

# Fraser Valley Future 2050

Fraser Valley Regional District  
Regional Growth Strategy

*DRAFT - August 2020*



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Abbotsford Airport Authority



Chilliwack Economic Partners Corporation

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# Introduction

## The Purpose of the Regional Growth Strategy

The Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) is a strategic plan enabled by the *Local Government Act* that provides an overarching planning framework for coordinating the activities of local governments and the Provincial government. It considers transit, housing, parks, economic development and environmental issues from a regional perspective with the goal of creating healthy, sustainable communities. As a long range vision with a 30 year scope, it aims to ensure the region as a whole is working toward a common future.

Regional growth strategies support the management of issues that affect more than one jurisdiction and can perform the following functions (among others):

- Promote coordination among municipalities and regional districts on issues that cross jurisdictional boundaries;
- Promote coordination among municipalities, regional districts and Indigenous communities as a means to establishing and maintaining meaningful and collaborative relationships;
- Strengthen links between regional districts and the Provincial ministries and agencies whose resources are needed to carry out projects and programs; and,
- Communicate the region's strengths to potential investors while demonstrating that local governments, Indigenous governments and stakeholders are

proactively addressing the key issues affecting the region's future.

In 2004, the Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD) adopted "Choices for our Future", the region's first Regional Growth Strategy bylaw. However, much has changed since 2004. In 2010, a review of the RGS was initiated to reassess and adjust the region's long-term vision and objectives in light of new legislation, new growth, and changing demographics. This updated RGS reflects these changes.

The content and policies presented in this document are based on input from member municipalities, Indigenous communities, the general public, and other stakeholders throughout the region. Input was gathered through a series of open houses, surveys, workshops and direct communications.

The Regional Growth Strategy is intended for elected officials and staff from the Fraser Valley Regional District, electoral areas, member municipalities, neighbouring regional districts, Indigenous governments, other levels of government, as well as the general public and other stakeholders. The document outlines the vision and priorities of the region, and will be referenced when making both short-term and long-term decisions that have the potential to affect the region as a whole.

Per Section 445 of the *Local Government Act*, the RGS does not commit or authorize a regional district to proceed with any project or action specified within the plan.



# Context

## Who We Are

The Fraser Valley Regional District is comprised of six member municipalities and eight electoral areas and features a wide range of communities, from small rural hamlets to the fifth largest city in British Columbia (BC). Situated in Southern BC just east of Metro Vancouver, the boundaries of the FVRD extend from Abbotsford to Hope in the east, sharing our southern border with Washington State and extending north just past Boston Bar. The region's total land base is 13,361 square kilometres.

This region has a diverse population living within its boundaries. Indigenous Peoples have lived in the area for thousands of years, and more recent arrivals have come from countries around the globe. The lives and experiences of our residents are characterized by an equally diverse landscape of rugged mountains, sizeable rivers, and fertile valleys.

The FVRD is one of the fastest growing regional districts in British Columbia. As of 2019, the region is home to 320,000 residents. By 2051 the population could increase by as much as 56% to around 500,000. Anticipating and accommodating this growth over the next 30 years will offer both opportunities and challenges for the region.

Although the FVRD remains remarkably independent from the rest of the Lower Mainland, the region will increasingly face external pressures as a result of growth occurring within Metro Vancouver.

By 2050, the population of Metro Vancouver is expected to increase by over 40% to 3.6 million. Like any growth, this will create both challenges and opportunities for the FVRD. As the primary link between Metro Vancouver and the rest of Canada, the FVRD will continue to be impacted by major infrastructure projects traversing the region that are crucial to the flow of goods and services. Parks are facing overuse as more Metro Vancouver residents visit the FVRD to access nature and outdoor recreational opportunities. High housing prices in Metro Vancouver affect this region's ability to maintain affordable housing while protecting agricultural land. Even air quality is directly affected by development to the west.

However, the FVRD's unique relationship to Metro Vancouver offers advantages by putting the region within easy reach of a large market, generating new potential in the tourism industry and creating opportunities for collaboration when addressing issues such as air quality and housing affordability.

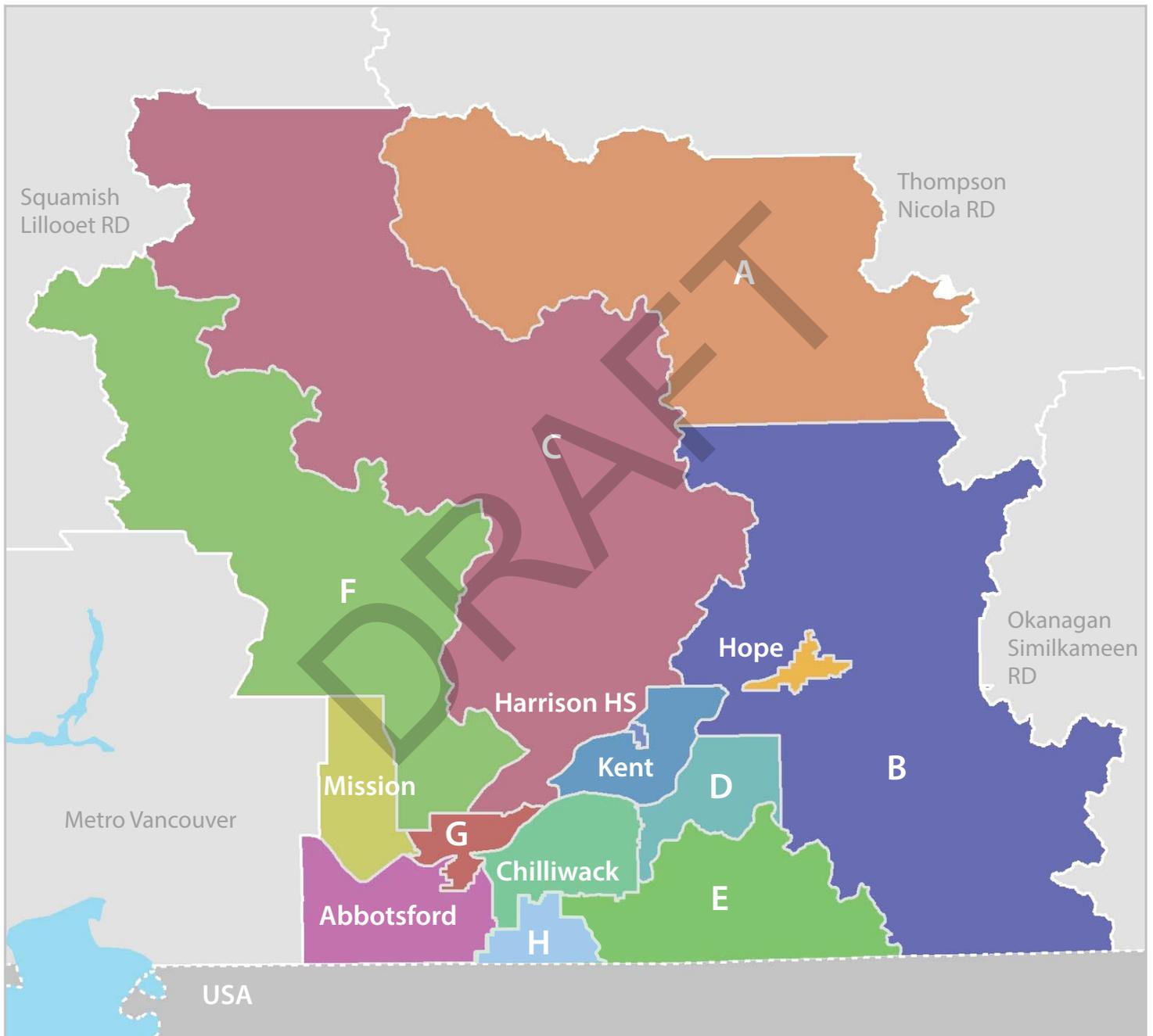
For additional information on the region, please see our Regional Snapshot series, designed to provide greater insight into the forces which are shaping growth and change in the region today. For a full list of snapshots currently in the series and the most recent monitoring report please visit us at [www.fvrd.ca](http://www.fvrd.ca)



Cheryl Uphill

Nikki Rekman

# Map 1. FVRD Jurisdictions





### The Facts:

#### 2016 Population:



309,000



Land Area:  
13,361 km<sup>2</sup>

## Population Estimates & Projections

The Lower Mainland has long been recognized as one of the fastest growing regions in Canada and is currently home to over 2.9 million residents. It is anticipated that the Lower Mainland's population will reach 4.1 million by 2051. At an estimated 309,000 in 2016, the FVRD makes up almost 11% of the Lower Mainland's population and is the third largest regional district in the province by population.

The FVRD is consistently one of the fastest growing regional districts in British Columbia. Growth has been continuous, with the most rapid period of growth taking place between 1971 and 2001. Since 2001, growth has moderated somewhat, but only in a relative sense. It is anticipated that the region will see an additional 190,000 residents from 2016 levels, a 61% increase in overall population, by 2051. Ninety-six percent of this growth will take place within the six member municipalities, with the remaining 4% taking place in the region's rural electoral areas (see Table 1). The region's Regional Growth Boundaries, delineated in the RGS, will help to contain this growth in established urban centres and foster the development of more compact and complete communities.

Table 1. FVRD Population Growth Estimates 2016-2051

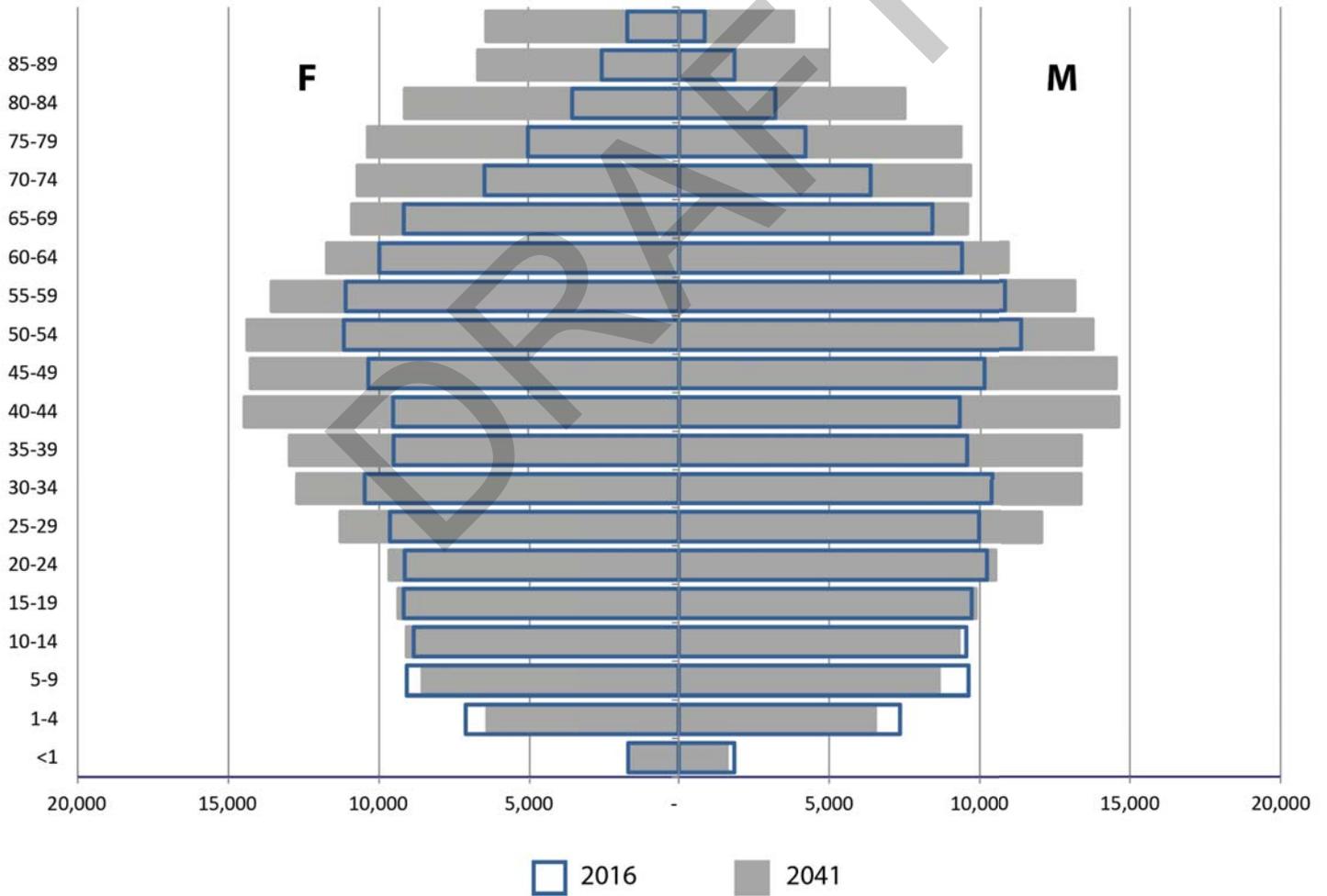
Population Growth Estimates				
	2016	2026	2041	2051
Abbotsford	148,056	172,767	214,935	237,422
Chilliwack	87,560	105,644	134,045	151,027
Mission	40,668	47,421	57,901	67,196
Hope	6,385	6,931	7,359	7,969
Kent	6,356	6,870	7,240	7,840
Harrison	1,514	1,750	2,027	2,196
EAs	10,775	12,515	14,674	15,578
Reserves	8,128	9,441	11,069	11,752
<b>FVRD</b>	<b>309,442</b>	<b>363,338</b>	<b>449,249</b>	<b>500,979</b>

*High estimates (takes into account estimated Census undercount) including Corrections facilities population*

Another important consideration for the RGS is the region's aging population. Over the next 20 years, the number of seniors in the region is expected to increase from 17% to 25% of the total population. By 2041, almost 100,000 residents, will be over the age of 65 (see Figure 1).

This demographic shift will impact housing demand, health care, municipal services, built-form, travel patterns, transportation mode share, transit use/demand and accessibility in the region. Rural areas will face the greatest challenges with a higher percentage of seniors and fewer resources to manage demands.

**Figure 1.** Current and Projected population of the FVRD by age and gender, 2016-2041



BC Stats PEOPLE 2019 projections

## Economic Outlook & Employment Projections

Since the earliest days of British Columbia, employment in the region has centred around the agriculture and resource industry sectors. While these sectors are still an important, ongoing source of jobs, the region's employment base has expanded and diversified and now includes a wide variety of manufacturing, aerospace, service and high-tech fields. Many of these diversified industries have important connections to the older, more traditional sectors like agriculture, with its increasing dependence on technology.

The diversifying economy has not reached all corners of the Regional District. While larger communities like Abbotsford and Chilliwack are developing employment opportunities outside the traditional resource sectors, other communities have experienced difficult times as resource-dependent industries adapt to a changing global market.

Understanding the structure of the region's economy can inform a number of policy areas including education requirements, sustainable transportation options and social planning strategies. Goods producing industries play a much larger role in the FVRD than in neighbouring Metro Vancouver, with almost 30% of the labour force engaged in these industries. The larger communities of Abbotsford, Chilliwack and Mission are more diversified and often act as suppliers of commercial services to smaller communities and the electoral areas. The region's proximity to one of Canada's fastest growing metropolitan regions provides the FVRD with a ready market for a broad range of goods and services.

Longer term employment projections for the FVRD sees continued growth, primarily in the three largest urban centres: Abbotsford, Chilliwack and Mission. Employment is expected to increase regionally by approximately 100,000, or 74%, between 2016 and 2051. Of the job growth, approximately 52% will be in Abbotsford, 29% in Chilliwack, 12% in Mission with the remaining 6% in the rest of the region.

Table 2. FVRD Employment Growth Estimates

Employment Growth Estimates				
	2016	2026	2041	2051
<b>Abbotsford</b>	69,586	81,200	108,376	119,715
<b>Chilliwack</b>	37,650	45,426	60,769	69,989
<b>Mission</b>	17,487	20,391	26,325	31,231
<b>Hope</b>	2,299	2,495	2,829	3,143
<b>Kent</b>	2,733	2,954	3,253	3,600
<b>Harrison</b>	651	752	979	1,083
<b>EAs and ICs*</b>	5,066	5,884	6,586	6,991
<b>FVRD</b>	135,666	159,107	209,076	236,028

\* High estimates - Employment projections not available for individual Electoral Areas or Indigenous communities (ICs)

## Housing Outlook & Projections

The Region has seen increasing housing demand as the population continues to grow. This is partly driven by people moving to the FVRD seeking more affordable housing options in the Lower Mainland. Growth in the housing sector is projected to be strongest in the large municipalities but will also be seen in the electoral areas. Housing demand forecasts in the Region are linked to population forecasts. Therefore, housing demand is projected to continue to reflect the projected population growth in the Region.

Constrained by local geography and the Agricultural Land Reserve, a broad range of housing types and densities are being developed in the region's urban centres. New housing in the urban centres is increasingly shifting from mainly single family to multi-family housing forms. In addition, secondary suites, laneway housing and other housing options are increasing densities and affordability in traditional single family neighbourhoods.

