

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-25



GREATER VANCOUVER
BOARD OF TRADE

PROPEL PROSPERITY

CULTIVATE COMMUNITY

IGNITE INNOVATION





Walter R. Pela, FCPA, FCA
*Chair, 2024-2025,
GVA Regional Managing Partner,
KPMG in Canada*

MESSAGE

FROM THE CHAIR

It has been a profound honour to serve as Chair of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade during a year that has tested the strength, adaptability, and optimism of our business community. Beneath a backdrop of global uncertainty, rising protectionism, tariffs, and rapid technological transformation, our region continues to face long-standing challenges – lagging productivity, growing fiscal pressures, and policies that too often work against competitiveness. Yet even amid these headwinds, I remain inspired by the resilience, creativity, and leadership of our members and businesses across our region. Throughout this period, the Board of Trade has played a vital role: advocating for evidence-based policy, equipping companies with practical tools, and connecting leaders across sectors to strengthen our collective resilience.

At the heart of our efforts this year was Agenda for Economic Growth – The 3% Challenge. This bold campaign rests on a simple truth: economic growth is essential to improving quality of life. It calls on all levels of government to target real GDP growth of 3% annually—an ambitious yet achievable goal. This agenda has guided much of the Board of Trade’s advocacy, programming, and partnerships throughout the year, sparking meaningful dialogue on how to unlock our region’s full economic potential.

Our progress this year reflects the leadership and dedication of many. I want to acknowledge and thank our 35 board of directors for their time, expertise, and unwavering commitment to our mission. I also want to recognize our President and CEO, Bridgitte Anderson, who has led the organization during this challenging and eventful year with poise, strategy, and resolve, rising to every occasion as one of our region’s leading voices.

The GVBOT continues to be recognized for its exceptional event programming and convening power. Our forums and signature gatherings bring together voices from across industries and around the world, positioning the Board of Trade as the convener of Vancouver’s business community. This year we saw record participation—over 12,000 attendees across 47 main-stage events, representing a 20% increase over the previous fiscal year.

Among the highlights was a focus on the foundations of future growth—both the infrastructure that enables it and the technologies that will define it. Early on, the Board of Trade recognized the transformative potential of artificial intelligence, launching a unique AI Adoption Program to help members seize the opportunity. This was followed by the report Accelerating AI Adoption in B.C., which highlighted how AI can boost productivity



and create value. We also convened the landmark Building B.C.: Major Projects Driving Economic Growth, presented by KPMG. The event brought together leaders from government, industry, academia, and the not-for-profit sector for a timely discussion that foreshadowed the Province's Infrastructure Projects Act and the federal government's evolving infrastructure agenda.

The message from these discussions was clear—and echoed sentiments we continue to hear from members and business leaders across the region. B.C. has the resources, expertise, and global demand to grow. And yet our economy has reached a crisis point. What we need is speed, certainty, and collaboration to build. Amid a patchwork of both welcome and counterproductive legislative developments, lasting success will instead require intentional and systemic change focused on stronger economic policies—enabling faster approvals, lower regulatory burdens, improved tax competitiveness, and greater investment readiness, attracting both capital and talent to the region. The Board of Trade will continue to advocate across all levels of government and with stakeholders to adopt good policy, move from words to action – to get things done—and to drive the meaningful change needed for businesses and communities to thrive.

This year also marked the 25th anniversary of our Leaders of Tomorrow (LOT) program, which continues to empower emerging leaders in our community. Nearly 90 students graduated in 2024–25, joining a network of more than 2,750 alumni who have helped shape our region's business and civic landscape since the program's inception in 1999.

Another highlight of the year was our Governors' Gala and Rix Awards, a signature celebration recognizing outstanding leadership and community contribution. We proudly honoured the great Bob Rennie with the Rix Award for Community Citizenship and Stantec with the Rix Award for Corporate Citizenship—two exemplary recipients who reflect the very best of our region's values.

We also welcomed our remarkable immediate past chair, Juggy Sihota-Chahil, into our esteemed Council of Governors.

Our member surveys reaffirm that the organization continues to meet the moment. Growth in both our membership and partnership base has strengthened the Board of Trade's financial foundation, ensuring we remain well-positioned to lead an increasingly unpredictable economic landscape. This success is a testament to the dedication of the exceptional team at 999 Canada Place, whose work continues to advance the goals set out in our three-year strategic plan.

As we look ahead, our mission remains clear: to make British Columbia a place where businesses can build, people can thrive, and communities can prosper. Achieving this will require courage, innovation, and collaboration – qualities that define the Greater Vancouver business community.

The work of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade has never been more important—and I am deeply proud to be part of it.

I also want to extend my sincere thanks to our incoming Chair, Stuart Louie, whose entrepreneurial leadership will serve the Board and its members well in the year ahead.

Thank you to our members, partners, volunteers, and staff for your unwavering commitment and support.

Walter R. Pela, FCPA, FCA
2024–25 Chair
Greater Vancouver Board of Trade

MESSAGE

FROM THE CEO

It's become cliché to say we live in unprecedented times. Yet how else do you describe the last 12 months? This fiscal year, more than any other year in my time as President and CEO, has shown - time and again - the importance of a business community that works together to champion economic growth.

