



**INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE –
APRIL 13, 2026**

COMMUNICATIONS

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C1.

Communication

Intergovernmental Relations

Sub-Committee – April 13, 2026

Item No. 1

IGR Sub-Committee Term in Review

2022-2026 Council Term



Background

- ▶ In September 2022, Council endorsed a Member's Resolution requesting a report outlining intergovernmental relations strategic support.
 - Council then established the IGR Sub-Committee in December 2022, and in May 2023, approved a Strategic Intergovernmental Relations Framework.
- ▶ The approved strategy for the City's IGR efforts is guided by three strategic actions:
 - **Identify:** Identify Council-approved priorities requiring IGR support, including non-taxation funding sources and grant opportunities
 - **Advocate:** Develop communications and briefing materials to advance city-building projects with other levels of government.
 - **Collaborate:** Align Council-approved priorities with other government priorities and work across agencies and governments to deliver win-win outcomes.

Sub-Committee Objectives

- ▶ The inaugural meeting took place on November 2, 2023, with subsequent meetings every year since.
- ▶ The Sub-Committee's objectives include:
 - To identify and inform opportunities to advocate on City priorities; and
 - To provide new opportunities to advance City priorities; and
 - To receive regular updates and briefings on emerging issues and advocacy effort progress, including briefings from other organizations and levels of government.

MP/MPP Breakfast Roundtables

- ▶ In January 2024, Local and Regional Councillor Ferri introduced a Member's Resolution to establish a breakfast roundtable event with local MPs and MPPs to discuss various local priorities, including:
 - Establishing a Hwy 7/Concord GO station and Kirby GO station.
 - Community safety initiatives.
 - Support for asylum seekers in York Region.
 - McMichael Canadian Art Collection –Revitalization and Capital Campaign.
- ▶ Following the success of this event in April 2024, Council endorsed hosting a second event in November 2025, where additional advocacy priorities were discussed, including:
 - Community safety and well-being of residents.
 - Housing accessibility and affordability, especially for first-time home buyers.
 - Transportation and mobility, in particular, the Council approved Nine-point Action Plan to Fight Traffic Gridlock.

Key Initiatives: Advocacy and the Mayor's IGR Mandate

- ▶ The Mayor's leadership on intergovernmental relations has been a defining feature of the 2022-2026 Council term. The Sub-Committee's work has directly supported advocacy efforts that contributed to significant funding outcomes for city-building priorities.
- ▶ These funding outcomes included:
 - \$35 million of provincial investment in September 2024 through the Housing-Enabling Water Systems Fund that will support building water infrastructure that will enable the construction of 20,000+ new homes.
 - \$9 million provincial allocation for York University Medical School in Vaughan.
 - Council's decision to reduce development charges by 50 per cent to address the housing affordability crisis.

Key Initiatives: Stakeholder Engagement – AMO, FCM and GTAA

- ▶ The Sub-Committee has served as a collaborative forum for external stakeholder organizations to engage the City and align advocacy efforts.
- ▶ Engagements include:
 - AMO and FCM presented to the April 2024 meeting, coinciding with the Federal and Provincial budgets, where they emphasized advocacy for housing and infrastructure funding.
 - FCM has been a long-standing grant funding partner that has supported the City's alternative revenue generation efforts.
 - City staff participate in annual AMO and FCM conferences and report back to the Sub-Committee.
 - The GTAA has provided a link between the City and GTAA for airport operations updates. An Open House was also held at City Hall in December 2024 to address noise pollution concerns.

Key Initiatives: Constituent Advocacy

- ▶ The Sub-Committee has served as a forum for Members of Council to raise emerging issues important to residents and translate them into formal advocacy actions.
 - In response to public inquiries raised by Ward 3 Councillor DeFrancesca regarding Ontario Landlord and Tenant Board application backlogs, the Sub-Committee advanced a motion to request correspondence be sent to the Ministry of the Attorney General calling for urgent action to fund the resources needed to clear the backlog of landlord-tenant disputes.
- ▶ This demonstrated the Sub-Committee's ability to translate resident concerns into formal advocacy actions.

