

Breakfast with Your Local MLA's

“Year in Review and What's Ahead”

With a packed room of over 130 Richmond Chamber of Commerce guests, the breakfast with the MLA's on Friday morning was a huge success.

After a buffet breakfast, Rob Howard took to the stand to give the audience an update. Howard focused on International Air Access policy (also known as Open Skies) and reiterated the importance of the policy in allowing for increased air access into YVR to reach our full economic potential.

As it stands there is an estimated \$800 million hit a year due to lack of access.

Howard thanked Richmond Chamber of Commerce, in particular Executive Director Craig Jones, for its leadership in bringing this policy to federal government level and looks forward to continue working closely with the chamber on this issue.

Howard went on to state the importance of the Property Tax issue and the fact that it needs a long term solution.

Regarding HST and the transition to PST, Howard assured the audience that he was moving as fast as possible with this issue by speaking with the Minister of Finance continually looking for a solution. “It's like trying to unscramble the omelette”, he said.

Linda Reid chose to speak about the issues surrounding the next generation and where they will find work here in BC? Reid urged the business audience to make use of local business and support our local education establishments, in particular Trinity Western University and Kwantlen Polytechnic University.

Lastly John Yap took to the stage with his update on his work in the Clean Technology sector, adding this sector would create significant job openings in the area.

Yap also spoke about his recently appointed position of Chair of the Immigration Task Force. Over the next 10 years, 1 million jobs will be available in BC; the creation of the task force is to review how skilled immigrants and foreign investors come to B.C. and Canada.

Led by Yap, the nine-member group will consist of community and business leaders and will review the Provincial Nominee Program; the Federal Skilled Worker Program; the Canadian Experience Class; and the Federal Immigrant Investor Program.