Per S. 585.2 of the *Local Government Act*, all local governments must prepare housing needs reports (HNR). The reports must include information in relation to the demand for, and supply of housing within a local government area and will provide the basis for housing policies within municipal and electoral area Official Community Plans (OCP's) and Regional Growth Strategies. The first HNRs must be received by local governments by April 2022 and subsequent report must be prepared every 5 years thereafter.

In response to increasing homelessness and housing affordability concerns, local governments in the region are already engaged in developing housing strategies to address a range of needs across the housing continuum. These needs range from ensuring the supply of a broad range of housing types and preserving rental stock, to providing supportive housing and emergency shelter options for those most vulnerable. The FVRD has supported these efforts by undertaking homelessness counts and social housing inventories over the last decade. It is important to recognize, however, that housing affordability and homelessness is not only an "urban" issue and that rural homelessness in the region, including on Crown lands, is a concern.

Table 3. FVRD Housing Unit Growth Estimates

Housing Growth Estimates				
	2016	2026	2041	2051
Abbotsford	52,403	61,149	76,074	84,033
Chilliwack	34,551	41,687	52,894	59,595
Mission	14,644	17,076	20,850	24,197
Hope	3,027	3,286	3,488	3,778
Kent	2,672	2,888	3,043	3,296
Harrison	760	878	1,017	1,102
EAs + ICs	8,365	9,716	11,392	12,095
FVRD	116,159	136,390	168,639	188,058

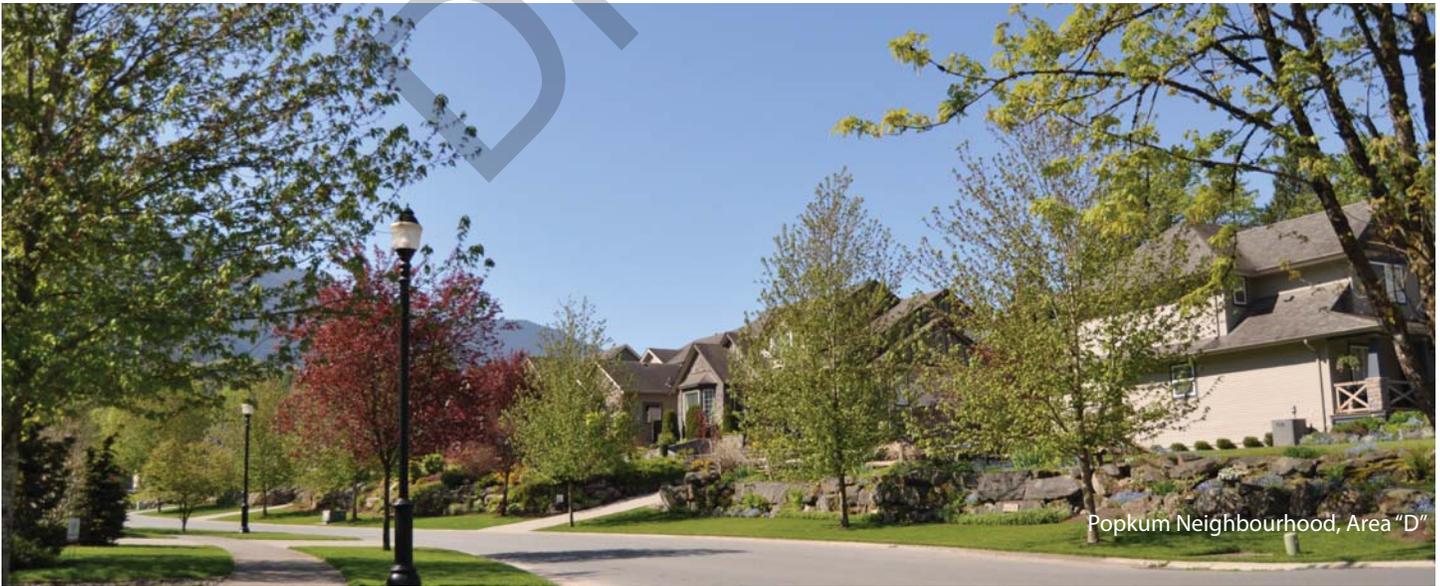
Table 4. FVRD Dwelling Types

2016 Dwelling Type (%)				
	Single Detached	Semi-Detached, Row, Suite	Apartment	Moveable
Abbotsford	40%	32%	27%	1%
Chilliwack	56%	23%	20%	1%
Mission	65%	25%	9%	0%
Hope	74%	9%	10%	7%
Kent	72%	14%	9%	4%
Harrison	71%	10%	18%	1%
EA's	82%	1%	0%	16%
FVRD	52%	25%	20%	2%

2016 Canada Census



Street oriented townhousing, Abbotsford



Popkum Neighbourhood, Area "D"

# Indigenous Peoples and Communities

## The Past

Indigenous Peoples have inhabited the Fraser Valley for roughly 10,000 years<sup>1</sup>. In Stó:lō communities, the connection to this place is said to date to 'time immemorial'.

Indigenous Peoples in the Fraser Valley numbered in the tens of thousands in the 17th century.<sup>2</sup> The extensive network of rivers, lakes and mountain ridges in the region were critical, providing a communication and transportation network between communities that ranged from the Pacific Ocean to the interior of British Columbia. To this day, the Fraser River plays a significant role in Indigenous Culture, providing an important connection to the spiritual world, and a place to practice cultural traditions.

Near the end of the 18th century, with the arrival of European settlers, Indigenous Peoples were exposed to smallpox, the first viral epidemic to reach Indigenous communities. Historians have estimated that nearly two-thirds of the Indigenous population in the Fraser Valley was lost in less than six weeks<sup>3</sup>.

Federal and provincial government policies and programs resulted in further fragmentation of Indigenous Communities through the Indian Act; notably the creation of bands and allocation of reserves, and the Residential Schools programs. The long term effects of these actions are still being felt today.

## Governance

Today there are 30 Bands in the region, representing three broad language groups<sup>4</sup>. A number of these communities operate independently, while most manage services and programs through regional tribal councils, and other types of self-defined organizational structures and authorities.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), to which Canada is a signatory, and the principles of which BC has designated to uphold through the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA), outlines Indigenous rights of self-determination, lands and resources, and free, prior and informed consent.

The Fraser Valley Regional District recognizes and respects autonomy and self-governance of local Indigenous organizations as they work to strengthen their communities and toward realizing their visions for the future. The FVRD is committed to a collaborative, government-to-government relationship with Indigenous communities which is built around the principles of UNDRIP.

## Economic

Indigenous communities are engaged in the regional economy in many different ways, including: natural resource development, educational and economic development partnerships, cultural tourism and others. The amount of Indigenous economic activity in the Fraser Valley reflects the range of economic opportunities available and the considerable potential for future growth.

Continued economic growth in the Region will continue to provide opportunities for Indigenous communities to diversify and expand their economies.

## Partnerships

The Fraser Valley Regional District works with a number of local Indigenous communities on a wide range of initiatives and projects. These partnerships are enabled through a number of different agreements ranging from Memoranda of Understanding and Protocol Agreements to service agreements.

Throughout the Region, the FVRD has entered into agreements with local Indigenous communities for the delivery of a number of services, including but not limited to: liquid waste management, water, planning and building inspection services, animal control, regional transit and fire protection.

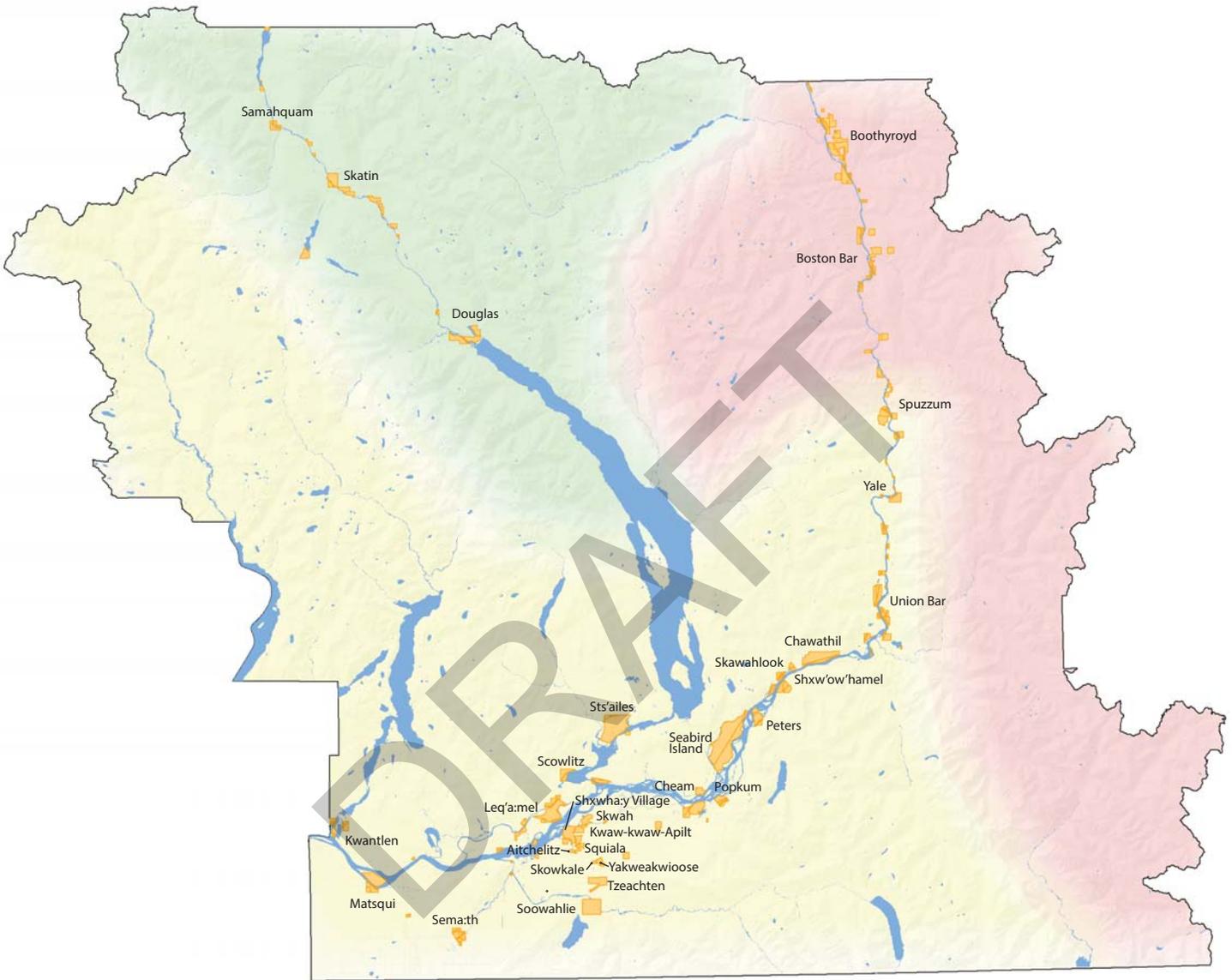
<sup>1</sup> A Stó:lō-Coast Salish Historical Atlas (2001), 16

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 18

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 30

<sup>4</sup> First Peoples' Language Map of B.C. (maps.fphlcc.ca)

# Map 2. Indigenous Communities



### Cultural Regions

- Nlaka'pamux
- Stó:lō/Coast Salish
- Stl'alt'imc

### Jurisdictional Boundaries

- Reserve Land
- FVRD Boundary

Source: First Peoples' Language Map of B.C. (maps.fphlcc.ca)

# Defining Growth

## Regional Vision

Growth can mean many different things depending on the context. One of the roles of the RGS is to understand the different growth patterns occurring within the region and to ensure that growth and development is appropriate within the larger regional context. It's then up to each municipality's Official Community Plan (OCP) to ensure that growth is appropriate for each community and neighbourhood.

Three categories help to define the different types of growth occurring in the region: Urban Centres, Rural Centres, and Rural Landscapes (*see Map 3*). Beyond these, extensive portions of the region are Provincial Crown Land, outside the authority of the FVRD.

## Collaboration

The FVRD is committed to maintaining strong, collaborative, and respectful government-to-government working relationships with Indigenous communities, which is built around the principles of UNDRIP. The FVRD will foster opportunities for mutual understanding of governing structures, planning tools, traditions, roles and responsibilities while respecting the views and authority of each party, recognizing that we have a common interest in a sustainable and resilient future.

## Regional Growth Boundary

The Regional Growth Boundary (RGB) is a tool for delineating areas with Urban Centres for future growth. Concentrating growth within the RGB contributes to the development of more compact, complete communities, a primary goal of the RGS.

Higher residential densities are encouraged and accommodated within the RGB where appropriate services exist. New high density developments should not be considered outside of the Regional Growth Boundary.

## Urban Centres

Urban Centres are located in all six of the region's municipalities and are intended to accommodate most of the future residential, industrial, and commercial growth in the region. Definitions of urban growth vary across the region. However, there are common characteristics shared among each of the Urban Centres. These include:

- Identified areas for future growth
- Urban residential densities
- The inclusion of industrial and commercial lands
- Greater access to basic municipal services

## Rural Communities and Resorts

Rural communities, are small areas of concentrated residential lots. Rural communities support lower densities, housing is primarily single family and access to services, such as transit, is limited. However, there may be opportunities to promote compact rural communities. Commercial land uses are generally limited and serve local residents or the traveling public. Growth in these areas is expected to be minimal for the next 30 years.

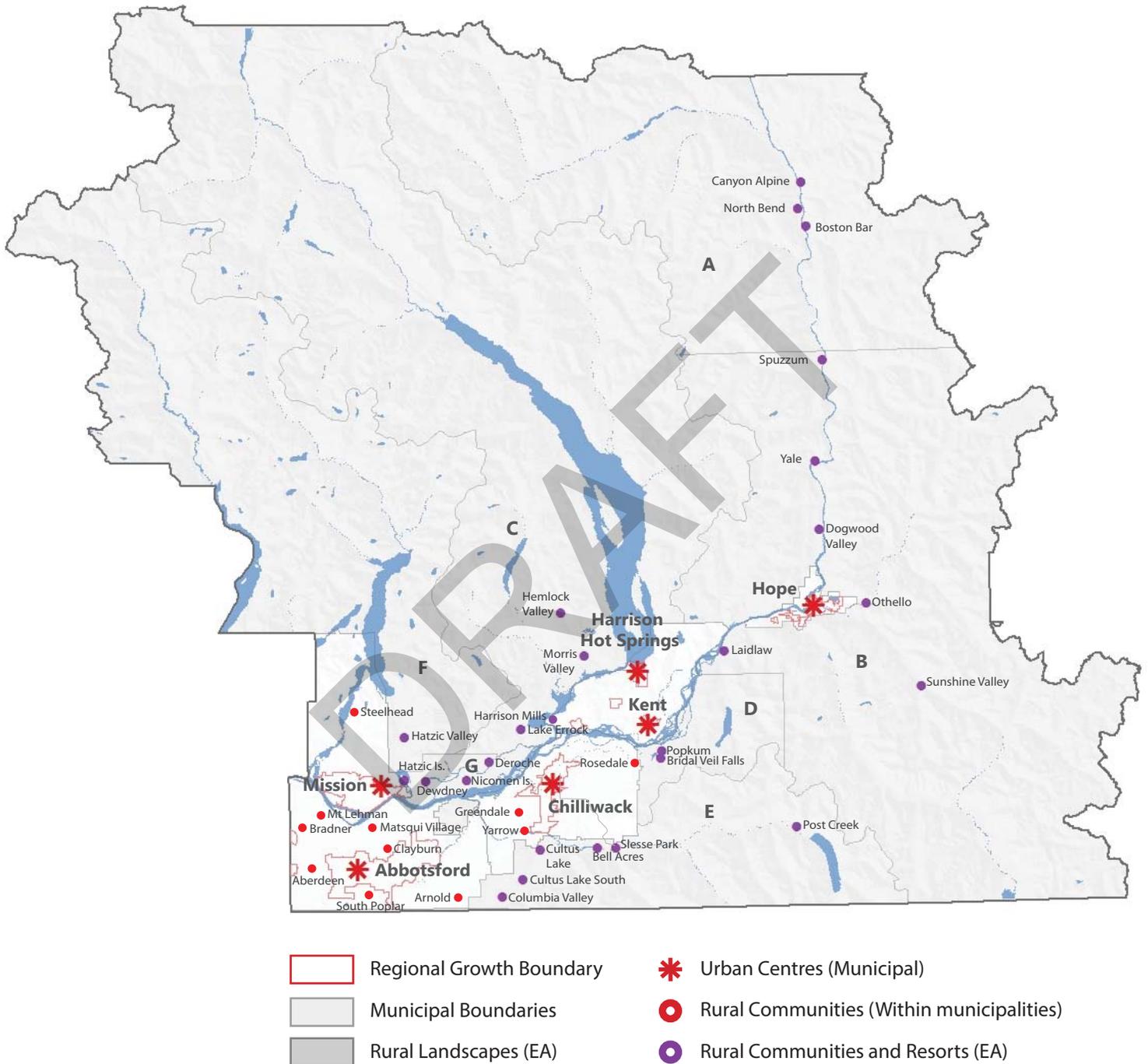
From ski hills to lake side resorts, resorts can take a variety of forms. Unlike rural communities, they are intended to serve a more seasonal community, attracting visitors from throughout the Lower Mainland. They are not intended to be served with more traditional community amenities such as schools or transit.

