

## 7 International Friendship and Twin City Relationships

Municipal twinning is an ancient practice dating back to 9<sup>th</sup> Century Europe and the sister city relationship of Paderborn, Germany with LeMans, France. Modern twinning efforts expanded greatly during the reconstruction efforts following the Second World War, and as an ongoing effort at citizen diplomacy during the Cold War. The relationships created over the years have taken a wide variety of forms and aspects, and a growing body of “best practices” is now emerging to guide communities as they assess and consider their options for productive economic, social, cultural and recreational partnerships with sister communities around the world.

The City of Vaughan has a number of existing “Friendship and Twin” city relationships with communities including:

- Sora, Italy (1992) Friendship City
- Ramla, Israel (1993) Friendship City
- Sanjo, Japan (1993) Friendship City
- Yangzhou, China (1995) Friendship City
- Baguio, Philippines (1997) Twin City
- Delia, Italy (1998) Friendship City
- Lanciano, Italy (2002) Friendship City

The International Partnership Policy of the City of Vaughan has been in place since 1991 and it indicates two forms of International Partnerships: Friendship Agreements and Twin City Agreements. These partnerships are also characterized by the type of collaboration that they propose to cultivate: cultural or educational relations or economic opportunity development.

In 2007, Council approved a report directing staff to bring forward recommendations for new economic partnerships with suitable

partner cities in China, northern Italy, USA and any other jurisdiction offering excellent growth opportunities for Vaughan.

In addition to the current partnerships, in 2006, the City of Vaughan also entered into an informal agreement with an office of the University of Calabria in Cosenza, for the purpose of exploring innovative programs for young professionals and the business community.

Following Vaughan’s 2007 business mission to Italy, initial discussions took place with respect to a potential relationship with Parma. In addition, Council placed a moratorium on new partnerships with any jurisdiction in Italy for a period of at least five years in order to focus on existing partnerships and the inherent opportunities realized from existing ties.

Given the number and varied directions with respect to International Partnerships, this strategy re-examines the City’s International Partnerships; its future activities with existing partners; new partnership proposals and handling protocols; resource requirements; and benefits to the City.

In the City of Vaughan, there is a distinction between twin cities and friendship cities. Using a human relationship analogy, those cities with whom Vaughan has the closest and most formal of relationships, we would consider twin cities. Whereas relationships with friendship cities are less formal, and the relationship is generally accepted as still evolving. Notwithstanding these differences, international partnership programs raise awareness of global issues; build and strengthen bridges of mutual understanding and respect; and promote economic development.

### 7.1 Best Practices

As mentioned, there is a growing body of “best practices” now emerging to guide communities as they assess and consider international business development and international relationships. The strategy identifies four leading options that will assist Vaughan in creating a solid IBD Program which in time may lead to further more formal partnerships.

#### 7.1.1 The Hanseatic Model

In the late Middle Ages, the fragmented political structure of Europe left many cities and towns feeling isolated, unprotected and economically vulnerable. In 1241, the small north German city of



Lubeck created a series of alliances with other communities in order to enhance security, create stability and – above all – to promote new economic and trade opportunities. It began by forming an alliance with the City of Hamburg, followed soon after by the City of Cologne. In 1266, this alliance of cities (known as the Hansa or Hanseatic League) was granted special

trade rights in England, and began a period of rapid expansion.

By about 1350, the Hanseatic League had grown to include 170 member towns and cities, and had become one of the most powerful political and economic forces in Europe. Its influence was eroded during the Thirty Years War, and the Peace of Westphalia which ended that war in 1648 formally signalled the end of Hanseatic power. European power increasingly gravitated toward a strong group of emerging nations, including Spain, France, England and Sweden.

In recent years, however, the advent of globalization has led some theorists to suggest that the declining power of national governments in a globalized economy allows towns and cities to once again reassert their influence, and to establish productive international partnerships between cities even when they are geographically separated.

The Hanseatic League is often held up as a model of how such structures may be established, nurtured and maintained over time. Modern advocates suggest that “neo-Hanseatic” models of municipal cooperation will begin to emerge as cities identify potential partners with whom they may pursue common economic, political and cultural goals.

Neo-Hanseatic models are often attractive to small and mid-size municipalities, as they allow communities with corresponding interests to pool their limited resources. In theory, such co-operative approaches also lend themselves to more effective lobbying and political pressure tactics. However, the primary motivation for neo-Hanseatic models – as with the ancient Hanseatic League – appears to be for the promotion of economic activity.

