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# NEWS RELEASE

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## Abbotsford Announces Citizen Advisory Commission Members

**ABBOTSFORD, September 17, 2014** – The City of Abbotsford is pleased to announce the members of the new Citizen Advisory Commission in support of the Abbotsford, Official Community Plan (OCP) update project, said Mayor, Bruce Banman today.

Over 30 applications for the Citizen Advisory Commission were received and a nine member group was selected by Abbotsford City Council last week.

“We are very pleased with the response from residents wishing to be a part of this important advisory committee,” said Banman. “The residents represented on this Commission will have direct input into Abbotsford’s updated OCP which will guide how future development occurs across our City for years to come.”

The Citizen Advisory Commission will meet once a month and will help shape the future of Abbotsford by reviewing land use policy, helping with community engagement and giving feedback on new planning ideas. The members of the Citizen Advisory Commission are:

- Gurminder S. Gobindpuri
- Nissa Hildebrand
- Sonya Hossmann
- Denise Laier
- Aaron Levy
- Eden Luymes
- Carson Noftle
- Crystal Salter
- Hardeep Sidhu

The public engagement activities of the Abbotsford OCP update project officially launched on July 1 at Abbotsford’s Canada Day celebrations, and the project team has since engaged with nearly 600 residents at eight different local events over the summer.

As part of the initial public engagement campaign, the ‘Picture Your City’ photo activity, which asked residents to send in what they like, dislike and wish for in Abbotsford, received over 95 photo submissions. These photos will help in informing City staff what residents want from their city. A sample of the photos taken can be found at [www.abbotsford.ca](http://www.abbotsford.ca)

Staff will begin compiling all the information from the community engagement events, as well as from initial research, analysis and workshops to prepare a Background Research report for Council to consider next month.

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**For more information contact:**

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## **Backgrounder: Citizen Advisory Commission Member Bios:**

- **Gurminder S. Gobindpuri - member**  
Gurminder is a Managing Lawyer for Venus Law Corporation here in Abbotsford and has skills in Administrative Law, policy making and interpretation. He has attended numerous mediations and negotiations with a diverse set of groups. He is fluent in Punjabi and Hindi languages.
- **Nissa Hildebrand – member**  
Nissa is a newcomer to Abbotsford, originating from St. John's, Newfoundland, and she has since been working as an Orthotist with Ossur Motion Lab. In 2013, she served on the Board of Directors for the Abbotsford Community Garden. She has also recently spent time volunteering as an exercise assistant for elderly house-bound patients.
- **Sonya Hossmann – member**  
Sonya grew up on a dairy farm and has extensive knowledge of the farming community. She has a Diploma in Agriculture Business and a Bachelor's of Social Work and is currently a candidate for a Master's of Social Work. She helped open and manage the Christine Lamb second stage transition home for marginalized women from Abbotsford. As a long-time resident of the community she has also contributed to the Abbotsford Arts Council and the Clayburn Village community Society Board.
- **Denise Laier – member and Vice-Chair**  
Denise has worked in community libraries for the past 19 years and is currently located at the Abbotsford Community Library. As a Library Assistant she has taken several courses at the UFV and has developed customer service skills in her daily dealings with the public. Denise grew up in Abbotsford and has been living here for over 50 years.
- **Aaron Levy – member**  
Aaron is the station manager of CIVL 101.7 FM, UFV's Campus and Community Radio Station and is a member of the Jam in Jubilee organizing committee. He has a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Guelph and has worked with many local groups including the ADBA, the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce, Agrifair, Abbyfest, the Abbotsford Airshow, and others for various initiatives and in different capacities.
- **Eden Luymes – member**  
Eden is a student at Abbotsford Christian School entering Grade 12 as a High Honour Student and has served on its Student Action Leadership Team for three years. She has also served on Abbotsford's Youth Council this past year and this has given her useful experience about community issues throughout the City.
- **Carson Nofle – member and Chair**  
Carson is a retired land development consultant and has served as Chair of the City of Abbotsford's City Industry Development Advisory Committee for 13 years. He has practised architectural design and planning locally in Abbotsford for over 30 years.

- **Crystal Salter – member**

Crystal has been working as a Public Health Nurse in Abbotsford since 2006 and has also previously worked as a Perinatal (Labour, Delivery and postpartum) nurse. She is involved in Women's Leadership at Central Heights Church and represents Abbotsford on Fraser Health's Public Health Nursing Practice Advisory Council. Her work as a nurse has led her into taking several professional development courses including ones in cultural competency and leadership.

- **Hardeep Sidhu – member**

Hardeep has a Bachelor of Arts in Geography specializing in Urban and International Development from the UFV. For her practicum, she worked as a Community Development Officer for the District of Mission where she reviewed community and neighbourhood plans. Outside of the planning profession she also has experience working for Blue Bell Farms as an Administrative and Accounts Manager and is very active within the Sikh Punjabi community.