## Rural Landscapes

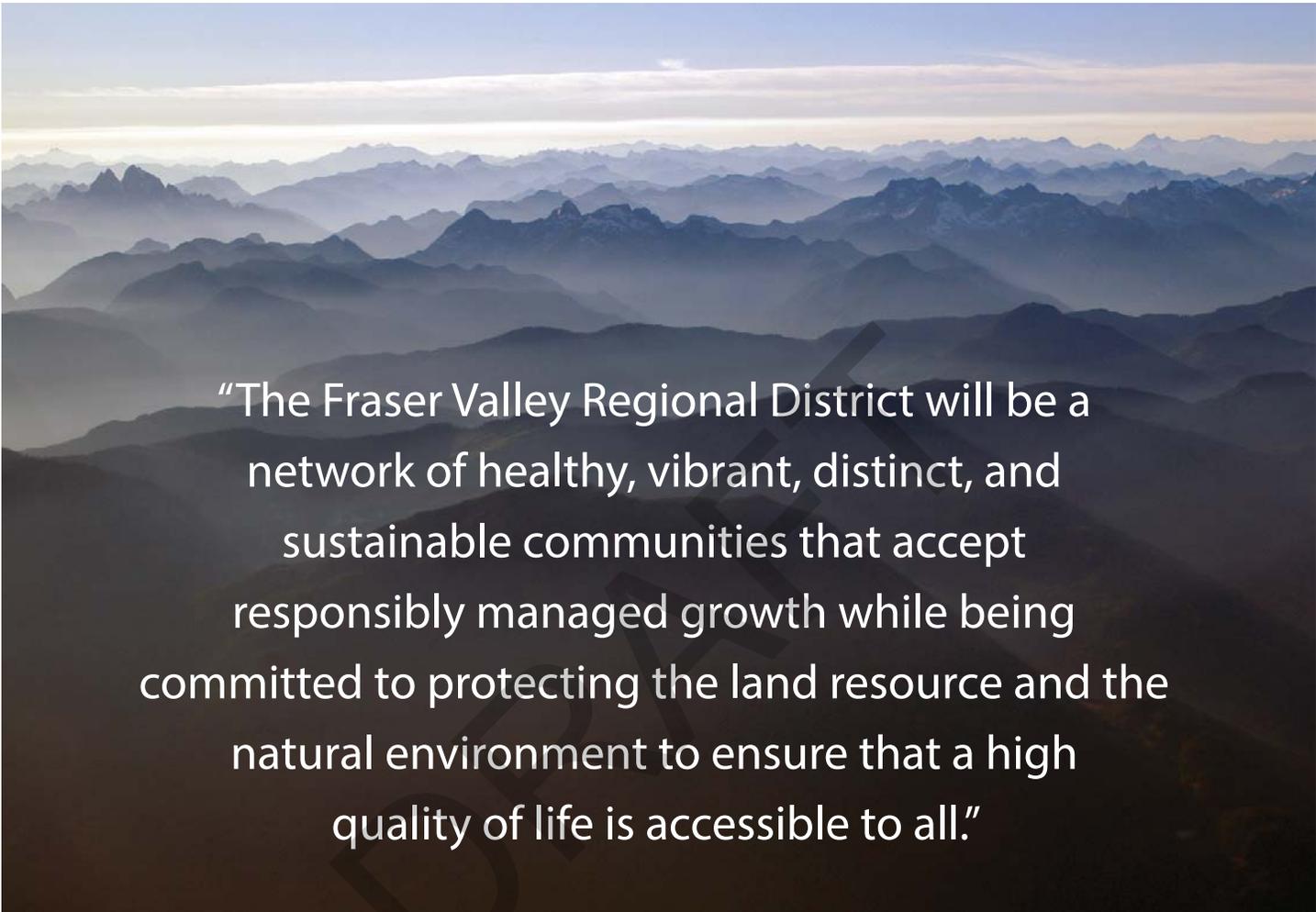
Lot sizes in the areas outside of urban and rural centres are intended to remain large with low residential densities, in order to protect the rural character of these more remote areas. These areas are characterized by large rural lots, parks, agricultural land and forested Crown land.

Located primarily in rural landscapes, Crown Land represents the vast majority of the FVRD's total land base.

# Map 3. Urban Centres and Rural Communities



# Vision



“The Fraser Valley Regional District will be a network of healthy, 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.”

## Guiding Principles

### Collaboration

This plan represents a common, collaborative vision for the future of the region. As such, it will take action on the part of many to ensure its success. The nature and structure of the plan emphasize the importance of partnerships in achieving plan goals. In some cases, action will be taken at the individual level and in others it will require cooperation from all parties.

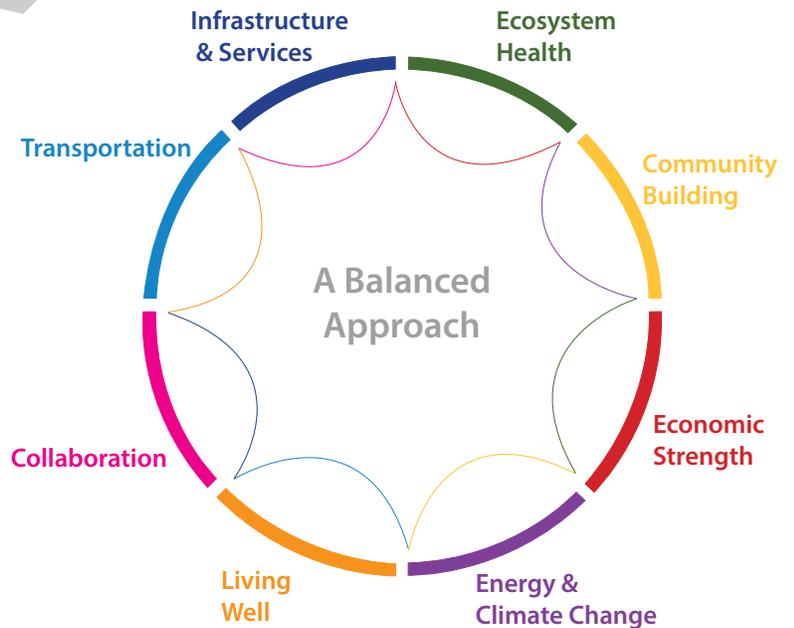
Collaboration among residents, member municipalities, neighbouring regional districts, Indigenous governments, the Province, and a range of stakeholders in creating and implementing this plan will ensure greater success in achieving the overall vision.



### A Balanced Approach

A balanced approach to regional planning understands and takes into account the inherent complexities of goals and objectives that cross jurisdictional, cultural or geographical boundaries. The goals and objectives that follow depend upon a thoroughly collaborative approach to decision making that recognizes and values the unique challenges of each stakeholder.

Objectives outlined in this plan should not be considered as independent but as working, interconnected parts of a larger whole.



# Goals

## Collaboration

**Goal:** *To achieve our common goals for the future of the region by encouraging collaboration between jurisdictions, cultures, and neighbours.*

## Economic Strength & Resiliency

**Goal:** *To realize the region's economic potential by providing opportunities in employment and education that will grow the economy by building on the region's strengths.*

## Living Well

**Goal:** *To ensure everyone is able to maintain a high quality of life, regardless of age, income, or ability.*

## Community Building

**Goal:** *To create compact, complete communities that strengthen urban cores, maintain rural character and offer choice and affordability in housing.*

## Creating a strong, integrated region

In keeping with the guiding principles, it is important to recognize that the Regional Growth Strategy covers a wide range of topics, all of which are interconnected. Each individual action will influence decisions made in other areas. Embracing the interconnected nature of a regional growth strategy will highlight the complexities and challenges that come with regional planning, at the same time demonstrating its potential to strengthen and enrich regional relationships through collaborative action.

### **Ecosystem Health**

**Goal:** *To protect the air, water, and biodiversity on which we depend.*

### **Transportation & Mobility**

**Goal:** *To develop an integrated, safe, and efficient transportation system for people and goods that promotes transit, walking and cycling, and minimizes the transportation system's impact on air quality.*

### **Infrastructure & Services**

**Goal:** *To provide efficient, sustainable, and cost effective services that contribute to compact and sustainable growth.*

### **Energy & Climate Change**

**Goal:** *To increase energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in order to minimize the region's impact on climate change and to mitigate impacts of climate change on our region.*

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# 1.0 Collaboration

**Goal:** *To achieve our common goals for the future of the region by encouraging collaboration between jurisdictions, cultures, and neighbours.*

Implementing the RGS will require all levels of government, including Indigenous governments, health authorities, non-profits, the private sector, and the public to work together on shaping the future of the region. It will take cooperation and strong partnerships to achieve the goals outlined in the RGS and to ensure that the region as a whole is working toward a common future.

By working together, local governments have a stronger voice when addressing common issues. Collaborating on service delivery and pooling resources where feasible will build regional resilience.

It is important for the region to plan collaboratively with Indigenous governments to find innovative and effective ways to meet the future needs of the region and Indigenous communities. Since 2001, the FVRD has signed five Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with different Indigenous organizations for a range of purposes, from the sharing of bulk water to establishing and maintaining long-term cooperative relationships. A number of our municipalities also have MOU's and servicing agreements with adjacent Indigenous communities.

## 1.1 Build and strengthen relationships with Indigenous communities and governments

- a. Recognize that working with Indigenous communities will best serve all residents and facilitate cooperation by fostering a mutual understanding of governing structures, cultures, roles and responsibilities.
- b. Develop sustaining relationships with Indigenous communities and governments which embody the principles of UNDRIP, work together to develop a common vision for the future of the region and remain open, without prejudice to ongoing treaty negotiations, to innovative opportunities for information sharing, and coordination of planning and services in areas of mutual interest.
- c. Recognize and support work led by Indigenous governments, both established and developing self-governance structures, and advancing self-determination, as expressed in the principles of UNDRIP.
- d. Support establishing MOUs and service agreements between Indigenous and local governments that address issues of mutual concern, such as water and sewer systems that protect public health and the environment.

## 1.2 Work together to ensure success

- a. Collaborate with local governments, Indigenous governments, the Provincial government and stakeholders to develop services which provide mutual benefit and support to communities throughout the region.
- b. Collaborate to promote regional objectives, educate residents, pool resources, secure funding and investments, and to have a stronger voice.
- c. Recognize the importance of private and non-profit sectors in regional development, and foster partnerships with organizations and the business community that support the objectives of the RGS.
- d. Advocate for Provincial support in realizing the stated objectives of the RGS and petition for more flexibility in terms of funding eligibility and requirements.
- e. Determine a mechanism for ongoing liaison, engagement, and adaptation between different levels of government.



## 2.0 Economic Strength & Resiliency

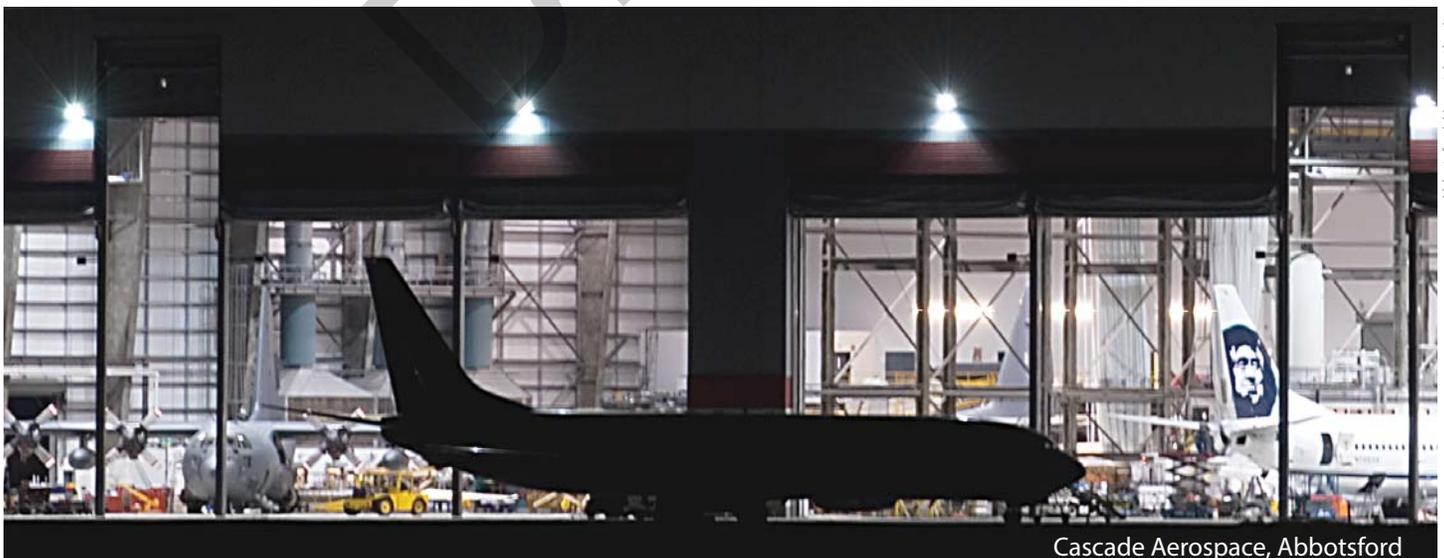
**Goal:** *To realize the region's economic potential by providing opportunities in employment and education that will grow the economy by building on the region's strengths.*

The economy of the Fraser Valley is strong, diverse and expanding. Over the past fifty years, the Region's economy has shifted from being resource based to one that is highly diversified. Building complete communities that provide residents with jobs and services close to where they live can improve employment opportunities and contribute to local self-sufficiency and resiliency.

Recognizing our economic strengths and building on them is key to ensuring a healthy economy in the future. The *Clean Economy in the Fraser Valley* study has confirmed that the Fraser Valley has a solid foundation and set of underlying strengths to grow the Region's clean economy. Agriculture remains at the core of the FVRD's economy, with the production of food and other agricultural products not only providing inputs to other sectors of the economy, but being itself a significant consumer of goods and services. The FVRD recognizes that 21<sup>st</sup> century agriculture will provide exciting opportunities in terms of technology and innovation and that we are well positioned to capitalize on our competitive advantage of a strong and diverse agricultural economy.

Ensuring a strong economy also requires anticipating future demand; one example being our growing tourism industry. The abundance of and accessibility to nature, a growing demand for recreation, and our close proximity to Vancouver, make the FVRD well situated to expand our share of the local tourism market. The Experience the Fraser Initiative (ETF) embodies this idea and is working to expand tourism opportunities throughout the region (*see page 30*). Manufacturing will continue to grow in the region and with population growth, there will be increased opportunities for employment in such areas as technology, health care, sales and services, business services and others.

A regional economy is only as strong as its labour force. Making post-secondary education more accessible in the region will help to ensure a stronger labour force in the future. Programs that train employees in both established fields and emerging ones will not only strengthen the regional economy but may be the incentive younger residents need to study, work and stay in the Fraser Valley.



Cascade Aerospace, Abbotsford

## 2.1 Create opportunities for employment and education

- a. Promote the development of a strong employment base and favourable investment climate by recognizing economic drivers and being flexible enough to take advantage of changing markets and new opportunities.
- b. Support initiatives that contribute to growth of a diversified economy.
- c. Develop and maintain a skilled labour force.
- d. Provide educational and employment opportunities in fields that will enable and encourage younger generations to remain in the Fraser Valley.
- e. Support initiatives that provide employment opportunities in rural communities and electoral areas, including Indigenous communities.
- f. Encourage mixed-use development and development that locates employment centres near residential areas to increase accessibility and minimize commuting.
- g. Improve the viability of smaller communities, including Indigenous communities, and help them adapt to economic change by advocating for improvements to internet access and other basic services that encourage innovative entrepreneurship in remote locations.
- h. Support equal access to employment or educational programs and initiatives for Indigenous Peoples.
- i. Work with local governments, Indigenous communities, senior governments, the private sector and the public to implement the recommendations of the *Clean Economy in the Fraser Valley* study.
- j. Work with internet service providers, the Provincial and Federal Governments, and Indigenous communities to implement the recommendations from the FVRD's Rural Broadband Internet Connectivity Strategy to provide equal access to high speed internet for the FVRD's rural residents, businesses, and institutions.

## 2.2 Promote growth and development in agriculture

- a. Work with the Province and the Agricultural Land Commission to support the continued protection of agricultural lands.
- b. Work with the Provincial and Federal government to leverage our substantial agricultural research capacity to support and expand the region's agricultural-based economy.
- c. Work with municipalities and farm-based agencies to promote local agricultural production and increase public awareness of agricultural activities in the region.
- d. Encourage farm-based tourism and support efforts to strengthen the connection between farmers and residents.
- e. Work with the University of the Fraser Valley to further the potential of the Agriculture Centre of Excellence.
- f. Support the creation of Agricultural Area Plans to maximize the production potential of agricultural lands while protecting environmental and social values, and culturally significant sites.
- g. Work with local communities to minimize conflicts along the agricultural/urban interface.
- h. Work with the agriculture sector to address and mitigate climate change impacts identified in the *Fraser Valley BC Agriculture and Climate Change Regional Adaptation Strategies*.