#### 7.1.2 Best Cities Global Alliance

The Best Cities Global Alliance is probably the most successful neo-Hanseatic model involving a Canadian city. The Alliance is a

coalition of eight cities working cooperatively to attract “mega-conferences” of 10,000 delegates or more to their communities. The eight member cities are:

- Cape Town, South Africa
- Copenhagen, Denmark
- Dubai, United Arab Emirates
- Edinburgh, Scotland
- Melbourne, Australia
- San Juan, Puerto Rico
- Sydney, Australia
- Vancouver, Canada

While in one sense each of these cities is competing with the others to attract conferences to its community, the reality is that these large-scale conferences do not visit the same city year after year – rather, they move from global venue to global venue. The rationale behind the Best Cities Global Alliance is thus to gather and share intelligence on those organizations and associations holding mega-conferences, thereby allowing member cities to improve their “bids” for conference hosting opportunities, and to improve their chances of winning large value conference contracts.



At the same time, member cities can promote their partners when hosting large events within their own communities. In this way, the eight member cities collaborate to improve their individual performances within this particular area of economic activity.

Each of the eight cities makes an annual contribution to the organization, a portion of which is used to hire a General Manager who coordinates the organization’s activities. The organization operates under the auspices of a Board of Directors representing each of the eight communities, with the Chair selected on a rotating basis among all eight communities. The organization is presently based in Denmark.

### 7.1.3 The St. Catharines, Ontario – Oulu, Finland Model

In 2001, economic development staff at the City of St. Catharines in the Niagara Region of southern Ontario began to consider possible international linkages in an effort to kickstart a sagging manufacturing economy. Recognizing the need to diversify the economic base, they searched for a potential partner that had successfully shifted from the old to the new economy, but also a partner that could conceivably offer creative opportunities for new economic and cultural partnerships on an ongoing basis.

For a number of reasons, the St. Catharines team ultimately settled on the community of Oulu in northern Finland:

- The two communities were roughly the same size at 120,000-130,000 people
- Oulu had been a traditional manufacturing centre that transformed itself in the 1990s into a world-leading centre of wireless communications and information technology development
- Oulu had been ranked by *Wired Magazine* as one of the “10 smartest cities in the world”
- Finland was ranked by Transparency International as the most honest country for business in the world
- Finland was ranked by the World Economic Forum as the “most competitive economy in the world”
- Finland was ranked by the World Economic Forum as the “most technologically-advanced economy in the world”

Beginning in 2001, St. Catharines courted Oulu, proposing an informal partnership focused on creating economic linkages between the two communities. The Canadian community positioned itself as a “gateway to North America” for Oulu-based firms, where they could



enter the huge North American market from a Canadian “safe haven” with multiple, specialized support programs drawing support directly from St. Catharines municipal staff, and then – once more firmly established – take advantage of NAFTA to expand into the US market. At the same time, St. Catharines-based exporters could gain a toehold in European markets through Finnish partnerships, particularly in the

fields of wine, tourism and professional training.

Ultimately, 16 Finnish firms have established operations in St. Catharines, while a 17<sup>th</sup> firm that was already operating in the community closed a Montreal-area facility to consolidate its operations within St. Catharines. Some 50 Canadian jobs have been created through the partnership to date. Although initiated by the municipality (with financial support from the Industry Canada-administered Community Investment Support Program), the relationship has now largely been taken over by the private sector, with many of the incoming investments handled by a new St. Catharines company called The Scandic Group (TSG).



TSG is an innovative, results-oriented business development firm that specializes in the internationalization of Scandinavian-based companies.

Headquartered in St. Catharines, Ontario, TSG currently represents the North American interests of more than a dozen firms from Finland, Sweden and elsewhere in northern Europe.

The firm offers a range of support services and structures to Scandinavian firms, including Export Partner programs, market entry analysis and market assessment research, access to financing and in-market representation. TSG also works closely with regional governments – and particularly the Finnish Ministry of Employment and Economy – to assist with export development and foreign market entry programs.

TSG’s Canadian team consists of 9 staff headed by John Savio (a former software executive and entrepreneur) and Greg McCandless (a long-time economic development professional who has worked for municipalities including Fort Erie, St. Catharines and Richmond Hill).

The success of the St. Catharines-Oulu model prompted a number of other Scandinavian communities (including Lulea, Sweden and Bodo, Norway) to seek similar relationships with St. Catharines, earning the community a reputation as the “Nordic Gateway” to North America.

**7.1.4 The Global Hometown Model**

In early 2008 the Town of Markham unveiled a new economic development strategy. The strategy described a series of “enabling environments” that would be required to achieve success in the new economy. One of the targets of this activity was the “building of the global city” – in other words, the development of a community that was fully linked to and integrated into the increasingly globalized economy.

To achieve this end, the strategy suggested, Markham had to look beyond its historical international business ties, and establish new international connections that would carry it further in the future. The strongly multicultural and multilingual nature of the community were seen in this context as a foundation for creating new or enhanced international linkages and relationships, utilizing the community's own human resources to open doors to international economic opportunities. Within the strategy, this was referred to as the "global hometown" approach.

