

Committee of the Whole (2) Report

DATE: Tuesday, May 9, 2023 **WARD(S):** ALL

TITLE: 2023 INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS - AGRI-FOOD
CLUSTER MISSION UPDATE

FROM:
Nick Spensieri, City Manager

ACTION: DECISION

Purpose

To further support and advance the Council-approved agri-food industry mission in October 2023, staff are seeking approval to include two (2) Council and Mayor support staff as delegation members.

Report Highlights

- Council has directed staff to conduct an agri-food economic mission in 2023.
- The agri-food cluster in Vaughan represents nearly 10 per cent of the City's employment base.
- To support the mission, staff are seeking the participation of two (2) Council and Mayor support staff as delegation members, consistent with the Corporate Policy requiring Council approval for staff travel outside of Canada and the USA (Employee Expense Policy No. 12.A.02).
- The additional support staff will help ensure the City's delegation can maximize its participation during meetings, events, and other critical networking opportunities.
- Additional budget to support the additional two support staff will be provided from Council office budgets.

Recommendations

1. THAT, up to two (2) Council and Mayor support staff be added to the Agri-Food Cluster Mission Delegation as delegation members;
2. THAT, the additional two support staff be chosen in consultation with City staff; and
3. That Council shall ratify this decision at the Council meeting of May 16, 2023.

Background

In December 2022, Council approved staff's recommendation to conduct an economic mission in October 2023 to advance the agri-food cluster in Vaughan.

The mission is centred on participation in the Anuga conference in partnership with York Region and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA). Anuga takes place in Cologne, Germany, from October 7-11, 2023. With an added mission to engage with Northern Italy's Food and Food Processing Cluster, an international mission to Europe would be up to 14 days.

York Region Economic Development and OMAFRA are applying to secure booths at the Anuga Conference. They are also conducting a B2B engagement program to raise the profile of Ontario and York region amongst international food companies.

In addition to three Council representatives, the City Manager, or designate, the Director, Economic Development, and one staff from Economic Development were authorized to attend the mission. These staff representatives were chosen to advance economic development (foreign direct investment and trade) priorities.

In April 2023, Council delegates were appointed to the Mission.

To join the Mayor as representatives of the City of Vaughan on the mission, Council appointed Wards 1 and 3 Councillors as members of the delegation.

Previous Reports/Authority

[2019 WEB SUMMIT 2022 AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS PROGRAM – 2023](#)

Committee of the Whole Report (2), December 12, 2022

[2023 INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS – AGRIFOOD CLUSTER MISSION](#)

Committee of the Whole Report (2), April 18, 2023

Analysis and Options

Administrative and political support staff being added to the delegation will enhance the planning and onsite management and support of the mission.

The mission will include up to fifteen economic and cultural meetings during the three to five business days planned in Italy. At the Anuga conference, simultaneous activations will occur with OMAFRA and York Region. The additional support staff will help ensure the City's delegation can maximize its participation during meetings, events, and other critical networking opportunities.

Financial Impact

Additional budget to support the additional two support staff will be provided from Council office budgets.

Item	Description	Cost
Airfare	Round-trip airfare including between Cologne and Milan (multi-city route)	\$10,000
Accommodation	2 rooms, up to 14 nights	\$10,000
Ground Travel		\$1,000
Per Diem		\$2,000
Total		\$23,000

Operational Impact

None.

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

Vaughan will continue to work in collaboration with regional partners such as OMAFRA, York Region, Toronto Global, the Italian Chamber of Commerce of Ontario (ICCO), the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce, and the Canadian Trade Commissioner Service (TCS) to position itself as a destination of choice within York Region, the GTA, Ontario, and internationally, with a focus on making valuable connections abroad to grow this sector.

Conclusion

Vaughan's agri-food industry cluster is one of Ontario's largest. It represents nearly 10 per cent of Vaughan's employment base. To maximize the impact of the mission, staff are recommending the inclusion of up to two support staff.

For more information, please contact: Raphael Costa, Director, Economic Development,
ext. 8891

Attachments

None.

Prepared by

Raphael Costa, Director, Economic Development, ext. 8891.

Approved by

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "V. Musacchio". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "V" and a long, sweeping underline.

Vince Musacchio
on behalf of Nick Spensieri,
City Manager