



## It's that time of year again! – Attention Members come join us at our Annual General Meeting and meet your new Chamber Board of Directors!



### Annual General Meeting

Members, please take notice that the Annual General Meeting of the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce will be held on Wednesday, March 29, 2023 at the Sandman Hotel & Suites.

Why attend? We will be announcing our special keynote speaker who you won't want to miss! Plus, it's a networking luncheon opportunity and the chance to meet the new Board and hear about the progress your Chamber has made this past year in 2022 as your voice of business and community advocate. We have many accomplishments to be proud of in our service to our members and local business, that we want to share like: our BC Economic Development Award 2022 for our flood crisis support to businesses and farmers, Company of Young Professionals and Entrepreneurs Program, microcredential government partnerships with

local private post-secondary Focus College, Shop Local initiatives and more.

Please register:

[www.abbotsfordchamber.com/events](http://www.abbotsfordchamber.com/events)

For more information contact:

[events@abbotsfordchamber.com](mailto:events@abbotsfordchamber.com) or

[officemanager@abbotsfordchamber.com](mailto:officemanager@abbotsfordchamber.com)

### About the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce:

The Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce is a leading member-driven organization that improves the effectiveness of doing business. We have over 650 members and are the largest Chamber in the Fraser Valley, located in the 5th largest city in the Province. We are an Accredited Chamber of Commerce, meaning that we are a Chamber that is managed strategically and that our operations reflect national standards of business excellence and best practices.

Membership gives access to a variety of benefits and services and a well-grounded organization with quality business people who are focused on the growth and development of the business community. The Abbotsford Chamber is widely recognized as at the forefront of business advocacy and policy development, acting as a strong voice for its members.

In 2022, the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce celebrated its 109th year of service. Created to promote the interests of businesses in the City of Abbotsford, the Chamber has been an integral part of Abbotsford's growth and evolution for nearly as long as the city has existed.

## 2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Craig Toews**  
PRESIDENT



**Chris Gauthier**  
VICE PRESIDENT



**Katie Yu**  
TREASURER



**Kevin Mierau**  
SECRETARY



**Mike Ashcroft**  
DIRECTOR



**Karen Biggs**  
DIRECTOR



**Corina Carroll**  
DIRECTOR



**Paul Penner**  
DIRECTOR



**Josh Reynolds**  
DIRECTOR



**Ravi Sidhu**  
DIRECTOR



**Brittany Tucker**  
DIRECTOR



**Ryan Turner**  
DIRECTOR



**Sam Varing**  
DIRECTOR

## 2023 CHAMBER TEAM MEMBERS

#207-32900 South Fraser Way • 604-859-9651



**Carole Jorgensen**  
ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS MANAGER  
officemanager@abbotsfordchamber.com



**Jessica Levesque**  
BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT MANAGER  
engagement@abbotsfordchamber.com

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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

Welcome to 2023 – I hope you had a wonderful break over the holidays and looking forward to the full potential of the New Year!

There is a certain level of optimism and angst as we head into 2023. The typical optimism that a New Year brings is overshadowed by the continued geopolitical unrest, supply chain issues, labour market challenges, and pending recession. It is no wonder that some businesses continue to struggle, and I want you to know that the Abbotsford Chamber is here to serve and support you. We are interested in your situation – what's working well? what's getting in your way? what growth plans do you have, and how can businesses learn from each other? Let us know – we would love to engage in these conversations 1:1 or at one of our upcoming events.

An upcoming series of [Chamber Member Roundtables](#) is one opportunity to engage the Abbotsford Chamber and its business

community on these issues. Executive coach, facilitator, and transition specialist, [Cam Taylor](#) will be facilitating multiple round table sessions that will be divided into sector-relevant discussions. The four early-morning sessions will be held on Feb 15, 16, 22 & 23 and we are anticipating a large turnout so watch for the invitation from our Chamber team.

As I mentioned in December, the Abbotsford Chamber is in a time of transition. Our CEO, Katerina Anastasiadis has moved to a new position, and we are actively engaged in a national leadership search. Notwithstanding the current labour market challenges, we are getting a good deal of interest and I would encourage you or someone you know to [apply](#) if interested. As the hub of the Fraser Valley, Abbotsford is one of the fastest growing business centres in Canada. A multicultural community and beautiful location coupled with residential opportunities and upscale



**Craig Toews**  
PRESIDENT

amenities make it an attractive destination.