Key Initiatives: International Missions and Economic Partnerships

- ▶ The Sub-Committee has received briefings on international missions that advanced economic and cultural development, including:
 - **2024 Northern and Central Italy Mission** – the delegation held a roundtable at the Italian Parliament and met with Canada’s Consul to Milan.
 - This led to participation in Global Affairs Canada’s Trade Commissioner Service Investment Roadshow where staff met with investment leads in Milan and Madrid.
 - **City of Sora** – Vaughan renewed its friendship agreement advancing youth, culture, tourism and education exchange opportunities.
 - **Milan Urban Food Policy Pact** – the Economic Development team participated in this conference in October 2025 as part of a broader trade mission to Italy focused on advancing trade and investment opportunities in the agrifood processing sector.

Key Initiatives: International Missions and Economic Partnerships Cont'd

- **City of Grand Rapids Sister City Initiative** – Grand Rapids was identified as a strategic partner with strong cultural and economic alignment to Vaughan. Progress continues as Grand Rapids formally voted to expand the program to include Vaughan as its seventh partner and the first Canadian partner.
 - Subject to Council approval, this partnership will be formalized at a signing in May, 2026.
- **City of Verona Partnership** – During the 2024 Italy mission, staff also engaged with officials in Verona who expressed interest in a partnership with Vaughan. Verona is a hub for the economy of northeastern Italy, and staff will report back in a future Committee of the Whole Report.

Key Initiatives: Alternative Revenue Generation – Grant Funding

- ▶ Grant funding updates are a standing agenda item for the Sub-Committee, supporting internal collaboration on alternative revenue generation.
 - This funding provides an alternative revenue stream to meet critical capital and operating needs without relying on taxation, development charges and service fees.
- ▶ In 2025, the City was awarded over **\$34.7 million** in grant funding across priority areas including Transportation and Mobility, City Building, Environmental Sustainability, Active and Inclusive Communities, Community Safety and Wellbeing and Economic Prosperity and Job Creation.
- ▶ 43 applications were submitted in 2025 and the amount received demonstrates the effectiveness of the City's centralized Grant Funding Policy.

Key Initiatives: Leadership in Municipal Government Relations

- ▶ The City is a member of the Municipal Government Relations Network (MGRN), a working group of Ontario municipal intergovernmental affairs professionals sharing best practices.
- ▶ Vaughan hosted the MGRN in 2019 welcoming 14 municipalities and four regions.
- ▶ Building on that success, the City will host the 2026 MGRN meeting on May 22, 2026 at City Hall, welcoming approximately 40 municipal government relations professionals.
- ▶ The event will feature presentations on Canada-US relations and their impact on municipalities, as well as best practices for municipal elections and transition between Council terms.
- ▶ The meeting will also highlight the work of Vaughan's IGR Sub-Committee as a model for peer municipalities.

Broader Regional Impacts and Considerations

- ▶ The Sub-Committee has been an important forum to provide vital information and explore the alignment of budgets, resources and priorities across levels of government and external stakeholders.
- ▶ Vaughan's growing capacity to secure non-taxation revenue through grants – over \$34.7 million in 2025 – reduces fiscal pressure at both the municipal and regional levels.
- ▶ This strengthens intermunicipal alignment, supports regional policy objectives and reinforces York Region's long-term sustainability and prosperity.

Conclusion

- ▶ Through the 2022-2026 Council term, Vaughan has established a structured, strategic approach to intergovernmental relations, delivering meaningful results for residents.
- ▶ The Mayor's leadership, supported by the Sub-Committee and the Strategic IGR Framework, produced significant funding outcomes and strengthened advocacy with all orders of government.
- ▶ The Sub-Committee served as a vital working group for briefing Council, engaging stakeholders and enabling public participation on matters of importance.
- ▶ International missions and partnerships reflect the global dimension of Vaughan's IGR efforts.
- ▶ The evolving national and international landscape underscores the continued importance of robust intergovernmental relations.



Thank you!

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Sister City Update: Vaughan & Grand Rapids

IGR Subcommittee – April 13, 2026

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Sub-Committee – April 13, 2026

Item No. 2



Agenda

- **Strategic Context**
- **Why Grand Rapids**
- **Strategic Alignment with Vaughan**
- **Engagement Highlights**
- **What This Partnership Enables**
- **Similar Examples**
- **Progress and Next Steps**

Strategic Context

A Gateway Economy to the U.S. Great Lakes Region

- The Great Lakes St. Lawrence Region represents an \$8 Trillion economic corridor
- Vaughan is strategically positioned within this integrated North American supply chain
- Economic Development priority: build a sustainable and structured pathway to a major economic corridor by:
 - Diversifying export markets
 - Strengthening supply chain integration
 - Expanding cross-border collaboration for local businesses



Why Grand Rapids?

