



Staff Report for Council Committee of the Whole

Date of Meeting: June 4, 2025

Report Number: SRCM.25.08

Department: Office of the City Manager

Division: Richmond Hill Centre and Economic Development

Subject: **SRCM.25.08 – Economic Development Mission to Hannover Messe**

Purpose:

To provide an update on the results of the City's Economic Development Mission to Hannover Messe.

Recommendations:

- a) That SRCM.25.08, regarding the Economic Development Mission to Hannover Messe, be received.

Contact Persons:

- Brenda Osler, Senior Economic Development Officer, extension 5483
- Anthony Ierullo, Director of Richmond Hill Centre and Economic Development, extension 6515
- Darlene Joslin, City Manager, extension 2423

Report Approval:

All reports are electronically reviewed and/or approved by the Division Director, Treasurer (as required), City Solicitor (as required), Commissioner, and City Manager. Details of the reports approval are attached.

Page 2

Background:

In November 2024, Council approved Staff Report SRCM.24.14 authorizing the Mayor and two staff persons to attend the Hannover Messe Conference for the purposes of promoting international trade and investment. Hannover Messe is the world's leading trade show for industrial technology and industrial transformation, where more than 4,000 companies showcase innovations and top tier technological products to over 130,000 visitors from over 150 countries.

In 2025, Canada took centre stage as the partner country. The federal and provincial governments had a very large presence at the show, dedicating many resources to promoting Canada and Ontario. The City of Richmond Hill participated in the tradeshow as Government of Canada delegates along with York Region, the City of Vaughan and the City of Markham.

The City's participation in Hannover Messe aligns with the approved Economic Development Strategy and supports the implementation of the Investment Attraction Strategy and Subsector Strategy. It is part of a multi-year Investment Attraction Program that aims to attract new investment within the City's target subsectors. The City's participation in Hannover Messe was included in the 2025 Investment Attraction Program as presented to the City's Economic Development Committee on October 15, 2024. In accordance with the Foreign Travel Policy for Council Members, this report has been prepared to outline the results of the Hannover Messe Mission for Council.

Discussion:

Hannover Messe Mission achieves key objectives

The Hannover Messe Mission provided an opportunity for the City to achieve a number of key objectives related to the implementation of the Investment Attraction Strategy and Subsector Strategy. These objectives, as outlined in report SRCM.24.14, included:

1. Communicating the City's investment attraction goals and value proposition to partners, other levels of government and stakeholders;
2. Developing relationships with key agencies, businesses associations, trade organizations and trade commissions to explore investment opportunities;
3. Engaging with businesses and industry experts to explore opportunities within the City's target subsectors; and,
4. Meeting with potential investors.

The City was able to meet or exceed all of these objectives through dozens of successful meetings and engagements. Since returning from Germany, staff have also continued to follow up with various partners to further advance potential opportunities. A summary of the outcomes of the Mission and their contribution to the above noted key objectives is outlined below:

Page 3

1. Communicating the City's investment attraction goals and value proposition to partners, other levels of government and stakeholders.
 - The City secured meetings with the Ontario Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade to discuss business development in Richmond Hill.
 - The City provided opening remarks at four panel discussions highlighting both Richmond Hill and York Region.
 - The Richmond Hill delegation met with representatives at the federal and provincial levels to explore opportunities for collaboration and partnerships.
 - The City met with representatives from communities across the Region, GTA and Canada to discuss opportunities for collaboration.
 - The City visited the City of Augsburg at the Augsburg Innovations Park to explore business and investment partnerships as well as opportunities to grow the green economy.
2. Developing relationships with key agencies, businesses associations, trade organizations and trade commissions to explore investment opportunities.
 - The City met with government representatives from several German States to discuss business development partnerships.
 - The City met with representatives from several German innovation clusters to discuss partnership opportunities.
 - The City was connected to Foresight Canada to discuss business support partnerships for the Clean Tech Sector.
 - The City met with several federal and provincial Trade Commissioners to explore investment opportunities and communicate the City's value proposition.
 - The City met with Invest Latvia to explore future trade opportunities.
3. Engaging with businesses and industry experts to explore opportunities within the City's target subsectors.
 - The City met with partners such as the Ontario Vehicle Innovation Network (OVIN), Toronto Global, VentureLab and Trillium Network for Advanced Manufacturing to explore opportunities to support the City's target subsectors.
 - The City met with representatives of the German head offices of local businesses BMW and Sick AG to explore opportunities for additional investment in Richmond Hill.
 - The City supported Richmond Hill based Maple Advanced Robotics Inc. in receiving the prestigious Robotics Award at Hannover Messe.
 - The City visited Richmond Hill businesses exhibiting at Hannover Messe including Tool Holder Shop Inc. and Emerson.

