

## Committee of the Whole (1) Report

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**DATE:** Tuesday, January 21, 2025

**WARD(S):** ALL

**TITLE:** INVESTMENT CANADA ROADSHOW 2024 FINAL REPORT AND  
PROPOSED 2025 FEDERAL TRADE AND INVESTMENT  
OPPORTUNITIES

**FROM:**

Michael Genova, Deputy City Manager, Strategic Initiatives

**ACTION:** DECISION

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**Purpose**

Economic Development (EcDev) participated in Global Affairs Canada's (GAC) Trade Commissioner Services (TCS) Fall 2024 Investment Roadshow in Europe. This is a summary of the TCS-organized meetings with pre-qualified investment leads in Milan, Italy and Madrid, Spain. The report also requests approval for Economic Development staff to participate in three 2025 international economic development activities led by other levels of government in Canada.

## **Report Highlights**

- As a result of the City's ongoing engagement with the Canadian Consul in Milan, staff received a direct invitation to participate in the Trade Commissioner Service's Europe Roadshow under Global Affairs Canada. The roadshows provide an opportunity for staff to deliver technical briefings directly to pre-qualified business professionals actively seeking to invest in Canada.
- This Europe Roadshow was a strategic opportunity to help fill Vaughan's investment pipeline and connect in person with investors in Italy and Europe which are key target markets for Vaughan.
- In securing meetings, Vaughan staff prioritized companies closer to investment readiness over a sector-specific approach.
- The TCS will be delivering two roadshows in 2025. EcDev will be applying to participate and will seek federal funding to offset costs.
- Given that the Roadshow is a clear example of the benefit of taking part in international trade and investment activities led by other levels of government in Canada, staff are recommending that Council approve staff participation in the following federally led international economic development programming throughout 2025:
  - Canadian delegation to Hannover Messe (March 2025).
  - Global Affairs Canada Trade Commissioners' Roadshow Taiwan and Singapore (May 2025).
  - Global Affairs Canada Trade Commissioners' Roadshow Texas (fall 2025).

## **Recommendations**

1. THAT Council approve Economic Development staff participation in the following federally led international economic development activities throughout 2025:
  - a. Canadian Delegation to Hannover Messe (March 2025);
  - b. Global Affairs Canada Trade Commissioners' Roadshow Taiwan and Singapore (May 2025);
  - c. Global Affairs Canada Trade Commissioners' Roadshow Texas (fall 2025).
2. THAT staff report to future Committees of the Whole on activity outputs.

## **Background**

***As a result of the City's ongoing engagement with the Canadian Consul in Milan, staff received a direct invitation to participate in the Trade Commissioner Service's Europe Roadshow under Global Affairs Canada. The roadshows provide an opportunity for staff to deliver technical briefings directly to pre-qualified business professionals actively seeking to invest in Canada.***

The 2024 Roadshow took place from Oct. 28 to Nov. 1 in Milan, Italy and Madrid, Spain. This resulted in direct meetings with pre-qualified investment leads. The federal government provided lead generation services through third-party vendors.<sup>1</sup> The Roadshow was a staff-to-staff technical briefing opportunity.

As a key department of GAC, the TCS leads delegations of staff from select economic development organizations from Canada's cities, provinces and territories on international missions where foreign companies can meet directly with Canadian economic developers and receive first-hand knowledge about establishing and doing business in Canada. Since 2013, the TCS has led 18 multi-city roadshows globally.

TCS typically undertakes two multi-city investment roadshows per year in priority foreign direct investment (FDI) markets. Each stop includes:

1. A plenary session featuring keynote speakers, testimonials and sectoral panel discussions articulating the benefits of investing in Canada and the advantages of doing business in Canada;
2. An investment matchmaking session where Canadian business development executives meet targeted local companies seeking greenfield, expansion or partnership opportunities;
3. A side program of market briefings and/or potential meetings with key regional organizations/FDI influencers.

