

**“2007 Outlook and Theme”  
Remarks by Ross F. Brown,  
Incoming 2007-2008 President, Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce**

2006 Annual General Meeting at Cascade Community Church  
Abbotsford, B.C. – 12:55 p.m., Wednesday, November 29, 2006

Thank you Fiona,

I am honoured to be the next president of the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce.

Although I can't be sure, I believe I am the first president in the Chamber's history who has also had a brief, but well documented career as ... a Can-Can dancer.

I look forward to working with all of you over the next 15 months. There are many talented people in our organization. I know with their help and their guidance business will continue to gain ground in our community.

And this *is* an exciting time indeed to be involved with the Abbotsford Chamber.

It wasn't too long ago, if you wanted a small business in B.C., you would buy a large one, and then wait a while.

But thanks to a dynamic economy and energetic business and community leaders like you, that is no longer the case.

Plan A has just been given the go ahead.

And within two years Abbotsford will also have a new Hospital and Cancer Centre and, we hope, a new Fraser Valley University. Those projects carry the promise of a stronger community, better jobs and businesses that grow larger, not smaller.

And our Chamber of Commerce will continue to reach out in an effort to bring new endeavours to Abbotsford.

Last year, I was part of a successful trade mission to the Yukon.

Next year, we will build on that with a trade mission to India.  
I promise not to do the Can-Can in Mumbai.

I want to mention policy, just briefly.

Policy that finds acceptance with all three levels of government is the mark of success.

And creating seamless policy in a country like ours is not only vital, but also challenging.

Our Committee's have identified several areas for policy development over the coming year.

I am talking about the Abbotsford International Airport, about Agricultural Land Utilization, about Provincial Highway infrastructure, about the Pacific Gateway Plan and other issues many of you are familiar with.

In 2007, the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce Committees will be hard at work.

Their policy development efforts will ultimately be presented to municipal, provincial and federal levels of government through City Council and the B.C. and Canadian Chamber of Commerce's.

At the same time, I hope we can develop a policy book for our Chamber.

I believe we have the skill and expertise to develop the kind of quality regulatory framework that can glide through every level of government. And if I am right, I hope that will put us in the running for a "Chamber of the Year" award next year.

And finally, over the next year I want us to foster entrepreneurship by interacting and encouraging the young men and women in our schools and colleges. And, I want to thank you today for taking the first step along that road. Our new, reformed membership fees will make the Chamber more accessible to young business people.

I believe in entrepreneurship AND I believe in it passionately.

It's the foundation of our business community; in fact, it's the foundation of the Chamber of Commerce.

Entrepreneurs contribute to the quality of life. They advance our society through innovation, through hard work and they create wealth.

It's for reasons like those that I have chosen Entrepreneurship as the theme during my term as president of the Chamber of Commerce in Abbotsford.

I started my own business just 2 years ago. Since then I have experienced first hand the thrill of success and come face to face with the challenges of starting a business.

I now have a better understanding of the risks you must take and the skills you must have to be a successful entrepreneur.

Before I leave you today...

I want to thank the many people who have helped me along the way. Without them I would not be standing here today as your new president. I want to thank my mother Darlene Brown. She encouraged me to "Follow my dreams" and taught me to "Persevere."

And, I would like to thank my business partner, Matthias Morel. His generous help will allow me to take time away from our office to fulfill my Chamber responsibilities.

Thank you all.  
Our future is limited only by imagination.  
May Abbotsford be blessed.