National Innovate Council Meeting Highlights

Summary of Outcomes from Canada-wide Meetings

Q3 COUNCIL MEETINGS

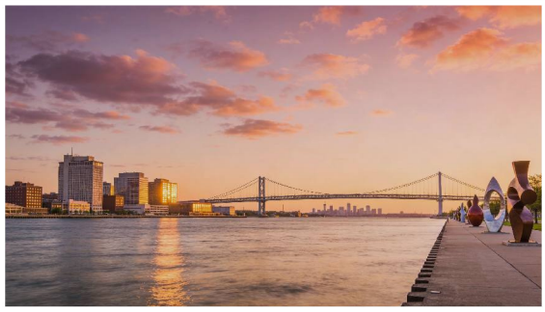
Preparing communities for coordinated recovery across Canada

Councillors emphasized practical, near-term steps to strengthen regional economies, including workforce training grants, streamlined permitting for green projects, and focused tourism promotion for smaller communities.



Winnipeg Regional Innovate Council

- Population (Metro): 865,000
- Population (MB): 1,517,379
- Unemployment (Winnipeg): 5.3%
- Unemployment (MB): 5.0%
- Avg Rental Cost: $1,667-$1,759



Windsor-Essex Innovate Council

- Population (Metro): 489,176
- Population (ON): 16,262,121
- Unemployment (Windsor): 7.5%
- Unemployment (ON): 7.0%
- Avg Rental Cost: $1,796 - $1,921



Waterloo Region & Guelph Innovate Council

- Population (Metro): 711,457
- Population (ON): 16,262,121
- Unemployment (Wat Region): 8.2%
- Unemployment (ON): 7.0%
- Avg Rental Cost: $2,050-$2,302



London Innovate Council

- Population (Metro): 865,000
- Population (ON): 16,262,121
- Unemployment (London): 8.5%
- Unemployment (ON): 7.0%
- Avg Rental Cost: $1,800-$2,095



Calgary Innovate Council

- Population (Metro): 1,709,000
- Population (ON): 5,101,050
- Unemployment (Calgary): 6.7%
- Unemployment (AB): 6.4%
- Avg Rental Cost: $1,748-$1,967



Regina Innovate Council

- Population (Metro): 291,187
- Population (SK): 1,278,402
- Unemployment (Regina): 6.2%
- Unemployment (SK): 5.4%
- Avg Rental Cost: $1,449-$1,594.

Q3 Council Meetings - September, 2026

The Innovate Council Canada is an initiative of The Roundtable Event Co.
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National Roundtable Discussion Topics

Question #1 - Winnipeg Region

Identify regional anchor industries in the Regina region that are facing immediate challenges (tariff or regulatory friction), mapping socio-economic spillovers onto local employment and municipal, regional, and provincial initiatives.

Our Task: By consensus, identify our top three industries in the region who are facing immediate challenges due to the changing landscape in Canada-USA trade.

From the Discussion

- **Crown Royal**, a globally popular Canadian whisky owned by Diageo is manufactured in Gimley, MB and employs about 80 people. The USA President recently signed an Executive Order that would prohibit the importing of Canadian-made alcoholic products. At this time there is some uncertainty as to whether that EO would affect this product.
- There are 2 primary **iron and steel mills** located in Manitoba. The City of Selkirk is home to a major steel mill, employing 550 workers, and is facing intense vulnerability, but employment currently holds steady.
- Manitoba **agriculture industry** faces significant economic pressure and uncertainty. Some 46% of the Provinces' agri-food exports, roughly $9.28B, are shipped directly to the USA. Live pigs and pork are major cross-border exports, but with the pressures of the tariff, producers and processors fear instability and are unwilling to invest in new farm equipment or expand capacity.
- Manitoba's **forestry industry** has widespread market uncertainty due to the 50% Section 338 Tariffs. Manitoba operations are aggressively prioritizing local Canadian infrastructure projects and seeking non-US international buyers.
- The **Arctic Gateway** has seen a surge in trade diversifications and volume and Canadian industry leaders look for ways to bypass American supply lines. The Gateway serves as an "escape route", with some ports seeing a doubling of its critical mineral shipments to Europe.