Underlying this global hometown concept is the notion that the community's existing national, cultural, and ethnic communities routinely maintain links and contacts with other members of those same communities in other countries. Residents of Chinese descent or Polish descent or Moroccan descent (for example) often retain links and close connections to their former homes and communities. In a globalized economic environment, such links are immensely valuable, and there is an opportunity for Markham to leverage those existing relationships in a manner that promotes and enhances additional investment attraction and trade partnerships for the community's benefit. Such activity is well-positioned for success, as the benefits of the relationship can apply equally to both ends of the newly-created international relationship.

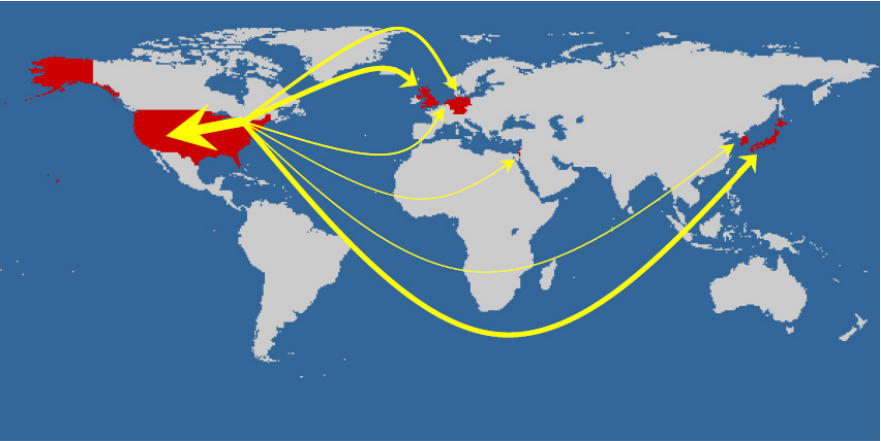
This approach also equally assumes, however, that there is a "disconnect" between the patterns of Markham's *existing* international business linkages, and its *potential* international linkages. In essence, those countries that represent the best targets under this approach are not necessarily those on which Markham's business community is presently focused.

Ownership of Markham's Top 100 firms suggested that the existing international business linkages emphasize relationships with the following countries (in descending order of magnitude):

- United States

- United Kingdom
- Japan
- Bermuda
- Germany
- Israel
- The Netherlands
- South Korea

These could be displayed on a map as illustrated below:



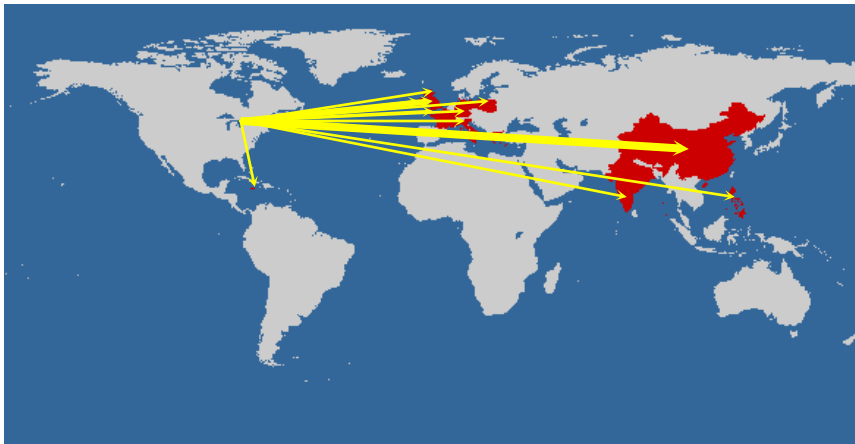
The "global hometown" strategy, in contrast, emphasized the following countries by virtue of their "people connections" to Markham:

- China
- England
- India
- Scotland
- Ireland
- Italy
- Germany



- France
- Greece
- Jamaica
- The Philippines
- Poland

These are shown on the following map:



While there was some overlap between the two approaches (notably in the UK and Germany), the analysis suggested that Markham was well-positioned – given local human resources – to pursue new international partnerships with countries that had previously been ignored. Markham economic development staff have recently taken significant steps in this direction, launching campaigns focused on India, and leading a recent trade mission to China. In both instances, they have leveraged significant support from the community’s own Indian and Chinese populations, and leveraged those local connections into contacts, intelligence and business opportunities abroad.

## 7.2 An International Business Development Strategy for Vaughan

From an economic development perspective, the City needs to form a strategy for partnerships beyond Friendship and Twin Cities; partnerships that can enhance the business development opportunities in Vaughan. There must be a strategy in place to approach potential economic partners that can benefit Vaughan, or can benefit from a partnership with Vaughan. The new economic strategy advocates this type of program instead of the more cultural or social partnerships facilitated through traditional Friendship and Twin city relationships. As such, a more detailed discussion of the objectives of such a partnership strategy, as well as the opportunities associated with that potential partnership structure is warranted.

