

Township of
Langley



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NEWS RELEASE

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ABM CELEBRATES SECOND YEAR OF BUILDING BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS IN LANGLEY TOWNSHIP

It was an intensive three-day event designed to support economic reconciliation, increase shared prosperity, promote business partnership opportunities, and foster collaboration through relationship building.

The second annual Advanced Business Match (ABM) Lower Mainland was co-hosted by the Kwantlen First Nation and the Township of Langley at the Langley Events Centre from October 22 to 24.

Held across the country, Raven Events presents ABMs to connect indigenous communities with the private sector to create business opportunities. Using sophisticated business matching technology, participating indigenous and non-indigenous businesses along with Nation communities schedule appointments with each other online prior to the events, making them a highly efficient way to connect with organizations of interest.

Held on the traditional territory of the Kwantlen, Katzie, and Semiahmoo First Nations, the 2018 ABM Lower Mainland provided business opportunities to more than 100 delegates from business and Nations, who met in an environment that strived to remove geographic barriers, condense time requirements, reduce costs, and facilitate opportunities for shared prosperity.

“Raven Events, with support from the Kwantlen First Nation and the Township of Langley, hosts a business event that provides value-proposition like no other,” said Val Gafka, the Township’s Senior Manager of Economic Investment and Development. “There is such an incredible spirit of collaboration, cooperation, and energy that truly results in purposeful dialogue towards economic reconciliation. We were thrilled to once again partner with Kwantlen First Nation and Raven Events to host this ABM.”

“The Township of Langley is the fastest growing municipality in Metro Vancouver and has numerous businesses advantages that make our community an exceptional place to invest and do business in,” Gafka added. “We are always pleased to take part in opportunities that enrich our community, enhance job opportunities, and support a thriving economy.”

Gafka noted that the Township values a strong and constructive relationship with Kwantlen First Nation, having worked together on projects including the Lelem’ Arts and Cultural Café, and other current initiatives to enhance the Fort Langley waterfront and provide a new community cultural centre.

“If communities across Canada worked towards economic reconciliation and shared prosperity with First Nations, Canada could see an increase to the national annual GDP by two percent, which is some \$27 billion,” she said. “That’s an economic value proposition that makes a lot of sense. Building and maintaining genuine relationships is fundamental to working together for the economic success of the entire community.”

“Seyem’ Qwantlen Business Group was pleased once again to be a co-host of the Advanced Business Match,” said Brenda Fernie, Vice President of the Seyem’ Qwantlen Business Group, which manages Kwantlen First Nation’s business activities and opportunities. “The Advanced Business Match introduces businesses to the indigenous marketplace, and is an opportunity to explore potential partnership opportunities. It’s the first step in putting reconciliation into action.”

The Lower Mainland ABM featured two and a half days of match-making business meetings and a welcoming ceremony and prayers from members of the Kwantlen First Nation, the Semiahmoo First Nation, and special guest Chard Marchand, director of Business Development for the National Centre for American Indian Enterprise Development in Arizona.

ABM, Marchand said, offers a model for relationship building that could be used in other areas of the world, as more indigenous nations move towards forming partnerships including those within the energy sector and coping with climate change.

Advanced Businesses Matches have been held across Canada for several years, and next year will move into America when an ABM is presented in Arizona.

“Delegates of ABM Lower Mainland come away with new business relationship building opportunities through an extremely effective and productive event,” Gafka said.

For more information, contact Val Gafka, Township of Langley Senior Manager of Economic Investment and Development, at vgafka@tol.ca or 604.532.7305; or Brenda Fernie, Vice President, Seyem’ Qwantlen Business Group, at 604.888.5556 ext 202