Top 3 Industries facing immediate challenges

- **Steel mills and manufacturing**
- **Agri Businesess**
- **Transportation**

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National Roundtable Discussion Topics

Question #2 - Winnipeg Region

Tactical Playbooks for Private: What are some immediate, actionable firm-level steps (including supply chain shifts, localized domestic sourcing, and operational pivots) that local entities can employ to off-set the impact of the changing trade dynamic in North America?

Task: What is the single-most critical, low-cost operational change a local firm can implement today to protect its bottom line?

Suggestion

Trade Specialist. Companies that are exporting or importing goods to/from the USA should have a specialist on their payroll to manage product code classifications, to seek exemptions from tariffs.

Additional note: Credit Unions in Manitoba account for 41% usage for funding, but capital is restricted within the provincial borders, which limits sources of capital. Regulatory change needs to be made to allow Credit Unions to offer investment.

Question #3 - Winnipeg Region

Ecosystem Support Systems & Collective Action: Avenues for local B2B and B2G alliances, regional supply syndicates, and targeted collaboration with local, regional, provincial and federal economic agencies for toolkits and market diversion.

Task: What is one specific recommendation this council can make to address how best to promote the various local/provincial/federal toolkits to businesses across the region?

Recommendation

Program Education: Federal, Provincial and Local Governments have numerous support programs available, but there is a lack of knowledge as to what funding exists, The Chamber of Commerce should coordinate the various programs available within the community, and offer counselling to assist in the application process.

Additional notes: The Hub Model approach should be employed, which consists of a multi-agency team focused on addressing specific situations where the probability of experiencing harm is imminent.

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National Roundtable Discussion Topics

Question #1 - Windsor-Essex

Identify regional anchor industries in the Windsor-Essex region that are facing immediate challenges (tariff or regulatory friction), mapping socio-economic spillovers onto local employment and municipal, regional, and provincial initiatives.

Our Task: By consensus, identify our top three industries in the region who are facing immediate challenges due to the changing landscape in Canada-USA trade.

From the Discussion

- **Auto manufacturing** is at the heart of Windsor since 1904 when the Ford Motor Company of Canada was established. The Windsor Assembly Plant - the City's largest private-sector employer run by Stellantis - has faced recurring production cancellations and temporary idling periods, including scheduled plant downtime.
- The tariffs have triggered layoffs and reduced shifts across connected cross-border **supply chains**, impacting local tool, mould, and die makers as well as regional **parts suppliers**.
- Overall visitation numbers for the Windsor-Essex **tourism industry** dropped by nearly 10% compared to the previous year, driven largely by heightened Canada-U.S. geopolitical tensions and ongoing tariff disputes. USA travellers traditionally account for roughly 33% of total visitation to the region, and American arrivals dropped by nearly 6%.
- Essex County (centered around Kingsville and Leamington) accounts for roughly 80% of Canadian greenhouse **agriculture** production—spanning 3,200 acres, 142 farms, and about 28,000 jobs—and exports over 85% of its cucumbers, tomatoes, and peppers to the United States. U.S. tariffs have squeezed profit margins, threatened thousands of local jobs, and forced growers into deep uncertainty while trying to see if retail markets can absorb short-term cost spikes.

Top 3 Industries facing immediate challenges

- **Auto manufacturing & Part suppliers**
- **Tourism**
- **Agriculture**

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National Roundtable Discussion Topics

Question #2 - Windsor-Essex

Tactical Playbooks for Private: What are some immediate, actionable firm-level steps (including supply chain shifts, localized domestic sourcing, and operational pivots) that local entities can employ to off-set the impact of the changing trade dynamic in North America?

Task: What is the single-most critical, low-cost operational change a local firm can implement today to protect its bottom line?

Suggestion

Diversification. Pursue a multi-faceted approach, led by local economic development agencies, and look to transition to clean energy, EV Supply Chains, expanding transportation and logistics, seek out investments for Health Sciences & Research, and invest into Agri-Tech for the rich agriculture footprint in Essex County.

Question #3 - Windsor-Essex

Ecosystem Support Systems & Collective Action: Avenues for local B2B and B2G alliances, regional supply syndicates, and targeted collaboration with local, regional, provincial and federal economic agencies for toolkits and market diversion.

Task: What is one specific recommendation this council can make to address how best to promote the various local/provincial/federal toolkits to businesses across the region?

Recommendation

Central Database: Economic Development offices throughout the region and across the Province of Ontario should be tasked to create a shareable database of grants and support programs that are available to business and farm producers.