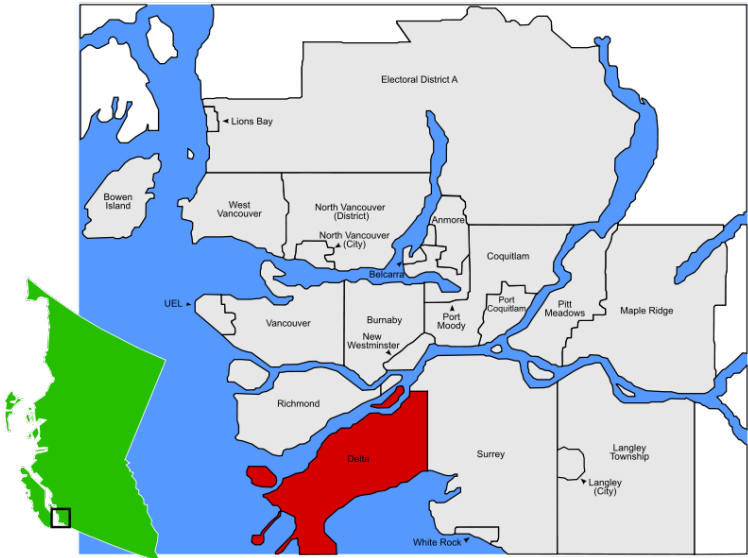
Vaughan should incorporate elements of each of the four models outlined above into the International Business Development (IBD) partnerships strategy, so that the objectives of Vaughan’s international business development are tied to bringing economic benefits to Vaughan’s businesses and residents.

The key objectives for Vaughan’s IBD strategy are:

1. To support local economic development by providing local businesses with an additional tool to access new markets, achieve growth, and retain their competitive edge (Hanseatic Model)
2. To support local economic development by pursuing foreign investment attraction (St. Catharines-Oulu Model)
3. To create or leverage opportunities arising from multicultural or ethnic communities (Global Hometown Model)
4. To enhance Vaughan’s global image (Global Cities Alliance)

At the same time, the development of the Vaughan Enterprise Zone – with its important CP rail connections linking Vaughan to the larger global economy – suggest a potential anchor for IBD efforts. The rail

connections into Vaughan essentially originate in western Canada, and primarily at the port facilities in the Vancouver suburb of Delta, British Columbia. A community of about 120,000 people, Delta is located at the southern edge of the Greater Vancouver area.



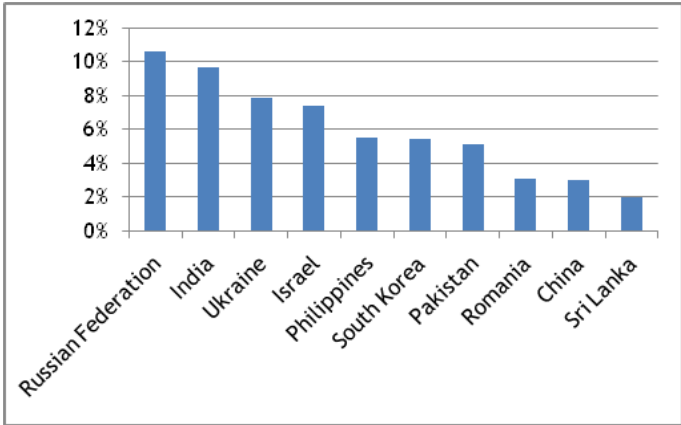
The CP rail lines originating in Vaughan essentially terminate in Delta, where they are linked to Asia-Pacific trade through the Deltaport Container Terminal, one of Canada's largest container terminals. An obvious potential for partnership exists between Delta and Vaughan, based on the following factors:

- Asia-Pacific goods carried by CP Rail and destined for the Ontario market enter the country through Delta and make their way to Vaughan
- Goods produced in Ontario and destined for markets in the Asia-Pacific region pass through Vaughan before heading west to Delta

- The realities of rail traffic suggest that CP Rail has little desire to stop at additional locations along the route from Vaughan to Delta; such stops cause delays and make goods transport less profitable
- Vaughan and Delta may both take advantage of the existing flow of goods to expand existing strengths in transportation, warehousing and logistics, while cooperatively pursuing new opportunities for packaging, light assembly and value-added manufacturing.

Through the Asia-Pacific linkages of cargo moving in and out of Delta, Vaughan should then seek to partner with additional communities across the Asia-Pacific region to form a mutually supportive and targeted trade and economic development partnership. Statistics Canada data suggests that recent immigration patterns into Vaughan point to strong people-based connections to a number of Asia-Pacific communities. The following chart displays data on the community's top sources of recent immigration.