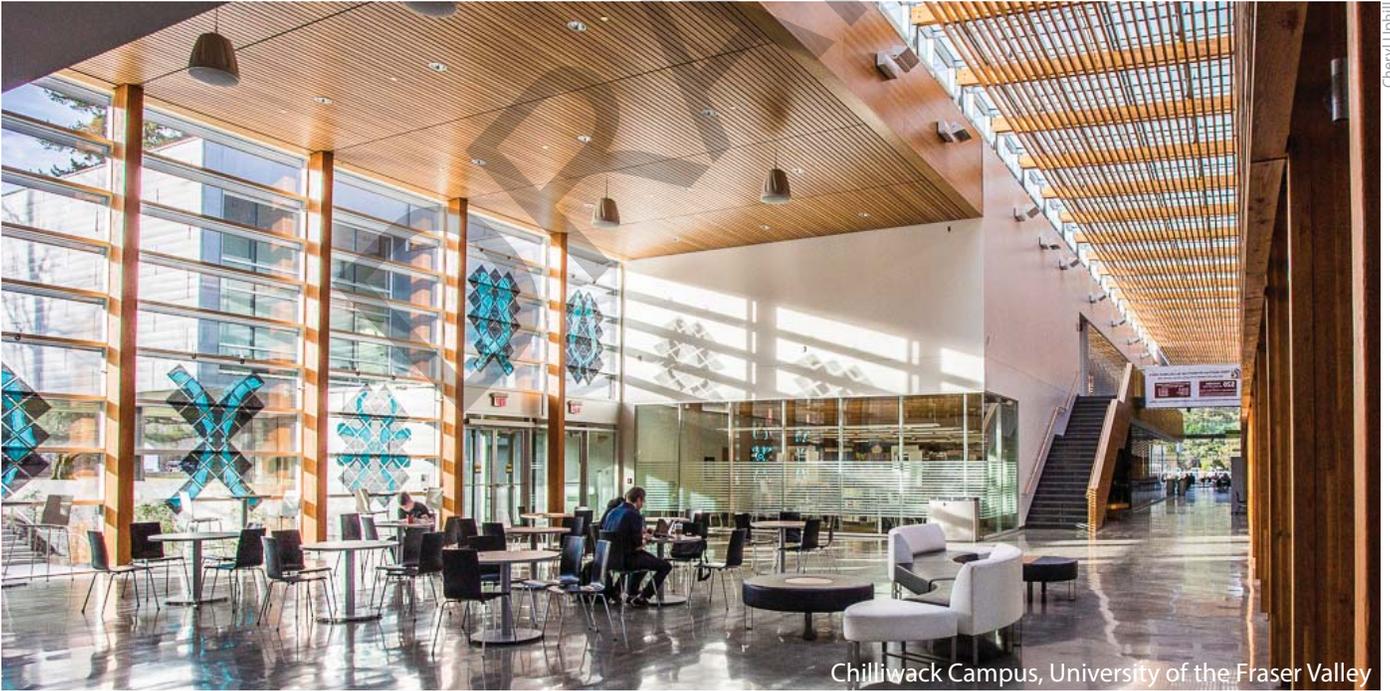
## 2.3 Protect employment lands

- a. Expand economic growth and productivity by exploring opportunities for clustering industrial development in a manner that will create competitive advantages and foster collaboration between Indigenous communities, businesses, organizations, and government agencies.
- b. In collaboration with local governments, develop and maintain an employment lands inventory to ensure an adequate supply of industrial, agricultural, and commercial lands.
- c. Protect the supply of industrial lands from non-industrial conversion to ensure future needs can be met.
- d. Work with Indigenous governments and the Province to ensure sustainable management of natural resources by using an integrated management approach, developing natural resource plans for the region, and acknowledging cumulative impacts on the environment and culturally sensitive sites.
- e. Work with the Agricultural Land Commission and other stakeholders to develop innovative approaches to address urban land requirements without compromising the intent of the Agricultural Land Reserve.

## 2.4 Work to attain the Region's full tourism potential

- a. Partner with member municipalities, Indigenous organizations, different levels of government, destination marketing organizations and stakeholders to develop and coordinate a regional tourism strategy that will promote and protect the region's natural, cultural, and agricultural heritage and attract both residents and employers.
- b. Partner with member municipalities, Indigenous organizations, Metro Vancouver, the Province, local businesses and other organizations to realize the vision of the Experience the Fraser initiative and support the development of projects and initiatives that contribute to its long-term success.
- c. In collaboration with member municipalities, Indigenous governments, and the Province, pursue high value parks and recreational assets that strengthen the region's recreational tourism portfolio.
- d. Support local ecotourism initiatives that promote the region's parks and natural areas, including the internationally recognized Chehalis Important Bird Area.





Cheryl Uphill

Chilliwack Campus, University of the Fraser Valley

# 3.0 Living Well

**Goal:** *To ensure everyone is able to maintain a high quality of life, regardless of age, income, or ability.*

An important factor in maintaining a high quality of life is the ability of residents to preserve an adequate level of physical and mental health that enables them to enjoy the many cultural, recreational, and social opportunities the region has to offer. Providing access to healthy food as well as traditional harvesting sites, offering opportunities for active living, encouraging social inclusion, and continuing support for community and regional cultural initiatives all contribute to living well.

Maintaining a high quality of life can be especially challenging for seniors who often have greater health concerns and fewer financial resources. Our aging population will influence how facilities and amenities are used but also the demand for different services. Anticipating and planning for a growing senior population is essential for maintaining high quality of life at every age.

An extensive and well managed outdoor recreation system is another factor in maintaining a high quality of life. Greenspace and trails are highly valued by the region's residents for a number of reasons: easy access to nature, the wide variety of recreational opportunities it offers, and or the health benefits it provides. It can also have cultural significance for Indigenous Peoples, containing harvesting and hunting sites, or areas where cultural activities are practiced.

The Lower Mainland's growing population and an escalating interest in outdoor recreation will only increase the demand for outdoor recreational opportunities in the region. As park usage climbs, pressures on the parks and trails will mount. Maintaining current services at existing recreation sites, adjusting to demographic-led shifts in usage, and finding suitable, accessible areas to designate as new parkland will be increasingly challenging.

Fortunately, the region will have opportunities to leverage our natural assets in a way that is both sustainable and economically advantageous. By planning ahead we can ensure that everyone has access to nature and outdoor recreation opportunities.

## 3.1 Promote healthy living

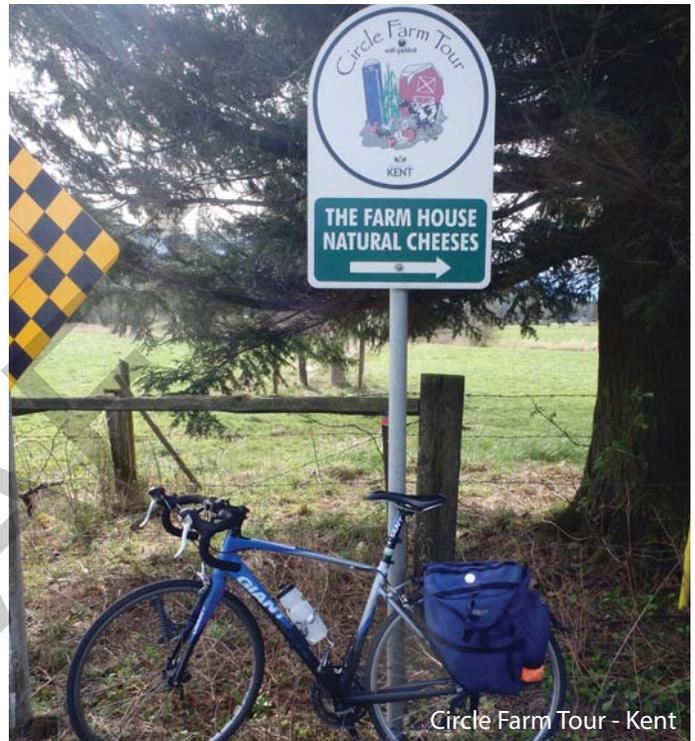
- a. Create an environment in which residents of all ages, abilities, incomes and cultures can access the mental, social, and physical support they need to live healthy and fulfilling lives.
- b. Support initiatives, programs, and research targeted at maintaining a healthy senior population in the region.
- c. Promote increased local access to healthy and affordable food.
- d. Encourage the development of a strategy to address food security at the regional level.
- e. Work with Indigenous organizations to ensure access to culturally significant harvesting and hunting areas.

## 3.2 Support arts and culture initiatives

- a. Work with Indigenous organizations, non-profits and all levels of government to find innovative ways to support arts and cultural initiatives that promote cultural inclusion, increase opportunities to experience and celebrate the region and enhance quality of life.
- b. Create a strong regional identity that is based on and which highlights the region's cultural, natural, and agricultural assets.

### 3.3 Protect and enhance parks and recreation lands

- a. Work with member municipalities, electoral areas, Indigenous organizations, neighbouring regional districts, and the public to develop an accessible and integrated network of parks, greenspaces, and trail networks which accommodate the growing demand for recreational opportunities while minimizing the impact to the natural environment or adjacent communities, including communities on-reserve.
- b. Promote physical health and active living through parks and recreation programs and events.
- c. Support the Experience the Fraser project and its commitment to enhancing cultural and recreational opportunities along the Fraser through the development of partnerships, trail construction and improvements, and efforts to help celebrate the Fraser River and the communities that have been shaped by it.
- d. Implement the action steps of the *Regional Parks Strategic Plan* to guide regional park management, improvements, and acquisitions over the next decade.
- e. Recognize the regional, interregional, and international role of parks and recreation and encourage all levels of cooperation and support to maintain and enhance these lands and facilities.
- f. Implement the actions of the *Outdoor Recreation Management Plan*.
- g. Consider establishing a Regional Land Acquisition Strategy and fund for acquiring parks and recreation lands.

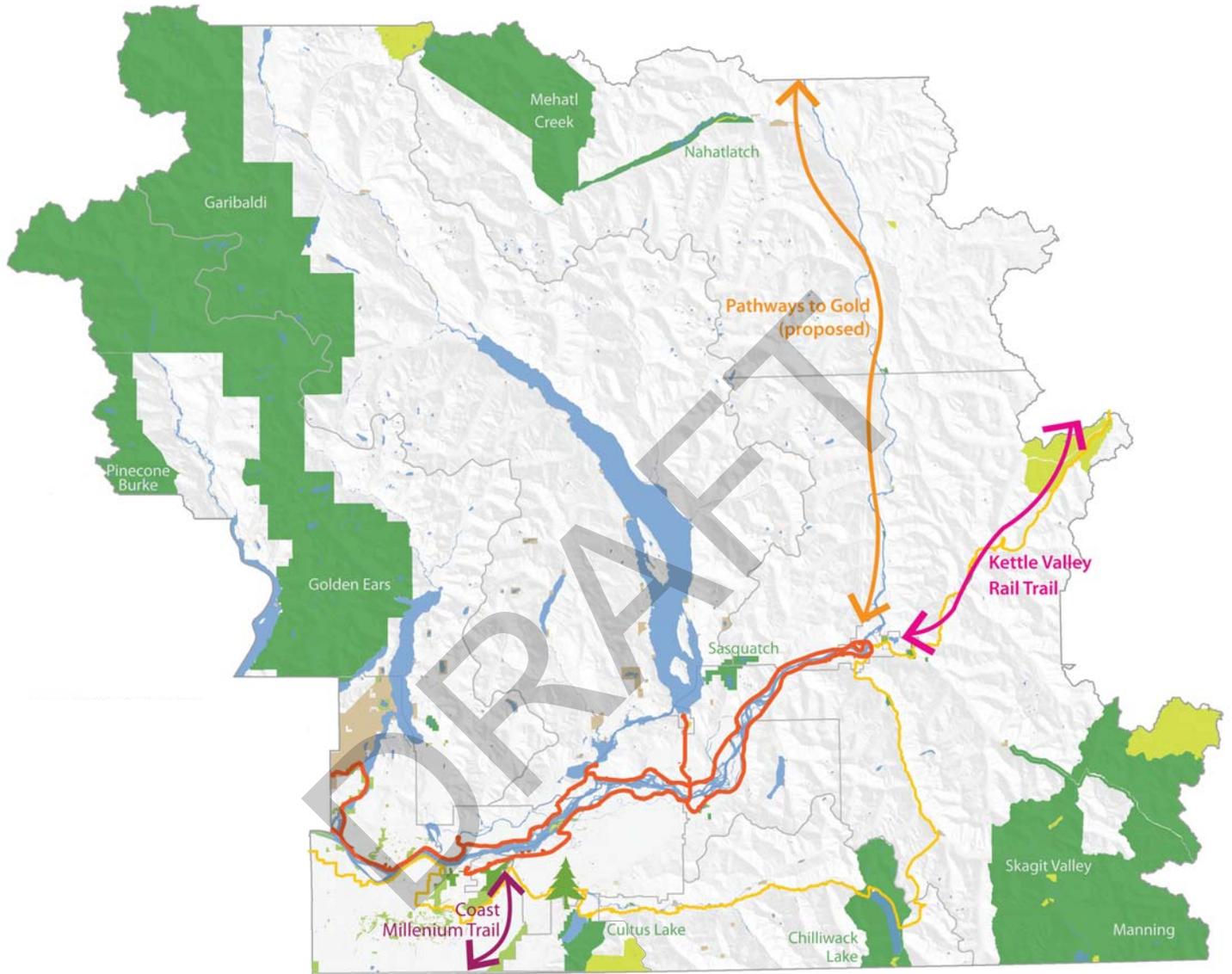


Circle Farm Tour - Kent



Mt. Cheam Trail

# Map 4. Parks and Protected Areas



- |   |                             |  |   |
|---|-----------------------------|--|---|
|  | Regional Park               |  | FVRD Jurisdictions                          |
|  | Local Park                  |  | Trans-Canada Trail                          |
|  | Other Recreational Space    |  | Experience the Fraser Canyon to Coast Trail |
|  | Provincial Recreation Areas |  |   |
|  | Provincial Park             |  |   |