Additional notes: Local Chambers of Commerce should proactively seek out support programs that are available in the region, and promote these opportunities through public educational activities. Knowledgeable members should be recruited to assist local employers to complete paperwork to apply for programs.

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National Roundtable Discussion Topics

Question #1 - Waterloo Region & Guelph

Identify regional anchor industries in the Waterloo Region & Guelph that are facing immediate challenges (tariff or regulatory friction), mapping socio-economic spillovers onto local employment and municipal, regional, and provincial initiatives.

Our Task: By consensus, identify our top three industries in the region who are facing immediate challenges due to the changing landscape in Canada-USA trade.

From the Discussion

- Waterloo Region generated $18 billion in **manufacturing** exports to the United States last year, making up roughly 92% of the region's total exports. The Economic Development Corporation estimates that 60,000 to 70,000 local jobs are directly exposed to cross-border tariffs. Canadian Chamber of Commerce ranked Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo as the 4th most vulnerable urban region in Canada due to its concentration in advanced manufacturing and automotive supply chains. According to a Conference Board of Canada study, Guelph and the Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo area rank 1st and 3rd respectively among Canadian municipalities most severely hit by real GDP drops from the US tariffs.

- US tariffs and ongoing trade pressures have severely strained **social services** in Waterloo Region and Guelph primarily by driving up local unemployment, triggering job cuts in manufacturing and auto sectors, and creating a massive surge in demand for emergency assistance. Local food assistance networks have experienced historic, record-setting growth as trade disruptions ripple through the workforce. Region-wide, reliance on community food programs escalated significantly from roughly 1 in 20 households in 2021 to 1 in 8 households by recent tracking.

- The US 25% tariffs on various Canadian goods and subsequent sector-specific measures, severely affecting cross-border **agricultural** trade. Because local farmers and processors rely heavily on integrated North American supply chains, tariffs drive up export costs, depress producer returns, and inject extreme volatility into long-term farm planning. The Canadian counter-tariffs impact regional producers who need American-made farm equipment parts, trailers, and engine components.

Top 3 Industries facing immediate challenges

- **Manufacturing**
- **Social Services**
- **Supply Chain**

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National Roundtable Discussion Topics

Question #2 - Waterloo Region & Guelph

Tactical Playbooks for Private: What are some immediate, actionable firm-level steps (including supply chain shifts, localized domestic sourcing, and operational pivots) that local entities can employ to off-set the impact of the changing trade dynamic in North America?

Task: What is the single-most critical, low-cost operational change a local firm can implement today to protect its bottom line?

Suggestion

Tariff Impact Portal: Local and regional Economic Development organizations should collaborate on the creation of a portal that identifies what products are subject to the tariff, and what supports may be available.

Additional Notes: Challenge identified is the slow change processes for materials. Example was a chemical coating used since 1935 that is banned in Canada due to environmental issues, but there is a similar product available. Because "it has always been done this way" the Canadian solution cannot be used.

Question #3 - Waterloo Region & Guelph

Ecosystem Support Systems & Collective Action: Avenues for local B2B and B2G alliances, regional supply syndicates, and targeted collaboration with local, regional, provincial and federal economic agencies for toolkits and market diversion.

Task: What is one specific recommendation this council can make to address how best to promote the various local/provincial/federal toolkits to businesses across the region?

Recommendation

Collaboration: Economic Development offices throughout the region and across the Province of Ontario should be tasked to create a shareable database of grants and support programs that are available to business and farm producers.

Additional notes: Renew the "BEST WR" initiative that was launched during the COVID crisis to help the local economy navigate disruptions.

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National Roundtable Discussion Topics

Question #1 - London

Identify regional anchor industries in London that are facing immediate challenges (tariff or regulatory friction), mapping socio-economic spillovers onto local employment and municipal, regional, and provincial initiatives.

Our Task: By consensus, identify our top three industries in the region who are facing immediate challenges due to the changing landscape in Canada-USA trade.

From the Discussion

- Tariffs, including the 50% duties on major Canadian exports like steel, aluminum, and autos, paired with retaliatory counter-tariffs, have created severe cost pressures, order uncertainty, and investment shifts for the **advanced manufacturing** sector in the London region. The Ivey Business School notes that London's heavy reliance on cross-border manufacturing supply chains leaves local small and medium businesses disproportionately exposed to sudden US tariff spikes and shifting rules.

