

DATE: June 27, 2022

TO: Hon. Mayor and Members of Council

FROM: Julie Flesch, Senior Advisor, Strategic Economic Initiatives
cc. Nick Spensieri, City Manager
cc. Michael Genova, Chief, Communications and Economic Development
cc. Raphael Costa, Director, Economic Development
cc. Office of Communications and Economic Development

RE: **2022 Collision Conference: Post-Conference Wrap-up**

Key Messages:

- Economic Development participated in the 2022 Collision Conference from June 21-23 at the Enercare Centre in Toronto.
- The main objective of conference participation was to raise the profile of Vaughan's tech and innovation ecosystem, with a specific emphasis on economic opportunities in the health technology and life sciences sectors.
- The City leveraged the stage in the York Region pavilion to make three presentations on June 22nd to highlight the Vaughan Healthcare Centre Precinct (VHCP), Toronto Research Chemicals' investment in Vaughan, and the establishment of a ventureLAB MedTech lab and incubator.
- Economic Development staff held meetings with international investment agencies, consulates and public sector stakeholders to raise Vaughan's profile abroad and to generate international business development opportunities.
- Strengthening relationships with gateway destinations such as Luxembourg, the Czech Republic and Illinois presents a significant opportunity to help Vaughan-based companies gain access to leading economies in Europe and the U.S. and to raise the profile of Vaughan's economy abroad.
- Staff made nearly 300 individual connections during the three-day conference

Hon. Mayor and Members of Council,

Economic Development participated in the [2022 Collision conference](#) last week from June 21st to 23rd at the Enercare Centre in Toronto.

Collision is North America's fastest-growing tech conference, bringing together leaders, entrepreneurs and companies that are redefining the global tech industry. The conference attracted more than 33,000 attendees from more than 140 countries.

Key Objectives

Economic Development's activities at the conference focused on raising the profile of Vaughan's tech and innovation ecosystem, with specific emphasis on the economic opportunities in the health technology and life sciences sectors.

Key messages Economic Development staff emphasized at the conference included:

1. Vaughan is a destination of choice for research, education, innovation and commercialization in health and health technology;
2. Vaughan is a transformative city on the rise, with a number of significant city-building initiatives underway, including the development of Vaughan's downtown (the VMC), the Vaughan Healthcare Centre Precinct, major transportation networks, parks and more;
3. Vaughan's partnership-driven approach to city-building is driving economic opportunity for businesses and talent alike while improving the quality of life for residents; and
4. Significant city-building projects, rapid urbanization, and investment in critical innovation assets (like the VHCP and MedTech HCI) are driving Vaughan's growth as a leader in the technology and innovation sectors, and its transformation into a knowledge economy.

Connections and Opportunities

The City of Vaughan had a kiosk in the York Region pavilion on the tradeshow floor where staff will connect with conference attendees including representatives of multi-national firms, high-growth companies, other local, national and international governments and public sector organizations, and investment agencies. Together, Economic Development staff made nearly 300 connections with conference attendees over the three-day event.

Staff will follow up with new contacts to further explore a number of investment attractions, partnership development and intelligence gathering opportunities, including:

- More than 12 referrals to the Economic Services team for advisory support to grow their early-stage technology businesses in Vaughan;
- Site selection inquiries by more than 6 international technology companies interested in locating their businesses in Vaughan;
- Reconnections with 5 Vaughan-based clients to support business expansion activities;
- Discussion with the Trade Commissioner Service to discuss a pipeline for Vaughan-based companies looking for exporting support;
- Reconnection with Colliers' life science division to discuss growth of Vaughan's life science sector;
- Reconnection with Evergreen to explore partnerships, funding opportunities and a new national Community of Practice group for smart cities;
- Inquiries from 8 smart technology companies to explore smart city business opportunities in Vaughan;
- Opportunities to work closely with the Ontario Centre for Innovation (OCI) to connect with India-based emerging technology startups and scaleups that will be soft-landing in the GTA;