Identified by Ontario Agent General in Chicago as a priority partner due to strong alignment with City of Vaughan:

- Diverse economy anchored in healthcare, automotive, and advanced manufacturing.
- Commitment to Public Art, culture, DEI, and tourism
- Strong food processing cluster
- Innovative housing strategy supporting livable and buildable communities
- Strong public/private partnership framework
- Geographic proximity resulting in efficient cross-border collaboration
- No existing Canadian sister-city relationship



Why Grand Rapids

A Globally Connected City:

- Medical Mile Cluster : Life sciences and MedTech hub with strong focus on R&D, medical school, and hospital linkages (Health and Research Cluster)
- The Grand Rapids Smart Zone (Innovation and Commercialization)
- The Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center-West (MTCC)
- Global Integration – the Right Place
- International airport and logistics access
- Home to major employers such as Steelcase, Bissel and Meijer



Strategic alignment with Vaughan

Direct Alignment Areas:

- Life Sciences and MedTech
 - Medical Mile cluster and Vaughan Health Care Precinct (VHCP)
- Advanced Manufacturing
 - MTCC and Vaughan Metropolitan Center (VMC)
- City Building and Placemaking
 - Grand Rapids infrastructure investments and initiatives and Vaughan Metropolitan Center and downtown core (VMC)
- Culture and Inclusion
 - Public art and cultural strategy alignment
 - Grand Rapids Amphitheater, Van Andel Arena and ArtPrize and Vaughan's vision for the Cultural and Performing Arts Center, and ARTonBOXES.



Engagement Highlights: Key Activities to Date

Spring 2024 : The City of Vaughan and the City of Grand Rapids were identified as potential partners by Ontario's Agent-General and the City of Grand Rapids Sister City International.

Summer/fall 2024: Initial meetings were held between staff in Grand Rapids and Vaughan. Grand Rapids Sister Cities International formed a local Vaughan Inquiry Committee and initiated preliminary conversations with the City of Vaughan's Economic Development department

April 2025: Vaughan hosted a staff delegation led by Grand Rapids' City Manager, Mark Washington. City Manager Zoran Postic and City Manager Washington met to discuss city-building priorities.



Engagement Highlights: Key Activities to Date

- ▶ **June 2025:** Council adopted an international plan of activities that included the continued work towards a partnership.
- ▶ **June 2025:** A delegation from Vaughan, led by Deputy City Manager, Strategic Initiatives, Michael Genova, visited Grand Rapids.
- ▶ **July 2025:** Mayor Steven Del Duca and Mayor David LaGrand met at the City of Vaughan.
- ▶ **October 2025:** Vaughan's Intergovernmental Relations Sub-Committee received an update on Grand Rapids.



Engagement Highlights: Key Activities to Date

- ▶ **January 27, 2026:** Grand Rapids Sister Cities International's leadership presented an overview of next steps to the City Commission in Grand Rapids
- ▶ **February 10, 2026:** Deputy City Manager Genova presented to the City Commission and the Mayor in Grand Rapids Council, followed by the Commission's vote in favour of expanding the Sister City program to the City of Vaughan, adding Vaughan as the seventh sister city of Grand Rapids and the first in Canada.

Partnership is fully endorsed by the Grand Rapids Commission



Economic and Cultural Collaboration: What this partnership enables

▶ Economic Outcomes

- The creation of a Grand Rapids-Vaughan economic gateway program.
- Business to business cross border missions and collaboration opportunities

▶ Cultural Outcomes

- Public art initiatives: Public art celebrations, including a future ARTonBOXES (Vaughan) activation and an on the SLATE exhibition, celebrating the partnership.
- Talent exchanges

▶ Municipal collaboration :

- Joint working groups to work towards a workplan
- Sector-specific partnerships
- Cross-border learning in city building



Why this framework works : Similar examples

- ▶ Kingston, Ontario, and Syracuse, New York
- ▶ Barrie, Ontario, and Saginaw, Michigan
- ▶ Toronto, Ontario, and Chicago, Illinois
- ▶ Quebec City, Quebec, and Albany, New York
- ▶ Windsor, Ontario, and Detroit, Michigan



Next Steps:

Formalize a Cultural and Economic Partnership with Grand Rapids:

- ▶ Following approval of the partnership with Vaughan by Grand Rapids' Council, a staff delegation from Grand Rapids is joining the April 14, 2026, Committee of the Whole (2) meeting to provide support for the future partnership.
- ▶ Proceed with official signing ceremony on May 7 2026, pending the approval of the report by Vaughan Council.
- ▶ Staff to draft and finalize a joint workplan following the official ceremony.