Rising geopolitical tensions, a global economic slowdown, and Trump's unjust trade war and tariffs on Canadian goods have made for a tumultuous year. However, the team at 999 Canada Place has done their level best to navigate these choppy waters and ensure that our organization continues to increase its influence and impact, providing a strong voice for the business community in the region, and deliver results that position us as a key player in shaping the future of Greater Vancouver.

Our reach and visibility expanded dramatically this year. With 47 main stage events drawing more than 12,000 attendees, our social media platforms reached a record-breaking three million impressions, over 7,000 media hits, and hundreds of thousands of website visitors; our voice carried farther than ever before.

Foundational to our mission this year was the launch of Agenda for Economic Growth: The 3% Challenge. This multi-year campaign is grounded on the simple premise that if we want to build a future that reflects our ambitions—and one we can be proud to pass on to the next generation—British Columbia must pursue policies that unlock growth, attract investment, and raise our standard of living.

Economic growth is more than just a number. At its core, it reflects the lives of everyday people—the value of their efforts, their ability to provide for their families, and the hope that their children will have a better future. By staying laser-focused on growth, we confront the greatest enemy of prosperity: uncertainty.

Uncertainty shows up every day. It's the young person unsure whether they can build a life here. The family stretched to their limits with mortgage payments. The senior worried about accessing timely healthcare. The small business trying to navigate trade compliance or the large employer debating whether a multi-year arduous permitting process is worth the risk of investment.

Uncertainty is a death by a thousand cuts. Let it fester, and it undermines confidence, deters investment, and weakens our ability to act when it matters most. Our collective challenge—governments, businesses, not-for-profits, and individuals—is to remove that uncertainty and unleash the full potential of our economy.



Bridgitte Anderson

President and Chief Executive Officer
Greater Vancouver Board of Trade

This year, we met that challenge head-on. In the face of growing trade friction with the U.S., we stepped up. Our team joined over 100 leaders from across Cascadia for a joint advocacy mission to Washington, D.C., meeting with lawmakers, White House officials, and trade representatives to defend Canadian economic interests. We welcomed U.S. Ambassador Pete Hoekstra to Vancouver during his first visit and relaunched our U.S. Tariff Resource Hub to support businesses on the ground.

Nationally, we amplified our voice through the Canadian Global Cities Council, which I currently chair. We hosted the first-ever CGCC Day on the Hill, met with federal officials, and released a detailed letter to Prime Minister Carney outlining key economic priorities for his government's first 100 days. At every level, our message was consistent: a strong economy is the foundation for everything else.

Our policy team worked tirelessly to mobilize dozens of leaders and experts across four major reports—all anchored in the 3% Challenge. From streamlining permitting and reducing business costs to expanding internal trade and preparing our province for the AI economy, our work delivered timely, targeted solutions.

While we build locally, we must ensure we're able to get goods to market, and the World Trade Centre Vancouver team has been hard at work over the last 12 months doing just that. In 2024-25, WTC-V directly supported more than 1,000 companies navigating CUSMA compliance, trade acceleration, digital transformation, and market diversification.

We also recognized that amid all these changes, one group is being hit especially hard: young people. Canadian graduates are facing the highest unemployment rate in nearly three decades, with the unemployment rate for those aged 15 to 24 at 16.6%. That's why our Leaders of Tomorrow (LOT) program—now in its 25th year—is critically important. Thanks to support from the VBOT Foundation, bursaries were introduced for the first time this year. LOT equips students with the mentorship, skills, confidence, and professional connections they need to build careers here in B.C. and be able to lead in the years ahead.

As part of our commitment to reconciliation, we continued to offer Indigenous Awareness training in partnership with Indigenous Corporate Training. Nearly 200 individuals participated in five sessions this year, building cultural understanding and practical knowledge to support respectful relationships with Indigenous Peoples.

2026 brings big opportunities to our region. The world's attention will be on us when the FIFA World Cup 2026 descends on BC Place. This May, for the second year in a row, Vancouver will host Web Summit, one of the world's largest tech conferences connecting start-ups, tech giants, and investors from around the globe. And while the future



may not be more predictable, we will have a plethora of opportunities to position and showcase B.C. as a globally attractive investment destination; we just need to ready ourselves to lead.

Canada has the resources the world needs most: energy, food, and critical minerals. And we also have the talent to create the technologies and companies of the future. We have all the building blocks necessary to be a world leader and British Columbia can and should be the launchpad for that leadership.

The Greater Vancouver Board of Trade will continue to build on the foundation we laid this year, strengthening the conditions for growth, investment, and opportunity across our region. The road ahead will not be easy. But with the continued support of our members, partners, volunteers, and staff, I know we will meet this moment. Together, we will be the strong voice our economy needs, putting forward real solutions and seizing this generational opportunity to build a better future for all.