Figure 25: Top 10 Recent Immigrants in Vaughan by Place of Birth, 2006



Source: Derived from Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006 by Millier Dickinson Blais

This suggests that a “global hometown” approach to identifying partners in the Asia-Pacific region could draw on local resources to support efforts in the following countries:

- Russia
- India
- The Philippines
- South Korea
- Pakistan
- China
- Sri Lanka

However, the nature of economic development partnerships is such that preference must be given to partnerships that present significant economic opportunity. The struggling economies of Pakistan, Sri Lanka and even the Philippines offer limited opportunities to Vaughan from an economic development perspective.

At the same time, Japan’s strong economy and the rapidly growing Indonesian economy may also be of interest in the later timeframe of the strategy. In that regard, partnerships may one day be pursued with areas like Kobe, Japan, or Jakarta Utara, Indonesia, which both exhibit similar characteristics to Vaughan.

Kobe, Japan is an Edge City within the Keihanshin metropolitan region (which includes Osaka and Nagoya), Kobe is home to Japan’s fourth busiest port, and is a major rail and highway transportation hub. A traditional centre of advanced manufacturing and food processing, the community has growing strengths in biotechnology and information technologies. It is a major centre for Japanese multinationals including Mitsubishi and Kawasaki. More than 100 western multinationals have located their regional head offices in Kobe. Kobe has no existing twinning relationships with Canada.

Also, Jakarta Utara (North Jakarta), Indonesia is an Edge City within the Greater Jakarta metropolitan area of Indonesia. The Tanjung

Priok port facility – the largest in Indonesia and the 26th largest in the world – is located in the community. An access point to a fast-growing emerging market, this particular relationship also takes advantage of a growing desire on the part of Indonesian industries to cooperate with Canadian partners, a subject of ongoing discussion with organizations including the Canadian manufacturers and Exporters. Local industry has a heavy focus on automotive, electronics and biomedical opportunities, and the Jakarta regional economy exhibits a heavy reliance on international trade. There is a growing demand for environmental technologies, particularly with respect to water quality, water distribution and water treatment. Neither Jakarta Utara nor metropolitan Jakarta has any existing twinning relationships with Canada.

While communities in the developed world with their established markets and sophisticated economic engines will be of particular importance in this context, some less-developed economies also hold strong potential. In 2001, US investment firm Goldman Sachs published a report which identified the BRIC countries (Brazil-Russia-India-China) as ideal economic partners. Some more recent observers have included Indonesia on this list, referring to BRIIC countries. From this perspective, Vaughan should consider the development of a “Best Cities Global Alliance”-style partnership.

Within this context, it must consider how existing and potential economic and trade linkages connect it to other communities and partners internationally. From this perspective, it may be appropriate to consider links to other global “mega regions” (using Richard Florida’s terminology described in Chapter 3), and within those mega regions, to connect with other “Edge Cities” – fast growing centres of economic activity at the periphery of these mega regions, situated where trade and transportation links are strongest and most dynamic. The choice of partner communities should also be directed by apparent economic linkages in terms of common industrial and trade characteristics, which will allow Vaughan to promote a St.



Catharines/Oulu-style “win-win” relationship as the basis for an ongoing economic development partnership. Wherever possible, this should build on the “people connections” of those already living within Vaughan, in order to build bridges via existing national, ethnic, linguistic and cultural connections.

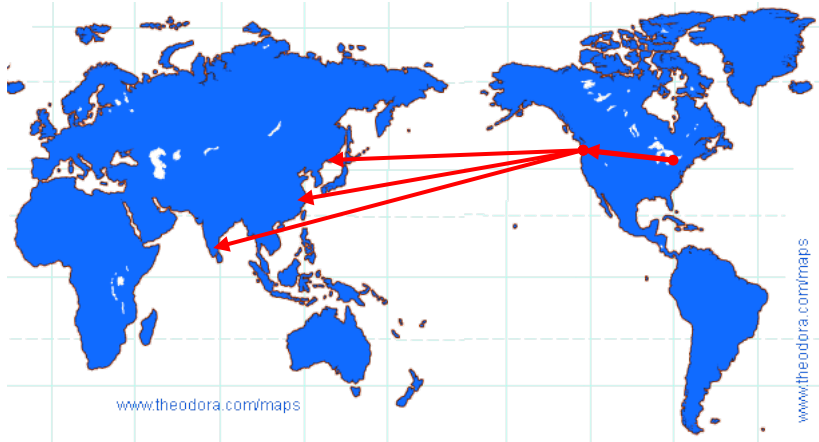
From the perspective of an Asia-Pacific orientation, partnerships with the following communities are recommended;