Establishing this partnership positions Vaughan within a high value cross-border economic corridor, strengthens supply chain integration, export growth and long-term regional competitiveness.



Thank you!

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Sub-Committee – April 13, 2026

Item No. 3

IGR Sub-Committee Ontario Budget Overview

2026 Ontario Budget

Ian Hall, Manager, Public Policy & Strategic Corporate Initiatives

Strategic Initiatives Portfolio



Budget Overview

- ▶ On Thursday, March 26 Finance Minister Peter Bethlenfalvy presented the 2026 Ontario Budget, titled ***A Plan to Protect Ontario***.
- ▶ This year's budget projects a deficit of \$13.8 billion in 2026-27, nearly double the \$7.8 billion that was projected last fall.
 - The government attributes this increase to the challenging financial situation the country is facing from U.S. tariffs, disrupted supply chains and geopolitical uncertainty.
 - The government expects the deficit to improve to \$6.1 billion in 2027-28 and that it will run a surplus of \$0.6 billion in 2028-29. This surplus is one year later than previously forecast.
- ▶ Total revenue is projected at \$231.9 billion and expenses at \$244.2 billion with \$17.2 billion in debt servicing costs.
- ▶ Real GDP growth is projected at 1% in 2026 and 1.7% in 2027.

Provincial Priorities

- ▶ In the days leading up to the budget, the provincial government highlighted a number of priority policies, including:
 - **HST Rebates On New Homes** – the province is expanding the HST rebate by removing the 8% provincial portion of HST on all new homes valued at up to \$1 million; all buyers will now be eligible for this, not just first-time buyers.
 - The province estimates this will support up to 14,000 construction jobs and boost GDP growth by 0.2%.
 - The province is working with the federal government to have this rebate take effect retroactively for eligible purchases on or after March 20, 2025.
 - **Billy Bishop Airport Expansion** – the budget reiterates the government's intention to introduce legislation to take ownership of Toronto's lands around Billy Bishop to unlock its full economic potential.
 - **Retail Holiday Openings** – Ontario is proposing to allow retail stores to open on Family Day and Victoria Day and will prevent municipal authorities from maintaining local closure by-laws.

Investments in York Region

▶ **Marvell Technology**

- Ontario is supporting a five-year expansion of AI infrastructure company Marvell Technology, which will involve a scaling of its semiconductor research in York Region.

▶ **Convertus Group Biofuel Facility**

- Ontario is providing \$2 million to support a new facility that converts organic waste into renewable natural gas, which is based in York Region.
- This is the first facility of its kind in Canada.

▶ **Permanent removal of Highway 407 East Tolls**

- The provincially owned portion of Hwy 407 East will have its tolls permanently removed, saving commuters up to \$7200 a year.

▶ **One Fare Program Extension**

- Ontario is extending the One Fare program for two years, saving transit users in the GTHA up to \$1600 a year.

▶ **Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund**

- Adding \$300 million over six years to this fund to support the repair, upgrade or construction of new sport and recreation facilities across Ontario.

Housing Construction and Affordability

▶ Lowering Development Charges

- Ontario is working with the federal government on a new funding program for municipalities that agree to significantly reduce development charges.

▶ Removing HST on Purpose-Built Rental Housing

- The government is removing the 8% provincial HST on qualifying purpose-built rental housing to encourage more rental construction.

▶ Building Ontario Fund (BOF) Housing Initiative

- BOF will invest up to \$300 million in collaboration with High Art Capital to convert approximately 2,200 newly built condo units into long-term rental housing, including about 550 affordable units.

▶ Municipal Housing Infrastructure Program (MHIP)

- The government is increasing funding to the MHIP – Health and Safety Water Stream by \$700 million to support 120 projects across 127 municipalities and First Nations. This program has helped support the construction of 800,000 new homes across Ontario.
- Municipalities can also access up to \$1 billion in loans through the Housing-Enabling Water Infrastructure lending stream.

