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# NEWS RELEASE

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## First Annual Abbotsford ‘Business Walks Week’ Sept 15-17

**Abbotsford, September 10, 2015** –, The City of Abbotsford will host its first-ever Business Walks event September 15-17<sup>th</sup>, announced Mayor Henry Braun today.

A “Business Walk” is an event dedicated to learning more about local businesses through short 5-10 minute interviews. During the 3 scheduled Business Walk days, leaders walk from business to business, talking with business owners about their successes, their barriers and the solutions that might improve business.

“The Abbotsford Business Walks program provides a great opportunity for City Council, Economic Development staff, provincial and federal government officials, as well as community partners to ‘take the temperature’ of businesses across our City,” said Braun. “Local leaders will visit a large number of businesses with the hopes of gathering the knowledge they need to help support small business and shape the kinds of resources that the City of Abbotsford Economic Development team needs to develop.”

The program is powered by the City of Abbotsford Economic Development department with significant support from stakeholders such as the Chamber of Commerce and the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training. Business Walks programs are recognized as Economic Development Best Practice by the Provincial Government of BC.

“The Business Walks program is an excellent informal way for us as local community leaders to get in touch with the pulse of the business community and to gather the business intelligence needed to stimulate the local Abbotsford economy,” said Braun. “We are excited to be able to have an opportunity to interact with local business owners one-on-one and hear what they have to say.”

Although the information that businesses provide is strictly confidential, themes and responses will be analyzed to develop a report on business in Abbotsford, and shape future initiatives of the City of Abbotsford Economic Development department.

“Proactive and regular communication with the business community is a critical component in building a Vibrant Economy and helping to foster the success of new business investment in our community,” said Braun. “Through early engagement and communication, our Economic Development staff will have the opportunity to address and respond to concerns, correct misinformation and accurately inform public discussions – it’s a win-win for everyone involved.”

More information on the Abbotsford Business Walks program can be found online at <http://bit.ly/1qckfpU>.

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