- **Delta, British Columbia** – located at the southern edge of the Greater Vancouver Area, Vaughan’s existing rail connections from the Enterprise Zone run directly to Delta and its Deltaport facility. Delta is thus the other end of the Asia-Pacific/Tor-Mon-Tawa gateway and trade corridor that holds significant potential for Vaughan. Delta is also well-positioned to help fund a joint approach to partners across the Asia-Pacific region, as it is eligible for funding through the British Columbia Ministry of Municipal Affairs’ “BC-Asia-Pacific Municipal Twinning Program” which offers \$50,000 seed funding to communities seeking to partner across the Asia-Pacific region.
- **Vladivostok, Russia** – this community of 595,000 is Russia’s largest seaport on the Pacific coast. An entry point into one of the BRIC countries, and an opportunity to build upon the presence of the large Russian population within Vaughan, Vladivostok is seeking to increase its international trade linkages. Its current major imports and import needs include food products, medical technologies and medicines, automobiles and automotive products and environmental technologies. Vladivostok has no existing twinning relationships with Canada.
- **Chennai, India** – formerly known as Madras, Chennai is home to one of the six largest port facilities in India, and one of only two to see traffic increase during the global recession of 2008-2009. A major automotive manufacturing centre, the

community is increasingly a centre of advanced materials, as well as a focus in the growing Indian electronics, software and IT industry. Another entry point to the BRIC economies, Chennai is also situated in Tamil Nadu state, which gives it strong cultural and linguistic connections to Vaughan’s Sri Lankan population. Chennai has no existing twinning relationships with Canada.

- **Yiwu, China** – An Edge City of the Jinhua Prefecture-level city, Yiwu is a major market and trade centre in China’s coastal zone. Providing another entry to the BRIC nations, and building on the asset of Vaughan’s growing existing population of Chinese origin, Yiwu has also expressed interest in partnerships with Vaughan. An important local and regional transportation hub, Yiwu relies on international trade connections to service its rapidly growing economy. It has been highlighted by investment firms including Morgan Stanley as a significant growth centre in the Chinese economy.

These potential partners and trade links are displayed below:



The rapid growth of the Asia-Pacific economy and Vaughan's emerging natural trade linkages with that region underlie this particular set of international partnerships. This should not preclude future consideration of Atlantic-oriented opportunities. This approach would likely link Vaughan to outbound US ports such as New York City, and then onwards to potential partners in locations including the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and Brazil. Should the Asia-Pacific program prove successful, additional resources could be allocated to this effort at a future time.

As noted before, the Economic Development Department was instructed through a council resolution to investigate a relationship with Parma, Italy. The area has a strong economic presence in food processing, most notably the multi-national food and dairy company Parmalat SpA, and agriculture. However, in light of the proposed direction of the Economic development Department to seek out economic partnerships rather than Friendship or Twin city relationships, Parma may not necessarily represent as high-value an economic partner as other cities identified as potential economic partners in this chapter.

In addition, consultation with industry and community leaders has resulted in the suggestion that Vaughan, based on strong national trade relationships between the countries, should be focusing on a US partner as well. In a way, this thinking is based on the principles outlined in the Hanseatic model. The two countries exchange approximately \$1.5 Billion in goods – and people to people contact – daily. Collectively, that trade volume accounted for over \$560 Billion in trade between the two countries in 2007. As a gateway to trade for the country's largest market, the City is uniquely positioned to become an integral part of the expansion of that trade – especially given that 70% of this trade is transported by truck and prominent pieces of truck-rail infrastructure that support long- to short-haul trade reside in the city in the CP Rail intermodal yard and the CN marshalling yards.

Considering the convergence sectors though, Vaughan seems positioned well to facilitate a partnership with a certain type of U.S. city. The focus on advanced industrial technologies, including research, development and design in materials, lends itself to a “targeting” of a specific US partner. In addition, elements of growing that type of sector – the creative economy, quality of life, transportation connectivity – further assist in the narrowing of potential partners.

Two additional partners from the U.S. should be pursued. Each potential U.S. partner demonstrates similar advantages in terms of a potential partner for the City. Both are home to major universities with centres and institutes focused on a number of Vaughan's target areas; primarily advanced materials, but also transportation, logistics, and construction research, with growing orientation towards “green” industries. As well, both Cities have previously been identified as leaders within the emerging creative economy. Either community represents a potential partner for the City on the basis of the advancement of similar economic development goals:

- **Dayton, Ohio** – Dayton is the fourth largest metropolitan area in Ohio, home to the University of Dayton, and is noted as part of one of the two major logistics centres in the United States, having 60% of the U.S. population, 60% of U.S. manufacturing capacity, and 60% of the Canadian population within 500 miles.<sup>36</sup> Dayton is home to the National Composites Centre (NCC), which is recognized as the national centre of excellence for the development and commercialization of composite materials and manufacturing processes for the aerospace, defence, ground transportation, commercial, and infrastructure markets. In addition, Wright State University in the City provides

<sup>36</sup> Page, D. Dayton Region a Crucial Hub for Supply Chain Management. *Dayton Daily News*. Published on December 21, 2009.

innovative research and academics in logistics and supply chain management. The City of Dayton supports a number of research pursuits in advanced materials and manufacturing, transportation technologies, small business development, and the creative and cultural economy, including sponsorship of a number of incubators and institutes focused on those fields.

