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To: ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)
Date: 3/2/2023 5:10:58 PM
Subject: FW: Council Memo: Follow-up to VEC Staff Council Briefing, January 16, 2023
Attachments: 2023 03 01 - Council Memo - Follow-up to VEC Staff Council Briefing.pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

On behalf of Eleena Marley, CEO of the Vancouver Economic, we would like to thank Mayor and Council for their participation and the questions raised on January 16, 2023 at the Staff–Council Briefing on the Vancouver Economic Commission and local economic development ecosystem.

The attached memo provides answers to those questions which required a follow-up response. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or Eleena (emarley@vancouvereconomic.com).

Best,
Paul

Paul Mochrie (he/him)
City Manager
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The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

MEMORANDUM

March 2, 2023

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Patrice Impey, CFO and General Manager of Finance, Risk, and Supply Chain
Eleena Marley, CEO, Vancouver Economic Commission
Maria Pontikis, Chief Communications Officer, CEC
Rosemary Hagiwara, Acting City Clerk
Teresa Jong, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Mellisa Morphy, Acting Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Trevor Ford, Director of Operations, Mayor's Office

FROM: Paul Mochrie, City Manager

SUBJECT: Vancouver Economic Commission – Follow-up to VEC Staff Council Briefing, January 16, 2023

Dear Mayor and Council,

On behalf of Eleena Marley, CEO of the Vancouver Economic, we would like to thank Mayor and Council for their participation and the questions raised on January 16, 2023 at the Staff–Council Briefing on the Vancouver Economic Commission and local economic development ecosystem.

Below are answers to those questions which required a follow-up response. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or Eleena (emarley@vancouvereconomic.com).

Best,



Paul Mochrie
City Manager

paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca

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Question and Answer 1

Can you expand on how you're considering helping employment for newcomer Canadians in the tech sector?

At the Vancouver Economic Commission (VEC) we aspire to a Vancouver where businesses have access to the talent they need and where everyone has fair access to prosperity. We primarily focus on working with trades, unions, industry and academia on re-skilling for future work and leveraging the skills of newcomers to Vancouver.

According to the BC Government Labour Market Outlook 2021, the professional, scientific, and technical services industry – largely driven by the tech industry - is predicted to have the highest number of job openings in the next 10 years. With estimates of 262,000 to 362,000 tech job openings, but only 102,000 tech workers to fill them. The potential labour gap is a vast range of between 160,000 to 260,000 tech workers. This means that newcomers will play a crucial role in filling this labour gap – as outlined in [VEC's 2017 Labour Market Partnership report](#) commissioned by the Province of BC.

Examples of active initiatives:

- [Tech Bootcamps](#) – In 2022, our team began our partnership with the Immigrant Employment Council of British Columbia (IEC-BC) to co-design and co-host several Tech Bootcamps for newcomers and tech employers, such as SAP. The bootcamps deliver soft skills-focused training to tech-skilled newcomers to increase their employability, and the design and consultation process provided a learning experience for tech employers looking to hire more inclusively. The first tech bootcamps will be held in March–May 2023 with over 100 newcomers registered.

- [TAP Diversity in Tech Dashboard](#) – VEC supported the launch of a benchmarking tool to help the sector track progress on increasing the representation of equity-deserving groups over time. In 2023, we continue to engage with participating employers to advance sector-wide diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging.
- [Vancouver Local Immigration Partnership \(VLIP\)](#) Council – VEC works alongside 40+ individuals from organizations focused on supporting newcomers in Vancouver. VEC provides input on VLIP’s strategic direction and sits on the newly formed Employment Solution Strategic Working Group, a community–industry partnership meant to create equitable opportunities for the hiring and retention of newcomers.

VEC and City staff have also worked closely to support and enable training for trades and other professionals in the green buildings industry, including working with the provincial government. VEC’s [Zero Emissions Economic Transition Action Plan \(ZEETAP\)](#) supports training and upskilling for various professions and occupations related to the greening of Vancouver’s economy, which will include newcomers in the workforce.