Bridgitte Anderson

President and Chief Executive Officer
Greater Vancouver Board of Trade



BY THE NUMBERS

Voice & Visibility

3,318,411

Total Social Media Impressions

76,185

Total Followers

7,021

Total Media Mentions

698,100

Website Visits

Cultivating Community

5,500

Members

47

Main Stage Events

12,224

Attendees

Propelling Prosperity

84

Media Statements, Open Letters, Releases, and Articles

66

Committee Members

4

Agenda for Economic Growth Policy Reports

3

Policy Committees

Igniting Innovation

1500+

World Trade Centre Participants

80

80 Trade Accelerator Program Graduates

125

ELP & LOT Graduates

POLICY & ADVOCACY

The last 12 months have been a challenging time for the business community, our region, and our nation. Trump's unjust trade war has meant that our relationship with the United States has fundamentally and irrevocably changed, creating pressures we have not had to deal with in a generation.

But in every crisis, there is opportunity. We have the chance to get our house in order, making it easier to unlock economic growth, welcome investment, diversify our trade, and build a stronger more resilient region.

It is with this mindset that our Policy and Advocacy team advanced the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade's influence and impact, delivering on our stated objectives and aligned all work under our pillar campaign: Agenda for Economic Growth: The 3% Challenge. Our team's strategic, non-partisan approach continues to position GVBOT as a trusted voice on the issues that matter to business—at all levels of government and across sectors.

The Policy and Advocacy team's work in propelling Agenda for Economic Growth has been conducted alongside ongoing organizational initiatives, like hosting impactful policy forums and policy committee meetings. Each year, the team organizes three committees, with 30+ committee meetings throughout the year. These meetings facilitate a dialogue between our members on key policy issues and provide a platform for government, local business leaders, and partners to discuss policy priorities in a more intimate setting. Member volunteers are essential and provide valuable input on GVBOT's advocacy and policy work.



GREATER VANCOUVER
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Agenda for Economic Growth: The 3% Challenge



The 3% Challenge enabled the Policy and Advocacy team to focus on recommendations to grow the economy and release several policy reports in short succession. At the same time, the team remained nimble in responding to new threats, including escalating trade tensions with the United States.

Launched at our Economic Outlook Forum in January, the Agenda for Economic Growth - The 3% Challenge has become the organizing principle behind all our policy and advocacy work. This bold call to action urges all levels of government to target 3% annual real GDP growth.

Since its launch, the campaign has gained significant traction, including formal support from Vancouver City Council and inclusion in the mandate of the City's Business Growth Taskforce, on which Bridgitte participated. Over the past year, we've conducted over 20 briefings, released four supporting reports, discussed our growth priorities with elected officials at all levels of government, and engaged with stakeholders across sectors.

To further amplify our advocacy efforts, we launched The Agenda, our first-ever newsletter dedicated to highlighting ongoing policy engagement and promoting The 3% Challenge to members and decision-makers.

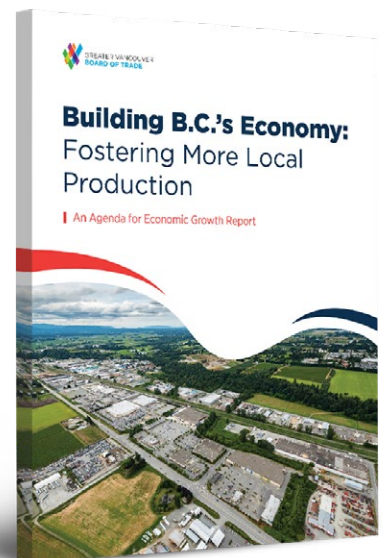
Using The 3% Challenge as a guiding force, we released four policy reports this fiscal year:



1

Building B.C.'s Economy: Fostering More Local Production

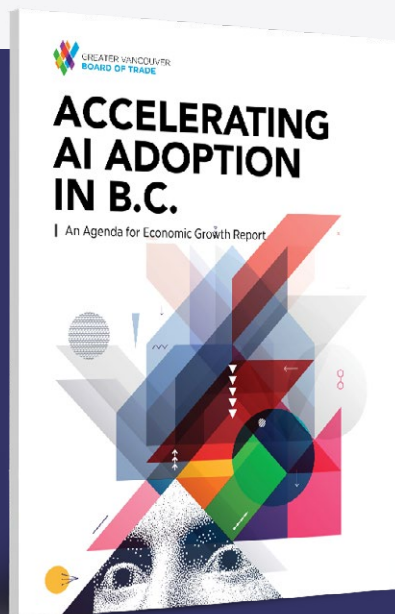
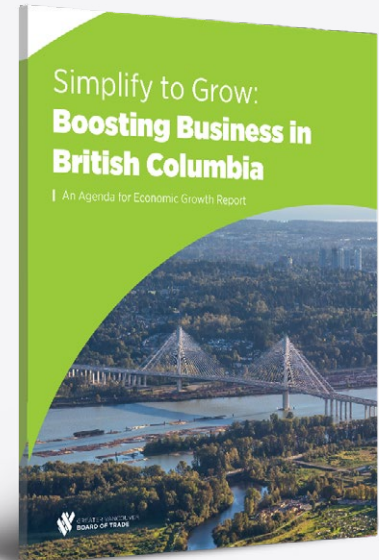
In response to mounting bottlenecks in industrial development, we convened a targeted working group of developers and industry stakeholders to engage directly with the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship. This collaborative forum has enabled focused discussion on streamlining permitting processes to unlock stalled projects. In June, we released a policy report that built on this work by outlining specific recommendations to accelerate industrial land development and attract private investment to B.C.