Chilliwack Dikes

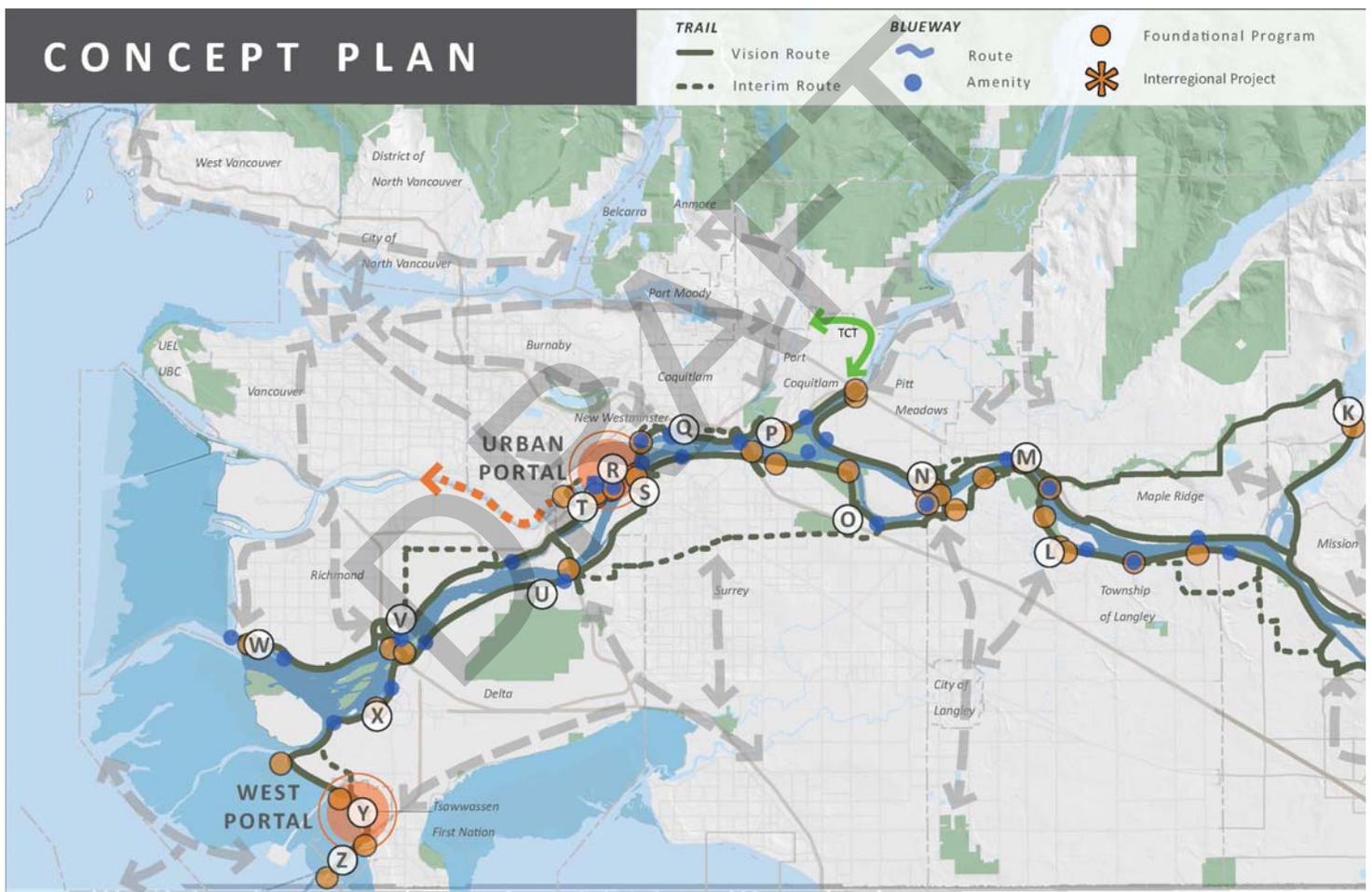


Mt. Cheam

# Map 5. Experience the Fraser Initiative

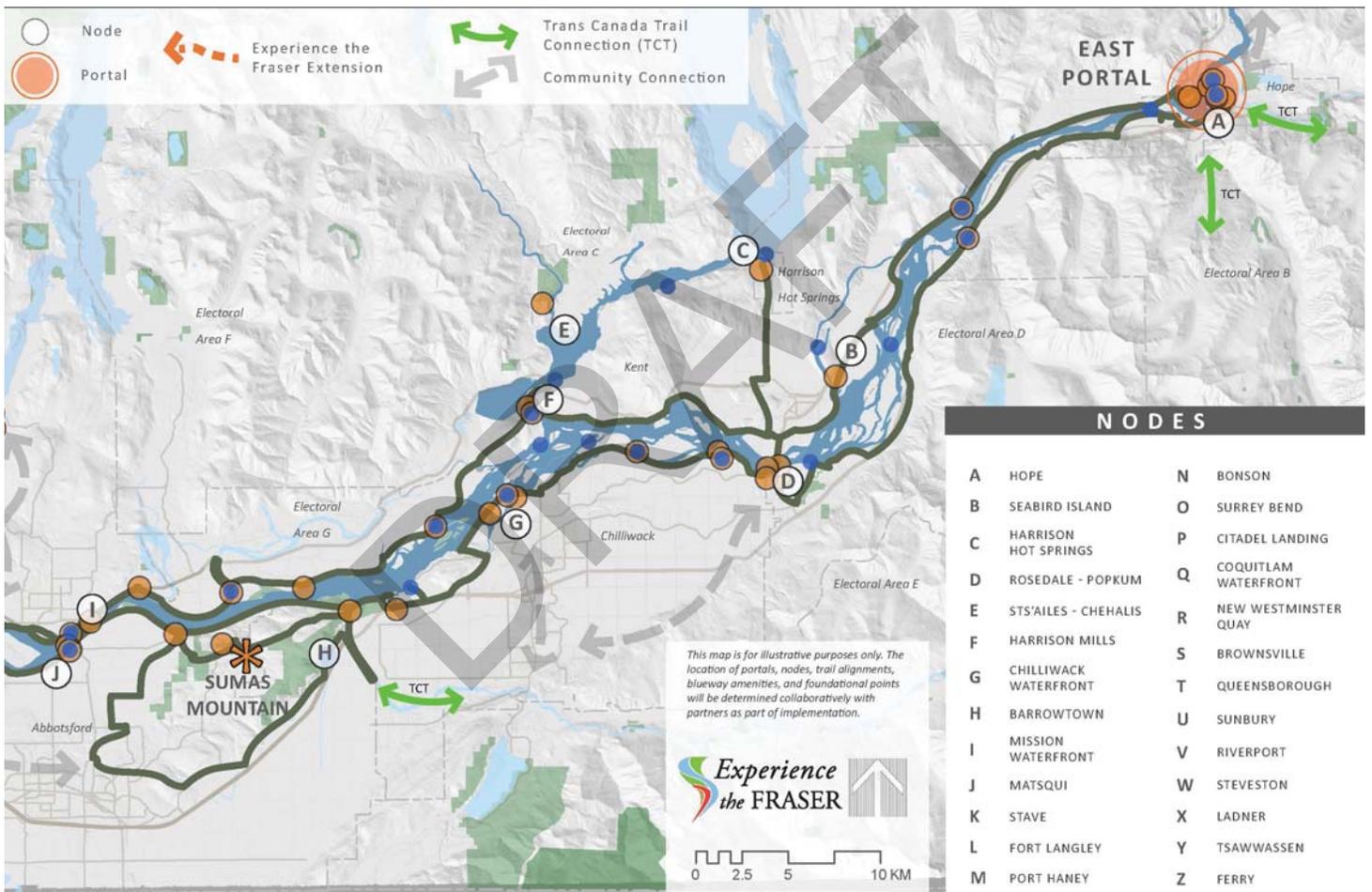
Experience the Fraser (ETF) is a unique vision to connect communities, parks, natural features, historic and cultural sites and experiences along the Lower Fraser River. The project is a partnership between the Province of British Columbia, Fraser Valley Regional District and Metro Vancouver to showcase the Fraser River as a world class recreational, cultural and heritage destination.

Since the beginning of ETF, many Indigenous communities within the Project Area have participated. The success of ETF is reliant on furthering existing and developing new partnerships among Indigenous communities, the private sector, citizens, and different levels of government.



Experience the Fraser is a long-term project that will be implemented by many, over decades. The ETF Concept Plan expresses the project's vision and goals and presents a framework for the development of both land and water based initiatives.

When completed, ETF will include more than 500 kilometres of trails and 15 sanctioned boat launches. In fact, one can experience the many kilometres of trails and other amenities that are already in place throughout the trail corridor.



# 4.0 Community Building

**Goal:** *To create compact, complete communities that strengthen urban cores, maintain rural character and offer choice and affordability in housing.*

Over the next 30 years the FVRD will absorb an additional 160,000 residents. The Regional Growth Boundary encompasses 1.5% of the region's total land base. It is expected that about 90% of this growth will occur within the Regional Growth Boundary, with the remaining growth occurring in the Region's more rural areas.

Encouraging the development of compact complete communities, whether urban or rural, will help to reduce our impact on the surrounding natural environment, promote a more active lifestyle, and enable more efficient distribution of services such as transit, utilities, and water, benefitting residents of all ages.

One important sign of a healthy community is housing diversity that meets the needs of all residents no matter their age, income or ability. Planning for a wide range of housing now will ensure demand for accessible, affordable, and adaptable housing will be met in the future.



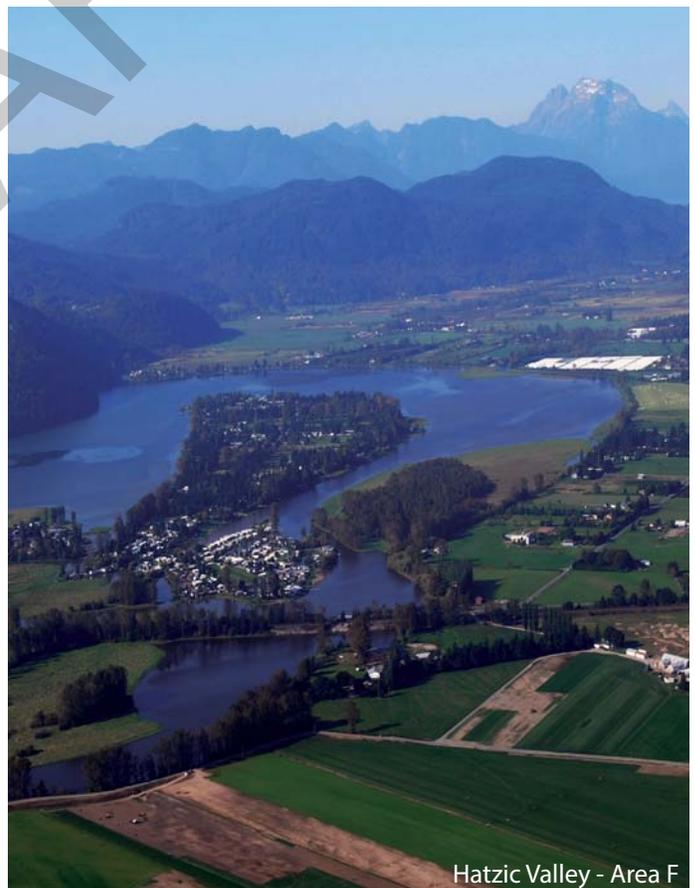
City of Abbotsford

## 4.1 Concentrate growth in Urban Centres

- a. Focus urban development within established Regional Growth Boundaries, around existing downtown cores and transit hubs, and require that amendments to the RGB's be referred to the FVRD Board (*see page 55 for Amendment Process*).
- b. Support Official Community Plans and Zoning Bylaws that integrate land uses with transit service and active transportation routes; and encourage infill, redevelopment, densification and mixed use as a means of creating more compact development patterns and housing affordability, particularly around downtown cores.
- c. Encourage mixed-use Transit Oriented Development (TOD) at key locations to support municipal and regional transit services.
- d. Encourage development that is sensitive to the sense of place, history, and unique character of each community.
- e. Support energy efficient development and urban design techniques that promote efficient use of energy resources and existing infrastructure.
- f. Support development patterns that minimize development costs and risks associated with geotechnical and environmental constraints.

## 4.2 Maintain the character of rural communities in Electoral Areas

- a. Concentrate growth within existing rural centres, and encourage compact, energy efficient development that minimizes infrastructure and development costs.
- b. Recognize the regional role of rural areas and communities in attracting and supporting tourism, providing recreation and natural resources, and encourage regional cooperation and support to ensure rural areas, often with limited resources, can continue to provide these services.
- c. Ensure adjacent land uses are compatible and minimize conflict where residential areas, including reserves, border natural resources operations on public, private, and Crown lands.
- d. Limit development in areas with geotechnical and environmental hazards to minimize any risk to public safety.
- e. Seek the cooperation of senior levels of government to create policies and programs that will improve the land use management of Crown Lands.



### 4.3 Promote sustainable regionally-scaled resort development

- a. Support resort developments that protect public investments by demonstrating financial self-sufficiency with regards to the provision of community-wide infrastructure and servicing.
- b. Support compact, complete resort development that provides for the needs of both visitors and residents, minimizes the ecological and cultural impact on surrounding natural environment, protects the scale and character of surrounding areas, and adheres to high energy efficiency standards.
- c. On a case by case basis, consider establishing a threshold at which it would be mutually beneficial for a resort development to consider transitioning to a resort municipality or other form of governance, and develop a process that will facilitate a smooth transition.
- d. Ensure resort development proposals have undergone meaningful engagement, collaboration, or partnership with Indigenous communities that meets the standard of free, prior, and informed consent.
- e. Require that emergency management plans be developed by project proponents to ensure the safety of resort residents, employees and visitors in the event of an emergency.

### 4.4 Ensure housing choice and affordability

- a. Work with local governments, Indigenous governments, and stakeholders to monitor and address housing affordability at a regional level.
- b. Ensure housing choice for residents of all ages, ability, and incomes by promoting innovation and diversity, and by encouraging the application of Provincial Adaptable Standards for new housing developments.
- c. Work with local governments to complete housing needs reports as per S.585.2 of the *Local Government Act*.
- d. Support proposals for new residential development which provide a component of seniors housing, affordable housing, special needs housing, and the use of adaptive housing construction methods.
- e. Continue working with community partners and other levels of government to address homelessness.
- f. Advocate for increased Federal and Provincial action to address homelessness, mental health, and addictions issues in the region.
- g. Promote home energy conservation and the use of energy efficiency measures as a means of reducing housing costs.





Abbotsford - City in the Country



Garrison Crossing, Chilliwack

# Map 6. Agricultural Land Reserve & Regional Growth Boundaries

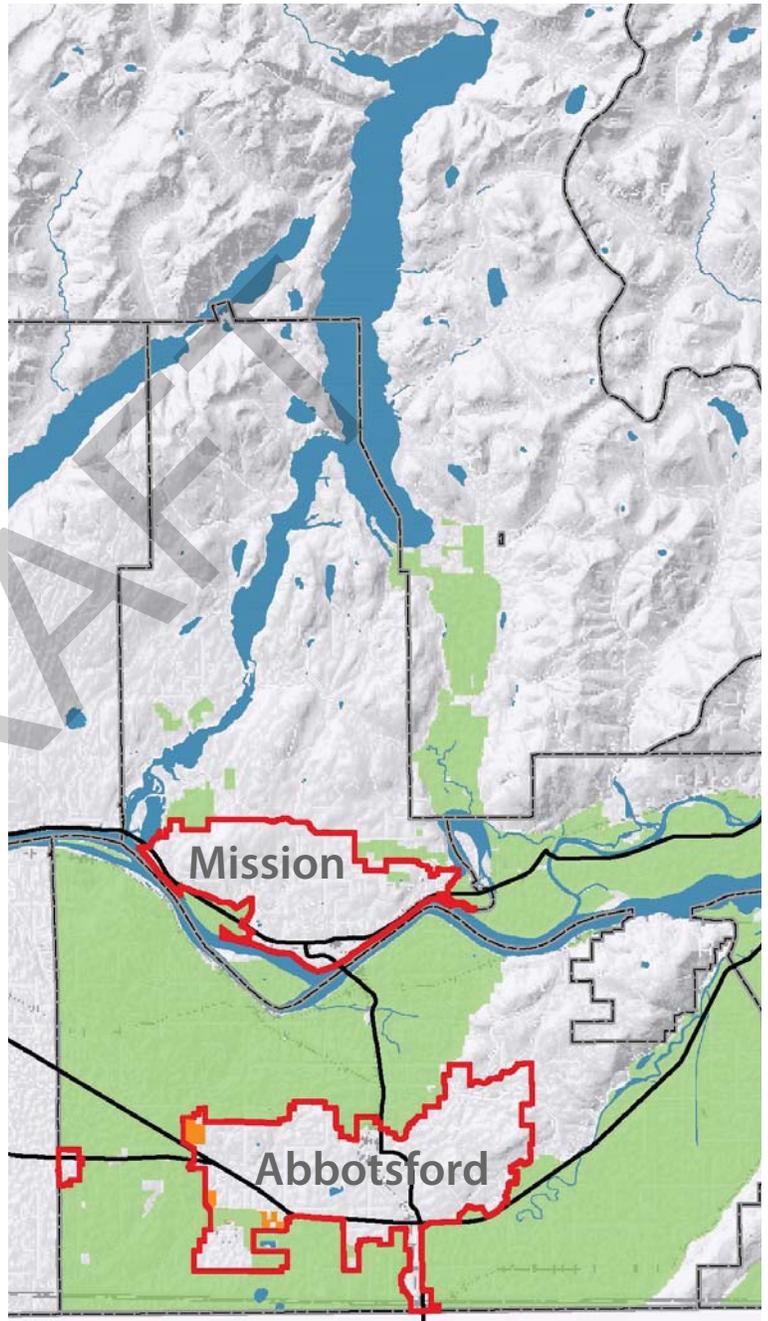
-  FVRD Jurisdictions
-  Regional Growth Boundary\*
-  ALR Lands
-  Highways

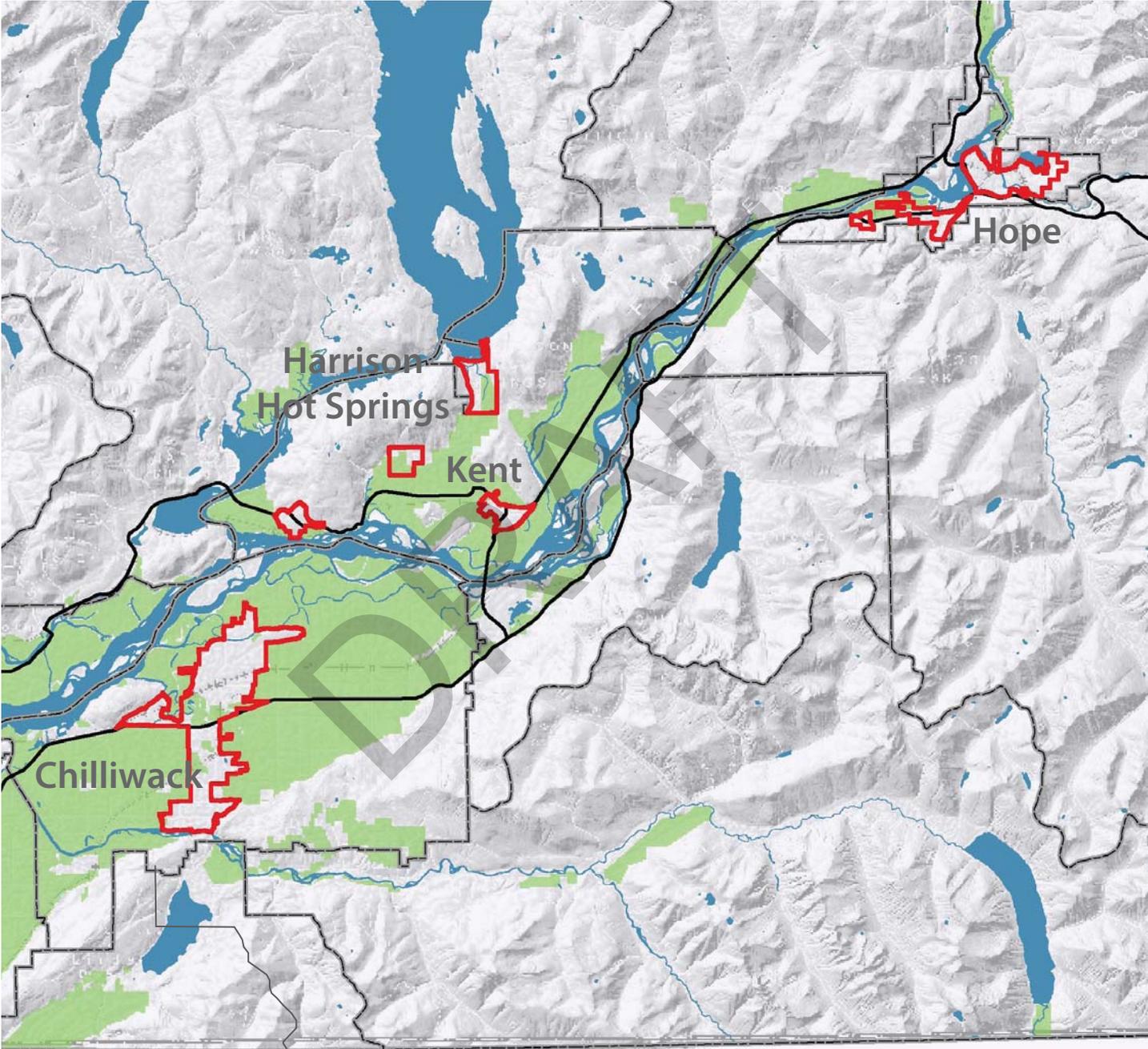
\*The Regional Growth Boundary is intended to contain most of the future industrial, institutional, commercial, and residential growth over the next 30 years. Areas within the RGB are allocated for growth at higher urban densities and reflect Municipal OCPs.

