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 ABBOTSFORD

## WORRIES ABOUT THE AIRLINE AND TRAVEL INDUSTRY, CHAMBERS RENEW CALL FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT



**(Abbotsford) – January 21, 2021** – The Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce along with Chambers across the nation are concerned about last week's airline capacity reductions announcement and renew the call for financial support for the airline and travel industry.

It is well known the devastating impact the travel industry has faced in this pandemic and for the sectors closely tied to travel the road to recovery has not started. While some other businesses have thrived or others have been able to cope (albeit, barely) given eligibility for government supports and what has been possible to do to adapt and innovate. However, this simply has not been possible in a substantive way for the airlines and travel.

For example, Abbotsford Airport saw a drop from airport passenger service going from a milestone 1 million passengers achieved in 2019 to about 300,000 in 2020. With public health restrictions swiftly changing, unpredictably throughout last year including impacting local and domestic travel, this has been an unbearable and unsustainable scenario.

Why has the federal government been so slow to act and adequately address this major issue? There are serious

implications at stake and multiple sectors, jobs and economic activity that are being cut at the knee, an impact that will take years to recover from.

On January 13, the Hon. Perrin Beatty, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, released the following statement regarding the implications of workforce reductions at Air Canada:

"The implications of today's news about decreased capacity and further workforce reductions at Air Canada are deeply troubling. With cuts to regional air service in Atlantic Canada and across the country, the situation is much more than just an air industry issue – pockets of our country risk being disconnected from others.

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce renews our call for the federal government to provide targeted financial support for the hardest hit sectors, including the beleaguered travel industry. As we continue to navigate the current crisis, a restart plan for safe travel while using an integrated approach to rapid testing for COVID-19 is also crucial. Our industry partners are committed to working with governments to develop this plan and to reopen our economy."

As part of its efforts to address the economic and business damage of restricted travel, the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce is working closely with Tourism Abbotsford and the Airport Authority to create solutions, opportunities and advocate together. We will also work with our network to press the federal government and stand with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in this work.

### **About the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce:**

The Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce is the Fraser Valley's leading member-driven organization and voice that improves the effectiveness of doing business. An Accredited Chamber of Commerce managed strategically to reflect national standards of business excellence and best practices. 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 and is in its 108th year of service.

### **For more information, please contact:**

Katerina Anastasiadis  
 Executive Director  
 communications@abbotsfordchamber.com  
 604-859-9651



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2021

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2021

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



Katerina  
Anastasiadis  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
katerina@  
abbotsfordchamber.com



Carole Jorgensen  
MANAGER OF EVENTS & SPONSORSHIP  
events@  
abbotsfordchamber.com



La Vonne Bandsma  
OFFICE MANAGER  
lavonne@  
abbotsfordchamber.com

BE PART  
OF A  
THRIVING  
MEMBERSHIP

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It feels a bit challenging to be super energized and enthusiastic about embracing 2021. The start of January hasn't 'felt' much different than prior months. If only life were exclusively about feelings. However, it takes much more to get through life than making decisions based on how we feel. Consider all the business owners who have been experiencing the pressures of running a business this past year. Many had to disappoint staff and customers by modifying operations to abide by restrictions or even to the extreme of shutting down their business.

How do we foster hope and encouragement in 2021? We can enter 2021 with expectation, but we also can do our part by having hearts of gratitude and giving. That sounds counter intuitive, right? Abbotsford has continued to be a strong community during this pandemic for many reasons – its rich agricultural base, its vibrant community core, and its leadership and vision by our City...just to name a few.

In addition, Abbotsford remains the most charitable community in Canada!

Psychologists have studied the fact that simple random acts of kindness create a positive reaction in our minds and bodies. *"Biochemically, you can't live on the 3-to-4-minute oxytocin boost that comes from a single act. That's why kindness is most beneficial as a practice—something we work into our daily routine whether in the form of volunteer work, dropping coins into an expired parking meter, bringing a snack to share with your officemates, or holding the elevator for someone"* (cedars-sinai.org, February 2019). Further to this, *"When we express gratitude and receive the same, our brain releases dopamine and serotonin, the two crucial neurotransmitters responsible for our emotions, and they make us feel 'good'. They enhance our mood immediately, making us feel happy from the inside"* (positivepsychology.com, January 2020).