2

Simplify to Grow: Boosting Business in British Columbia

Also in May, we released *Simplify to Grow: Boosting Business in British Columbia*, a report that sets out tangible reforms to reduce costs, streamline permitting, and expand market access. The report was deliberately timed to precede the Province of British Columbia's Ease of Doing Business review, and we followed its release with a public statement urging bold, structural action. Our recommendations include increasing the EHT threshold, exempting PST on equipment, and expediting approvals—core elements of a more competitive business environment.



3

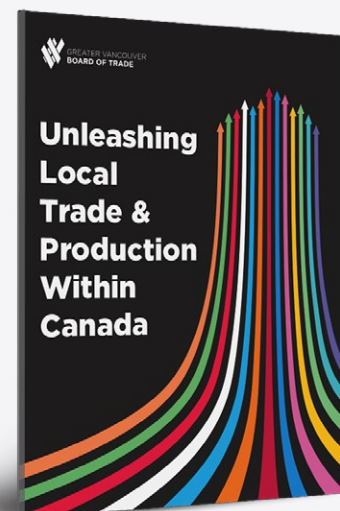
Accelerating AI Adoption in B.C

In May, we released *Accelerating AI Adoption in British Columbia*, a policy report that highlights the potential of artificial intelligence to improve productivity, drive innovation, and enhance economic resilience across sectors. The recommendations focus on SMEs, enabling broader adoption in underrepresented sectors, addressing gaps in talent development, and leveraging public data.

4

Unleashing Local Trade & Production within Canada

Building on our economic growth agenda, we released a report in February focused on unlocking Canada's domestic market potential. The report outlines five key recommendations to reduce interprovincial trade barriers, with the potential to generate \$7.6 billion in GDP growth for B.C. and \$1.7 billion in additional public revenue. These recommendations, which include mutual recognition of standards and expanded labour mobility, continue to inform our advocacy federally and provincially, including our position on Bill 7.



B.C. Election Strategy

GVBOT took proactive steps last fall to ensure business priorities remained front and centre of the provincial election. This included hosting B.C. Votes, the only non-media event to feature all three major party leaders, offering members direct insight into the province's political direction. We also led collaboration with the broader business community through a coordinated media strategy regarding the fragile state of B.C.'s economy.



B.C. Legislative Session Advocacy & Tariff Response

GVBOT was highly visible throughout the legislative session, weighing in on major legislation such as Bill 4, Bill 7, and Bill 15. Through this work, we successfully paused the advancement of Bill 4, influenced revisions to Bill 7 and advised on internal trade provisions, and supported Bill 15 while advocating for transparent criteria for project designation.

In January, the Premier established a Trade and Economic Security Taskforce, within the Ministry of Jobs and Economic Growth, to advise the government on how to best navigate the challenges posed by an increasingly adversarial trading relationship with the United States and to answer questions of economic security and resiliency. Bridgitte was invited to sit as Co-Chair on the Taskforce, during which she provided input to protect the economic interests of B.C. and advocate for a comprehensive agenda of economic growth.



Policy and Advocacy Achievements

The Policy and Advocacy team’s work extended far beyond the specific objectives outlined in the 2024-25 annual plan, often responding to sudden economic and political challenges.

In the face of significant trade turmoil with the U.S., GVBOT emerged as a key thought leader and representative of the business community. We participated in a major cross-border mission to Washington, D.C. with 100+ Cascadia partners, meeting with U.S. legislators and White House officials to reinforce trade ties amid rising protectionism. We also hosted U.S. Ambassador Pete Hoekstra during his first Vancouver visit and relaunched our U.S. tariff resource hub.



Over the year, we got involved in federal advocacy efforts. As Chair of the Canadian Global Cities Council, we led the first-ever CGCC Day on the Hill in Ottawa. We also hosted the Canada Votes forum and sent a detailed letter to Prime Minister Carney outlining our first 100-day economic priorities.

In terms of municipal and regional engagement, we convened our third annual Regional Councillors Roundtable, engaging elected officials from Vancouver, Burnaby, Coquitlam, and West Vancouver on housing, competitiveness, and fiscal sustainability. GVBOT continued to be a constructive voice at the local level on housing, public safety, procurement, and permitting reform. We also engaged on preparations for Taylor Swift’s concerts in Vancouver and remained engaged in FIFA 2026 preparations.



Internationally, we welcomed multiple Ambassadors and foreign delegations, strengthening trade and innovation ties with the EU, Germany, Ukraine, Croatia, and Denmark.

