



OLIVIA CHOW MAYOR

July 14, 2025

Dear Executive Committee,

Report on the Trade Mission to Dublin and London

The recent announcement from the President of the United States threatening Canada with further tariffs is the latest in a series of provocative measures that deserve a strong and unified response from all Canadians.

The City of Toronto is working with other orders of government and cities across the country to stand up for Canadian workers, Canadian jobs, and Canadian sovereignty. A key part of our long-term response to these continued threats is building trade relationships with other partners.

In that spirit, I am writing to provide you with an update on my July 2025 trade mission to Dublin, Ireland and London, United Kingdom.

Over five days, I had 30 meetings with a wide range of business leaders in both countries through the Dublin and London Chambers of Commerce. I made connections with many companies who are interested in expanding their businesses to Toronto in industries such as film, television, digital media, snow removal, education, transportation infrastructure, and artificial intelligence. Toronto City staff will be following up with each of these contacts to see how we can facilitate their investments in our city.

Supporting Canadian Exports

One of my key observations was how focused Ireland is on their import and export strategies. Enterprise Ireland is a centralized government agency that provides a one stop shop for Irish businesses looking to expand their trade internationally. It has offices around the world that facilitate connections with global markets. This year, Enterprise Ireland's coordinated approach has already resulted in 179 new investments, a 37% increase over previous years.

Companies that are active internationally are more prosperous, competitive and skilled. At present, government support in Canada for small- and medium-size companies wishing to export their goods or services is fragmented and challenging to navigate. The City of Toronto

may receive enquiries but is not adequately equipped to support these businesses who wish to expand overseas. In discussion with Federal and Provincial trade officials during a meeting hosted by the Canadian High Commissioner in the UK, Ralph Goodale, we concluded that the City of Toronto can play a significant role in being the gateway to companies interested in export.

Our Economic Development staff will work with Canadian federal and provincial trade offices via the TradeTO initiative and explore a pilot program to enhance the capacity of small and medium sized businesses to trade internationally. Once that is established, the Protocol office will work with Toronto Global and TradeTO to determine the mission and refine the purpose of the City's International Alliance Program.

Economic Development staff will explore the suggestion of High Commissioner Goodale to include a Toronto Pavilion at the Canada Day celebrations in London to showcase our city's film, technology and AI industries.

Protecting and Strengthening Toronto's Film, Television and Digital Media Industry

Many of my meetings focused on supporting and growing Toronto's film, television and digital media sectors. These industries produce \$2.6 billion in economic activity and support over 40,000 good jobs.

I met with all the leading broadcasters and nearly every large film and TV production company in the UK and Ireland to promote the many opportunities for our industries to work together.

Production volume in Toronto's creative industry has increased dramatically from 2023 to the present. As diversification of our industry becomes more important in the face of trade and tariff threats, building stronger relationships with markets that share our values and stories is critically important.

In discussions with the film industry in both the UK and Ireland, our delegation unlocked tremendous interest in co-production partnerships with Toronto. Many Canadian producers met with their foreign counterparts through meetings and receptions arranged by our delegation. Canada's diverse talents and various stable and generous tax credits are not as well known by these foreign producers as the ones in Los Angeles. Recognizing the opportunity to promote Toronto's two greatest strengths, the Toronto Film Office is already focused on developing greater awareness in Dublin and London of the talent and tax credits that make Toronto one of the world's premier cities to produce film and television.

Public broadcasters in both countries champion significant productions telling UK and Irish stories. In our meetings with BBC and IRE, the delegation identified and opened up opportunities for co-production with Toronto. The Toronto Film Office will facilitate meetings

between Canadian broadcasters and BBC and IRE during the Toronto International Film Festival in September.

Innovative Ideas to Fight Rising Housing Costs and Get People Moving

Toronto and London are both fast growing global cities that share the values of diversity and inclusion as our strength. We also share the challenges that come with rapid growth, particularly in the areas of housing, transit and congestion.

In meetings with the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, and the Deputy Mayors for Housing and Transportation, I gained valuable and constructive insights into London's approach to resolving these shared challenges.

I will be actively exploring the British Share Home Ownership model, which assists middle income home buyers in purchasing a home.

I will also be studying what lessons we can learn from London's lane rental program that could apply to our own implementation of a new fee structure for construction projects that close our roads. In London, these fees are used to ease congestion and maintain the road infrastructure. Starting this year, Toronto is finally going to be charging appropriate fees for closing lanes of traffic to incentivize coordination between developers, utilities, the TTC and the City, so these lessons will be timely.

I also had the opportunity to learn about London's new Elizabeth Line subway. Twenty percent of the riders on this line are new customers. No doubt it eases congestion and keeps London moving. Prior to the subway line opening, there was extensive testing. This was an important reminder that, while we are all anxious for it to open, the TTC must thoroughly test the Eglinton Crosstown and Finch LRTs prior to their openings to ensure success. I hope to see a similar increase in new riders when these two long-awaited lines open in Toronto.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Executive Committee receive this report for information.

Sincerely,



Olivia Chow
Mayor of Toronto