- **Colleges and Universities** in the London region are experiencing unprecedented, steep declines in international student enrollment and severe staff reductions. Fanshawe College has been one of the hardest-hit institutions in Canada. This crisis is primarily driven by the federal cap on international study permits, combined with long-term provincial funding freezes. The college has undergone a catastrophic workforce reduction, eliminating a total of 500 positions across administrative, faculty, and support staff roles. This represents a staggering 35% to 40% reduction of its workforce to address deficits.

- The **packaging** supply chain faces escalated operational costs and import-export friction. Regional packaging companies have cited tariff pressures and planning workforce reductions. Across southwestern Ontario, aluminum packaging materials and cans face massive cost inflations. US duties on aluminum and metal inputs have dramatically escalated costs. Standard aluminum cans rely on an integrated cross-border supply chain (with aluminum smelted in regions like Quebec and processed via USA or North American mills), making localized short-term substitution or domestic sheet manufacturing economically unviable for smaller volumes.

Top 3 Industries facing immediate challenges

- **Advanced Manufacturing**
- **Colleges and Universities**
- **Packaging Industry**

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National Roundtable Discussion Topics

Question #2 - London

Tactical Playbooks for Private: What are some immediate, actionable firm-level steps (including supply chain shifts, localized domestic sourcing, and operational pivots) that local entities can employ to off-set the impact of the changing trade dynamic in North America?

Task: What is the single-most critical, low-cost operational change a local firm can implement today to protect its bottom line?

Suggestion

Re-use, Re-Tool and Recycle: While many American-sourced parts will be facing a tariff, companies and farm producers should employ the 3-R's and Re-use, Re-tool, and Recycle, when and where possible.

Additional Notes: Food waste needs to be curbed at source. Producers and retailers must be encouraged to employ ongoing programs to divert surplus and past-their-prime foods in order to feed the most vulnerable in our communities.

Question #3 - London

Ecosystem Support Systems & Collective Action: Avenues for local B2B and B2G alliances, regional supply syndicates, and targeted collaboration with local, regional, provincial and federal economic agencies for toolkits and market diversion.

Task: What is one specific recommendation this council can make to address how best to promote the various local/provincial/federal toolkits to businesses across the region?

Recommendation

Grant Training: a) Municipalities should be empowered to advertise funding and support programs from other levels of government and promote local initiatives. Training programs should be offered to assist businesses and farmers to complete the application process for support programs. b) Offer grant writing training to help the applicant understand what the grant evaluator is actually evaluating, to improve the chance of success for the application.

Additional notes: A 3-1-1 phone system should be established by the Economic Development office to enable businesses and potential local founders to access information that affects their ability to operate.

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National Roundtable Discussion Topics

Question #1 - Calgary

Identify regional anchor industries in Calgary that are facing immediate challenges (tariff or regulatory friction), mapping socio-economic spillovers onto local employment and municipal, regional, and provincial initiatives.

Our Task: By consensus, identify our top three industries in the region who are facing immediate challenges due to the changing landscape in Canada-USA trade.

From the Discussion

- Canadian softwood lumber exports face combined collective duties reaching roughly 45% to 50%, pricing many Alberta products out of the U.S. market, which historically absorbs nearly half of the province's production. Canfor Corp announced the permanent closure of its Fox Creek **sawmill** affecting over 74 jobs. Major producers like West Fraser Timber and Canfor Corp have reported multi-million-dollar quarterly losses, forcing them to assess, curtail, or scale back operations.

- **General Contractors** estimate that US tariffs and the Canadian counter-measures have added 8% to 12% to total construction project costs, depending on the material mix. The bigger financial squeeze for local projects comes from Canada's matching counter-tariffs on U.S. goods (such as appliances, specialized hardware, and building components). In Calgary, municipal officials estimated that tariff-related cost increases could add $315 million to $466 million across roughly $5.3 billion in active city procurement contracts.

- Heavy-duty Class 8 **trucks** and replacement parts are largely manufactured or sourced from the US, with industry projections estimating price spikes of roughly $10,000 per tractor due to tariffs. Most fleets operating in Calgary run US-built tractors, making this an immediate structural capital increase. Economists (such as Trevor Tombe) estimate that Alberta could still lose up to 9,000 jobs, with the largest cascading disruptions landing in transportation and warehousing. Lower cross-border export demand for Alberta sectors like agriculture, plastics, and manufacturing translates directly into fewer loads and reduced demand for truck drivers.

