



# ABBOTSFORD **CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**



# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

**MARCH 2023**

32900 S Fraser Way, Abbotsford,  
BC V2S 5A1  
[www.abbotsfordchamber.com](http://www.abbotsfordchamber.com)  
604-859-9651

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**CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

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**107.1  
COUNTRY**



# BOARD PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Members,

On behalf of the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce I am pleased to share our Annual Report for 2022, which summarizes a year of many accomplishments involving strong partnerships and focus on supporting local businesses, farmers and enriching our members experiences.

We began the year still in pandemic and flood recovery mode, and committed to helping our local businesses and farmers. From our Shop Local BC campaign in partnership with the Abbotsford Downtown Business Association, to our award-winning Disaster Relief Fund work with our Coalition partners, the Abbotsford Community Foundation and University of the Fraser Valley.

A highlight of the year was the expansion of our growing Company of Young Professionals and Entrepreneurs Program. These next leaders gained traction achieving key milestones, including the establishment of their Leadership Council and a number of signature events throughout the year. We also launched our new Chamber brand and renewed our Accredited Chamber of Commerce status for 2023-2025.

At the heart of everything we do is the desire to provide a responsive, relevant and meaningful Chamber membership experience with quality supports and service. We work tirelessly to be your voice of business, offer valuable benefits and positive member experiences in a variety of ways.

We look forward to continuing our momentum in the year to come and thank our volunteers and sponsors for your continued support of the Chamber. We could not do our work without your contributions!

Board President,  
Craig Toews

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C Toews', written over a light blue horizontal line.

# ABOUT YOUR CHAMBER

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The Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce is a leading business member-driven organization with over 625 members the largest Chamber in the Fraser Valley, located in the 5th largest city in the province. We are an Accredited Chamber of Commerce, managed strategically and operating according to national standards of chamber business excellence and best practices.

Since 1913, we have been working to foster a growing and competitive business environment in Abbotsford. Our members include entrepreneurs, small and medium-sized businesses, non-profits, academic institutions, individuals, and large corporations. The Chamber has been an integral part of Abbotsford's growth and evolution for nearly as long as the city has existed.

We support members and local businesses through a variety of benefits and services and making connections with quality business people who are focused on the development of the business community and innovative practices. The Abbotsford Chamber is widely recognized as at the forefront of business advocacy and policy development, acting as a strong voice for its members.



## OUR VISION

**To be a relevant business association that is highly engaged with our business community and champions economic growth and prosperity.**

## OUR MISSION

**To build and sustain a thriving business community.**

## OUR VALUES

**Genuine relationships, vibrant culture and growth orientation.**

# CHAMBER TEAM MEMBERS

# 2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Katerina Anastasiadis  
CEO



La Vonne Bandsma  
OFFICE MANAGER



Carole Jorgensen  
MANAGER OF EVENTS AND SPONSORSHIP



Jessica Levesque  
BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT MANAGER



ABBOTSFORD  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Craig Toews  
PRESIDENT



Chris Gauthier  
VICE-PRESIDENT



Katie Yu  
TREASURER



Kevin Mierau  
SECRETARY



Ravi Sidhu  
DIRECTOR



Karen Biggs  
DIRECTOR



Josh Reynolds  
DIRECTOR



Brittany Tucker  
DIRECTOR



Corina Carroll  
DIRECTOR



Sam Varing  
DIRECTOR



Paul Penner  
DIRECTOR



Ryan Turner  
DIRECTOR



Mike Ashcroft  
DIRECTOR



CEO Abbotsford Chamber, Katerina Anastasiadis, President & CEO Canadian Chamber, Perrin Beatty, and Board President Abbotsford Chamber, Craig Toews at Canadian Chamber AGM 2022, Ottawa, ON

# 2022 AT A GLANCE

## Advocacy

The Chamber advocates on behalf of members and local business issues by engagement with the top decision makers at each level of government. We participate in and host member and business stakeholder roundtables with industry leaders and elected officials. This provides direct policy or program input, information exchange, feedback and constructive dialogue by sharing of expertise and on the ground experiences.

## BC & Canadian Chamber

We leverage our membership in the BC and Canadian Chamber networks, strategic industry and community partnerships to move the dial on effective solutions. Every year the Chamber is a leading voice at the BC and Canadian Chamber Annual AGM and Policy Conventions and involved with a calendar of outreach opportunities.

## Shop Local Advocacy Campaign

Beginning in 2022 and into the Spring, the Chamber collaborated with the Abbotsford Downtown Business Association on an "Abby Loyal" and "Hey Neighbour" shop local promotional campaign. It featured a variety of our local businesses across the City on digital and print advertising, as well as an online contest. Funding was provided by the Federal government through the BC Chamber of Commerce and was an initiative to continue support during pandemic recovery.



# Advocacy Issue Highlights

Advocacy is the heart of what our Chamber does to communicate to all levels of government and partners on business issues for our members. One key way we advocate is through our policy development process and stakeholder engagement. This involves Chamber leadership and collaboration to work on solutions for our local businesses and organizations. Our Government Affairs Committee identifies and analyzes concerns of the business community and recommends evidence-based policy positions to the Board of Directors for decision. We work to gain support of regional Chambers, the BC Chamber and the Canadian Chamber at annual policy conventions and at other opportunities throughout the year.

