



# UPPER FRASER COMMUNITY COUNCIL

## ANNUAL REPORT 2008

### CHAIR SUMMARY

This second year of the Upper Fraser Community Council could best be described as a year of moving forward to consolidate our membership, to clarify our roles and responsibilities, and to reach out to community in order to gain insight into the strengths and needs of the various communities that comprise the Upper Fraser region. The Council started with excitement and passion with a strong group of 12 members. As proposed changes to the mandate of CLBC began to unfold and as members began to leave partly due to those changes and partly due to busy lives, the Council weakened but is looking forward re-strengthening itself during the third year of operation.

The Council continues to meet at least nine times per year. Efforts have been made to alter the meetings between Chilliwack, Abbotsford and Langley. There are currently only seven members on the Council so the goal of the Council is to recruit more family members and community partners from the various communities, particularly those from diverse cultural backgrounds that represent the make-up of the Upper Fraser region.

I would like to thank the hard work and time that Council members have contributed to the Council, especially as all the members have such busy lives outside of the Council. Although the Council is currently small, the group work well together and share a common vision which is "good lives in welcoming communities".

### BUILDING WELCOMING COMMUNITIES

In order to gain insight into the strengths and needs of the various communities within the Upper Fraser, the Council hosted family and self advocate meetings in Chilliwack, Abbotsford, and Langley. The meetings introduced families and self advocates to Council members and provided them with an opportunity to have input into the work plan of the Council. A PATH was developed at each of the meetings which focused on current strengths and needs of community and where families and self advocates would like to see their communities in the future. The details of the three PATHs were scribed and reviewed by the Council. As Council members began to leave the Council as described in the Chair Summary, it was challenging to move forward on what was discovered during the PATH process. This will be re-reviewed by the Council during the third year and a work plan will be

developed to address the concerns.

The Council chair has attended a number of community events at the invite of CLBC that included community crisis response planning meetings and Upper Fraser service provider meetings. A council member also participates on the Upper Fraser Ethics Committee.

## ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Ongoing Council membership has been a challenge over the past year. Due to the large area the Upper Fraser covers (from Langley to Boston Bar and from Mission to Harrison Hot Springs), it has been difficult to get equal representation from all the various communities. When the announcement was made by the Provincial Government that all children services currently the responsibility of CLBC was to be transferred back to the Ministry of Children and Family Development, two of the members resigned, feeling that they needed to expend their energies on the change of services for their children. Other family members left, citing busy lives. It has been challenging for the current Council members to remain focused on Council work when they are being pulled in other directions due to health, family issues, and work commitments. The Council is in the process of recruiting members to the Council with the hope that there will be a total of 15 members in order to have community representation, cultural representation, and to be able to spread the work of the Council among more people. The Council notes that business cards for the Council members will go a long way to credibility in the community and will help in involving community partners and families.

With children services leaving CLBC, the Council recognized that this will be the first time in BC history that children services will be the responsibility of a different Ministry than adult services. The Council wants to be vigilant that the services for both children and adults are not interrupted during the transfer process. The Council also will monitor the transitions from child to adult services, noting that there are still barriers to current transitions.

The Council notes that there is a disconnect between the workings of the Provincial Advisory Council and those of regional councils and is looking forward to a stronger partnership in the third year.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

The Council admits that there has not been a lot of focus in this area. Having heard from families of both children and adults of the difficulties in finding respite opportunities outside of the family home, Council sanctioned community development dollars to be spent on the setting up of “respitality” in both the Chilliwack and Langley communities. The Chilliwack Society for Community Living has connected with hotels that are willing to provide hotel rooms to families for free so that the families get a break while their child or adult is being cared for by a respite worker in

the family home. The Langley Association for Community Living is in the process of setting up similar opportunities in Langley. The Council is willing to assist in the hiring of new CLBC staff to the Upper Fraser.

#### ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

The Council, to date, has had very little input into the hiring of new CLBC staff in the Upper Fraser and is hoping that there will be increased opportunities to do so.

#### FINANCIAL DECISION MAKING

The Upper Fraser budget has been presented to the Council by Quality Service Manager, Jai Birdi, and Financial Manger, Jon Cruz. Although it was well presented, Council members found it difficult to understand the intricate details of the budget and believe, at this point, that it is challenging to provide direction on where funds should be allocated without a clearer understanding of the current needs faced in the various communities. The Council recognizes that this could take time to gain that needed understanding.

#### ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

The Council notes the difficulties in understanding the budget and is looking forward to working with CLBC in developing a more simplified budget format. Due to the large area of the Upper Fraser and the diversity within the area, Council also notes that, at this time, they do not have the required knowledge to provide input into the allocations of funds.

#### COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Besides the community forums the Council hosted for families and self advocates, it has also had a CLBC representative to talk about the safeguards project, the Vice President of Community Planning and Development to talk about Council terms of reference and the Upper Fraser Quality Service Manager and Finance Manager to discuss budget.

**COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP**

| NAME   | COMMUNITY                           | MEMBERSHIP       |
|--|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Jerry Laidlaw<br>Bryce Schaufelberger<br>Heidi Sneider       | Mission<br>Mission<br>Langley       | Self-Advocate    |
| Kathleen Rake  | Mission                             | Family Member    |
| Clayton Arkesteyn-Volger<br>Cathy Bonnett<br>Brenda Gillette | Abbotsford<br>Mission<br>Chilliwack | Service Provider |