Looking back at my first President's



Melinda Friesen  
President

Message in April 2019, the title was – Bloom on Abbotsford. It doesn't feel that could be appropriate now. But that is where feelings are set aside. The facts are that Abbotsford continues to grow, being noted as wonderful place to live and work and is a frontrunner in being a community that thrives. So, let's keep giving to and thanking each other and our local businesses. Let's take on 2021 as an opportunity to be an example of a community that blooms.

NEW MEMBERS:

Kevin M. Murray Law Corporation  
604-831-3142

Securus Research  
securusresearch.wixsite.com/mysite

Accord Meeting & Conference Rooms Inc.  
accord-mcr.com

Pharmasave #1009  
604-746-7117

Orion Labs Inc.  
orionlabs.ca

BFS Realtor – Jennifer Schanick  
604-217-8555

Abbotsford Skin Clinic  
604-309-8617

Susanne Walton – BC Farm & Ranch Realty  
fraservalleyacearage.com

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Thursday, January 28, 2021  
Virtual Lunch N' Learn "HR Management - Answers to Most Common Workplace Questions"  
Sponsored by KSW Lawyers  
11:30am-12:30pm

February 24 – March 31, 2021  
Building Resilience to Thrive  
6-Week Online Training Program  
Wednesday's 11:00am-12:00pm

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





## Opinion Editorial – Agriculture Industry 2020 Review



Growing up on a dairy farm and working in the agriculture industry has allowed me to see the resilience of farmers. 2020 was a year of adapting and working together while apart. While all industries have been impacted in some way this year, whether positive or negative, I have continued to see the pride farmers take in feeding our communities and their positive outlook on 2021.

Supply managed industries were impacted at the beginning of the year adjusting from restaurant sales to more retail. Borders continuing to be closed has helped with domestic dairy demand, resulting in a 1% increase to quota allocations for dairy farmers. Chicken farmers, egg and meat birds, have also seen an impact from restaurant and hospitality with events being cancelled and restaurants at half capacity. 2021's promise of distribution of vaccine adds optimism to this group.

When taking a look at some of our crops industries, potato farmers have mentioned pre-

orders are looking favorable for 2021, but with still some uncertainty with restaurant and hospitality industries, some farmers will possibly reduce planting in 2021. Some blueberry farmers adapted to shortage of labour by going automated making them more efficient. Those who brought in foreign workers took advantage of grants available.



From a banking perspective, almost all industries took the CEBA loan (Canada Emergency Business Account). A recent announcement of increasing the loan from \$40,000 to \$60,000 has been attractive for the zero interest period and the loan forgiveness. The banks postponed payments for the first 6 months of the pandemic for those who needed it and continue to work with businesses seeking assistance. Grants have been more popular than ever, Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, Business Recovery grant and Emergency Processing fund to name a few. The Student Work Placement Program will help farmers save on labour costs and create jobs in the process.

2020 was like no other and like most people we are looking forward to what 2021 will bring, working together in our economy recovery. Now more than ever is the time to support our local farmers.

**Written by Lauren Tap**, Member of the Agriculture Committee, Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce | Commercial Account Manager | Agriculture & Agribusiness | RBC Royal Bank |

### Notice of AGM & Board Nominations

The Annual General Meeting of the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce will be held on Thursday, March 11, 2021.

Nominations are now open for 4 available spots for Director on the Chamber Board (1 year term beginning April 1, 2021). The Board is seeking qualified candidates with expertise in the areas of:

- Finance/Accounting & Audit
- Legal/Risk Regulatory
- Large Enterprise
- HR/Performance Management
- Agriculture/Agr Tech
- Governance
- Advocacy

Candidates should align with the direction of the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce, and augment and accelerate the governance principles of the Board.

If you are a voting member in good standing you are eligible to submit your application to run for Director. If you are interested in letting your name stand for election please email [lavonne@abbotsfordchamber.com](mailto:lavonne@abbotsfordchamber.com) for an application package

If you are unable to attend, please email [lavonne@abbotsfordchamber.com](mailto:lavonne@abbotsfordchamber.com) for your Proxy Form to assign your vote to another member or for a Ballot to complete and return.

**Deadline for completed nominations is 12 noon February 8, 2021**

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