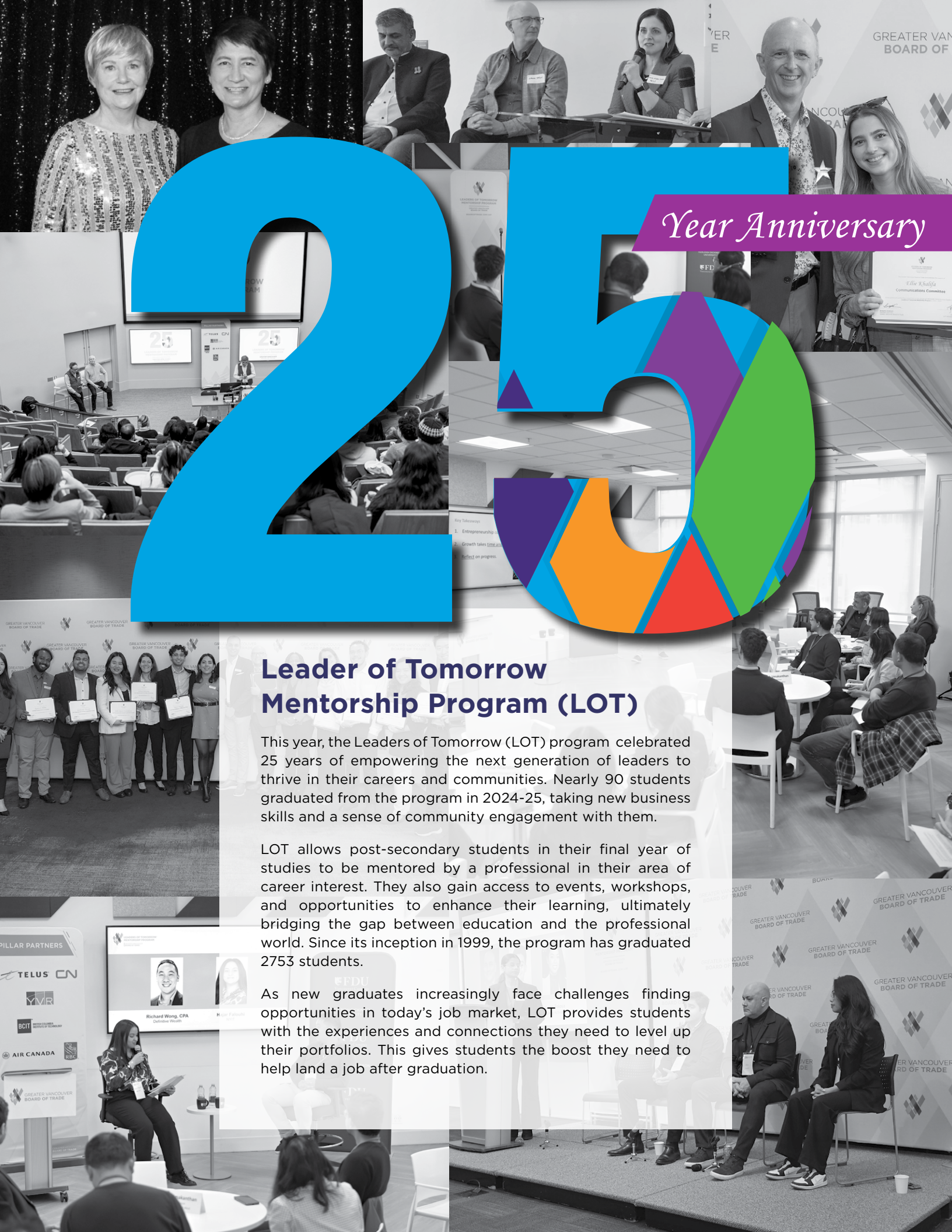
Following abrupt federal immigration changes, we convened members, hosted Minister Marc Miller, and submitted a detailed policy letter outlining the potential \$787M GDP impact to B.C. and calling for greater coordination with provincial labour market needs.

During major labour disruptions across ports, airlines and freight, we pushed for early federal intervention and reactivated our Port Shutdown Calculator during the summer port strike. Following the Industrial Inquiry Commission’s final report, we urged federal implementation of its recommendations to ensure long-term stability in supply chains.

While our Policy & Advocacy team has had a successful and busy year advancing our policy objectives and advocating on behalf of the business community, we recognize that the last 12 months have been very tough for our members. There are still rough waters ahead, but we remain steadfast in ensuring that all levels of government prioritize fostering a legislative and regulatory environment that unlocks our full potential, champions B.C.’s entrepreneurial spirit, and builds a secure economy. Through hard work, collaboration, and community we will sail to calmer waters where a prosperous future is possible for all.

A purple-tinted photograph of a city skyline across a body of water. In the foreground, two people are standing on a pier, looking out at the water. The city skyline in the background features several tall buildings, including a prominent tower with a spire. The text "LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT



25

Year Anniversary

Leader of Tomorrow Mentorship Program (LOT)

This year, the Leaders of Tomorrow (LOT) program celebrated 25 years of empowering the next generation of leaders to thrive in their careers and communities. Nearly 90 students graduated from the program in 2024-25, taking new business skills and a sense of community engagement with them.

LOT allows post-secondary students in their final year of studies to be mentored by a professional in their area of career interest. They also gain access to events, workshops, and opportunities to enhance their learning, ultimately bridging the gap between education and the professional world. Since its inception in 1999, the program has graduated 2753 students.

As new graduates increasingly face challenges finding opportunities in today's job market, LOT provides students with the experiences and connections they need to level up their portfolios. This gives students the boost they need to help land a job after graduation.