Looking ahead, the Abbotsford Chamber will be holding its [Annual AGM](#) (luncheon) on March 29 at the Sandman Hotel on Simon Ave. Our nomination process is now open and we are actively recruiting two board directors. This is open to members, and I would encourage you to apply, particularly if you are in the agriculture sector, an entrepreneur, or a business owner. Please contact: [officemanager@abbotsfordchamber.com](mailto:officemanager@abbotsfordchamber.com) to apply.

I hope to see you soon!  
-Craig Toews

## NEW MEMBERS:

- Let's Talk Flooring & More Ltd.
- Pacific New Media Inc.
- Truck Doctor Inc.
- Driverseat Abbotsford Mission
- House of Sher 2018 Ltd.
- M&M Food Market

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

### Chamber Member Roundtables

February 15, 16, 22 and 23  
Clarion Hotel &  
Conference Centre  
8:00am-9:30am


### Business After Business

Thursday, March 9  
Backbone Coworking &  
Executive Offices  
4:00pm – 6:00pm

### Chamber Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, March 29  
Sandman Hotel &  
Suites  
11:30am-1:30pm

For more information and registration go to: [abbotsfordchamber.com/events](http://abbotsfordchamber.com/events)

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## B.C.'S CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND BOARDS OF TRADE ARE INTEGRAL TO OUR COMMUNITIES' HEALTH AND PROSPERITY



Abbotsford, BC – February 16, 2023

February 13 to 17 is Chamber of Commerce Week in British Columbia. It's an opportune time to recognize and celebrate the meaningful work undertaken by the chambers of commerce and boards of trade in communities across the province.

Whether it's advocating to local, provincial or federal governments for changes to public policy, developing innovative programs and initiatives to support business, or leading charitable works that contribute to social well-being, local chambers of commerce and boards of trade are the trusted "boots on the ground" that understand the unique needs of their communities.

They are convenors, collaborators and catalysts for positive change and are integral to creating sustainable, healthy communities.

As the largest and most broadly-based business association in the province, the BC Chamber of Commerce represents 100 local member chambers of commerce and boards of trade and, through them, 36,000 businesses of every size and from every region in the province. We champion the collective voice of our members to create an environment in which B.C. businesses prosper, families thrive and our communities flourish.

British Columbia is an expensive place to do business. And so, our immediate focus is to help create an environment where businesses succeed. However, our collective purpose is much greater and focuses

on the symbiotic relationship between successful businesses and healthy communities - one cannot exist without the other.

And so, contrary to what many people may assume, we advocate also on important societal issues that exist in all our communities.

For example, there is a critical dearth of affordable housing in communities across the province that makes it impossible to attract and retain workers. Layer on the lack of inter-community transportation and dependable childcare both of which prohibit parents from returning to/entering the workforce and it's no wonder our businesses, especially in rural communities, struggle to attract and retain the workers they need.

Of equal concern are the mental health and addictions challenges seen in nearly every community. Those challenges affect our personal and professional lives equally, and too many of us have experienced their impact on our family members, our friends and our co-workers. We cannot expect to have a productive economy, without a work force that feels supported. Given the breadth and depth of our collective reach, our members know we must play a role in finding lasting solutions to these problems.

Finally, while B.C. has made gains on Indigenous reconciliation and participation in the economy, much more needs to be done. Across the province, many of our members are undertaking the work to listen, to learn from and to collaborate with their Indigenous partners. We know, indigenous economic reconciliation is inextricably linked to deeper, lasting reconciliation.

With predictions of a recession in 2023, the need to address some of our greatest challenges with increased urgency, social and economic, is clear.

The BC Chamber of Commerce, along with its network of local chambers of commerce and boards of trade advocate on all issues that will help to create an environment where businesses prosper, families thrive and our communities flourish.

I encourage you to check out your local chamber of commerce or board of trade to learn about the integral role it plays to your community's health and prosperity. I am proud of the work they undertake and you should be too.

*Fiona Famulak, President and CEO  
BC Chamber of Commerce*