

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

26 February 2024

## **CHEERS TO AN EVENT THAT BROUGHT THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER**

ABBOTSFORD, BC – On February 3, 2024, Downtown Abbotsford witnessed a remarkable event that brought people together as the Cup of Cheer sold out, with 200 participants gathering to enjoy warm beverages, community spirit, and a little retail shopping.

The event was organized by Community Champion Rupī Rajwan, in collaboration with the Abbotsford Downtown Business Association, United Way British Columbia, and Tourism Abbotsford.

Participants of Cup of Cheer visited a host of locations around Downtown Abbotsford, including Open Space, Aurora Roasters, BRGR BRGR, Delish from Archway, Lepp's Bakehouse & Delicatessen, Old Yale Brewing, Re:vive Boutique Bistro, Reddy Made Cakes, The Pastry Portal, and Tracycakes Bakery and Café; who opened their doors to offer a variety of delicious variations of traditional classics including Chai, Red Maple Latte, Aztec Gold Mocha, and Salted Caramel Hot Chocolate.

Organizer, Rupī Rajwan shared, "For the past 30 years, as a resident of Abbotsford, I've witnessed the city's growth and diversity. Seeking to connect the community through partnerships, I collaborated with our supporting partners. Our collective efforts materialized in November with the conception of "Cup of Cheer," which proved successful through our utilization of strengths, and social media platforms. We're grateful for everyone's involvement in creating this unique opportunity for Abbotsford citizens."

Jennifer McEwan, Executive Director of the Abbotsford Downtown Business Association, praised the event organizer for her outstanding work supporting the businesses and community. She said, "Rupī did an amazing job of gathering the community together! Her goal of creating a positive, inclusive, and safe space for people to connect is placemaking at its finest. With 200 people walking and exploring downtown, the positive economic impact on our downtown businesses was beyond measurable!"

The event's success was not just limited to the day itself with non-perishable food items and \$362 cash donated to the Mill Lake Community Cupboard. The \$10 ticket price, which included all drinks and a Cup of Cheer mug, made the event an affordable way for people to experience many of Abbotsford's unique business offerings.

Elise Goertz, Community Engagement Specialist for United Way British Columbia added, "Our initiative, Hi Neighbour, endeavors to tackle the pervasive loneliness and disconnection prevalent in our communities. Through innovative approaches to

community engagement (like cup of cheer!), we aim to sow the seeds of connection and foster a sense of belonging among individuals."

The Cup of Cheer is a perfect example of how Abbotsford's community spirit can bring people together, with the event's success a testament to the hard work and dedication of the organizers and the generosity of its participants.

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IMAGE: New Mission resident from Mexico who took the bus to Abbotsford and was welcomed to join other Cup of Cheer participants.