Top 3 Industries facing immediate challenges

- **Sawmills**
- **General Contractors**
- **Trucking Industry**

Innovate Council

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National Roundtable Discussion Topics

Question #2 - Calgary

Tactical Playbooks for Private: What are some immediate, actionable firm-level steps (including supply chain shifts, localized domestic sourcing, and operational pivots) that local entities can employ to off-set the impact of the changing trade dynamic in North America?

Task: What is the single-most critical, low-cost operational change a local firm can implement today to protect its bottom line?

Suggestion

Buy Local and source Inter-provincially: Shift purchases of raw materials away from USA sources towards Canadian or other international suppliers. Take full advantage of the trade agreements that the Federal government is developing in Europe and Asia.

Additional Notes: Promote participation by businesses in the New West Partnership Trade Agreement (between British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba) for barrier-free market access to ease the movement of goods, services, investment, and labour.

Question #3 - Calgary

Ecosystem Support Systems & Collective Action: Avenues for local B2B and B2G alliances, regional supply syndicates, and targeted collaboration with local, regional, provincial and federal economic agencies for toolkits and market diversion.

Task: What is one specific recommendation this council can make to address how best to promote the various local/provincial/federal toolkits to businesses across the region?

Recommendation

Education: There is a significant lack of understanding about the various support programs available to companies. There needs to be a central repository for information regarding access to funding programs. Perhaps develop an AI Concierge tool that can provide information about program eligibility and the application process.

Additional notes: An AI Concierge phone system could also be purposed to assist potential business owners, Founders, and start-ups.

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National Roundtable Discussion Topics

Question #1 - Regina

Identify regional anchor industries in the Regina that are facing immediate challenges (tariff or regulatory friction), mapping socio-economic spillovers onto local employment and municipal, regional, and provincial initiatives.

Our Task: By consensus, identify our top three industries in the region who are facing immediate challenges due to the changing landscape in Canada-USA trade.

From the Discussion

- Canadian softwood lumber exports face combined collective duties reaching roughly 45% to 50%, pricing many Alberta products out of the U.S. market, which historically absorbs nearly half of the province's production. Canfor Corp announced the permanent closure of its Fox Creek **sawmill** affecting over 74 jobs. Major producers like West Fraser Timber and Canfor Corp have reported multi-million-dollar quarterly losses, forcing them to assess, curtail, or scale back operations.

- **General Contractors** estimate that US tariffs and the Canadian counter-measures have added 8% to 12% to total construction project costs, depending on the material mix. The bigger financial squeeze for local projects comes from Canada's matching counter-tariffs on U.S. goods (such as appliances, specialized hardware, and building components). In Calgary, municipal officials estimated that tariff-related cost increases could add $315 million to $466 million across roughly $5.3 billion in active city procurement contracts.

- Heavy-duty Class 8 **trucks** and replacement parts are largely manufactured or sourced from the US, with industry projections estimating price spikes of roughly $10,000 per tractor due to tariffs. Most fleets operating in Calgary run US-built tractors, making this an immediate structural capital increase. Economists (such as Trevor Tombe) estimate that Alberta could still lose up to 9,000 jobs, with the largest cascading disruptions landing in transportation and warehousing. Lower cross-border export demand for Alberta sectors like agriculture, plastics, and manufacturing translates directly into fewer loads and reduced demand for truck drivers.

Top 3 Industries facing immediate challenges

- **Farming / Agriculture**
- **Steel Recycling Industry**
- **Farm Equipment Manufacturing**

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National Roundtable Discussion Topics

Question #2 - Regina

Tactical Playbooks for Private: What are some immediate, actionable firm-level steps (including supply chain shifts, localized domestic sourcing, and operational pivots) that local entities can employ to off-set the impact of the changing trade dynamic in North America?

Task: What is the single-most critical, low-cost operational change a local firm can implement today to protect its bottom line?

Suggestion

Introspection: An internal audit should be conducted within each organization to assess if there is redundancy, the right people in place, and if the skill set aligns with the current needs. Are we doing the right things for our stakeholders? Is our process aligned with our strategy?