***This Europe Roadshow was a strategic opportunity to help fill Vaughan's investment pipeline and connect in person with investors in Italy and Europe which are key target markets for Vaughan.***

This further built Vaughan's reputation as a destination of choice and augmented relationships with key international partners, such as Global Affairs Canada and the Trade Commissioner Service.

## **Previous Reports/Authority**

[Vaughan Economic Development Action Plan, 2024-27.](#)

Committee of the Whole (2) Report, [International Economic Relations – Italy 2024 – Summary and Next Steps](#), Sept. 17, 2024.

## **Analysis and Options**

***In securing meetings, Vaughan staff prioritized companies closer to investment readiness over a sector-specific approach.***

From this roadshow, twenty-six Canadian municipalities and investment agencies engaged dozens of European companies that are exploring the Canadian market. By and large, most companies are looking for a foothold in the market as a first step to longer-term investment.

EcDev staff met with thirteen companies and three European investment support agencies.<sup>1</sup> As a result of this mission, staff have:

- committed to delivering eleven business development packages outlining Vaughan's economy and sharing a public list of companies in the city.
- identified two opportunities for site information packages.
- begun introducing Italian and European companies to local agencies and firms.
- gained a better understanding of the federal government's approach to investment and trade attraction and been put on their distribution list for future opportunities.

***The TCS will be delivering two roadshows in 2025 and leading Canada's leadership at Hannove Messe. EcDev is seeking approval to participate and will seek federal funding to offset costs.***

The CanExport Community Investments program accepted proposals from Nov. 18, 2024 to Dec. 13, 2024 for activities planned in 2025-2026. The program provides financial support to communities and non-profit organizations to help them attract, retain and expand their FDI activities, supporting their capacity to create jobs for Canadians,

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that company profiles of those met with are confidential as they include sensitive business development and expansion plan details.

support innovation and increase exports. EcDev has been successful in securing funds in the past.

The TCS has confirmed that the 2025-2026 Investment and Innovation Roadshows are as follows:

- March 2025: Hannover Messe
- May 2025: Taipei, Taiwan and Singapore
- Fall 2025: Texas, USA

Canada is the 2025 partner country for Hannover Messe in 2025. Hannover Messe is the world's leading trade show for industrial technology, taking place from March 31 to April 4, 2025. Canadian participation is being led by GAC, Invest in Canada and NGen. York Region is investing in marketing and exploring opportunities to activate a regional booth as part of the Canadian pavilion. Municipalities across Canada and York Region have committed to participate in marketing and business-to-business opportunities to advance trade and investment.

GAC has invited Vaughan staff to participate in their two 2025 roadshows to Southeast Asia and Texas, USA. Southeast Asia is a key recruitment zone for Canada. It was also identified as a recruitment region in the background work that led to the Vaughan Economic Development Action Plan. Furthermore, Texas and Ontario share a variety of economic characteristics. These are relevant to Vaughan in that both Vaughan and the metropolitan areas of Texas are nodes for automotive parts, medical technology and aerospace.

The 2025 Roadshow regions are considered relevant recruitment zones for Vaughan and provide significant in-kind value in lead generation services.

### **Financial Impact**

None. Proposed costs are included in EcDev's operating budget. In addition, staff expect a portion of the costs to be offset by the Federal CanExport Fund.

### **Operational Impact**

None. International economic relations are an integral part of the Council-approved Economic Development Action Plan.

## **Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations**

None.

## **Conclusion**

The TCS roadshow in Europe generated valuable leads for investment and trade in Vaughan's economy. It also provided significant value in professional lead generation services.

To continue advancing Vaughan as a destination of choice for investment and trade, staff are requesting approval to participate in trade and investment activities led by other levels of the Canadian government in 2025.

**For more information**, please contact: Raphael Costa, Director, Economic Development

## **Attachments**

NA

## **Prepared by**

Raphael Costa, Director, Economic Development, extension 8891.