**RIX CENTRE
FOR LEADERSHIP**

Rix Centre for Leadership - Engaged Leadership Program (ELP)

GVBOT welcomed the fourth cohort of the Engaged Leadership Program (ELP) this year, which contained 36 participants. ELP helps propel managers and entrepreneurs into the next steps of their career progression, providing them resilient leadership training, mentorship, and community engagement opportunities.

Program participants spend 20 to 30 hours doing course material and participating in community engagement, networking, and roundtable opportunities over a six-month period. The 2025 ELP cohort heard from various speakers, including Susannah Pierce, Kory Wilson, Peter Guo, and Michele Mathews. Course and roundtable topics included innovation and engagement, change management, board governance, and Truth and Reconciliation.

ELP is led by the Rix Centre for Leadership Advisory Committee. The Rix Centre for Leadership was founded in honour of the late Dr. Don Rix, a renowned philanthropist and Governor of the Board of Trade who was dedicated to supporting the development of young professionals.





Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

GVBOT's Diversity and Inclusion Leadership Council ran its fourth annual EDI Forum, "Navigating Today, Shaping Tomorrow" this year. The event focused on ensuring that advocacy for diversity, equity, and inclusions programming does not get lost in the headwinds of today's economic challenges. EDI is a catalyst for innovation and sustainable economic growth and has been proven to improve financial performance, increase innovation, and reduce employee turnover.

Event attendees were able to listen to keynote speakers Christine Sinclair, retired Canadian Soccer Player and Olympic Gold Medalist, and Snotty Nose Rez Kids, an Indigenous music duo. More than 230 people attended the event, taking away a deeper understanding of how EDI can help lead to positive economic and social change.



Truth and Reconciliation

GVBOT is committed to reconciliation and strives to support Indigenous Peoples in the communities we serve. In alignment with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report, GVBOT follows a corporate sector reconciliation framework to adopt the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

We actively work to build knowledge and awareness of Indigenous Peoples through Indigenous Awareness training courses for non-Indigenous learners, which are offered in partnership with Indigenous Corporate Training. We hosted five of these sessions this year with almost 200 attendees. These training courses continue to be popular and fill up quickly.





Scale-up Centre for SMEs (SCS)

BUSINESS GROWTH S E R I E S



Small and medium-sized enterprises in the Greater Vancouver region gained support through GVBOT's Scale-up Centre for SMEs initiative this year. Through a series of curated events and roundtables, the SCS opens opportunities for companies to discover gaps, engage with experts, provide input on issues affecting businesses, and develop solutions that address obstacles to growth.

The SCS also works to understand the trends, forces, and issues impacting SME growth, innovation, and competitiveness, developing programming and policy to address these issues. One of these initiatives is the Business Growth Series, which provides small to medium-sized enterprises with useful resources, tools, and information needed to advance their company's growth and make a positive impact. The series covers a variety of topics and features industry experts.

This year we hosted seven events through the Business Growth Series, which explored legal structures for business, an economic forecast by BDC's Chief Economist Pierre Cl  roux, and stories from successful small business owners. The series also dived into pay transparency in B.C., the potential of newcomer talent, and navigating tax decisions, among other topics.





2024

BUSINESS DISTINCTION AWARDS

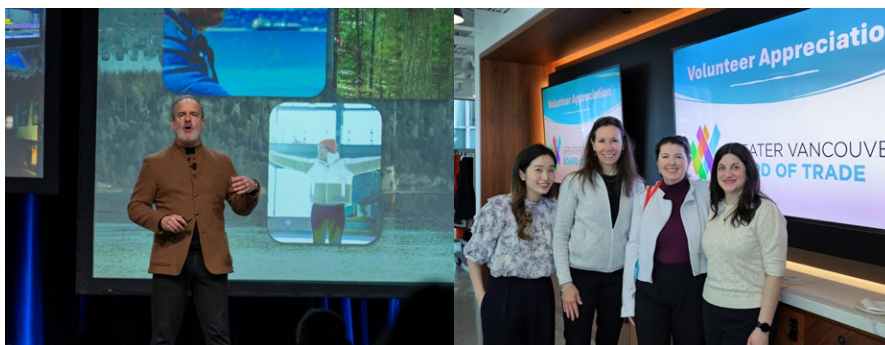
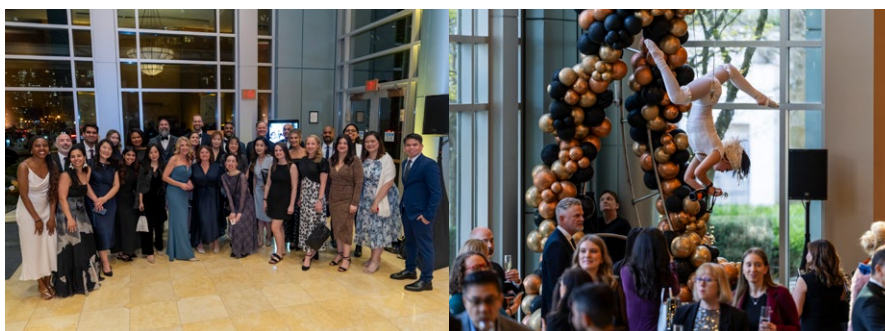
Led by the SCS advisory committee, the SCS presents the annual Business Distinction Awards (BDA), which recognize SMEs who have gone above and beyond to set themselves apart in the region. This year marked the third annual BDAs where six local businesses received awards for business growth, environmental impact, and outstanding new venture, among other categories.