### Agricultural Land Reserve Special Status

-  Conditional Exclusion

**Conditional exclusion:** Lands excluded from the ALR subject to conditions established by the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC).





# Map 7. Agricultural Land Reserve and Regional Growth Boundary by Municipality

-  FVRD Jurisdictions
-  Regional Growth Boundary
-  ALR Lands
-  Highways
-  Roads

## Agricultural Land Reserve Special Status

-  Conditional Exclusion

### Notes for Map 6 and Map 7:

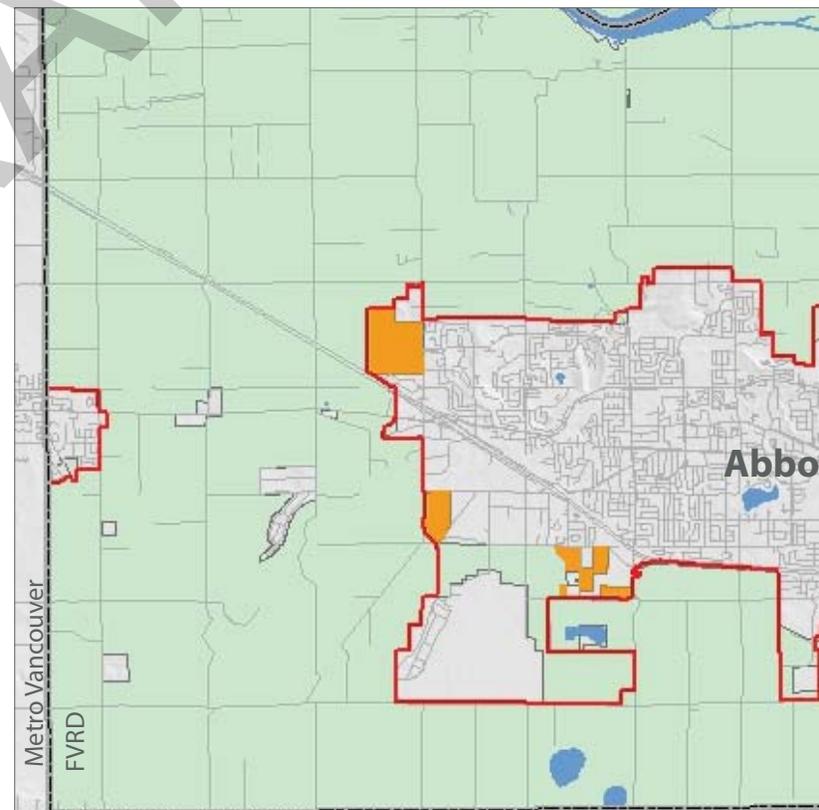
Conditional exclusion areas in the City of Abbotsford may be adjusted or removed subject to meeting ALC conditions. Land development decisions should not be based on this map.

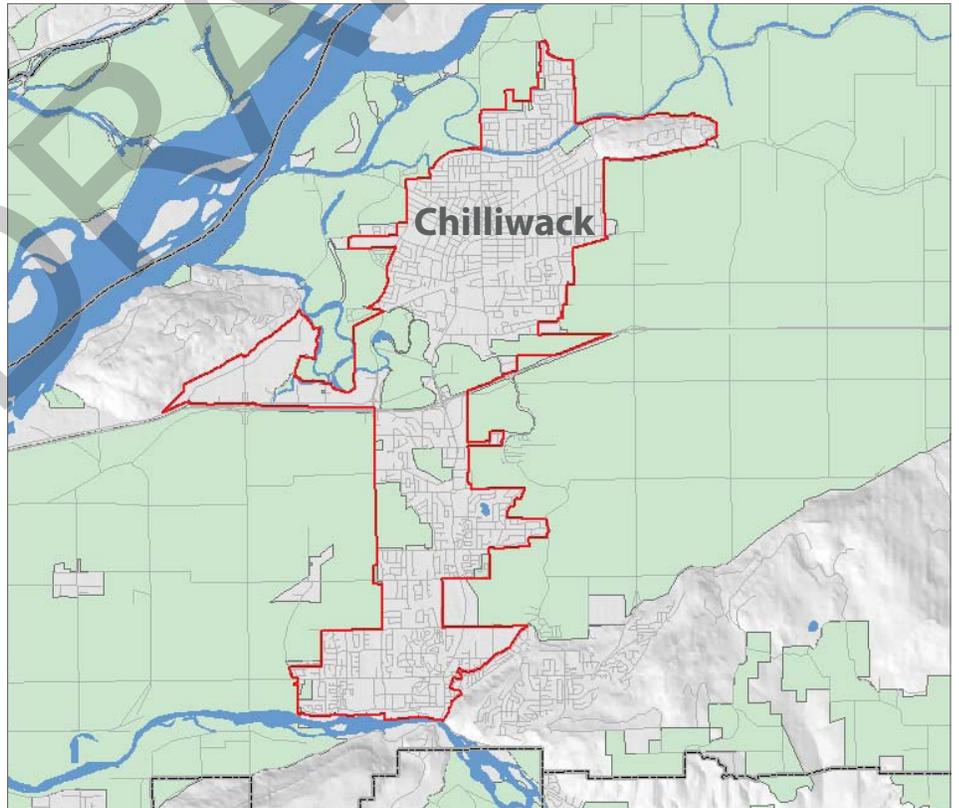
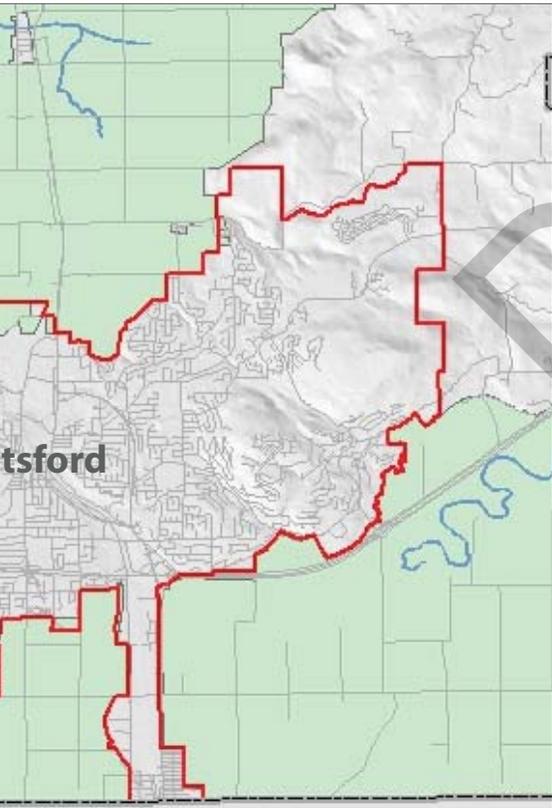
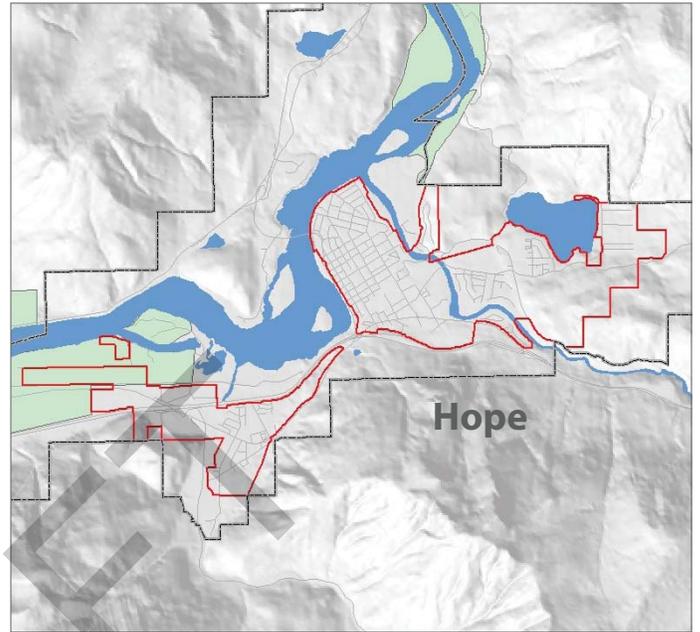
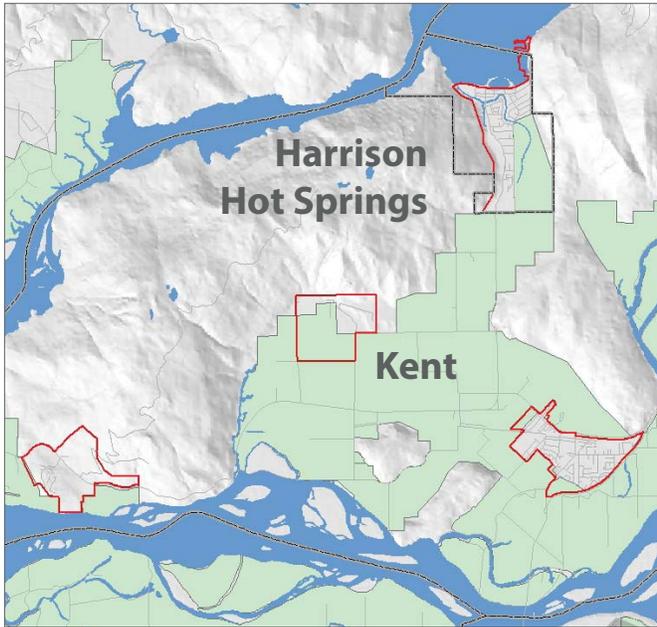
Furthermore, lands on this map may be impacted by various geotechnical and environmental constraints. No attempt is made here to indicate potential or existing development constraints.

Any non-agricultural development within the overlapping ALR/RGB areas must be consistent with the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and related regulations.

Contact municipal planning departments for specific land use regulations that apply within each respective jurisdictions. The FVRD planning department should be contacted for lands outside municipal boundaries.

Reserve Lands are not subject to the RGS or ALC Act.





# 5.0 Ecosystem Health

**Goal:** *To protect the air, water, and biodiversity on which we depend.*

The exceptional natural environment of the Region supports some of the most productive forests in British Columbia, one of the largest salmon spawning populations in the Province and over 100 endangered or threatened species.

The region depends on high levels of biodiversity to provide the foundation for the continued health and sustainability of not only the natural environment, but of the region as a whole by providing us with needed resources, jobs, recreational opportunities, and improved quality of life. For Indigenous Peoples, the connection to the natural environment has significant cultural value, and plays an important role in ongoing spiritual well-being.

As the region's population grows and development pressures increase, balancing the impacts of growth with the cultural and ecological sensitivity of the environment, which supports these activities, will become an increasingly significant and critical challenge.

## 5.1 Monitor, study, protect and improve air quality

- a. Continue to study and monitor air quality throughout the region, and expand the monitoring network as needed.
- b. Support land use development, initiatives, and programs across all sectors that protect air quality and reduce harmful emissions.
- c. Update and implement the regional Air Quality Management Plan.
- d. Collaborate with Indigenous governments, Metro Vancouver, Whatcom County, local governments, and other stakeholders on a continuing basis to improve air quality in the Lower Mainland.

- e. Advocate for Provincial and Federal support of measures to protect the region's sensitive airshed.
- f. Educate the public on the causes and impacts of degraded air quality, and what they can do to improve air quality.

## 5.2 Protect watershed health

- a. Take water quality and ecological health into consideration in regional planning and resource management decisions.
- b. Support initiatives that restore and protect life supporting qualities of streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands and riparian areas in the region.
- c. Consider establishing a water quality monitoring system throughout the region.
- d. Support the implementation of best management practices for water conservation and storm water management, including green infrastructure.
- e. Protect surface and groundwater and maintain good soil health by supporting the implementation of best management practices that minimize soil contamination and erosion, and reduce runoff and leaching into aquifers and surface water.
- f. Continue to support initiatives that enhance the stewardship of soil, agricultural waste, water, air, and habitat resources, including agricultural lands.

### 5.3 Protect biodiversity

- a. Encourage compact development that respects environmental constraints and limits development in ecologically sensitive or hazardous areas.
- b. Encourage Indigenous governments, member municipalities, neighbouring regional districts, and the Province to identify and protect ecologically sensitive areas.
- c. Continue to partner with all levels of government, including Indigenous governments and non-profit organizations to engage volunteers, restore damaged habitat, and monitor long-term ecological health within the region.
- d. Continue working with stakeholders and adjacent jurisdictions on controlling the introduction and spread of invasive species in the region.
- e. Continue to educate the public, decision-makers and other stakeholders on the importance of ecological health and how it relates to human health.
- f. Advocate for Provincial and Federal support of measures to protect the region's ecological health.



# 6.0 Transportation & Mobility

**Goal:** *To develop a safe and efficient transportation system for people and goods that promotes transit, walking and cycling, and minimizes the transportation system's impact on air quality.*

The region's transportation network connects our communities and workplaces, facilitating the flow of goods and services that keep our economy moving forward. As the region strives for higher levels of choice and efficiency in transportation systems, integrated transportation and land use planning will be essential. While a wider range of transportation options will contribute to improved mobility for all residents, promoting compact, mixed-use development within established community centres can also reduce car dependency and encourage walking, cycling, and other forms of active transportation.

In 2010, over 54% of greenhouse gas emissions in the Fraser Valley came from transportation sources. To reduce GHG emissions, it will be necessary to decrease our dependency on the car. Reducing distances to jobs, schools, and services while at the same time expanding transportation options to include public transit while promoting active transportation such as walking and cycling has the potential to greatly reduce emissions and traffic congestion, reduce transportation costs, improve air quality, and support the health and wellness of residents and visitors.

The significant expansion of the Port of Vancouver will see a corresponding increase of rail traffic through the FVRD's urban and rural communities. Expanded rail capacity need not be at the expense of other transport modes within the region. Senior governments will need to work with the FVRD and its member municipalities to reduce conflicts between transport modes to ensure the efficient movement of goods and services throughout the region.

## 6.1 Create a region-wide network of affordable and convenient transportation options that safely and efficiently facilitates the movement of people and goods

- a. Encourage integrated transportation and land use planning to minimize infrastructure costs, support multi-modal transportation, and reduce GHG emissions.
- b. Maintain and improve existing transportation corridors by implementing the Region's Transportation Priorities (*see Map 8*).
- c. Work with BC Transit, TransLink and other regional partners to establish and expand - as required by growth - a reliable, accessible, affordable and regionally integrated public transit system that links communities both within and outside the region (*see Map 9*).
- d. Explore innovative ways to address transportation needs in rural areas.
- e. Establish a region-wide marketing campaign with the aim of increasing transit ridership.
- f. Work with local governments, Indigenous governments, and other stakeholders to set transportation standards and priorities, identify core transit corridors, protect Rights of Way and explore funding options.
- g. Consider developing a regional form of governance to manage shared transit networks.
- h. Provide on-going support to regional airports, including Abbotsford International, to ensure long-term viability.

- i. Encourage the integration of existing railway infrastructure and waterway transportation systems into regional plans.
- j. Lobby senior governments to expand the Gateway program beyond Metro Vancouver and into the Fraser Valley.