Community Safety

► Bail Reform

- The budget highlights the *Keeping Criminals Behind Bars Act* that they introduced last year, which requires cash security deposits equal to the full court-ordered bail amount.
- The budget includes \$8.3 million in the Bail Compliance and Warrant Apprehension Grant program, which will help ensure high-risk, repeat and violent offenders comply with their bail conditions.
- They will also be expanding specialized bail prosecution teams that work with police to build stronger cases in bail hearings for serious offences.

► Operation Deterrence 2.0

- Ontario is investing \$32.5 million for two new border security grant programs that will help resource this operation with specialized equipment like drones, marine vessels and surveillance.
- Since January 2025, Operation Deterrence has been able to trace over 550 illegal firearms and seized over 4,000kg of cocaine and 192kg of fentanyl.

► Increasing Correctional Capacity

- Ontario is investing in new facilities and expansions to existing facilities.
- This will also include over 700 new staffing resources being hired.

► Fighting Gun and Gang Violence

- Ontario is continuing its partnership with the federal government, which is providing Ontario with \$121 million from 2023 to 2028 to fight gun and gang violence.
- This includes resources for the OPP, prosecutors, municipal police services and community organizations to help conduct investigations and for prevention measures.

► Sex Offender and Trafficker Registry

- Ontario is exploring making part of the Ontario Sex Offender and Trafficker Registry publicly available.

Infrastructure Investments: Hwy 413 and the Bradford Bypass

► Highway 413

- Construction has begun on a new 52km highway connecting Halton, Peel and York Regions.
 - This would run from Hwy 400 to the Hwy 401/407 interchange.
- The government estimates this will save drivers up to 30 minutes per trip.
- RFPs have been issued for a Hwy 410 extension that would connect the future highway.
- Construction is estimated to support 6,000 jobs per year and contribute \$1 billion annually to GDP.

► Bradford Bypass

- A new 16km four-lane highway connecting Highway 400 in Simcoe County and Highway 404 in York Region.
- Detail design contracts have been awarded for some sections as of November 2025.
- This is expected to save drivers 35 minutes versus local roads, create up to 2,200 jobs per year during construction and contribute \$286 million to provincial GDP.

► Highway 401 Tunnel

- The government is conducting a feasibility study on a proposed tunnel beneath the 401, with fieldwork beginning in Spring 2026.

Infrastructure Investments: Highway Widening and Transit in York Region

► Highway 400 Widening

- 26km of Hwy 400 between Langstaff and Hwy 9 are being widened to 10 total lanes (8 general purpose and 2 HOV).
- 21km from Major Mackenzie to Hwy 9 is already complete.

► Yonge North Subway Extension

- In October 2025, an RFQ for the design-build of 5 stations was issued.
- A tunnelling contract was awarded in 2025.
- Once complete, this extension will accommodate over 90,000 daily trips.

► GO Expansion

- Ontario will continue investing in expanding the GO network, including weekend service to Kitchener, more service to Niagara Region, construction at Woodbine Station and early work on a Bowmanville extension.
- There is advanced planning for GO 2.0 to identify potential new rail corridors.

Trade and Economic Resilience

► Buy Ontario Act

- Enacted in December 2025, this requires public sector organizations to prioritize Ontario, then Canadian goods and services in procurement.
- The government is working with municipalities to extend this to fleet vehicle purchases and capital projects, starting this spring.

► Trade-Impacted Communities Program (TICP)

- Ontario is providing \$40 million to support local projects in trade-affected communities.
- Municipalities and economic development organizations will be eligible to receive this funding, among other organizations.

► Protect Ontario Account Investment Fund

- Ontario is investing up to \$4 billion to attract pension funds and private capital into high-growth sectors like AI, defence, advanced manufacturing, critical minerals, biotechnology and others.

► Establishing Trade and Investment Offices

- Ontario is promoting trade with international trading partners through its network of Trade and Investment Offices (TIOs).
- These facilitate investment deals and help expand the province's SME exports into global markets and have facilitated market access for over 2,330 Ontario firms.

Municipal Finance and Property Tax

▶ Streamlining Education Property Tax Remittances

- Beginning in 2028, Ontario plans to have municipalities remit SPT directly to Ontario rather than distributing it across 72 school boards. Boards will continue receiving full funding directly from the province.