Event Highlights



Event Highlights



Event Highlights





WORLD TRADE CENTRE® VANCOUVER

In 2024-25, the World Trade Centre Vancouver (WTC-V) rose to the occasion and expanded its programs and initiatives in response to the United States trade war, supporting entrepreneurs in entering new markets and remaining compliant under CUSMA.

One new initiative dived into market diversification strategies, supply chain and customs guidance, and navigation of interprovincial trade barriers, assisting nearly 1,000 companies in working through U.S. tariffs.

In collaboration with Pacific Economic Development Canada, WTC-V launched the CUSMA Compliance Project to help businesses work through North American trade requirements. Seven events were run under this project, attracting more than 700 participants.

WTC-V also secured program funding from PacifiCan for the Trade Accelerator Program (TAP), which graduated 75 companies this year continuing their mission to ensure B.C. companies can successfully expand into new markets.

To assist professionals with adapting to digital methods of business, WTC-V ran 75 individuals representing 63 companies through its Digital Transformation Workshop (DTW). Graduates left with knowledge of cutting-edge strategies and tools essential for navigating the digital terrain.

Regarding the Market Activation Program (MAP), WTC-V hosted 7 events that welcomed nearly 500 total

participants. Its Tampa Bay B2B event saw U.S. federal and local government officials in attendance. This year's MAP events helped Canadian businesses on a global scale by improving their readiness for trade and building connections with international partners. The Conducting Business in Mexico event had a turnout of 198 participants who learned about trade and investment opportunities between Canada and Mexico.

WTC-V also organized three Global Performance Series (GPS) events this year. Its Navigating U.S. Tariffs and Compliance Measures event hosted 300 participants in February who learned how to optimize tariff strategies, navigate trade disruptions, and ensure compliance in the evolving trade environment. The Domestic Trade and Interprovincial Expansion event in March supported 336 participants in learning how to scale across provinces, navigate procurement challenges, and strengthen business resilience in Canada. Also in March, the Market Diversification event saw 296 participants who explored global market opportunities and strategies to expand internationally.

B.C. has the building blocks necessary to support a strong economy: an abundance of resources, a well-educated and skilled workforce, and a thriving technology and innovation ecosystem. Simply put, we have what the world needs, and the WTC-V team will continue to work tirelessly with local entrepreneurs to get our goods and services out to market and grow our local economy.



Hosted 42 cohorts
in 6 B.C. Cities



Graduated over 600
qualified companies



Coordinated over 5000
mentorship meetings



Helping Companies
Reach 48 Countries



Celebrating Kelly England.

Kelly England's 25th work anniversary

This year marked Kelly England's 25th work anniversary with the Board of Trade, making him one of the longest serving employees in our 138 year history. Kelly manages GVBOT's general office services and said he's most proud of the organization's contributions to Greater Vancouver.

"I started here in 2000, so that includes the successful bid for 2010 Olympics. Also seeing how significant the Board of Trade's role was in building the Canada Line."

Part of Kelly's job includes Export Documentation Certification. By doing so, he helps contribute to the flow of Canadian goods overseas every day, which is more important now than ever.

Some of Kelly's favourite memories of working at GVBOT include guest speakers, such as President Clinton, President Obama, and former First Lady Michelle Obama. He also enjoyed all the events that took place around the 2010 Vancouver Olympics.



"Talking to my coworkers is always interesting and informative. There is such a breadth of life experience and knowledge! It's something I look forward to every day."

Recognizing longtime GVBOT employees



Janice Chiem, Director of Finance – 14 years

“One of my favourite memories of working at GVBOT is when the entire team colluded to play an April Fool’s prank on Bridgitte. We had members of our Board of Directors as well as our former CEO, Iain Black, text her to congratulate her for securing Elon Musk. When she asks senior staff about it, we told her it was a fake event that was supposed to be a prank on the staff but that it accidentally got sent out to all members. Imagine her reaction! April Fools!”

“Over the years I have had the privilege to work with many colleagues who have come and gone. While we are a high-performing team and take our work seriously when we need to, we also have a lot of fun. One of my fondest memories is of a colleague who offered to do public and embarrassing acts to raise awareness for Movember and I was selected to pie him in the face with a chocolate mousse pie!”



Sarah Strong
Senior Manager, Member Engagement
– 13 years

“It’s hard to pick just one favorite moment from my twelve and a half years at GVBOT—there have been so many unforgettable experiences, from hearing from the Obamas and Hillary Clinton to connecting with inspiring local leaders and having fun implementing the GVBOT Corporate Cup. If I had to choose one, taking my mom to see Oprah was truly special. But what I’m most grateful for are the incredible people I’ve met along the way. From colleagues past and present to members and speakers, each connection has left a lasting impression.”