## 6.2 Promote active and alternative forms of transportation that prioritize pedestrians and cyclists

- a. Support development practices and land use policy that minimizes the use of cars and encourage walking, bicycling, and public transit within and between communities, including Indigenous communities on-reserves.
- b. Consider including multi-modal transportation (i.e. bike lanes, walking paths) as a part of the standard for all road upgrades for commuting and recreation purposes.
- c. Encourage investment in the necessary infrastructure (i.e. sidewalks, bike paths, trails, benches, and bus shelters) that will make walking, cycling, and transit more convenient and promote behavior change.
- d. Work with BC Hydro and other partners to coordinate locations of electric vehicle charging stations and associated infrastructure.
- e. Consider opportunities to utilize utility and rail corridors or other right-of-way agreements for the expansion of the recreational trail network.
- f. Consider Transportation Demand Management, reducing parking requirements where appropriate, and other strategies that encourage the development of a multi-modal transportation system and reduce long-term impact to air quality.
- g. Continue to educate the public, decision-makers and other stakeholders on the benefits of alternative forms of transportation.



# Map 8. Regional Transportation Priorities

**EXCEPT FOR PRIORITY 1** Priorities are not listed in order of importance letters and numbers have been used solely for the purposes of identifying priorities on the map. Priorities were established in collaboration with member municipalities.

## Critical Priorities

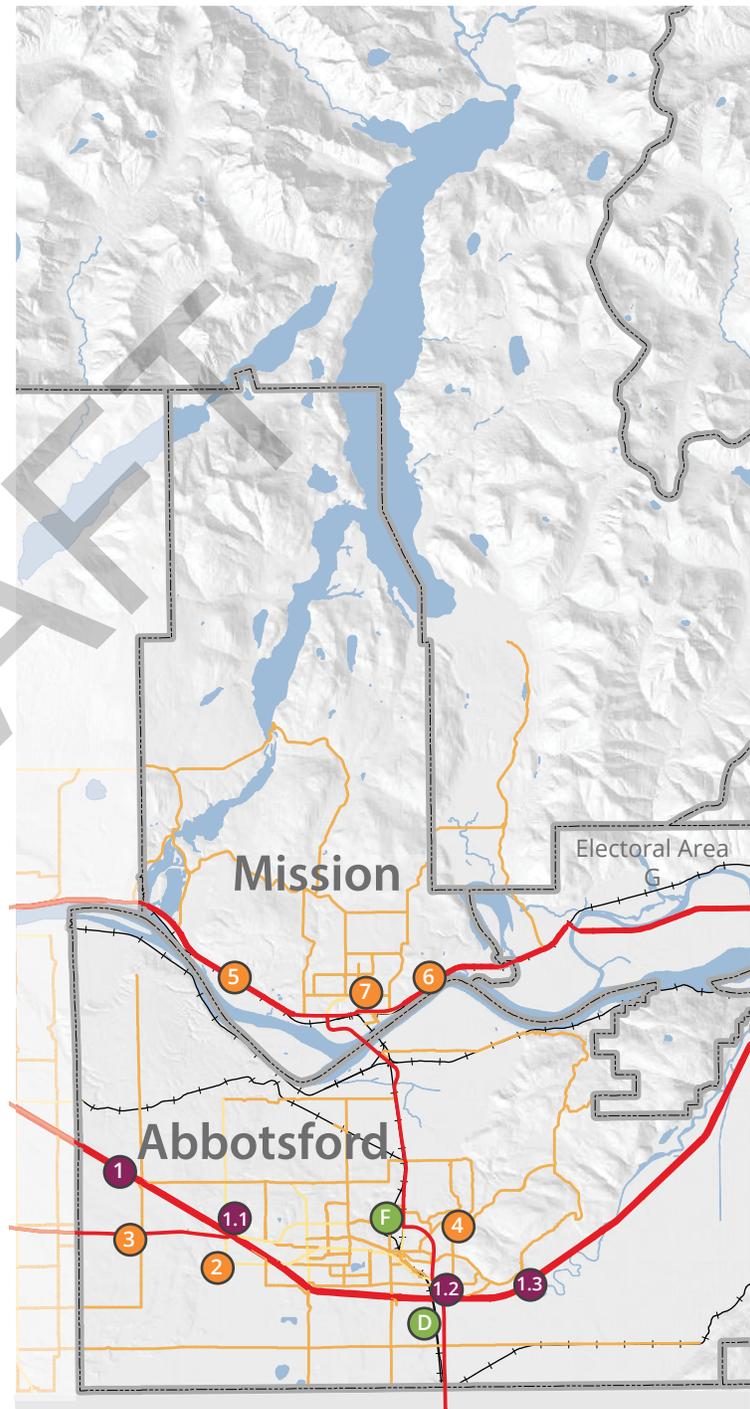
1. Hwy 1 - Extension of HOV/transit lanes through FVRD
  - 1.1. Hwy 1 at Peardonville Rd - Overpass replacement
  - 1.2. Hwy 1 at Highway 11 - Interchange replacement and park and ride
  - 1.3. Hwy 1 at Whatcom Rd - interchange improvements and park and ride
  - 1.4. Hwy 1 at Vedder Canal - re-alignment and widening
  - 1.5. Hwy 1 at Lickman Rd - interchange improvements and park and ride

## High Priorities

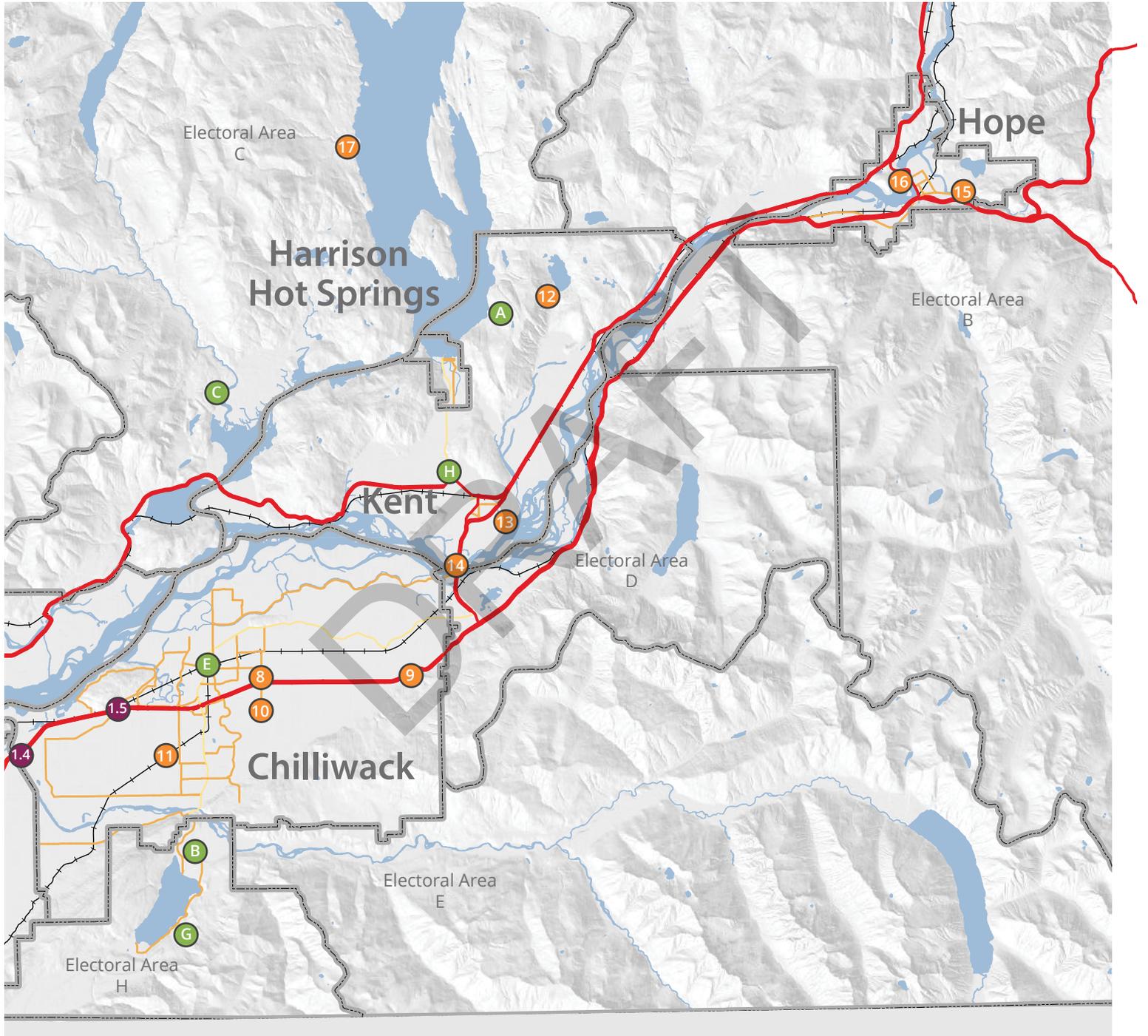
2. Marshall Rd extension - King Rd to Mt. Lehman
3. Fraser Hwy widening - Mt. Lehman to Aldergrove
4. McKee Rd upgrade - new overpass over Hwy 11 to Geoge Ferguson
5. Hwy 7 widening - Silverdale to Maple Ridge boundary
6. North of Fraser transit connections - west to Maple Ridge & east to District of Kent
7. Bypass between Hwy 7 and 1st Ave (Mission)
8. Hwy 1 at Prest - Interchange upgrade
9. Hwy 1 at Annis Rd - Interchange upgrade
10. Prest Rd upgrade - Chilliwack Central to Bailey
11. Valley Rail Trail south to Yarrow (active transportation)
12. Emergency Access Route Rockwell to Lougheed Hwy
13. Bypass between Hwy 7 & Haig Hwy
14. Rosedale Bridge seismic and safety retrofits
15. Othello Road Improvements (Hope)
16. Fraser Bridge Pedestrian Crossing (ETF - Hope active transportation)
17. West-side Harrison Lake to Lillooet Lake - FSR Improvements

## Medium/Long Term Priorities

- A. Rockwell Drive Upgrades
- B. Cultus Lake - 2nd Access Route/emergency access route
- C. Morris Valley Rd Bridge Replacement
- D. Vedder Way extension - Lonzo Rd to McClary Ave under Hwy 1
- E. CN Grade Separation at Young Road
- F. Maclure Rd - Connector between Hwy 11 to McCallum
- G. Columbia Valley Hwy - pedestrian and bike upgrades
- H. Highway 7 at Hotspings Dr - intersection upgrade



■ DRAFT UPDATES



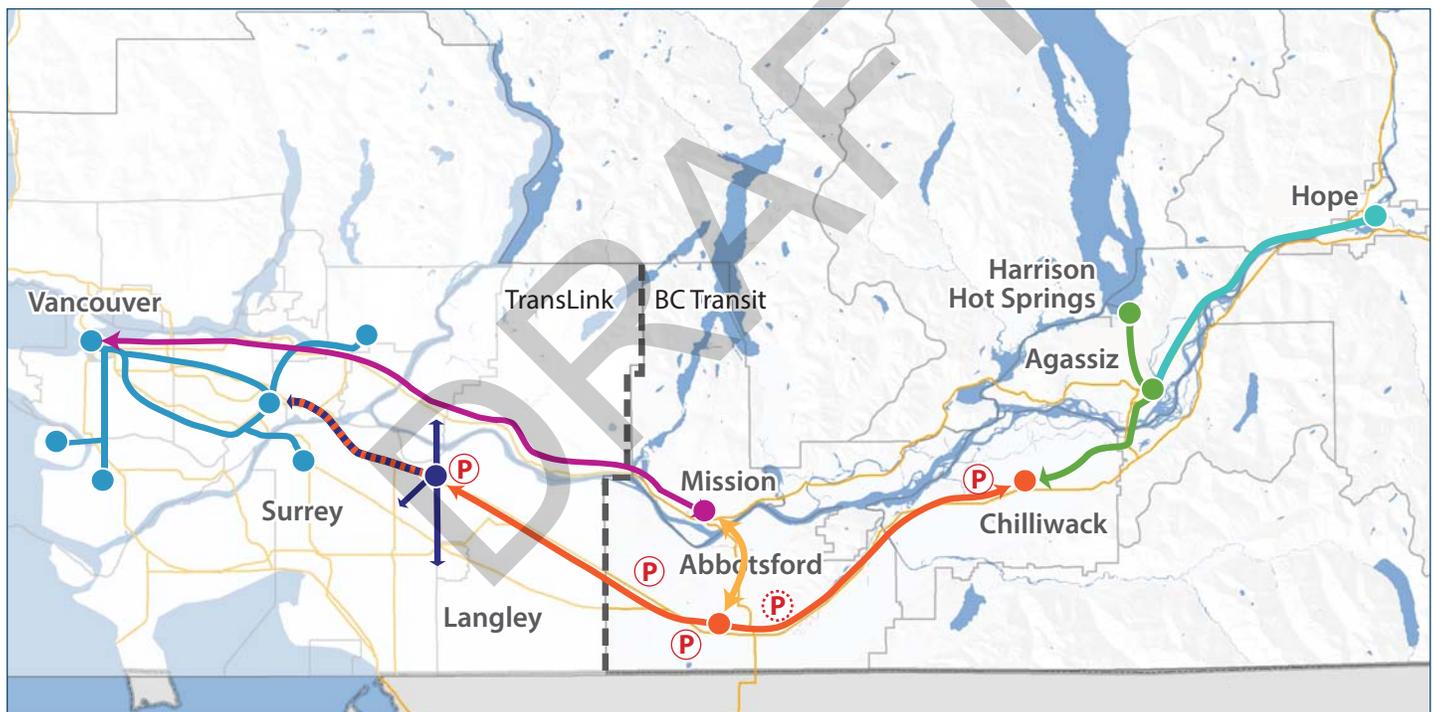
- Interprovincial Highways
- Arterial Roads
- Collector Road

# Map 9. Regional Transit Network

The *Strategic Review of Transit in the Fraser Valley* (2010) was a partnership between the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, FVRD, BC Transit and TransLink. It provided a 25 to 30 year vision and 20 year strategy to guide the significant expansion of transit services, facilities and policies needed to make transit an attractive transportation choice for Fraser Valley residents and visitors.

The FVRD's inter and intra-regional transit network is a product of the *Strategic Review* and subsequent *Transit Future Plans*. New services are being implemented, some well before the timelines set out in the *Strategic Review*, demonstrating the FVRD's commitment toward supporting more sustainable land use patterns, providing attractive transportation alternatives and reducing greenhouse gases.

Until now, the lack of integrated transportation services between Metro Vancouver and the FVRD and its communities has forced residents and visitors to primarily travel by private vehicle. Improved transit service between Harrison Hot Springs and Chilliwack, the introduction of the Fraser Valley Express (FVX) between the City of Chilliwack, City of Abbotsford and Langley Township and a new connection between the Districts of Hope and Kent, represent a significant expansion of transit in the region. These routes will add to existing inter-municipal connections within the FVRD and the inter-regional rail connection provided by West Coast Express. In 2021 the FVX service will expand to connect directly with Sky Train at the Lougheed Town Centre Station in Burnaby.



- |                                    |                                |                         |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Fraser Valley Express (FVRD)       | SkyTrain (TransLink)           | Carvolth Exchange       |
| Abbotsford-Mission (CFV)           | Bus Service (TransLink)        | Park and Ride           |
| Agassiz-Hope (FVRD)                | West Coast Express (TransLink) | Park and Ride, Proposed |
| Chilliwack-Agassiz-Harrison (FVRD) | Bus Service (FVRD 2021)        | Highways                |



# 7.0 Infrastructure & Services

**Goal:** *To provide efficient, sustainable, and cost effective services that contribute to compact and sustainable growth.*

Like most regions across Canada, communities in the Fraser Valley are feeling pressure to upgrade and expand their infrastructure to meet growing demand. A large share of financial resources goes into infrastructure, especially as the costs of maintaining aging infrastructure continues to grow. Given the significant costs associated with infrastructure development, municipalities and Electoral Areas are in the position of having to make difficult decisions that directly impact the lives of residents.

Building more compact communities is one of the most effective ways to reduce infrastructure costs. Compact development minimizes the need for new and expanded systems and reduces maintenance costs over the long term. To manage aging infrastructure, communities throughout the region have expressed interest in finding ways to collaborate that will be more cost effective and share the burden of liability.

In the FVRD's 2014 Solid Waste Management Plan, the region set an ambitious target to achieve 90% diversion rate by 2024. Achieving this goal will require commitments from both the public and private sectors to more effectively manage and reduce the overall amount of solid waste produced in the region. It will also require taking a more innovative approach to solid waste management practices, and a high level of public education. The Region is committed to finding solutions that effectively manage waste without impacting air quality.

In addition to the services that affect our daily lives, are those services we hope we never have to use. Emergency services help to encourage public preparedness, ensure that organizations are prepared in the event of an emergency, and that plans are in place to mitigate any disasters. The region will continue to develop and expand these services in ways that are adequate, safe, efficient, and ensure sustainable development over the long-term.

## 7.1 Provide safe and efficient access to basic utilities

- a. Ensure Rural Communities have access to effective and efficient water and sewer systems that protect public health and the environment; support establishing MOU's with Indigenous communities which will improve basic utilities.
- b. Support the installation and maintenance of water and sewer systems that have high-design standards, encourage compact development and are environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable.
- c. Explore the viability of green infrastructure and new and emerging technologies that can improve efficiencies and minimize future infrastructure investments.
- d. Clarify existing partnerships and explore new opportunities for joint ventures and cost sharing when building new infrastructure projects and maintaining aging infrastructure to achieve economies of scale.