Dayton does not have any existing twinning relationships with Canada. Over the short term, Dayton provides an excellent potential partner for Vaughan, given alignment of priority sectors, especially transportation and logistics, and importance as a hub along the national and international goods movement chain. That in itself is a significant rationale for partnership, but both cities can also point to similarities as emerging creative economy centres, with resources devoted to growth of those industries. Overall, Dayton, Ohio should be viewed as a potential U.S. partner over the shorter term.

- **Austin, Texas** - Austin is the Capital City of the State of Texas, home to the main campus of the University of Texas and a strong arts and cultural cluster that continues to keep the City among the highest rated cities in the United States for quality of life. Considered a major centre for the high tech sector, the city has emerging industries within the clean energy, digital media, wireless, and biotech/life sciences sectors, with strong support for the development of locally owned small businesses. In addition, the development and retention of creative industries and people in the city is a noted priority, supported by staff resources across the department of economic development. Of primary concern to Vaughan may be the presence of materials, transportation, and construction research capacity at the UT campus in Austin, which includes facilities like the “virtual” Texas Materials Institute, the Centre for Transportation Research, the Construction Industry Institute, and the Construction

Materials Research Group. Any of these may be a logical basis for a partnership between the two cities – Vaughan can provide a laboratory or incubator environment for the application of advanced technologies developed there, especially given the confluence of materials production and transportation opportunities and importance in the City and the “virtual” nature of materials research at the TMI.

Austin does not have any existing twinning relationships with Canada. However, over the short-term, the potential for an international partnership with Austin may be limited for Vaughan. Though there is some overlap between economic priorities and objectives between the two cities, Vaughan may not necessarily align with the priorities of Austin for an international partner in the short term, based on limited potential benefit for Austin. However, with the more sophisticated development of industries within advanced goods movement and production, as well as the development of the creative economy in the City, Vaughan may prove to be an excellent partner in innovation for Austin.

### 7.3 International Learning Partnerships

With the designation of the lands at Highway 400 and Major Mackenzie Drive for the development of a hospital, the City may have an opportunity to develop an associated science and technology park, potentially with a focus on a niche area of life or medical sciences. It should be noted, however, that the sector is especially crowded across the Greater Toronto Area with many communities either targeting life sciences, or establishing research and technology parks to accommodate life sciences and related industries. For example, the Town of Oakville is currently planning the development of a life sciences research and technology park on the lands adjacent to the proposed new hospital in Oakville. Thus it is necessary, as the City of Vaughan moves forwards on the planning for the hospital and adjacent lands, that it do so with a focused set of objectives and priorities.

Within that context, a differently structured international partnership may be of some value for Vaughan. Where the previously identified partnerships were based on mutual economic benefit and opening trade routes, these partnerships would instead be focused on gathering best practices information that can be used by Vaughan in the development of its own science and technology park. They would be international learning partnerships, from which Vaughan can learn about the experiences in developing similar parks, as well as establish direction on what industrial niche the park will serve. These are established as learning partnerships because Vaughan has potentially more to gain from a partnership than its partner. Without an existing focus on the development of life sciences industries, there can be little mutual benefit to the partnership over the short-term. However, by informally aligning with these partners and building a relationship, Vaughan can begin to build momentum behind the development of its own science and technology park.

Based on the size and characteristics of the City, and the potential size of the research park in Vaughan, two U.S. partners with existing master planned science and technology parks come to light: Skokie, Illinois and Cambridge, Massachusetts.

- **Skokie, Illinois** – Skokie is a village of approximately 64,000 people in the suburbs of Chicago. In 2003, ForestCity Science and Technology Group announced the redeveloped a vacant 23 acre Pfizer campus into the Illinois Science + Technology Park, focused on a range of early-stage to established life sciences companies. The NorthShore University Health System, a comprehensive, fully integrated, healthcare delivery system that serves the greater North Shore and northern Illinois communities is an anchor tenant of the research park, but the park is also just 10 minutes from Northwestern University. Among the other tenants are companies focused on nanotechnology, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, and laboratory support. In addition, the

Science + Technology Park is located along the Chicago Transit Authority's Yellow Line, offering connections throughout the Metro Chicago Area.