▶ Property Tax Measures

- Municipalities have the authority to reduce property tax rates on affordable rental housing, ensuring consistent tax treatment for university-operated student housing.
- Ontario will also allow municipalities to use Municipal Property Assessment Corporation data more broadly.

Other Measures

- ▶ **Small Business Tax Cut** – the government will be cutting the small business corporate income tax rate from 3.2% to 2.2%, effective July 1, 2026.
 - The government estimates this will save 375,000 small businesses \$1.1 billion over three years, with \$5,000 in estimated annual savings per business.
- ▶ **Gasoline and Fuel Tax Cuts**
 - Ontario is making their cuts to gasoline and fuel tax rates permanent which they estimate have saved families \$2.1 billion since July 2022.
- ▶ **Electricity Rebate**
 - The Ontario Electricity Rebate reduces monthly bills for the average resident by approximately \$36.
- ▶ **Rideshare Framework**
 - Ontario is engaging with rideshare operators, the taxi sector and municipalities to explore standardizing rideshare guidelines.
 - This will start with a pilot along the Northlander corridor.

Conclusion

- ▶ The 2026 budget continues the government's 'Protect Ontario' theme and emphasizes enhancing Ontario's economic resilience amid U.S. tariffs, geopolitical instability and supply chain disruption.
- ▶ The government has focused on increasing trade, reshoring supply chains and investing in key infrastructure across the province.
- ▶ In Vaughan and York Region, multiple major infrastructure projects were noted in the budget, including Hwy 413, the Bradford Bypass, Hwy 400 widening and the Yonge North Subway extension.
- ▶ Significant action is being taken to address housing affordability, including cutting the HST on new home sales and working to support municipalities that cut their development charges.
- ▶ PPSCI will continue to monitor for further announcements from the province.



Thank you!

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IGR Subcommittee Briefing: Federal Political Scan

C4.

Communication

Intergovernmental Relations

Sub-Committee – April 13, 2026

Item No. 4

April 13, 2026

Maria Papadopoulos, Program Manager, Intergovernmental Relations

Strategic Initiatives Portfolio

VAUGHAN CITY HALL

Federal Landscape: Background

- In April of 2025, Liberal Leader Mark Carney secured a minority government. With a series of MPs crossing the floor to the governing Liberals, and three by-elections, PM Carney may be poised to secure a 1-seat majority (172 seats).
- Like the Ontario provincial election in 2025, the campaign focus was on the tariff and sovereignty threat from US President Donald Trump.
- Prime Minister Carney outlined his priorities for implementing his mandate in the May Speech from the Throne, with his focus on rebuilding the economy by removing federal interprovincial trade barriers, expanding trade relationships internationally and building housing.
- The Prime Minister also stressed that he is focused on increasing community safety through bail reform for car and home theft, toughening sentencing for repeat offenders and increasing border security.

Federal Landscape: Budget 2025

- On Tuesday, November 4, 2025, Federal Minister of Finance François-Philippe Champagne presented the Federal Budget – the first budget for Prime Minister Mark Carney – entitled [Canada Strong](#)
- The budget provided an unfavourable economic outlook for Canada, with an increase in unemployment, business uncertainty, weak productivity and economic growth over the next two years at about 1%.
- To counter the economic downturn, the government proposed massive investments in infrastructure, housing, and the military, along with tax changes to spur business development.

Federal Landscape 2026: International

- In January 2026, Prime Minister Carney provided an address to the Davos conference.
- The speech was blunt in stating that the era of dependable U.S.-led globalization has ended.
- He emphasized that smaller and middle-power countries (such as Canada) must band together to manage global dynamics and push back against hard-power rivalry.
- Carney projected Canada as a stable, proactive partner focused on building a more resilient, just, and cooperative system.
- Building off this speech, Prime Minister Carney issued several foreign policy, defence, and economic cooperation announcements such as
 - Deepening cooperation with Nordic countries in defence, Arctic security, and critical minerals;
 - A plan to defend, build, and transform the North;
 - International partnerships forged with Japan, Australia, and India on defence, energy, trade, and technology

Federal Landscape 2026

- Domestically, as outlined in Budget 2025, the government is shifting its priorities toward infrastructure, clean energy, and productivity measures away from operational spending.
- This will also include the downsizing of the federal government by 40,000 positions by the end of 2028-2029.
- In early 2026, an agreement-in-principle was signed with Alberta to accelerate major project construction.
- In March 2026, the government announced legislation on affordability measures, which will include:
 - The ***New Canada Groceries and Essentials Benefit***, which will increase the former GST Credit by 25% for five years starting July 2026, plus a one-time payment in spring 2026.
 - Cap on NSF bank fees to a maximum of \$10.
 - Reinforced the middle-class tax cut benefits from 2025.

