

5

Regional Context Statement



Abbotsford within its Region

Abbotsford forms part of the Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD) and is subject to its Regional Growth Strategy (RGS): “Choices for Our Future” (2004). This OCP is consistent with the FVRD growth strategy’s vision in being a “network of vibrant, distinct, and sustainable communities that accept responsibly managed growth while being committed to protecting the land resource and the natural environment to ensure that a high quality of life is accessible to all.”

More specifically, Abbotsford’s growth management and land use policies align with RGS objectives and actions to “Manage Urban Land Responsibly”. The OCP focuses future growth and urban residential densities within the Urban Development Boundary, and supports infill, redevelopment, densification and mixed use as a means of creating more compact development patterns. These policies also help deliver on the other RGS goals.

The policy directions of this Plan are outlined in Part III, and as shown in *Table I.1*, they correspond with and have a direct alignment with the growth management goals of the RGS:

1. Increase Transportation Choice and Efficiency
2. Support and Enhance the Agricultural Sector
3. Manage Urban Land Responsibly
4. Develop a Network of Sustainable Communities
5. Protect the Natural Environment and Promote Environmental Stewardship
6. Protect and Manage Rural and Recreational Lands
7. Achieve Sustainable Economic Growth
8. Manage Water, Energy Resources, and Waste Responsibly

Table I.1: Abbotsford OCP Policy Alignment with the 2004 FVRD Regional Growth Strategy

FVRD Growth Management Goal	City of Abbotsford Policy Areas					
	Create a City Centre	Establish Distinct + Complete Neighbourhoods	Make Walking, Biking, + Transit Delightful	Make Places for People	Improve Natural + Built Systems	Enhance Agricultural Integrity
Increase Transportation Choice and Efficiency	√	√	√	√		
Support and Enhance the Agricultural Sector						√
Manage Urban Land Responsibly	√	√				√
Develop a Network of Sustainable Communities	√	√	√	√	√	√
Protect the Natural Environment and Promote Environmental Stewardship				√	√	√
Protect and Manage Rural and Recreational Lands				√	√	√
Achieve Sustainable Economic Growth	√	√	√	√		√
Manage Water, Energy Resources, and Waste Responsibly		√	√	√		√

Population and Employment Projections

The RGS projected population for Abbotsford is to reach approximately 209,500 residents between 2020 and 2030. The population projections developed for this OCP are lower, with a projection of 200,000 residents by 2040 residents under a medium growth rate of 1.5% per year. However the land use and other policies in this OCP are sufficient to accommodate either faster or slower growth rates.

The OCP employment projections identify and estimate a total of 87,000 jobs by 2026, which is consistent with the RGS employment projections for Abbotsford.

Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Targets

While the 2004 RGS does not include targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, they have been developed for this OCP and included in Part I, as required by the *Local Government Act*. The city wide target for Abbotsford is a 40% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2040, including: 35% reductions in buildings; 50% reductions in transportation; and 40% reductions in solid waste.

Alignment with Fraser Valley Regional District Matters

The following highlights select policy statements from this Plan to further demonstrate alignment with FVRD goals and objectives when providing for the needs of the projected population and related regional matters.

Housing

- Increasing the supply of non-profit rental social housing.
- Supporting a range of affordable housing options using a housing first approach along the housing spectrum, including shelters and safe houses, transitional/temporary housing, supportive housing, and independent living options, especially in transit-accessible areas.
- Leveraging shared funding with other levels of government through advocacy to support the City's limited mandate and resources to address social needs. Measure, monitor and articulate local priorities for the community to support advocacy objectives.

Transportation

- Creating a comprehensive direction system that is easy to understand and navigate for pedestrians, cyclists and transit users.
- Ensuring goods movement space is maintained through creative and innovative methods that meet both commercial retail objectives and streets designed for all users, and supporting major truck routes.
- Focus transit improvements and deliver the highest frequency of service in the Urban Core.

Regional District Services

- Maintaining or exceeding existing FVRD waste diversion targets of 65% by 2018; 80% by 2020; and 90% by 2025.
- Improving local water quality through reduction of point and non point source pollution, and through watershed planning in partnership with neighbouring and regional jurisdictions.
- Promoting strategies that reduce local air pollution, including measures to protect the Fraser Valley airshed from additional point pollution sources such as energy plants.
- Working with senior levels of government to assess projected impacts on dykes and stormwater infrastructure and respond to changing conditions through management strategies.
- Conducting an assessment of infrastructure to determine the level of risk and impact from more frequent and larger storms, droughts, or other natural disasters such as earthquakes, and ensure future development is informed by this assessment.

Parks and Natural Areas

- Managing parks in an environmentally sensitive manner, and consistent with the policies in Part III.
- Connecting neighbourhoods, where possible, to multiuse pathways and other trails that link neighbourhoods to Mixed Use Centres, park amenities, and recreation areas.
- Enhancing and restoring ecological links between existing natural areas and public open spaces, increasing connections between isolated habitats.

Economic Development

- Continuing to balance the number of jobs to number of residents employed in the labour force in the city, reducing the need for longer commute distances for residents. Support opportunities for jobs within complete neighbourhoods wherever feasible.
- Continuing to support the growth and expansion of the airport (YXX) as a destination for domestic and international flights, and aerospace related industries.
- Encouraging the continued diversification of a local economy that supports existing businesses, encourages the development of new businesses, and facilitates home-based business development with a wide variety of sectors.

Regional Growth Strategy Update

The FVRD RGS is currently being updated, and the City has been participating in the update process as members of the Inter-governmental Advisory Committee. Following the completion of the updated RGS, this Regional Context Statement will be amended to reflect the alignment with the new RGS.