Page 4

4. Meeting with potential investors.

- The City met with 15 European businesses with potential plans for North American expansion with a focus on attracting research and development opportunities to Richmond Hill.
- The City identified 8 additional European businesses with potential plans for North American expansion for follow up after the Mission.

Key Lessons Learned at Hannover Messe

1. The City's Investment Attraction value proposition was relevant and well received

The City received a positive response in market. Clients were impressed with the skills of our labour force, research and development incentives, the innovation network and the City's commitment to supporting businesses. The Richmond Hill value proposition remained relevant despite concerns over U.S Tariffs.

2. There are strong synergies with German businesses

Businesses in Germany are seeking long term, stable business partners that value innovation and entrepreneurship. There is a strong focus on technology, international trade and investment, which aligns well with Richmond Hill's value proposition.

3. Investments in innovation and entrepreneurship support Investment Attraction

Businesses were interested in the City's direct contributions to the innovation and entrepreneurship network. Assets such as the Richmond Hill SBEC and the Centre for Local Innovation and Collaboration (CLIC) were seen as important to demonstrate the City's commitment to business and to the innovation ecosystem.

4. Building the City's Investment Attraction brand requires sustained effort

The City's investment attraction brand is relatively new and is beginning to gain traction within the Canadian trade community. However, successfully building this brand will require sustained effort and investment to compete with more established investment attraction brands in the GTA.

5. Planning and partnerships are critical for International Trade Missions

The City invested in lead generation in advance of Hannover Messe to ensure that Team Richmond Hill had a full agenda of business meetings. We also coordinated closely with York Region, NGen (Next Generation Manufacturing Canada), the Trade Commission Service, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada and Global Affairs Canada to ensure that our activities included the right partners. This approach was critical to achieving the outcomes noted in this report.

Page 5

In summary, the City met or exceeded its previously stated objectives for the Hannover Messe Mission and developed a number of key lessons learned that will inform the ongoing implementation of the Investment Attraction Program.

Financial Implications:

In 2024, staff requested \$25,000 to be added in the 2025 Operating Budget to fund the costs associated with the Mayor and two Economic Development staff persons attending the Hannover Messe Conference. At that time, the total per person cost to attend the Hannover Messe Conference including travel, accommodation, registration fees and incidental expenses was estimated at \$8,500 (or \$25,500 for three attendees).

The actual costs for three attendees to attend the Hannover Messe Mission was \$27,100. Additional costs associated with lead generation, the development of promotional materials and partner/stakeholder engagement are an ongoing component of the City's Investment Attraction Program and have been delivered within existing operating budgets.

In addition, the City received \$15,000 in funding from York Region and \$5,100 in funding from CanExport to support the City's investment attraction activities. In addition to the financial contribution to Richmond Hill's investment attraction efforts, York Region also organized a regional presence at Hannover Messe that included paying for and securing a dedicated kiosk, sponsoring a panel stage, organizing three panel discussions, securing a panel event with Toronto Global and the German Chamber, and providing marketing support before and during the event.

Relationship to Strategic Plan 2024-2027:

The Investment Attraction Program helps to attract new companies to the City and assists existing companies to expand, thus creating new employment opportunities that help to grow a livable, sustainable community. Helping to create a dynamic and diverse business community supports the priority to manage growth in a way that enables choice and connection for the City, its residents and business, now and in the future. This program also contributes to advocating for the development of complete communities as we work with other levels of government to build a vibrant and inclusive community.

Attachments:

The following attached documents may include scanned images of appendixes, maps and photographs. All attachments have been reviewed and made accessible. If you require an alternative format please call the contact person listed in this document.

- None

Page 6

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	SRCM.25.08 Economic Development Mission to Hannover Messe v4.docx
Attachments:	- SRCM.25.08 Economic Development Mission to Hannover Messe.docx
Final Approval Date:	May 15, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Anthony Ierullo - May 14, 2025 - 8:52 PM

Darlene Joslin - May 15, 2025 - 3:02 PM