Federal Landscape 2026: Public Safety

- A priority for the City of Vaughan is public safety. Canada has experienced an increase in violent crime, hate-motivated incidents, and antisemitism.
- The federal government has responded with some legislative and policy measures, including the Bail and Sentencing Reform Act, National Action Commitments to Combat Antisemitism, and new funding and enforcement tools to address hate and violent extremism.
- Key measures include:
 - ***Bail and Sentencing Reform Act:*** The Bail and Sentencing Reform Act (Introduced October 23, 2025) is intended to strengthen bail laws and sentencing provisions. The legislation introduces new reverse-onus provisions for violent and repeat offenders. In addition, it includes mandatory consecutive sentences for violent auto theft, break and enter, extortion, arson, and certain repeat violent offences.
 - ***National Action Commitments to Combat Antisemitism:*** The federal government committed up to \$10 million in funding through the Community Resilience Fund to support grassroots organizations working to prevent hate, violent extremism, and early-stage threat identification. An additional \$26.8 million over four years was allocated to train provincial and municipal police forces in hate-crime identification and response, delivered through national police colleges. Federal agencies are partnering with Jewish community-led security networks to enhance local readiness, situational awareness, and protective measures.

Federal Landscape 2026: Public Safety (cont'd)

- Combatting antisemitism is of paramount concern to Mayor Del Duca, Council and the City of Vaughan and the City of Vaughan was a leader in protecting vulnerable social infrastructure, with the approval of the [Protecting Vulnerable Social Infrastructure By-law 143-2024](#) at the Council Meeting on June 25, 2024. Other municipalities across Canada followed suit thereafter.
- In 2025, the federal government introduced Bill C-9, the Combatting Hate Act, which aims to strengthen hate crime legislation in Canada. The legislation will create a stand-alone hate-motivated crime offence, ban public display of terrorist or hate symbols used to promote hatred, and, like the City of Vaughan by-law, criminalize intimidation or obstruction of access to places of worship, schools, and community centres.
- Following the March 7, 2026, violent antisemitic attack on Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto synagogue in Vaughan, Mayor Del Duca wrote an op-ed in the [Toronto Star](#) inviting the Prime Minister to meet with members of the Jewish community, as well as asking the Prime Minister for help in combatting antisemitism and increasing public safety measures.
- This includes calling on the Senate to pass Bill C-9 and do more to combat antisemitism.

Alignment with City of Vaughan Priorities

- Strong collaboration and alignment between federal, provincial, and local governments is essential to secure infrastructure funding and advance projects.
- The City of Vaughan's economic development team has been focused on increasing international trade avenues with Europe, as well as solidifying new relationships in the US with the signing of a Sister-City agreement with Grand Rapids, Michigan. These economic development measures align with the federal government's prioritization of investments in productivity, trade, and supply chain resilience.
- Mayor Steven Del Duca is focused on making life more affordable for Vaughan residents. Mayor Del Duca unveiled the City of Vaughan's 2026 Budget, with no property tax increases, making Vaughan the only municipality with a proposed or approved zero per cent tax rate increase in York Region and the Greater Toronto Area. This is aligned with the federal government's affordability initiatives outlined in Budget 2025 and 2026 affordability legislation.
- The City of Vaughan has made affordable housing a priority and has made efforts to reduce the cost of housing and spur development with a reduction of development charges. This is in line with the federal government's elimination of the GST for first-time home buyers on new homes at or under \$1 million and its reduction for first-time home buyers on new homes between \$1 million and \$1.5 million.

Analysis/Next Steps

- Looking ahead, Strategic Initiatives will continue to monitor the activities of the federal government and identify alignment opportunities with the City of Vaughan.
- Strategic Initiatives will update the Mayor and Members of Council on post-spring economic statement funding for announcements.
- Strategic Initiatives will also attend the FCM conference in 2026, and report back on key federal initiatives and opportunities