



NEWS RELEASE

Report Shows that Local Businesses Rate Location as Number One Reason for Doing Business in Abbotsford

ABBOTSFORD – January 31, 2017 – The City of Abbotsford has released the report from the second annual Business Walks, announced Mayor Braun today.

The Business Walks program is one of the initiatives that supports City Council's strategic goal of creating a vibrant local economy. The program is also a component of the City of Abbotsford's Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) strategy which supports the 7,000 licensed businesses currently operating in Abbotsford. Key findings from the report indicate that 47 percent of businesses rated 'location' as the number one reason for doing business in Abbotsford, and thirty five percent rated 'clientele' as the second reason for doing business in Abbotsford.

"The Business Walks event has engaged a significant number of local businesses," said Mayor Henry Braun. "Ninety-two percent of Abbotsford businesses indicated steady or increasing business growth, which shows the strength of our local economy."

Over 60 volunteers participated in the program, which took place from November 29 to December 1, 2016, and included MLAs Darryl Plecas and Simon Gibson and City Councillors, as well as members of local organizations such as the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce, Fraser Valley Indo Canadian Business Association, University of the Fraser Valley, Small Business BC and Business Development Canada.

"The feedback we received from our local businesses is extremely valuable as this helps us identify future opportunities to support our business community," said Braun. "From the interviews conducted, we have identified 50 businesses that want follow up support, which is a great opportunity to continue to grow and develop our local business sector."

Over 125 short interviews were held with business owners and managers. The interviews connected agencies to businesses, provided a venue for business owners and operators to share key challenges and opportunities with local decision makers, and identified the businesses that require follow-up from Abbotsford's Economic Development staff.

This year's walks focused on businesses located in the areas of Historic Downtown, Peardonville, Wheel Ave, Maclure Industrial, Mount Lehman, Blueridge and Highstreet.

The Business Walks report is now available online at <http://caed.abbotsford.ca/locate-here/caed-resource-library/> and includes the responses to the survey questions asked to the participating businesses. View the Business Walks video at <https://youtu.be/7z-kB4JTa0Q>.

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