Mark Cosgrove,
Senior Manager, Information
Technology Services – 13 years

“One of my favourite memories at the GVBOT was meeting Michelle Obama and hearing her speak—an inspiring moment I’ll never forget. I’m proud to have led a major backend migration to a flexible, future-ready platform, and worked closely with a small team on a successful website rebuild that integrated seamlessly, delivered on time and well under budget.”



Lisa Kaisers, Director, Partnerships – 12 years

“November 2025 will be my 12th year with GVBOT, I can’t believe how fast the time has flown, I guess it’s true when “they” say “time flies when you’re having fun!” I would have to say meeting Michelle and President Obama would be my most memorable moment(s) working at GVBOT. When it comes to my proudest accomplishment, I would have to say securing our 6th and final Pillar Partner in the midst of a pandemic and growing our partnership portfolio while so many other organizations were losing partners is something I will carry with me for the rest of my career.”

KP

Ketan Patel, Accounting Manager - 12 years

"I have been fortunate to work at GVBOT for over 10 years, and I am truly inspired by the dynamic group of colleagues I have the privilege of working with each day. Over the years I have seen how our member engagement, advocacy work and first-class event production have positively impacted the local business community. On a personal note, as an avid basketball fan, my fondest memory of my time with GVBOT was hosting an event in collaboration with the NBA."



Alison Russell,
Marketing Manager
- 12 years

"Over my 12+ years at GVBOT, I've gathered many fond memories. A few that stand out include planning the Obama events in 2018 and 2019, managing our organizational rebrand in 2016, and leading two website refreshes in 2015 and 2024. Most importantly though, I've had the honour of working alongside some truly incredible people."



Robert (Bob) Peden,
Senior Member Business Advisor
- 9 years

"As Senior Member Business Advisor, it gives me immense personal and professional satisfaction to do my part in serving and supporting our many members. One of my favourite memories to date is having been a part of the GVBOT team that hosted the Obama's back in 2018 and 2019."



Fatima Rasheed
Program Specialist - 6 years

"One of my proudest accomplishments has been leading the Trade Accelerator Program (TAP) at WTC Vancouver, helping hundreds of businesses scale and succeed in international markets. A highlight was welcoming the Federal Minister of Trade to celebrate our 500th graduate, a milestone that reflects the incredible growth and ongoing achievements of our alumni, which is deeply rewarding to witness."



Melody Secord
Strategic Liasion - 5 years

"My most fond memory and ongoing pleasure has been working alongside the best and brightest—building strong relationships with staff, members, and the board of directors. Together, we've created processes and systems that make our organization run smoothly to ensure we can advance our strategic priorities."



Derek Schofield
Director Membership Advisory Services
- 5 years

"Looking back, it's tough to pick just one memory because I've had the privilege of meeting so many inspiring individuals and organizations through GVBOT. What I'm most proud of is being able to help businesses build the right connections that lead to real impact."

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

Greater Vancouver Board of Trade Pillar Partners



World Trade Centre Vancouver Global Partners



Commitment to Reconciliation

Greater Vancouver Board of Trade recognizes and respects that our programs, events, and services are located on the traditional and ancestral territories of Indigenous Peoples, specifically the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Səḥílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) and Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) Nations. We acknowledge the relationship that Indigenous people have to their territories and the suffering and systemic inequities faced by Indigenous Peoples.

Greater Vancouver Board of Trade is committed to reconciliation and will demonstrate this by supporting Indigenous Peoples in the communities we serve. With a

mandate to lead, unite, and champion business to ensure Greater Vancouver is thriving, we will work towards a shared vision to make Vancouver stronger and a region that thrives on its true history, partnerships, and business landscape.

Greater Vancouver Board of Trade is committed to our role in addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report, specifically Calls to Action 92ii and 92iii, which outline a reconciliation framework for the corporate sector to adopt the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Our Approach

Education and Awareness

Greater Vancouver Board of Trade will actively work to build knowledge and awareness, both internally and externally, to increase understanding of Indigenous Peoples including the history and legacy of residential schools, UNDRIP, including the Calls to Action and Treaties.

Meaningful Inclusion

Greater Vancouver Board of Trade will work to include Indigenous Peoples throughout the organization, ensuring they have a seat at the table, including the Board of Directors, Advisory Committees, staff and management, and as part of community events and programming.

Economic Partnership

We believe the future prosperity of our region is dependent on a foundation of respect with Indigenous communities. Greater Vancouver Board of Trade will work to foster relationships and build trust with local Indigenous Nations centred on economic and community development. We commit to working in partnership with Indigenous communities on economic development projects and initiatives to provide sustainable local economic benefits for all.



Chief Wayne Sparrow
(yəxʷyaxʷələq)

Musqueam Indian Band
(xʷməθkʷəy̓əm)

Our purpose and vision

OUR PURPOSE

To lead, unite, and champion business to ensure Greater Vancouver is thriving and our region is the best place to live and work.

OUR VISION

To be the leading catalyst for economic growth and prosperity that creates a lasting impact for generations.



GREATER VANCOUVER
BOARD OF TRADE

Suite 400-999 Canada Place (Komagata Maru Place) Vancouver, B.C. V6C 3E1

T. 604-681-2111 | F. 604.681.0437 | E. info@boardoftrade.com