The following is a summary of recent training or projects VEC has supported in close partnership with COV. All were identified and prioritized based on existing COV strategic plans:

- Support a new heat pump installer course at BCIT, delivered in Q4 2022.
- Working with the City and the [BC Centre for Women in the Trades](#) on a research and capacity-building program to encourage and enable employers to hire diverse staff in the heating, ventilation and cooling industry.
- Convene a Sustainable Jobs Workforce Development Coalition. Participants include academic institutes, training authorities, crown corporations, unions and local and provincial governments to better coordinate workforce transition to a greener economy.
- Continue to work closely with the [Zero Emissions Building Exchange \(ZEBEx\)](#) and other industry stakeholders to identify needs and opportunities as it relates to trades training, to support the City’s building regulations, and to bring in more diverse and newcomer candidates into the workforce.

Relevant Links

- **Blog Post:** [New tech boot camps to remove barriers for newcomer workers](#)
- **Dashboard:** [TAP Diversity in Tech Dashboard](#)
- **Website:** [Vancouver Local Immigration Partnership](#)
- **Report:** [VEC’s 2017 Labour Market Partnership report](#)
- **Blog Post:** [VEC launches Zero Emissions Economic Transition Action Plan \(ZEETAP\)](#)

Question and Answer 2

What are VEC's core outcomes and can you demonstrate your return on investment (ROI) against city core funding?

Measuring the impact of VEC's work is clear for work with tangible and immediate outcomes, such as the number of reports we release, the number of participants in our events and programs, the amount of external funding and angel investment we raise, and the amount of investment attraction we have a significant role in landing in Vancouver. However, it is more challenging to measure the impact of systems changes, ecosystem capacity building, support to policy, advocacy and data sharing. For these less tangible but equally important initiatives, we rely on testimonials and tracking progress over time (i.e., the increase in green jobs in Vancouver.)

A summary of the impact of VEC's work today is included below:

1. External Funding

Our team raises funding from non-COV sources, which varies year to year and is often limited in its use to project-specific costs. Historically, this has averaged to about 15-20% of total funding, or circa \$600,000. VEC received **\$643,415** in non-core funding in 2022 from the provincial and federal governments and industry.

2. Investment Attraction and Trade Missions

For many years VEC was tasked with delivering significant levels of foreign direct investment (FDI) and we played a key role in attracting billions of dollars and thousands of jobs. With the launch of Metro Vancouver's Invest Vancouver service, VEC accordingly downsized its role and resources in investment attraction and took on a more supportive role.

In 2022, VEC actively supported 28 new incoming enquiries and played a role in landing over 551 jobs and \$263m in three-year deal value.

In 2017, with a more FDI-centred mandate, VEC's impact was significantly higher, and an illustrative snapshot of past work is included in the 2017 [Attachment 1](#), as requested by Councilor Carr.

3. Research and data

VEC actively monitors, analyses and disseminates macro and city-level economic metrics to inform the work of the City of Vancouver as well as other key policy makers, industry groups and our own VEC programs. A good example of this are the actions taken during the pandemic, when VEC shifted most of its resources to providing frequent (sometimes daily) sector-by-sector economic updates.

In addition, VEC conducts sector- and topic-based research reports which provide key and often unique data & insights. Examples of this include our [Green Jobs Reports](#) which define and track green jobs in the city, and our [Annual Film & TV Spend](#) research, which reports total spend within the industry. Both of these are delivered through proprietary and globally recognised VEC-designed methods.

Some examples of VEC's 2022 research reports:

- 1) 3 issues of the [Vancouver Economy Report](#).
- 2) The Economic Impact of the 2010 Winter Olympics, which informed Council's decision on whether to pursue a 2030 Winter Olympics bid.
- 3) [Film & TV Production Spend](#), which provides respected data and insights on the value and performance of a key Vancouver sector.

4. Support to City of Vancouver policies and decision making

- Over recent years, VEC has informed the following COV policies by providing data, co-hosting or participating on advisory groups and taking responsibility for key economic actions: Vancouver Plan, co-leading the economy working group; Employment Lands and Economy Review; City of Vancouver Liquor licensing review; Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP); Culture|Shift; Climate Adaptation Plan; UNDRIP Strategy; Community Benefit Agreement Working Group; childcare; carbon pollution limits in existing buildings; City of Vancouver's Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD), Reporting as part of City's Financial Statements; assessment of the 2010 Olympic's legacy and more.