Additional Notes: 700,000 people will be leaving the Trades in Canada through retirement by the end of the decade.

Question #3 - Regina

Ecosystem Support Systems & Collective Action: Avenues for local B2B and B2G alliances, regional supply syndicates, and targeted collaboration with local, regional, provincial and federal economic agencies for toolkits and market diversion.

Task: What is one specific recommendation this council can make to address how best to promote the various local/provincial/federal toolkits to businesses across the region?

Recommendation

Boots on the Ground: Governments who are providing support programs need to have a presence in the community, with staff explaining what funding is available, the criteria for eligibility, and the application process. Resources should be on-hand to assist with completing the application.

Additional notes: Indigenous Services Canada has a detailed supply directory that identifies Indigenous companies that can provide products and raw materials to Canadian manufacturers. Every Indigenous company should ensure that their products and services are properly listed, and this directory should be promoted across Canada to those seeking alternative suppliers.

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NATIONAL ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION TOPIC #1 :

IDENTIFY REGIONAL ANCHOR INDUSTRIES IN THE REGION THAT ARE FACING IMMEDIATE CHALLENGES (TARIFF OR REGULATORY FRICTION), MAPPING SOCIO-ECONOMIC SPILLOVERS ONTO LOCAL EMPLOYMENT AND MUNICIPAL, REGIONAL, AND PROVINCIAL INITIATIVES.

TASK: IDENTIFY OUR TOP THREE INDUSTRIES IN THE REGION WHO ARE FACING IMMEDIATE CHALLENGES DUE TO THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE IN CANADA-USA TRADE.

WINNIPEG REGIONAL INNOVATE COUNCIL	• **Steel mills and manufacturing** • **Agri Businesses** • **Transportation**
WINDSOR-ESSEX INNOVATE COUNCIL	• **Auto manufacturing & Part suppliers** • **Tourism** • **Agriculture**
WATERLOO REGION & GUELPH INNOVATE COUNCIL	• **Manufacturing** • **Social Services** • **Supply Chain**
LONDON INNOVATE COUNCIL	• **Advanced Manufacturing** • **Colleges and Universities** • **Packaging Industry**
CALGARY INNOVATE COUNCIL	• **Sawmills** • **General Contractors** • **Trucking Industry**
REGINA INNOVATE COUNCIL	• **Farming / Agriculture** • **Steel Recycling Industry** • **Farm Equipment Manufacturing**

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NATIONAL ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION TOPIC #2 : WHAT ARE SOME IMMEDIATE, ACTIONABLE FIRM-LEVEL STEPS (INCLUDING SUPPLY CHAIN SHIFTS, LOCALIZED DOMESTIC SOURCING, AND OPERATIONAL PIVOTS) THAT LOCAL ENTITIES CAN EMPLOY TO OFF-SET THE IMPACT OF THE CHANGING TRADE DYNAMIC IN NORTH AMERICA? TASK: WHAT IS THE SINGLE MOST CRITICAL, LOW-COST OPERATIONAL CHANGE A LOCAL FIRM CAN IMPLEMENT TODAY TO PROTECT ITS BOTTOM LINE?	
WINNIPEG REGIONAL INNOVATE COUNCIL	**Trade Specialist.** Companies that are exporting or importing goods to/from the USA should have a specialist on their payroll to manage product code classifications, to seek exemptions from tariffs.
WINDSOR-ESSEX INNOVATE COUNCIL	**Diversification.** Pursue a multi-faceted approach, led by local economic development agencies, and look to transition to clean energy, EV Supply Chains, expanding transportation and logistics, seek out investments for Health Sciences & Research, and invest into Agri-Tech for the rich agriculture footprint in Essex County.
WATERLOO REGION & GUELPH INNOVATE COUNCIL	**Tariff Impact Portal.** Local and regional Economic Development organizations should collaborate on the creation of a portal that identifies what products are subject to the tariff, and what supports may be available.
LONDON INNOVATE COUNCIL	**Re-use, Re-Tool and Recycle.** While many American-sourced parts will be facing a tariff, companies and farm producers should employ the 3-R's and Re-use, Re-tool, and Recycle, when and where possible.
CALGARY INNOVATE COUNCIL	**Buy Local and source Inter-provincially.** Shift purchases of raw materials away from USA sources towards Canadian or other international suppliers. Take full advantage of the trade agreements that the Federal government is developing in Europe and Asia.
REGINA INNOVATE COUNCIL	**Introspection.** An internal audit should be conducted within each organization to assess if there is redundancy, the right people in place, and if the skill set aligns with the current needs. Are we doing the right things for our stakeholders? Is our process aligned with our strategy?

