



## SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

February 11, 2025

A Special Meeting of the Council of the City of Vancouver was held on Tuesday, February 11, 2025, at 9:33 am, in the Council Chamber, Third Floor, City Hall, for the purpose of convening a meeting to discuss the subject of tariffs. This Council meeting was convened in person and via electronic means as authorized under the Part 14 of the *Procedure By-law*.

**PRESENT:** Mayor Ken Sim  
Councillor Rebecca Bligh  
Councillor Lisa Dominato  
Councillor Pete Fry  
Councillor Sarah Kirby-Yung  
Councillor Mike Klassen  
Councillor Peter Meiszner  
Councillor Brian Montague  
Councillor Lenny Zhou

**CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE:** Paul Mochrie, City Manager  
Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager

**CITY CLERK'S OFFICE:** Lesley Matthews, Acting Deputy City Clerk  
Cassia Nasralla, Meeting Coordinator

### WELCOME

The Mayor acknowledged we are on the unceded homelands of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh People. We thank them for having cared for this land and look forward to working with them in partnership as we continue to build this great city together.

The Mayor also recognized the immense contributions of the City of Vancouver's staff who work hard every day to help make our city an incredible place to live, work, and play.

## 1. Choose Canada, Tariffs and Buy Local Imperative

At the Council meeting on February 4, 2025, this item was brought forward as New Business. During discussion, Council voted to postpone the item to a Special Council meeting before February 25, 2025. Subsequently, the Special Council meeting was scheduled for February 11, 2025, at 9:30 am.

Council heard from one speaker who spoke in support of the recommendations and one speaker who spoke to other aspects of the recommendations.

MOVED by Councillor Fry  
SECONDED by Councillor Bligh

### WHEREAS

1. President Donald Trump has threatened to impose unilateral 25% tariffs on Canadian exports to the US, and further punitive tariffs in the event of any Canadian retaliation, Trump's tariffs are anticipated to destabilize the North American trading block and Canadian economy;
2. Experts suggest Trump's tariffs could cost the Canadian economy \$275 billion in GDP by 2030 and more than 200,000 in lost jobs;
3. On February 2, while proposing a temporary pause to his tariff agenda, President Trump reiterated his desire to see Canada become part of the United States. "What I'd like to see— Canada become our 51st state," Trump said in the Oval Office when asked what concessions Canada could offer to stave off tariffs."<sup>1</sup>
4. Prime Minister Trudeau has announced the federal government's response to any Trump tariffs with phased and targeted retaliatory tariffs, and a consumer call to action urging Canadians to "choose Canada";
5. Provincial, territorial, municipal, regional, and First Nations governments from coast to coast are united in a collective Team Canada approach to respond to US economic threats and aggression;
6. Canada's premiers have agreed to measures to strengthen internal trade and economic cooperation, and in BC, Premier Eby has suggested Crown Corporations halt buying American goods and services and instead buy Canadian goods and services first;
7. In response to tariff threats the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade (GVBOT) has challenged B.C. politicians of all political stripes to adopt a three-per-cent annual GDP growth target; and
8. The benefits of buying local are well documented, according to Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses (CFIB), 66 cents on average stay local for every dollar spent at a local business as the greatest share goes to procuring goods from other local, independent businesses, while according to the

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<sup>1</sup> TheHill.com, February 3 | [Trump doubles down on floating Canada as 51st state amid tariff dispute](#)

Independent BC report local businesses return 63% of revenue back in BC's economy compared to 14% for multi-national companies, and according to the City's own Retail-Commercial District Small Business Study, local independent businesses contribute to more vibrant Local Shopping Areas and play an important role in the livability and sustainability of the City's neighbourhoods.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT Council affirms and signals the City of Vancouver supports the Team Canada approach to align local, provincial, and national priorities as necessary to counter foreign policies designed to harm the Canadian economy or sovereignty.
- B. THAT Council directs staff to initiate an urgent high-level review of capital projects, suppliers, procurement, and trade agreement exposure and opportunities to Buy Local / Buy Canadian and report back as soon as possible with immediate and long-term strategies supporting the Team Canada approach.
- C. THAT Council directs the City's Business and Economy Office to immediately begin work with local business and community economic development organizations (including but not limited to the BIA Partnership, LOCO BC, GVBOT, CFIB, Destination Vancouver) to explore opportunities to initiate and promote a new targeted Buy Local / Buy Canadian campaign in response to tariffs;

FURTHER THAT the office is tasked to identify and report back with recommendations for streamlined, transparent and nimble City regulation for changes of use, and adaptation of business models to respond to tariffs, supply chain disruption, and GDP growth targets.

amended

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*At this point in the proceedings, Mayor Sim relinquished the Chair to Acting Mayor Meiszner in order to bring forward an amendment and participate in debate.*

\* \* \* \* \*

AMENDMENT MOVED by Mayor Sim  
SECONDED by Councillor Kirby-Yung

THAT B be amended as follows:

- The word "and" between the words "exposure" and "opportunities" be struck and replaced with "to identify";
- The words "on a priority basis" be inserted between the words "Canadian" and "and";
- The following be added to the end of B:

"including recommendations to streamline regulations and help Vancouver respond quickly to economic threats like tariffs and supply chain disruptions;

FURTHER THAT staff be directed to establish an Internal Roundtable to facilitate the rapid response to tariffs and other economic challenges facing the City of Vancouver, including direction to report back on actions the City can take on an urgent basis should the U.S. government impose tariffs including (but not limited to):

- Temporary fee reductions for patio permits and special event permits;
- Property tax deferral for commercial and/or light industrial properties;
- Potential adjustments to the City's business licensing regime to enable businesses to expand the scope of their businesses in the face of economic uncertainty, through a "split-license" mechanism."

