Economic Development & Planning Services

ABBOTSFORD SUSTAINABILITY CHARTER

Abbotsford is a diverse and dynamic community located in the heart of the Fraser Valley. Known as the 'city in the country', Abbotsford is characterized by a rapidly growing and distinct urban area surrounded by highly productive farmland.

As a young, family-oriented community, Abbotsford residents place a high value on environmental and sustainable priorities and, as the community grows, it is vital to ensure that decisions regarding future growth reflect these values and work towards achieving long-term sustainability. The Sustainability Charter defines Abbotsford's vision for a sustainable future and sets the tone for a healthy and diverse community.

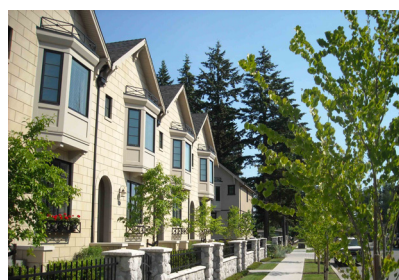


SUSTAINABILITY COMMITMENT

Abbotsford will grow and function through an integrated approach where the community's fiscal, economic, environmental and social needs are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. We will be innovative in working towards sustainability and will continuously adapt to what we learn along the way.

Together, the City, residents, businesses and community organizations, as well as our neighbours and partners in the region have a shared responsibility in becoming a sustainable community and are committed to achieving a future where:

- Our community is healthy and enjoys a good quality of life
- Our community's resources and assets are managed effectively and efficiently
- Our natural environment is protected and preserved
- Our local economy is prosperous
- Our community is compact, complete and connected



ABBOTSFORD SUSTAINABILITY CHARTER

FUTURE STATES

The Future States below support the sustainability commitment and describe in more detail what we want our future to look like.

What influences our quality of life?

- Housing
- Food
- Clothing
- Air quality
- Drinking water
- Employment
- Sanitation
- Safety & security
- Arts
- Recreation
- Heritage & diversity
- Transportation
- Education & training
- Health & well-being
- Natural environment
- Civic engagement

What are the components of the community's resources and assets?

- Hard infrastructure & assets
- Municipal revenue & capital
- Human resources
- Energy
- Water use
- Waste
- Ecosystem services

Our community is healthy and enjoys a good quality of life

A sustainable Abbotsford means:

Every individual in Abbotsford is able to meet their basic needs, through access to clean drinking water and air, affordable housing and living costs, ample employment opportunities, healthy affordable food, as well as quality education, health care and social support. We have a strong sense of community where people are friendly, and charitable with opportunities to engage in civic decision making. We are a welcoming, walkable, and accessible community with dedicated volunteers and responsive protective services. Our neighbourhoods are cohesive and safe. There is strong support of arts, cultural diversity, heritage and education. We have pleasant and inviting public places along with vibrant community spaces and programs that recognize our heritage and celebrate a diverse and inclusive community. We have access to formal and informal sport and recreational opportunities which keep us healthy and connected to our community and nature.

Our community's resources and assets are managed effectively and efficiently

A sustainable Abbotsford means:

We plan responsibly and deliver efficient municipal services. This results in reduced pressures on property taxes and a tax base that is balanced among commercial, industrial and residential users. We manage our resources efficiently and actively pursue conservation. Energy consumption and carbon emissions are minimized and we are innovative in using our waste as a resource stream. We continue to invest in the infrastructure that supports our community. Densification has enabled us to be more efficient with the infrastructure and assets that service and support our community.

ABBOTSFORD SUSTAINABILITY CHARTER

Our natural environment is protected and preserved

A sustainable Abbotsford means:

We are responsible stewards of the environment and we integrate our needs with that of the local and regional ecosystems that support thriving fish and wildlife populations. We value the services provided by our ecosystems and the air we breathe and water we drink is clean. Innovations in our agricultural, resource extraction and land development practices have allowed us to protect our natural environment. We continue to enjoy our natural areas for recreational purposes which contribute to improving our health, well-being and our overall quality of life.

What influences the integrity of our natural environment?

- Terrestrial habitats
- Aquatic habitats
- Recreation
- Land development
- Mineral extraction
- Food & agriculture
- Air quality
- Water quality

Our local economy is prosperous

A sustainable Abbotsford means:

Agriculture continues to thrive and grow as the foundation of Abbotsford's diversified economy, providing local jobs, food and agricultural products for local, regional and global markets. Industries and businesses are thriving in our community and are socially and environmentally responsible. There is a wide range of high quality jobs in the City, local businesses and industries are flourishing and significant commercial and industrial investment is occurring. A growing number of businesses and industry are contributing to a resilient and innovative economy in sectors such as aerospace, agri-business, health care, manufacturing, renewable energy, finance, green buildings, outdoor recreation tourism, water and waste management and other supporting services. The University of the Fraser Valley plays a key role in building a creative, skilled and successful workforce, and being a centre in applied research excellence. Community members, businesses, industries and institutions are well connected locally, to the region and the global marketplace, through efficient and cost effective transportation and communication infrastructure.

What influences our economy?

- Local employment
- Economic diversity
- Food & agriculture
- Energy
- Transportation
- Education & training
- Arts & culture
- Tourism
- Aerospace

ABBOTSFORD SUSTAINABILITY CHARTER

Our community is compact, complete and connected

What influences the development of a compact, complete connected community?

- Transportation
- Infrastructure
- Economic development
- Built form
- Community services
- Land protection

A sustainable Abbotsford means:

Development needed to support our community's growth is directed into neighbourhoods within the Urban Development Boundary resulting in a high density, mixed use urban form that promotes efficient use of infrastructure. Highly productive agricultural land is protected and intensive development is directed away from environmentally sensitive areas, making integrated energy systems viable and reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution. Community development efforts focus on a complete community, maximizing local employment opportunities, short commutes and convenient access to community services and vibrant public places. The transportation network provides convenient and safe connections between home, work, services, and other destinations, and results in walkable, cycle-friendly neighbourhoods supplemented with user friendly transit service and strategic road and air transportation improvements.

For more information on the Sustainability Charter contact:

Economic Development & Planning Services

Community Planning Division

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www.abbotsford.ca/css

SHAPING OUR FUTURE