## 7.2 Ensure responsible management of solid waste

- a. Implement the FVRD's Solid Waste Management Plan to effectively manage and reduce the region's solid waste.
- b. Commit to achieving Zero Waste over the long-term, applying strategies that will not negatively affect air quality.

- c. Educate the public on sustainable waste management practices (i.e. Zero Waste, recycling, composting, and Advanced Material Recovery).
- d. Consider a regional approach to waste management for materials recovery in order to achieve economies of scale and meet regional waste diversion goals.
- e. Consider the development of a liquid waste management plan.

- d. Work with the Province to identify and address emergency services gaps in rural areas, particularly in regards to wildfire and landslide risks near highways and residential areas.
- e. Work with local governments, Indigenous governments, the Province, and outside agencies to develop strategies for community recovery and resiliency should an emergency occur.
- f. Consider developing a plan for alternative access and evacuation should an emergency event block a major transportation corridor within the Region.

### 7.3 Ensure public safety through emergency management planning

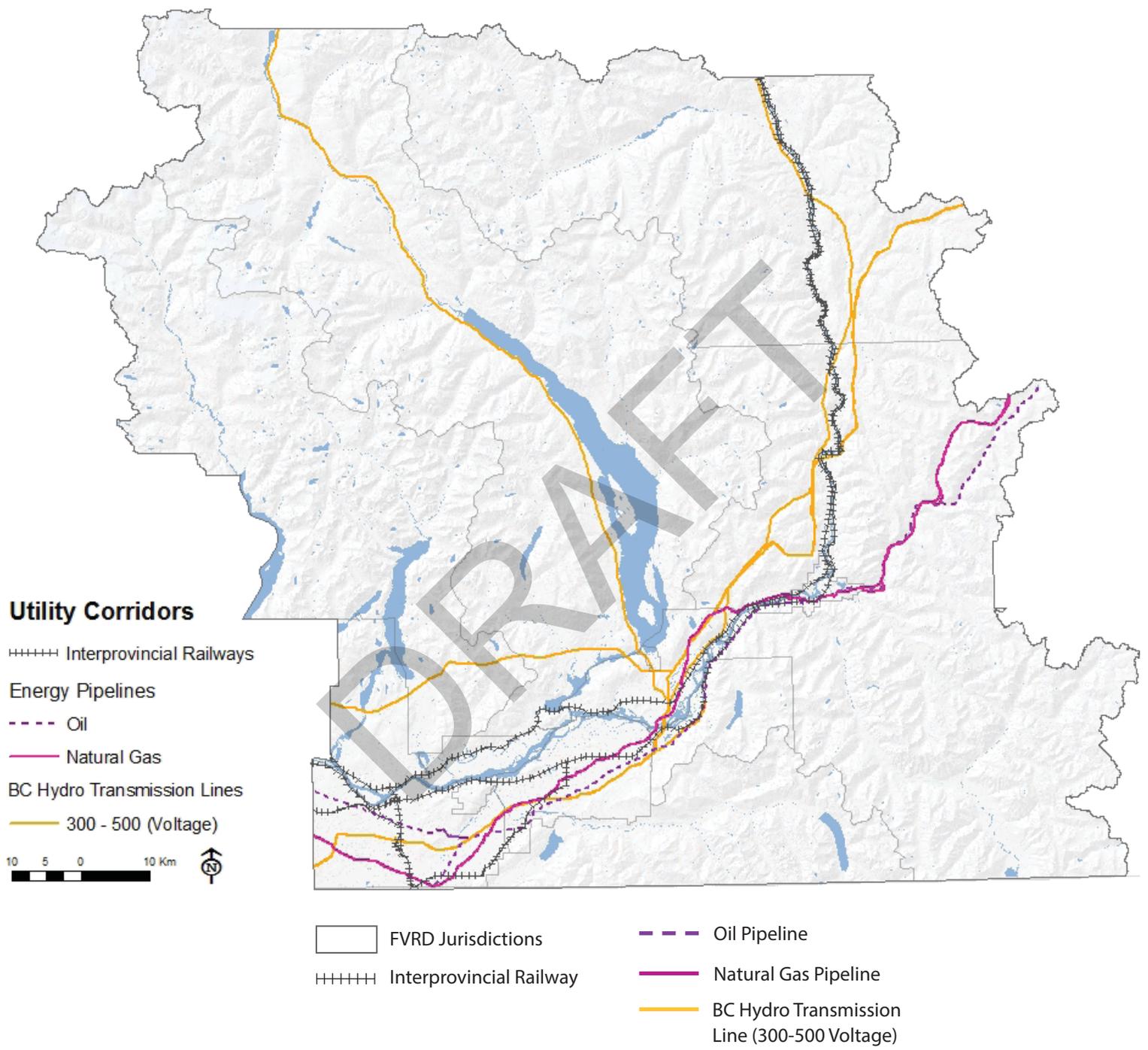
- a. Evaluate on a continual basis potential impacts of emergency events across the region and support measures to mitigate disasters.
- b. Continue working with the Fraser Basin Council, regional partners and senior governments on the Lower Mainland Flood Management Strategy initiative.
- c. Consider developing - in collaboration with Indigenous organizations - a regional system for hazard management.

### 7.4 Minimize the impact of large-scale utility corridors that traverse the region

- a. Minimize the impact of major utility corridors such as power lines, pipelines, and railways on communities, agricultural productivity, and the cultural and natural health of the environment.
- b. Work with railway companies and the Federal government to ensure high safety standards for transport of goods by rail, particularly within community boundaries.



# Map 10. Utility Corridors





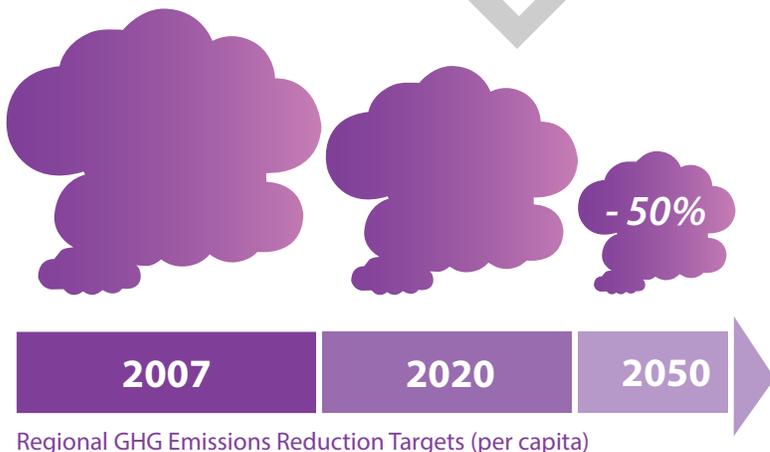
# 8.0 Energy and Climate Change

**Goal:** *To increase energy efficiency, lower energy costs, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in order to minimize the region’s impact on global climate change, and to mitigate impacts of climate change on our Region.*

Decisions and actions from outside our region contribute to the overall health of the ecosystem, particularly for air and water quality. The FVRD can and does collaborate with neighbouring jurisdictions in order to advocate for coordinated policies that will achieve the best possible outcome for the natural environment. In the same way, activities within the FVRD have an impact beyond our own boundaries, such as in the global effort to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and minimize the adverse effects of climate change.

As signatories to the British Columbia Climate Action Charter, the FVRD, along with its member municipalities, has committed to creating compact, energy efficient communities. The Provincial government has also enacted legislation and policies intended to encourage GHG emission reductions. The *Local Government Act* requires that all Regional Growth Strategies include GHG emissions reduction targets and actions.

Through a combination of efforts to reduce the consumption of energy, increase energy efficiency, prioritize clean energy and reduce GHG emissions, the region will work toward achieving its GHG reduction targets. Taking action will help to reduce energy costs, and contribute to a healthier future for both FVRD residents and our neighbours.



## 8.1 Promote energy efficiency and the reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- a. Promote development and sustainable management of local, clean, non-combustive and renewable energy supplies that reduce GHG emissions and protect air quality.
- b. Promote energy efficient incentive programs on a region-wide basis.
- c. Support community design that facilitates active transportation to reduce GHG emissions.
- d. Encourage use of high energy efficiency building standards to reduce energy costs and GHG emissions in all new developments.
- e. Work with municipalities to achieve a region-wide per capita reduction in Greenhouse Gas emissions of 50% by 2050, relative to 2007 levels.
- f. Encourage individual, municipal, Indigenous communities, and region-wide efforts to improve energy conservation and efficiency through education and other initiatives.

## 8.2 Reduce the region’s impact on climate change and develop capacity to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change on the region.

- a. Ensure that land use, transportation, and other planning decisions at the regional level consider the impacts to climate change.
- b. Research and promote best practices for climate change mitigation and adaptation.



Ruskin Dam (left) and Powerhouse

# Implementation

## Regional Context Statements

Section 446 of the *Local Government Act* requires that within a region that has adopted a Regional Growth Strategy, all municipal Official Community Plans (OCPs) must include a Regional Context Statement. The regional context statement sets out the relationship between the RGS and the OCP and how they will be made consistent over time.

Once the RGS has been formally accepted by all affected local governments, each member municipality has two years to adopt a Regional Context Statement (RCS) in their OCP. The Regional District Board in turn must accept the Regional Context Statements. Electoral Area planning and zoning must be consistent with RGS policies.

In order to simplify the process and apply a level of consistency across the Region, Regional Context Statements shall, at a minimum, include:

- A written description of how the OCP relates to each of the goals and objectives of the RGS; and
- Where there are inconsistencies, a description of how the OCP will become consistent over time.

Once the RGS has been adopted, all bylaws adopted by the Regional District must be consistent with the RGS. However, as set out in Section 445 of the *Local Government Act*, the RGS does not commit or authorize a Regional District to proceed with any project or action specified within the plan.

## Implementation Agreements

Implementation Agreements (IA) can be used to implement aspects of an RGS. An IA is a partnership agreement between a regional district and other levels of government, their agencies, Indigenous governments or other bodies which spells out the details of how certain aspects of a regional growth strategy will be carried out. The primary focus, however is on provincial ministries and agencies.

According to the province, such agreements are an important tool designed to promote coordinated local/provincial actions. These agreements are the primary means for the regional district and the provincial government to commit to actions on implementation of the RGS.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

Under British Columbia's *Local Government Act*, every Regional District with a Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) is required to review and monitor the RGS periodically. The FVRD will work on a continuing basis with local municipalities and provincial agencies to achieve the objectives outlined in the RGS and to track progress.

Although the RGS takes a long-term perspective it is important that the RGS is periodically reviewed and updated to ensure that the policies remain relevant. The FVRD will take the following actions to monitor progress on a region-wide level:

- Work with municipalities to develop Regional Context Statements for Official Community Plans.
- Prepare an annual monitoring report to evaluate progress in achieving the goals outlined in the RGS.
- Maintain a GIS database with up-to-date spatial information.
- Consider a review of the RGS every five years.

Figure 2. Relationship between the Regional Growth Strategy and Official Community Plans



## Amendment Process

Section 437 of the *Local Government Act* allows for both major and minor amendments to the Regional Growth Strategy. In both cases, the process to initiate amendments to the Regional Growth Strategy is by resolution of the Regional Board. Municipalities are encouraged to discuss the reasons for an amendment with the regional district prior to submitting a request for amendment.

Should a local government wish to request an amendment, it must be forwarded to the Regional Board as a resolution of Council. Submissions must be accompanied by a report explaining the planning justification and rationale for the amendment request. It is encouraged, but not mandatory, that referral requests be given after 1<sup>st</sup> reading by the Municipal Council.

All proposed amendments to the Regional Growth Strategy will be forwarded to the Board. Where the Board resolves to proceed with a request, the Board will:

- Agree whether the request should be treated as a minor or major amendment.
- Provide written notice to affected local governments of the proposed minor amendment along with any other relevant supporting documentation and the date, time, and place of the first reading.
- Provide a minimum of 30 days for affected local governments, and agencies to respond.
- Consider comments provided by affected local governments prior to giving first reading to the proposed amendment bylaw.
- Consider the need for a public hearing.

## Criteria and Procedures for Major Amendments

An amendment to the RGS is considered major if the proposed change includes one or more of the following:

- The addition or deletion of Regional Growth Strategy goals or policies;
- Amendments to the minor amendment process as outlined below;
- Proposed changes to Regional Growth Boundaries pertaining to land that is not adjacent to the existing Regional Growth Boundary; and, or
- Other criteria as specified in Section 437 of the Local Government Act.

Major amendments to the RGS must be accepted by all Affected Local Governments in accordance with the provisions of Section 436 of the Local Government Act and must follow the same process that is required to adopt the RGS.

## Criteria and Procedures for Minor Amendments

Minor Amendments may be made to the Regional Growth Strategy provided they fit one or more of the following criteria:

- Amendments to population or employment projections, tables, figures, grammar or numbering that do not alter the intent of the RGS;
- Text and map amendments required to correct errors or to update information;
- Amendments resulting from a full Official Community Plan process;
- Changes to evaluation and monitoring of RGS goals;
- Changes to lands adjacent to the existing Regional Growth Boundary.

## Minor Amendment Process

The procedure for minor amendments is as follows:

### Public Hearing Required

If at first reading, the amending bylaw receives an affirmative vote by the Board, and it is determined that a public hearing is necessary, a public hearing will take place after the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading. In consideration of public comment, the bylaw may then be adopted in accordance with the procedures that apply to the adoption of a regional growth strategy bylaw under Section 207 and the Board's procedure bylaw.

### No Public Hearing Required

If at first reading, the amending bylaw receives, by simple majority, an affirmative vote of the Board and it is determined that no public hearing is necessary, the bylaw may be adopted in accordance with the procedures that apply to the adoption of a Regional Growth Strategy bylaw under Section 207 of the *Local Government Act* and the Board's procedure bylaw.

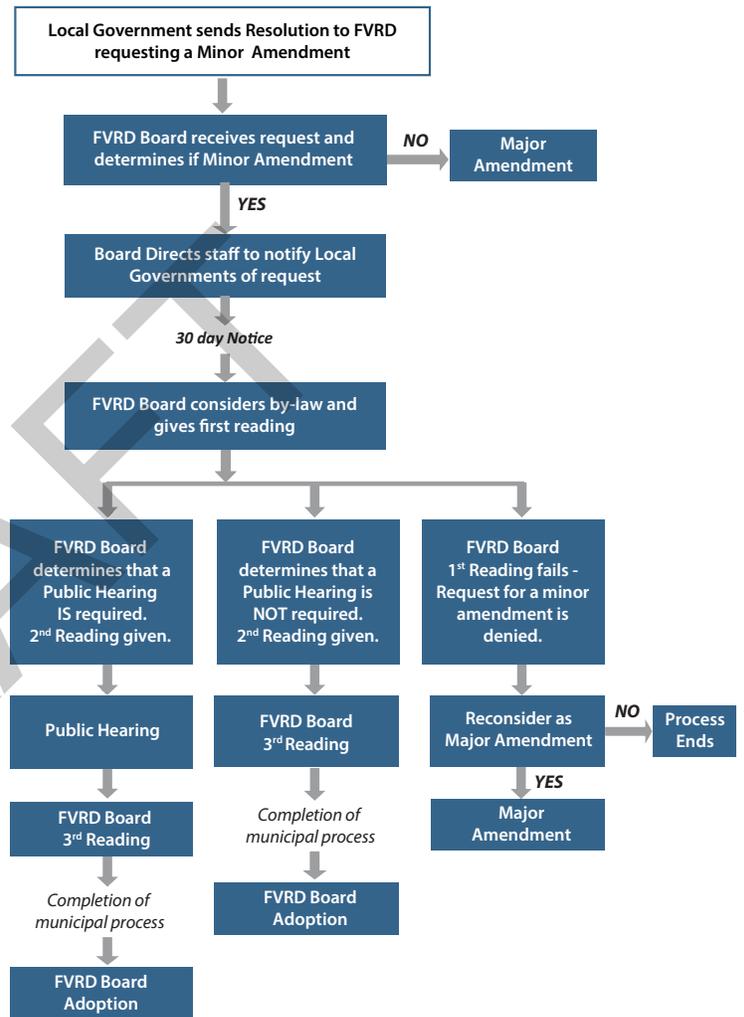
In either of the above two cases, final adoption of the minor amendment on the part of the Board will take place only after the municipal council has given final approval to the municipal application or initiative for which the amendment is requested. This is to ensure that the reason for the RGS amendment is first upheld at the municipal level.

If at first reading, the amending bylaw does not receive an affirmative vote of the Board, the bylaw may only be adopted in accordance with the Major amendment procedure established by Section 432 in which case acceptance by affected local governments is required. *(Please refer back to criteria and procedures for major amendments)*

### Final Adoption

Where an RGS amendment is tied to a municipal process, the RGS amendment bylaw will not be adopted until the municipal process is complete.

Figure 3. RGS Minor Amendment Process





DRAFT

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