FURTHER THAT C be amended as follows:

- The words "the City's Business and Economy Office" be struck and replaced with the words "City staff";
- The "FURTHER THAT" clause be struck;

AND FURTHER THAT the following be added as D and E:

- D. THAT Council endorse the creation of a Mayor's Task Force (type D advisory committee) with membership and terms of reference to be established by the Mayor, with a mandate to examine new pathways to make Vancouver the most competitive city for business in North America, including an aspirational goal to achieve an annual 3% growth in GDP in accordance with the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade (GVBOT) 3% Challenge through policies that measurably boost the City's economic growth and ensure a prosperous and affordable future.
- E. THAT Council directs the City Manager to engage with Invest Vancouver and formally communicate that bolstering local economic development and attracting direct foreign investment to the region are key priorities for the City of Vancouver and that Invest Vancouver should align its efforts accordingly to support this objective.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Vote No. 10520)

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*At this point in the proceedings, Mayor Sim resumed the Chair.*

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The amendment having carried, the motion as amended was put and CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Vote No. 10521).

## FINAL MOTION AS APPROVED

### WHEREAS

1. President Donald Trump has threatened to impose unilateral 25% tariffs on Canadian exports to the US, and further punitive tariffs in the event of any Canadian retaliation, Trump's tariffs are anticipated to destabilize the North American trading block and Canadian economy;
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4. Prime Minister Trudeau has announced the federal government's response to any Trump tariffs with phased and targeted retaliatory tariffs, and a consumer call to action urging Canadians to "choose Canada";
5. Provincial, territorial, municipal, regional, and First Nations governments from coast to coast are united in a collective Team Canada approach to respond to US economic threats and aggression;
6. Canada's premiers have agreed to measures to strengthen internal trade and economic cooperation, and in BC, Premier Eby has suggested Crown Corporations halt buying American goods and services and instead buy Canadian goods and services first;
7. In response to tariff threats the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade (GVBOT) has challenged B.C. politicians of all political stripes to adopt a three-per-cent annual GDP growth target; and
8. The benefits of buying local are well documented, according to Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses (CFIB), 66 cents on average stay local for every dollar spent at a local business as the greatest share goes to procuring goods from other local, independent businesses, while according to the Independent BC report local businesses return 63% of revenue back in BC's economy compared to 14% for multi-national companies, and according to the City's own Retail-Commercial District Small Business Study, local independent businesses contribute to more vibrant Local Shopping Areas and play an important role in the livability and sustainability of the City's neighbourhoods.

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THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT Council affirms and signals the City of Vancouver supports the Team Canada approach to align local, provincial, and national priorities as necessary to counter foreign policies designed to harm the Canadian economy or sovereignty.
- B. THAT Council directs staff to initiate an urgent high-level review of capital projects, suppliers, procurement, and trade agreement exposure to identify opportunities to Buy Local / Buy Canadian on a priority basis and report back as soon as possible with immediate and long-term strategies supporting the Team Canada approach, including recommendations to streamline regulations and help Vancouver respond quickly to economic threats like tariffs and supply chain disruptions;

FURTHER THAT staff be directed to establish an Internal Roundtable to facilitate the rapid response to tariffs and other economic challenges facing the City of Vancouver, including direction to report back on actions the City can take on an urgent basis should the U.S. government impose tariffs including (but not limited to):

- Temporary fee reductions for patio permits and special event permits;
  - Property tax deferral for commercial and/or light industrial properties;
  - Potential adjustments to the City's business licensing regime to enable businesses to expand the scope of their businesses in the face of economic uncertainty, through a "split-license" mechanism.
- C. THAT Council directs City Staff to immediately begin work with local business and community economic development organizations (including but not limited to the BIA Partnership, LOCO BC, GVBOT, CFIB, Destination Vancouver) to explore opportunities to initiate and promote a new targeted Buy Local / Buy Canadian campaign in response to tariffs.
- D. THAT Council endorse the creation of a Mayor's Task Force (type D advisory committee) with membership and terms of reference to be established by the Mayor, with a mandate to examine new pathways to make Vancouver the most competitive city for business in North America, including an aspirational goal to achieve an annual 3% growth in GDP in accordance with the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade (GVBOT) 3% Challenge through policies that measurably boost the City's economic growth and ensure a prosperous and affordable future.
- E. THAT Council directs the City Manager to engage with Invest Vancouver and formally communicate that bolstering local economic development and attracting direct foreign investment to the region are key priorities for the City of Vancouver and that Invest Vancouver should align its efforts accordingly to support this objective.

**ADJOURNMENT**

MOVED by Councillor Dominato  
SECONDED by Councillor Klassen

THAT the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Special Council adjourned at 10:19 am.

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