

## Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw Update

The Village of Ashcroft is excited to announce that we are updating our Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw. Over the next year, we will work to update our community's vision for Ashcroft's future, including exploring new possibilities for development in our downtown. The following information provides details about our plans and opportunities for community involvement.



### What is an Official Community Plan?

An Official Community Plan is the most important municipal planning document that describes a future vision and direction of the community. It establishes policies and actions for the municipal government, and the community at-large, to implement and pursue. Creating a new OCP is an opportunity for the community to come together and collectively offer input on how they want to see their community develop in the future.

More specifically, an Official Community Plan is:

1. A land use plan that provides direction on where certain land uses should be located. In this sense, a map will be prepared that will identify areas where residential, commercial, industrial, parks and institutional development should be located. It will also identify areas of environmental significance and areas where no development should be allowed.
2. A policy document that can include direction for a variety of issues including economic development, environmental sustainability, heritage preservation, transportation and infrastructure, and community services. It also provides, through Development Permit Area Guidelines, guidance for the form and character of development in certain areas such as the downtown as well as guidance for protection of development from hazardous conditions.

An OCP is a visionary document and is meant to reflect the community's aspirations. An OCP should answer the question, "where do we, as a community, want to be in the future?"

## What is the purpose of a Zoning Bylaw?

The Zoning Bylaw helps to implement the OCP. A zoning bylaw is a regulatory tool that addresses site layout and permitted uses for new development. Zoning bylaws regulate land use and address issues such as:

- What land uses are permitted in certain areas of the community
- Placement of buildings on properties including how far they must be from property lines and the road
- Building height, how many units can go on a single lot, and the amount of land that a building can cover
- Whether or not fences are permitted, and, if so, how high, and of what materials they are allowed to be

## Why update the OCP and Zoning Bylaw?

Since the Village last updated the OCP and Zoning Bylaw in 2018, there have been several changes:

- **Legal requirements** – The Province passed several laws in 2023 to encourage increased housing development. These changes require local governments like the Village of Ashcroft to create Housing Needs Reports and update their OCPs and Zoning Bylaws to ensure there is enough capacity to accommodate the identified housing needs. The deadline for OCP and Zoning Bylaw updates is December 31, 2025.
- **Reconsideration of Downtown Development Permit Area Guidelines** – Council has identified a desire to examine the current guidelines to see how Ashcroft’s historical context can still be celebrated while making it easier to develop downtown.
- **Regular updates to address community changes** – The Village has continued to grow and age since the last OCP and Zoning Bylaw were created. The 2021 census shows that half of the Village’s population is over the age of 58, compared to Province-wide where half the population is over the age of 42. This update allows us to ensure our OCP and Zoning Bylaw will continue to meet community needs and priorities.

## How to get involved?

Community engagement will begin in early 2025 and the final OCP and Zoning Bylaw will be ready for adoption in fall 2025. We look forward to hearing from community members along the way to ensure that these key documents reflect the community’s values and development goals.

Look out for the following engagement opportunities:

- **Early January** – A community survey will be available online and at key locations in the Village (see text right).
- **January 28<sup>th</sup> 2025**– We will host a community open house and a downtown charette to hear community ideas.
- **Late Summer 2025** – We will ask for community feedback on the draft documents at a community open house.

Stay tuned to the Village of Ashcroft’s website for project updates or contact the Village for more information:

- Email: [cao@ashcroftbc.ca](mailto:cao@ashcroftbc.ca), phone: 250-453-9161.

## What is the project’s timeline?

The Village’s OCP and Zoning Bylaw update is expected to run from winter 2024 to fall 2025. The following timeline shows key events that are planned over the next year:

- **Phase 1: December 2024** - Project Initiation
- **Phase 2: January to February 2025** - Community Engagement
- **Phase 3: March to June 2025** - Create Draft Documents
- **Phase 4: July to October 2025** - Open House, Finalization, and Adoption

Complete the survey here:



<https://www.surveymonkey.ca/r/VillageOCP>