

Township of
Langley



Est. 1873

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 12, 2018

WHAT DOES ECONOMIC SUCCESS LOOK LIKE? TAKE OUR SURVEY

It was an inclusive, productive day of discovery, sharing, and engaging in dialogue on what it takes to keep the local business climate thriving and healthy, as 150 business owners, employees, and residents gathered at a Stakeholder Engagement Forum on July 5 to discuss the Township of Langley's economic future.

A five-question online economic survey remains open to the public until Friday, July 20, and Township business owners and residents are encouraged to visit invest.tol.ca/events to complete it.

The Township's Economic Development and Investment Department hosted the interactive Forum to help guide the creation of a new Economic Development Strategy. The event featured prominent speakers, facilitated ideation sessions to generate discussion and gather opinions, and a display showcasing community investment.

"We are very pleased with how well the Forum went," said Val Gafka, the Township's Senior Manager of Economic Investment and Development. "Attendees were just buzzing with thoughts and ideas, and the ideation sessions were full. Participants were genuinely engaged and many wanted to stay and continue in rich dialogue, although the next session was ready to begin."

The ideation discussion groups focused on topics critical to the Township's economic future, such as agriculture, construction, manufacturing, the film creative/film industry, tourism and sport hosting, and wholesale trade, transportation, and warehousing.

The event's keynote address, delivered by the Honorable Bruce Ralston, BC's Minister of Jobs, Trade and Technology, provided an overview of the province's economic possibilities and the Township's role as a player. A mid-day speaker panel featuring Langley's MPs and MLAs put the spotlight on future possibilities for the Township.

Forum participants heard from numerous thought leaders, including Val Litwin, President and CEO of the BC Chamber of Commerce, who spoke about emerging opportunities and how the Township is positioned to capitalize on assets such as tourism, clean energy technology, agri-tourism, and international trade.

Destination BC's CEO Marsha Walden, Fraser Health Authority Medical Health Officer Dr. Michael Schwandt, and TransLink's Vice-President of Planning and Policy Geoff Cross discussed regional trends, needs, and opportunities related to tourism, community health, and transportation and transit plans. Their presentations will be available soon on **invest.tol.ca**.

Attendees received an information booklet highlighting Langley's primary industries and contributed to conversations about issues, opportunities, and challenges that impact the Township, including the importance of small business, affordability, our aging population, and the need to set goals for future success.

"With numerous, diverse competitive advantages, the Township is positioned to be a leader in economic prosperity," Gafka said, "and it is important that we hear from anyone who is vested in our economic future. We encourage business owners in the Township, their employees, and residents to take a few minutes and complete the short online survey."

A consultant's report on the Forum will be finalized later this summer. Input gathered will help form the Township's new Economic Development Strategy, which is being created to set goals and the activities necessary to achieve them for the three to five years ahead.

The Strategy's research phase was conducted earlier this year, and it is currently in its public and stakeholder engagement phase. A full draft of the Strategy will be created between this fall and April of next year, and comments will be sought from the public to make sure the document is on the right track. From May to December 2019, the proposed Strategy will be finalized and presented to Township Council for consideration and approval.

For more information, contact Val Gafka, Senior Manager of Economic Investment and Development, at vgafka@tol.ca or 604.532.7305.