5. Programs and Action Plans

- [Project Greenlight](#): Since the launch of the Project Greenlight program, we have secured a total of 6 institutional members, posted 12 challenges, and received 238 applications from entrepreneurs. The most recent City of Vancouver challenge launched sought innovators to co-locate at the city's Zero Waste Demonstration Site and received 21 applications (currently under review). The Site is anticipated to launch in Q3 2023. 5 total projects have launched to-date, and 5+ are under consideration by members.
- [Angels for Climate](#): Our inaugural Angels for Climate Solutions program successfully awarded a local startup, Circular Rubber Technologies, with **\$172,000** from an angel investor cohort. The second climate-tech cohort is underway for a Spring 2023 program with partners including TD Bank, Spring, Volition and Foresight Canada, with an additional \$150,000+ committed by angel investors. Planning is underway for a third cohort.
- [ZEETAP](#): As part of the City's Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP), the VEC delivered the Zero Emissions Economic Action Plan (ZEETAP) in June 2022 and is well into the implementation phase as we look to help businesses decarbonize and to support

upskilling and training for workers. VEC is currently baselining greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from Vancouver's businesses; promoting Vancouver as a destination for 'green' investment; supporting capacity building in the financial sector, and more.

- **[BC Heat Pump Technology Attraction Strategy](#)**: A significant partnership with Building to Electrification Coalition (B2E) led to the November 2022 release of the BC Heat Pump Technology Attraction Strategy which outlined key supply chain gaps for this crucial building electrification technology with work ahead to quantify heat pump demand to attract foreign investors. VEC is currently working to support three local manufacturers of heat pumps and on four separate workforce training initiatives for heat pump installers.
- **Circular Economy**: Multiple programs were progressed to deepen our support of the burgeoning circular economy in Vancouver. In April we completed a study on the level of circularity in Vancouver's food sector. We partnered to create the **[Circular Food Innovation Lab](#)** which was designed to help businesses cut food waste and costs. We further coordinated two **[Circular Economy Reverse Pitch events](#)** and in partnership with the Share Reuse Repair Initiative host the Greater **[Vancouver Circular Economy Network Series](#)** (GVCEN). Lastly, we provide mentorship and assistance as a community and delivery partner to ventures in the Vancity-funded **[Project Zero](#)**, an incubator program for circular economy startups.

Relevant Links

- **Blog:** **[Editor's Choice: Top 10 Stories from Vancouver's Economy in 2022](#)**
- **Attachment 1:** **[2017 BRIEFING NOTE to Council – The VEC and its regional economic impact](#)**
- **Website:** **[Zero Emissions Economic Transition Action Plan](#)**
- **Link:** **[BC Heat Pump Technology Attraction Strategy](#)**
- **Webpage:** **[Vancouver Learning Tour to Copenhagen to support private sector innovation in construction](#)**

Question and Answer 3

What is VEC's role in the Granville Entertainment District planning and development process?

VEC was a member of the City's Liquor Strategy Steering Committee in 2017, which was established partly as a response to concerns regarding the Granville Entertainment District.

VEC are currently exploring our role in the planning and development process going forward which may include advisory, research and other economic development components.

VEC has historical and present roles on other city planning and development initiatives. Examples of this work includes:

- 1. Rupert Renfrew** – VEC works closely with the planning team, as this is the first large planning project post Vancouver Plan. We see it as a potential new hub for film and TV in our economy, and a key site to support net-zero transportation of goods. VEC provides support to convene the film industry, and data and insights gleaned from industry, to inform transportation planning at the Rupert Renfrew hub.
- 2. Vancouver Plan** – VEC originally co-chaired the economy pillar of the Vancouver Plan during its initial stages. VEC is responsible for leading or supporting on a number of Vancouver Plan actions. The need for an economic strategy emerged from the Vancouver Plan process after it pivoted to be focused on land use, and VEC is co-leading on that initiative with BPPS.
- 3. Broadway line** – In 2013, VEC helped devise [the business case](#) for the Broadway Line, working with UBC and KPMG.
- 4. Olympics 2010 review** – In 2022 VEC provided an Economic Impact Report to inform Council's decision to bid for the 2030 Winter Olympics.
- 5. FIFA World Cup** – VEC will be a member of the Province-led economy working group and will also lead on the 'Economic' pillar of the City's FIFA World Cup Sustainability Plan.