- Connect with the City of Toronto's new Digital City unit within the IT department to learn more about a new framework and governance model to lead smart city initiatives;
- Reconnection with York University's innovation arm, Innovation York, to continue expanding partnerships with the City of Vaughan, including a partnership with the Public Works department to drive research and development on innovative municipal solutions, potential mobility innovation initiatives and expansion of Yspace services in Vaughan;
- Discussion with KPMG's Customer Experience (CX) design and digital strategy group to gather intelligence on trends in CX design in the public sector and civic innovation initiatives;
- Interest from several international and domestic companies that are interested in opportunities emerging from the health precinct; and
- Potential opportunities to feature the VHCP in OACETT's (Ontario Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists) magazine, reaching an audience of more than 5000 engineering technicians and technologists.

International Business Development

To raise the profile of Vaughan among international audiences and to foster opportunities for international investment attraction, Economic Development staff met with international investment agencies, consulates and public sector stakeholders to deliver technical briefings on Vaughan's economy.

International organizations staff met with include:

- Austrian Consulate General
- Consulate General of the Czech Republic in Toronto
- Consulate General of Greece in Toronto
- Consulate General of Japan in Toronto
- Illinois Department of Trade and Economic Opportunity
- InvestHK
- Invest Lithuania
- Italian Trade Commissioner Service
- Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)
- KOTRA (Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency)
- Ontario Trade & Investment in Chicago
- Startup Luxembourg and the Luxembourg-City Incubator
- Switzerland Global Enterprise
- Toronto Global
- UK Department for International Trade

Economic Development staff will follow up with each of these contacts to arrange follow-up meetings to provide more detailed technical briefings on Vaughan's economy and emerging economic opportunities. These briefings will provide a basis to explore incoming and outgoing international trade opportunities and opportunities for cross-border partnership and

collaboration. Strengthening relationships with gateway destinations such as Luxembourg, the Czech Republic and Illinois presents a significant opportunity to help Vaughan-based companies gain access to leading economies in Europe and the U.S. and to raise the profile of Vaughan's economy abroad.

Conference Presentations

Economic Development also leveraged the stage in the York Region pavilion to make three significant announcements on **Wednesday, June 22nd at 2:30 p.m.:**

1. Vaughan Healthcare Centre Precinct (VHCP)
 - Presentation by Mayor Bevilacqua, Mackenzie Health, York University and ventureLAB regarding plans to develop the VHCP into a world-class destination for health and health innovation.
2. Toronto Research Chemicals – LGC Group Investment in Vaughan
 - Toronto Research Chemicals is establishing a 200,000 sq ft facility in Vaughan in 2024, and once fully operational, this investment will relocate more than 450 employees and create additional new life sciences jobs in Vaughan.
3. ventureLAB Hardware Catalyst Initiative Expansion – MedTech Lab in Vaughan
 - Presentation by ventureLAB and Sterling Industries regarding plans to expand ventureLAB's Hardware Catalyst Initiative to establish a \$2.5 million MedTech lab and incubator for hardware and semiconductor companies, in Vaughan.

Photo and video collateral from the three presentations will be shared with Corporate and Strategic Communications to support future promotional efforts focused on raising the profile of Vaughan's health tech and life science sectors.

Next Steps

Economic Development staff will continue fielding inquiries resulting from participation at the Collision conference and will follow up with connections made to explore emerging partnership and collaboration opportunities, provide investment and business advisory support, and enhance departmental knowledge of emerging trends. Staff will also follow up on connections made from international organizations to share knowledge on Vaughan's economy and develop strategies and initiatives for enhancing cross-border trade and collaboration opportunities.

Staff will also provide links and information relating to the upcoming Innovation in Canada editorial campaign, promoting Vaughan as a destination for health innovation, to be published on Thursday, June 30th.

For more information, please contact Julie Flesch at Julie.Flesch@vaughan.ca.

Attachments:

Collision 2022 photos – [OneDrive folder](#)