NATIONAL ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION TOPIC #3 :
Avenues for local B2B and B2G alliances, regional supply syndicates, and targeted collaboration with local, regional, provincial and federal economic agencies for toolkits and market diversion.
Task: What is one specific recommendation this council can make to address how best to promote the various local/provincial/federal toolkits to businesses across the region?

WINNIPEG REGIONAL INNOVATE COUNCIL	**Program Education.** Federal, Provincial and Local Governments have numerous support programs available, but there is a lack of knowledge as to what funding exists, The Chamber of Commerce should coordinate the various programs available within the community, and offer counselling to assist in the application process.
WINDSOR-ESSEX INNOVATE COUNCIL	**Central Database.** Economic Development offices throughout the region and across the Province of Ontario should be tasked to create a shareable database of grants and support programs that are available to business and farm producers.
WATERLOO REGION & GUELPH INNOVATE COUNCIL	**Collaboration.** Economic Development offices throughout the region and across the Province of Ontario should be tasked to create a shareable database of grants and support programs that are available to business and farm producers.
LONDON INNOVATE COUNCIL	**Grant Training.** a) Municipalities should be empowered to advertise funding and support programs from other levels of government and promote local initiatives. Training programs should be offered to assist businesses and farmers to complete the application process for support programs. b) Offer grant writing training to help the applicant understand what the grant evaluator is actually evaluating, to improve the chance of success for the application.
CALGARY INNOVATE COUNCIL	**Education.** There is a significant lack of understanding about the various support programs available to companies. There needs to be a central repository for information regarding access to funding programs. Perhaps develop an AI Concierge tool that can provide information about program eligibility and the application process.
REGINA INNOVATE COUNCIL	**Boots on the Ground.** Governments who are providing support programs need to have a presence in the community, with staff explaining what funding is available, the criteria for eligibility, and the application process. Resources should be on-hand to assist with completing the application.



Working Calendar of Local Innovate Council Meetings Dates in 2027

	Calgary	London	Regina	Waterloo Region & Guelph	Windsor-Essex	Winnipeg Regional
Q1/27	Mar 10	Mar 3	Mar 18	Mar 4	Mar 2	Mar 16
Q2/27	Jun 17	Jun 2	Jun 14	Jun 3	Jun 1	Jun 11
Q3/27	Sep 14	Sep 28	Sep 16	Sep 29	Sep 27	Sep 15
Q4/27	Dec 7	Nov 24	Dec 9	Nov 25	Nov 23	Dec 8

Notes:

1. The calendar dates for the local Innovate Council meetings are planning dates only, at this time, but will be confirmed approximately 3 months in advance.

2. If your workplace has a facility that can accommodate 15-20 people, ideally in a U-shape table, and had a monitor for the A/V presentation, and you would like to host a 2027, please let us know. We will organize the lunch food & beverage catering order. If appropriate, we can build time into the agenda for a tour of your facility.

3. The reported discussion during the Roundtable Discussion for Question #1 has been supplemented in some cases, with additional research that was done post-event.

4. We think it is important to review the statistics highlighted on page 1 when you are reading the responses from each region.

5. During the council meeting in London, a member provided a weblink to a website from the University of Toronto which tracks and measures the impact of the USA tariffs across Canada. https://mappingtariffs.org

6. During the council meeting in Calgary, a member pointed out that the Canadian counter tariffs were having a large impact upon that economy. Large capital items that had been purchased long ago but are now ready for delivery, are subject to the Canadian tariff. Following the meeting, we did reach out to the Government of Canada and learned that there is a mechanism in place to exempt some of these items from the tariff.

7. During the council meeting in Winnipeg, a member shared the experience of a local manufacturer who was shipping product into the USA. The tariff system is based upon the specific product code on the paperwork that is reviewed at the border. It was discovered that it is possible for a product to have multiple codes, and some may not be included on the tariff list. The advice was to check your product codes on exports to USA.