Presently, Skokie does not have any twinning relationships with Canada. Similar to the economic partnerships noted above, Skokie may be a good first international learning partnership to pursue. While there are major tenants at the technology park, the park is still designated for development. Thus it would be a good partner to engage at the early, conceptual stages, as many of the initial development issues may still be present.

- **Cambridge, Massachusetts** – Cambridge, a city of approximately 106,000 people within the greater Boston area, is home to two of the most prominent institutions in the U.S.: Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). The latter institution, MIT, forms the anchor of the University Park, a 27-acre ForestCity Science and Technology Group development containing 1.3 million square feet of research space, 250,000 square feet of hotel, restaurants, and retail space, as well as 674 residential units. The park is home to several prominent institutions in the biosciences industry, and presents a best practice example of the integration of a research park into an urban area.

Cambridge does not have any existing twinning relationships with Canada. Like Austin, Cambridge represents a longer-term partner for Vaughan. As the master planning process progresses on the hospital lands, Cambridge may prove to be a valuable partner to have from a learning standpoint. The University Park is largely built out and contains a number of prominent companies, not to mention positioning at the centre of an existing biotechnology cluster within the Greater Boston Area. In building a learning relationship with the City, Vaughan can begin to craft a vision about what the science and technology park should focus on, as well as the resources and activities required to achieve that vision.

## 7.4 Practical Implications

The approach described above carries with it a number of implications. In large part, it de-emphasizes the existing international relationships. While it is true that from an economic development perspective, the existing relationships do not offer significant economic benefit, from a cultural and community perspective, they are very valuable.

In the case of Vaughan's "twin" and "friendship" cities that are social/cultural partnerships, there is usually strong community group support that maintains continuity of contact independent of the City. In the past, the activities of community groups have included reciprocal social/cultural visits (educational and personal exchanges); cultural celebrations; etc. Community groups do some very significant work, and it is recognized that the City reaps the benefits of those efforts.

To this end, these relationships should be continued by the City as a socio-cultural function, with ultimate responsibility for maintaining and promoting the existing relationships assigned to a newly redefined Creative Economy function. This option would be preferable. The City would focus on leveraging these relationships to enhance its placemaking and community development efforts. For example, Sora has initiated professional exchanges in urban design and planning fields, providing expertise to the City in the development of piazzas or public squares. It has also sent cultural exhibits to the City and provided funding for bursaries for local students. The outcomes, while not immediately apparent, do have indirect economic benefits as it enhances the City's attractiveness to its ethnic populations

In the past, the City has experienced significant formal and informal resource allocation requests (capital and human) associated with social/cultural partnerships, without the benefit of sufficient consultation, preparation or proper budgeting. So how can the City

work with its existing partnership cities in ways that sets out realistic expectations and is equitable to all groups and the City?

Through research undertaken in the preparation of the strategy, it was apparent that the City's current practice with respect to hosting official delegations requires clarification. What expenses and activities will be covered: accommodations, transportation, tours, official receptions, staff involvement?

Staff of the Economic Development Department has set forth a proposed policy (Attached to the Background Economic Analysis and Appendices document as Appendix B) for the hosting of foreign delegations. This policy is fair and distinguishes between delegations from twin cities, versus friendship cities and other non-related delegations. The policy also sets out guidelines for staff involvement with the delegation so that there is an appropriate allocation of both time and budget.

At the same time, the wide scope of the proposed economic development approach to new international business development needs to be approached as a multi-phase program of activity, with checks and balances built in at each stage. This will allow staff to identify logical points in the larger process where an assessment of overall effectiveness may be used in order to refocus or fine tune efforts before critical decisions are made.

In the case of International Business Development, the partner cities may or may not have a local population supporting its activities with Vaughan. Without the support of local community groups, City Staff and Council will need to have much greater reliance on external agencies such as international chambers and business aggregators; consulates; federal and provincial economic development agencies. The process of fostering trust and communication in order to achieve economic and social benefits, require regular reciprocal visits and/or local representation or agents in the partner market.



Responsibility for new international partnerships would lie with the Director. The following phased approach to new international partnerships should be considered:

- Year One/Two: discussions with Delta, BC regarding partnership opportunities; discussions with Dayton, OH regarding partnerships opportunities; initial discussions with Skokie, IL
- Year Three: cooperation with Delta, BC to identify and target Asia-Pacific partners;
- Year Four: funding applications from Delta, BC to Asia-Pacific Twinning Program; initial discussions with Austin, TX regarding possible partnerships
- Years Five-Six: exploration of opportunities and programs with Asia-Pacific partners
- Years Seven-Eight: establishment of Asia-Pacific partnerships
- Years Nine-Ten: delivery of Asia-Pacific programs; Initial discussions with Cambridge, MA

This phased approach may be accelerated should circumstances warrant, but allows Vaughan to explore options in a low cost, low pressure environment before committing to significantly larger or formal relationships.