



Abbotsford Community Foundation, President Hamilton's Report: AGM April 17, 2009

It Is the Best of Times: It Is the Worst of Times

Last year I spoke about the new story for ACF that emerged from our Case For Support:

Abbotsford Community Foundation (ACF) is the most trusted center for planned community giving, in Canada's most giving city. It is an independent, well managed and respected giving facility that attracts and manages asset-based gifts for the long term health of the community.

ACF Inspires Giving, Empowers People, Grows Community

How has this story served our Foundation, our Stakeholders and our City in a time when we seem to be living the Chinese curse "may you live in interesting times". What are interesting times?

Do We Live in the Best of Times?

Much evidence indicates that the last year has been the Best of Times:

On this occasion in April 2008, we did not have:

Right People on the Bus

- we did not have a full time office team. We now do.
- we did not have a full time Executive Director. We now do.
- we did not have a full Board complement representing the diversity of our community. We now do.

The Right Relationships

- we did not have overlapping Board memberships with other philanthropies. We now do.
- we had not requested the wisdom from our past BoD – Emeritus Board. We now have.

The Right Tools

- we did not have a locally or nationally recognized identity, logo, marketing package, advertising image or business cards. We now do.
- we did not have a functional inspiring website. We now do.
- we did not have an Agricultural Enhancement Fund Agreement with City of Abbotsford. We (almost) now do.
- we had not received the insights from our 3 year sponsorship of Imagine Abbotsford. We now have.

The Right Systems

- we did not have a Fund Development strategy that supports local charities, engages Allied Professionals and has a 10 year target of \$100mm. We now do.

- we did not have a plan to engage women as planned givers in the community. We now do.
- we did not have a plan for a Neighbourhood Ball that will create awareness for ACF because we are creating awareness for the major social issue of affordable housing by supporting a network of charities who lack planned giving fund development capacity. We now do.

Do We Live in the Worst of Times?

Much evidence indicates that the last year has been the Worst of Times:

On this occasion in April 2008 we did not have:

Challenging Internal Capacity Situation

- we had not experienced a difficult transition period in the handover of ED responsibilities from our longest serving contractor to our new full-time ED. We now have.
- we had not experienced the loss of our Director of Awards and Grants. We now have.

Challenging Relationship Losses

- we had not lost our Chair of the Scholarship and Bursary Committee. We still have not replaced her. (Director Reimer)
- we did not have our longest serving Board member complete his full nine year term. We now have. (Director Hindmarsh)
- we did not have another Foundation Board refuse our overtures of collaboration. We now have. (UFV)

Challenging Health Situations for our Board

- we had not lost a Board member because of unexpected family health challenges. We now have. (Director Reimer)
- we did not have a Board member suffering serious health risks. We now do. (Director Besse)

Challenging External Local Conditions

- we did not have a proposal to manage the City's Housing Fund declined despite no other competition. We now have.
- we did not have an objection from the Gaming Board blocking our awards to Scholarships and Bursaries. We now do.

The Most Challenging Economic Environment of our Time

- we did not foresee the erosion of the economy and the deterioration of capital investment portfolio values. We have now lost 15% of the value of the portfolio in unrealized losses. We can't predict what will happen next or when.
- we did not foresee the volatility of energy prices that has caused oil prices to peak at highest ever rates and then decline by 50% and continue to fluctuate irregularly across the general stock market. We can't predict what will happen next or when.

Resources for Change



However, whether we live in the best of times or the worst of times, one thing is becoming clear. ACF has a team with a strong purpose to implement our strategic plan, that is now working effectively.

ED Deborah Bullock has a vision for what is possible, confidence in selecting candidates for staff and contract team players, a plan for contacting potential donors and a growing network of community connections. Deborah needs Board help and commitment to put her in front of new contacts every week. She wants each Board member to buy her lunch and introduce her to an actual or potential donor, an Allied Professional, or another charity board or executive. If each Board member signs up her dance card that will keep her busy for three months plus, before she knocks on your door again.

Laurie Shopland has come on board to coordinate our Scholarships and Bursary Awards. She has effectively moved into a desk with a long history and already engaged with the most active committee, all the city's school counselors and the key donors at a successful Donor Appreciation Event. Laurie needs our Board's support by our appearance at the highschool graduations upcoming. She is circulating a sign-up sheet so that Board members can choose their favourite school grads to experience a big ACF proud.

