

MAY 2026

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For more than 110 years, the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce has served as the leading voice of local business, representing employers across agriculture, manufacturing, transportation, and services, and ensuring the realities of the regional economy are reflected in public policy decisions.

That role is especially significant in Abbotsford, one of British Columbia's most productive agricultural regions and a critical contributor to Canada's food system and export economy. Agriculture alone generates more than \$3.83 billion in annual farm gate sales, supports over 1,200 farms, and underpins a broader agri-food economy that is deeply integrated into regional supply chains, trade corridors, and processing capacity.

At the same time, the region faces increasing pressure from limited industrial land availability, infrastructure constraints, and growing

EXPLORING AGRICULTURE IN ABBOTSFORD



competition for space between agricultural preservation and economic expansion. These tensions are not abstract; they directly affect investment, business growth, and long-term competitiveness.

For decades, the Chamber has been actively engaged in these conversations, including recent advocacy to explore opportunities to reform and modernize the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) framework provincially.

It is in this context that the Abbotsford Chamber is hosting its annual Agriculture Industry Tour and featuring Minister of Agriculture Lana Popham on June 5th, bringing together business leaders, producers, and policymakers for a focused

conversation on the future of the sector in British Columbia. The tour provides a rare opportunity to see firsthand the scale and complexity of local agricultural operations, followed by a private lunch discussion with the Agriculture Minister.

The event is designed to connect policy direction with on-the-ground realities, and to ensure the voice of the Fraser Valley business community is clearly represented in ongoing provincial decision-making.

Tickets are now available for both the full tour experience and luncheonly participation. Space is limited, and early registration is encouraged.

AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY TOUR

JUNE 5, 2026 | 8:30 AM - 3:30 PM
TOUR MEETS UP AT SEVENOAKS MALL TO BEGIN

Tickets are now available for both the full tour experience and lunch-only participation.

Scan the QR code to register



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Abbotsford Income Tax
Browne Mortgages
+ More
Calm and Cozy
Edward Jones

Fraser Valley Office Systems
Langis Event Media
MAG Windows
Overlanders Manufacturing LP

Puroclean Restoration
Fraser Valley
Ridgecrest Dairies Ltd
Rona Clearbrook
Run For Water
Senoria Seniors
Terra Recycling
Yes Chef

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BC'S PST EXPANSION: WHAT EVERY BUSINESS NEEDS TO KNOW



The Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce continues to oppose the expansion of the Provincial Sales Tax to professional services and advocate to the province to scrap the tax. "This is a tax on doing business – plain and simple," said Alex Mitchell, CEO of the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce. "It raises costs at every stage of operations and makes it harder for businesses to invest, grow, and compete."

At a time when businesses are already facing rising costs, tariffs, inflationary pressures, and economic uncertainty, this change risks adding another layer of unrecoverable expense for small and medium-sized enterprises. The Chamber is calling on the Province to reconsider and scrap the PST expansion in order to protect business

competitiveness, investment, and job creation in communities like Abbotsford.

What's Actually Changing? Budget 2026 expanded BC's Provincial Sales Tax (PST) to cover professional services for the first time, including things like accounting, security and engineering. These are services that almost every business in Abbotsford relies on.

Historically, BC's PST has applied primarily to goods (products you can touch and buy). Starting October 1, 2026, the PST will expand to cover a range of professional services for the first time:

- Accounting and bookkeeping services
- Architectural services
- Engineering and geoscience services

- Security and private investigation services
- Rental property and strata management services
- Non-residential real estate commissions

The Chamber's Position

We understand the fiscal context. The province is projecting a \$13.3 billion deficit, and broadening the taxbase is one tool for addressing that. But the way BC's PST is structured creates a real problem for businesses, which is where our concern lies.

We are hearing this from members across our community. The businesses that keep local economies running are the ones absorbing these costs, and many of them are already under significant pressure.

We are actively engaging with government on behalf of Abbotsford Chamber members, and we'll continue to update you as this develops. The PST changes still require Royal Assent (the formal step where the Lieutenant Governor signs the legislation into law) before they take effect. There is still an opportunity for the province to act on the business community's concerns.

What Should You Do Right Now?

- **If you provide newly taxable services:** Begin preparing to register for PST. Registration opened April 1, 2026, six months before the changes take effect.
- **Review your contracts:** PST applies based on when services are performed, not necessarily when they are invoiced or agreed upon.
- **Model the cost impact:** For businesses relying heavily on accounting, engineering, or security services, it's worth estimating the annual cost increase now.
- **Engage with us:** Your local chamber of commerce is your channel. Share how this affects your business. Member voices shape our advocacy.

UPCOMING EVENTS



ANNUAL AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY BUS TOUR

June 5th, 8:30am - 3:30 PM

WLC BRAND BLUEPRINT: BUILD, DESIGN & DEFINE YOUR PERSONAL BRAND

June 9th, 5:00 - 7:00 PM

ABBOTSFORD AIRSHOW CHAMBER BUSINESS LOUNGE FRIDAY NIGHT SHOW

August 7, 3:00 - 10:00 PM