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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Small Business and Revenue

### **ROUNDTABLE REPORT PROMOTES SMALL BUSINESS GROWTH**

VICTORIA – Supporting human resource development, reducing the regulatory burden for small business and reducing tax complexity will foster further growth in British Columbia’s thriving small business sector, according to the first-year report of the Small Business Roundtable.

Rick Thorpe, Minister of Small Business and Revenue and Minister Responsible for Regulatory Reform, received the report today from Roundtable co-chairs Kevin Evans and Linda Larson during a Small Business Week luncheon with the Vancouver Board of Trade.

“This report reflects the input of hundreds of small business owners and operators through a comprehensive survey and 18 consultations throughout British Columbia,” said Thorpe. “It’s a blueprint for furthering our goal to make British Columbia Canada’s most small business friendly jurisdiction, with recommendations for both our small business partners and government. It’s also a plan for another successful year of this permanent Roundtable.”

Identifying small business challenges and opportunities was a major focus in the roundtable’s first year. In its report, the Roundtable summarizes the results of its consultations and survey. It recommends government focus its small business strategy on:

- Supporting actions to improve small business access to labour, trades development and training, and business, trades and entrepreneurship education for youth.
- Reduce tax complexity and ensure British Columbia has a competitive and fair tax structure for small business at all levels of government.
- Continued efforts to reduce the regulatory burden for small business by promoting activities that will streamline and simplify all levels of government regulation.

The Roundtable also developed a small business lens and recommends provincial, federal and local governments use it to ensure small business issues are fully considered when introducing new or amended legislation and regulations.

For small business, the report recommends investing in recruiting and retaining staff, clarifying provincial sales tax obligations and measures to support regulatory simplification.

“This report confirms almost two-thirds of business owners surveyed believe the overall business climate in British Columbia is better now than it was five years ago,” said Evans, Western Canada vice president of the Retail Council of Canada.

“Small businesses in British Columbia are the most optimistic in Canada; business is good across the province and there is clearly a tremendous opportunity for continued growth,” said Larson, former mayor of Oliver.

In the year ahead, the roundtable will develop an action plan to support access to and development of British Columbia’s labour force, support regulatory reform, enhance small business resources and support, and continue the dialogue with small business.

The Small Business Roundtable was established in October 2005, under the leadership of Premier Gordon Campbell, with a mandate to engage in a dialogue with small business to identify key issues and opportunities, and develop recommendations to small business and government on strategies to enhance small business growth and success. The roundtable's 25 members are small business leaders who represent regions, industries and associations throughout British Columbia.

The report is available at [www.smallbusinessroundtable.ca](http://www.smallbusinessroundtable.ca) online.

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Contact:	Kevin Evans	Linda Larson
	Co-chair, Small Business Roundtable	Co-chair, Small Business Roundtable
	604-904-7705	250-498-2016