Laurie Daschuk, Coordinator of ACF Communications has been instrumental in the evolution of our website and marketing package in conjunction with CFC. She is becoming ACF's voice shaper, amplifier and opportunity finder. She has designed the series of ads running in the Imagine Abbotsford insert that ACF co-sponsors.

Enrica Huston has created the conditions and connections for a high profile Neighbourhood Ball in October, that will carry ACF's strategy and vision into the community with unique flair for having fun in the present while we are creating new housing capacities for the futures. We appreciate her personal energy and quick connections to have already brought Envision Financial in as our presenting sponsor.

Our team on **Reception and Bookkeeping** are ensuring that ACF operates now on a 5 day basis, ready to follow through in supporting all our stakeholders who make contact.

Together with People and Organizations, ACF builds bridges to a vibrant future. ACF is the steward of long term community legacies, partnering with local charities to create a legacy stewardship fund for community wellbeing of \$100 million asset base in 10 years. That is our internal and external vision and the platform of our strategic plan. People who continue to support ACF and help us lead the way with our vision and our story, include founding donor Vivien Trethewey who has stepped forward again with a donation for the Neighbourhood Ball and a long term commitment to ACF Housing Endowment Fund. We couldn't claim even the tenuous stability we have in our investment portfolio without the strategy and management of our Fund Manager, McLean Budden. Past Board members like Maggie Reimer affirm ACF's direction, by stepping forward with a bounce in their step to represent the Board at events like the recent S&B Donor Appreciation Evening. Likewise our national affiliation and co-branding with CFC means that every time they spend a dollar on their logo's visibility, it leverages ACF's visibility.

ACF Appreciates Abbotsford's Positive Life Conditions

In addition to these pivotal resources, in the last year we have stepped into a whole new era.

- on the international stage, President Obama has galvanized an attitude of change that is sweeping through the economy of North America and the world.
- In Abbotsford City Hall we have a new city manager, Frank Pizzuto
- At the city helm we have a new mayor with George Peary – and a number of new counselors.
- In the community itself, we opened a new hospital and cancer treatment centre, The Reach Museum and Gallery and finally gained University status, with a new UFV President about to start next month.



ACF is Positioned for Opportunities

Whether ACF faces the best of times or the worst of times, we are gathering momentum. We have just signed our half of the Agricultural Enhancement Fund, with a target of \$4 to \$8 million dollars coming into ACF over the next four to six years.

We have created the Housing Development Fund and are about to propose to the City that ACF manage their Housing Fund in a strategy that is coupled with our Neighbourhood Ball initiative.

As we are poised on the somewhat precarious knife-edge of a future with new possibilities and a past that endangers all, we have to remember the fundamentals that underlie our strategy. In the next ten to twenty years the greatest transfer of wealth from one generation to the next will naturally happen. By having the imagination to envision the future and the courage to stay the course, the occasion of the Neighbourhood Ball will become the foundation to building our long term Planned Giving capacity.

ACF Builds Infrastructure

In 2007-8, we set a “stretch” target to grow ACF’s endowment fund to \$100,000,000 in 10 years, primarily through planned giving. In 2008, we created the infrastructure to enable that to happen.

Our current plan creates the Fund Development capacity and profile to demonstrate that ACF will become the local specialist in planned giving. Our job as a Board is to make this plan personal – each of us has the ability to coalesce authority, power and influence in carrying out that intention by:

- being planned givers ourselves
- naming ACF in our wills
- acting as ambassadors of the ACF story to the community, and
- inviting our current stakeholders to renew, replenish and initiate endowments.

So in the end, our job is to demonstrate the Courage to Imagine a Vibrant Future Because of the Best of Times and The Vision to Act Despite the Worst of Times.

The community of Abbotsford has a rich history and a proud tradition characterized by people who are generous, who believe in giving to generate a greater good, and genuinely want to help others. The Imagine Abbotsford Dialogues have demonstrated – as have Stats Can – that we are the most giving community in Canada. The Abbotsford Community Foundation BOD are representatives of this community. It is no coincidence that we can imagine, that in the years ahead we will create the conditions that: inspire planned giving, empower people and grow community.

Our ongoing story in this giving city is a never ending one.

Inspiring Giving Empowers People

Empowering People Grows Community

Growing Community Inspires Giving

Inspiring Giving Empowers People

...and so forth