## **2022 advocacy highlights included the following policies and topics:**

- Keep BC Growing through Responsible Resource Development
- Floods An Emerging Economic Threat Requiring Action
- Ensuring an Effective Affordable Childcare Model for BC
- Strategic Management of the Lower Fraser River in BC
- Presentation and input into the 2022 Federal and Provincial Electoral Boundaries Proposed Re-Distributions at Community Hearings and through written submissions.
- Presentation of the Chamber's Not-for-Profit and Agriculture Economic Impact Studies to the City's Business, Innovation and Public Affairs Committee.

# Canada's Agricultural Hub: An Economic Impact Analysis of Agriculture in Abbotsford

In 2020, as a follow up to our highly successful 2008 Agriculture Study the Chamber, partnered with University of the Fraser Valley, City of Abbotsford, TD Bank and with support from the University of British Columbia to produce a new Agricultural Impact Study, "Canada's Agricultural Hub: An Economic Impact Analysis of Agriculture in Abbotsford (2022)." In May of 2022, the Chamber hosted a luncheon featuring BC Agriculture Minister, Lana Popham as the keynote and a panel discussion to launch the release of the report and share its findings to the community.

Since then, the Chamber has been actively pursuing a community outreach and engagement strategy through the Chamber's Agriculture Committee to disseminate the nationally significant findings of this leading work. The full report can be found at: [www.abbotsfordchamber.com/how-we-help/policy-position-papers/canadas-agricultural-hub-report-2022/](http://www.abbotsfordchamber.com/how-we-help/policy-position-papers/canadas-agricultural-hub-report-2022/)



## Flood Disaster Relief Support



In 2022, the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce continued to provide flood disaster relief support for the long term impacts that resulted from the catastrophic November 2021 floods. Along with its Abbotsford Disaster Relief Fund Coalition partners: the Abbotsford Community Foundation and University of the Fraser Valley, the Chamber continued to grant funds from the over \$4 million dollars raised and coordinated with local agencies doing ongoing work.

## BC Economic Development Award 2022

In April 2022, the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce was awarded a BC Economic Development Award for its part and granting stream to administer funding to local businesses and farmers that suffered from the floods. The Chamber and its Coalition partners who were critical to this achievement were recognized.



## One Year After the Floods Event

In November 2022, the ADRF partners organized a Donor Appreciation event featuring heart felt stories from flood victims; not for profits, farmers and local businesses. The event was hosted at the University of the Fraser Valley.



# Connecting through Meaningful Experiences & Benefit Programs

## The Company of Young Professionals & Entrepreneurs (CYPE) Program



"Together we build, attract and grow the next generation of business leaders within Abbotsford and the Fraser Valley!"



In 2019, the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce initiated the development of a new program, the "Company of Young Professionals & Entrepreneurs" (CYPE) meant to provide leadership, connecting and growth opportunities for the next generation and those 40 years of age and under. Since then groundwork has been laid including in 2021, with the creation of CYPE's Strategic Plan 2021-2023 and established two annual events: the Annual Summer Social in partnership with the Fraser Valley Indo-Canadian Business Association and the Annual Christmas Mingler.

Most recently in 2022, the CYPE formed their Leadership Council and were part of informing the Chamber's new brand identity. The program has been growing and gaining traction in the community each year of its existence. Program sponsorship from RBC and the Abbotsford Tech District has supported this growth.

To find out more information visit: [www.abbotsfordchamber.com/cype/](http://www.abbotsfordchamber.com/cype/)

### CYPE COUNCIL



Sam Varing,  
Chair



Lauren Olynick,  
Vice-Chair



Hardeep Braich



Komal Gill



Ravi Sidhu



Khurram Javed



James Kehler



Gurnoor Sidhu



Whitney Fordham

# Connecting through Meaningful Experiences & Benefit Programs

We connect members through our Signature Events: Business Excellence Awards, Annual Golf Tournament and Agricultural Bus Tour. Also, events such as Lunch N' Learns, Workshops, Luncheons with Guest Speakers and Panels, and many networking opportunities. Our aim is to make meaningful social and business connections, that help you grow and learn about latest supports.

In 2022, we continued to engage with our volunteers, members and business community. Our popular socials and events were welcomed by the membership and community as we were increasingly able to connect post pandemic as we had before!



## Cost Saving Opportunities...

We provide cost saving benefits and services of value to our members, including: the Chambers of Commerce Group Insurance Plan, Esso Fuel Program, Hotel & Travel, Advertising & Promotions and other exclusive savings and discounts on essential business services.

The Chambers Group Insurance Plan, (CGI) available to all business members continues to be a mainstay attractant. Small to medium sized businesses and not for profits find the CGI Plan beneficial to their bottom line and wellbeing for themselves and their staff. Our members also find that it can be an effective employee retention feature with affordable and stable rates as the plan is fully pooled.

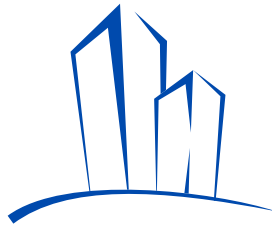


# KEY FACTS

625+  
MEMBERS



109 YEARS  
OF SERVICE



PROUD MEMBER OF B.C. CHAMBER AND  
CANADIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Canadian  
Chamber of  
Commerce

Chambre de  
Commerce  
du Canada



BC Chamber  
of Commerce

 2,600

 2,088

 4,070

 1,642

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