2017 Briefing Note to Council - The VEC and its regional economic impact

Briefing Note: The Vancouver Economic Commission (VEC) and its regional impact (2017)

CONTEXT

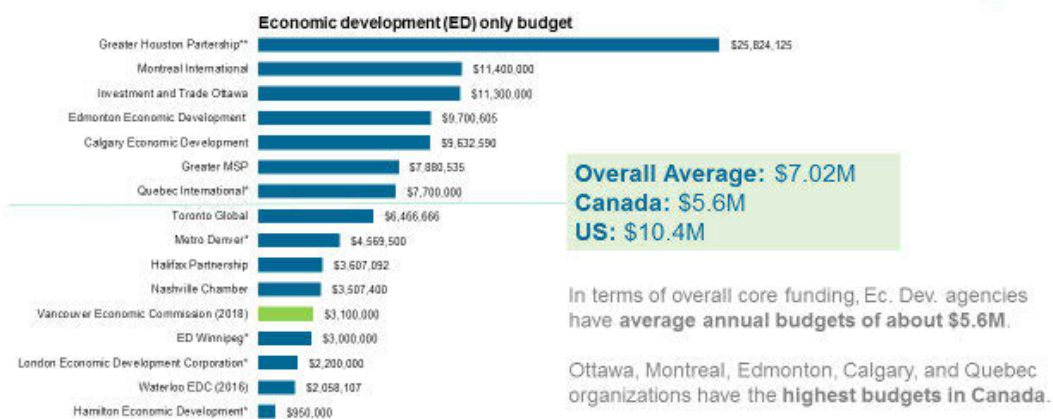
VEC is the economic development agency for the City of Vancouver, but given Vancouver’s brand as globally significant metropolitan city the VEC plays the role of the de facto economic agency for the region of Metro Vancouver. This means attracting and facilitating FDI into the region, increasing investment into local companies, helping local businesses to flourish and conducting strategic initiatives that enhance the region’s economic competitiveness.

VEC generates in excess of **\$600 million of local economic value per year**, with only 22 full-time staff and \$3,100,000 in core funding from the City of Vancouver. This creates a **return on investment of \$193 of economic activity for every \$1 invested**. With core support from the Province, we could deliver much more to the Metro Vancouver region, contributing even more to B.C.’s economy than our existing 60% of total provincial GDP.

Third-party funding for VEC’s core operations is increasing but is still limited compared to our peers. In 2017, VEC secured \$294,000 in third-party funding. In 2019, VEC has secured \$722,000 to date.

VEC is the only economic development agency of any major city in Canada that does not receive core Federal or Provincial funding.

FUNDING COMPARISON: Core Funding



VEC's RETURN ON INVESTMENT



VEC'S CORE FUNCTIONS



PROVINCIAL SUPPORT

Economic development is a highly competitive enterprise and the Vancouver region competes with other major cities around the world for foreign direct investment, for capital, for trade and more -- to support jobs, tackle affordability and to decarbonise our economy. VEC seeks core funding from the Province of BC to better extend this support to the Greater Vancouver region, position our region throughout the world as an economic powerhouse and educate the public in British Columbia about the importance of economic development to our future.

NOTE ON METRO VANCOUVER REGIONAL PROSPERITY

VEC have participated in the Metro Vancouver led 'Regional Prosperity Initiative' over the last 3 years, and were disappointed that the initiative failed to seed a new regional economic development agency. VEC, led by its Chair Mayor Kennedy Stewart, intend to now champion a

new initiative that can win the requisite support from local Vancouver Mayors, and all levels of government.

APPENDIX: Examples of VEC's current regional impact:

- 1) Vancouver Film Commission
- 2) Tech Deployment Network
- 3) Media & Entertainment Centre
- 4) Green Buildings
- 5) Asia Pacific