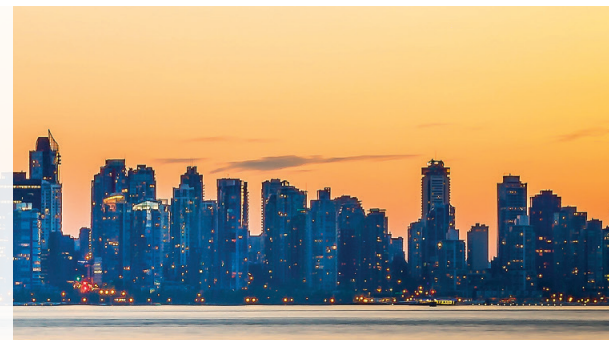




# SOUNDING BOARD



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## Finding the opportunity within the crisis

**LEADERSHIP** | New GVBOT Chair Brent Cameron outlines his priorities for the year ahead

The world today looks very different from the one that existed when the organization was first formed in 1887. But one thing that has remained the same is the vital role that the Board of Trade plays in supporting its Members.

The Board of Trade was founded by 30 business-owners and leaders in the year after the Great Fire of 1886 devastated Vancouver. They recognized the need to bring the city's business community together to rebuild and quickly set to work to make a series of recommendations that would help Vancouver not only survive in the short-term, but thrive in the long-term too.

This history is relevant today

as we once again face a major economic challenge. This time, it is not a fire ripping through our buildings, but a pandemic that has emptied out our downtown core and shuttered tens of thousands of businesses. Once again, the Board of Trade and its Members are coming together to ensure the city can rebuild from this crisis.

The Board of Trade's recently released *Economic Recovery Plan* includes three pillars: Helping Businesses Survive, Transforming our Region, Investing in the Future. Each pillar plays an integral role in informing our path to recovery. Moving forward, bold vision will be required to help businesses



Brent Cameron

survive in the short-term and the economy to be competitive and resilient in the future. The next few years will require our politicians to make important

decisions – decisions that we all need to help inform.

Do we simply focus on surviving the pandemic and try to get our economy and region back to where it was in 2019? Or do we think bigger and make infrastructure and policy decisions that will spur economic growth and investment? Do we make B.C. the place in Canada and the world that entrepreneurs and businesses want to invest? Can we create the transportation and housing infrastructure to attract and retain a world-class talent pool to fuel the growth of the region over the next two decades?

Many of these challenges aren't new to us. What is new however, is the economic and health crisis

that could act as a major catalyst to action that has eluded us. If we look back to the founders of the Board of Trade 133 years ago, they could have simply focused on the important task of rebuilding the structures that were burnt by the Great Fire. Instead, they saw in the crisis the opportunity to think bigger and longer term. In 2020-21, I encourage you to similarly engage with the Board of Trade, to provide the leadership and thinking needed to not only get us through the current crisis, but to build the region we need in the decades ahead. **BC**

Brent Cameron is the 2020-21 Chair of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade. He also serves as Managing Partner at Boyden.

## Remembering Dr. Ali Dastmalchian

**RECOGNITION** | Dean of SFU's Beedie School of Business passes away

Dr. Ali Dastmalchian, dean of SFU's Beedie School of Business and a GVBOT board member, passed away unexpectedly on August 13, 2020.

Dastmalchian was an international and award-winning teacher, facilitator and researcher. He served as dean and professor at the Beedie School of Business at Simon Fraser University from 2016-20. He had previously served as



Ali Dastmalchian

dean of the Gustavson School of Business at the University of Victoria and in the Faculty of Management at the University of Lethbridge.

Dastmalchian was deeply committed to making business education relevant and innovative. He led SFU Beedie through a process of renewal and championed a vision for the school to provide teaching and learning powered by world-class research,

meaningful community engagement, and a global outlook.

"I was completely shocked and deeply saddened to learn of Ali's passing," says Ryan Beedie, president of real estate development company Beedie, who in 2011 made a record donation to SFU to name the business school. "We had a wonderful working relationship. I loved his vision for the school and respected his inclusive leadership style. I learned a

lot from him and will miss him greatly."

SFU has appointed Dr. Andrew Gemino as dean, pro tem, of the Beedie School of Business, while a search is undertaken to appoint a permanent successor. Gemino previously served as associate dean for graduate programs and prior to that as associate dean of the undergraduate program. He has been a professor at SFU since 1998. **SB**



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## MEMBER NEWS

## LEADERSHIP | Reflecting on a year of challenges and accomplishments

**Kari Yuers looks back on her term as 2019-20 Chair as she prepares to pass the torch at GVBOT's 133rd AGM**

**M**y term as Chair started in November of 2019 and since then the world has been turned upside down by a debilitating pandemic and other events. Despite these unprecedented times, I have been proud to see that the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade's volunteers and staff have not only continued to fulfill its mandate, but also found innovative and creative ways to surpass everyone's expectations.

It has been the stalwart achievements of our Members and staff that enable me to reflect on the many significant accomplishments during the past 12 months.

At the start of the year, January's Economic Outlook Forum with Bank of Canada Governor Stephen Poloz, alongside the

first-ever Sustainability Series in March, were prime examples of the kind of in-person events the Board of Trade is known for. Our February event, which brought the leaders of the Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh, and the Squamish Nation Council together on the GVBOT stage for the first time, was precedent-setting.

Even after the onset of COVID-19 and the shift towards life online, the organization has continued to offer an invaluable platform for members. Indeed, since COVID-19 first arrived in B.C. some 12,714 people have signed up for our virtual events. That's twice as many attendees that we welcomed in-person during the same period in 2019. It's an achievement that shows you not only how successful these efforts have been, but also



Kari Yuers

how vital the information that was shared during these events are for our Members.

Beyond events and advocacy, the Board of Trade has made a tangible difference to Greater Vancouver businesses by helping Members and the broader business community take advantage of trade deals through initiatives like our World Trade Center's Trade Accelerator Program (TAP). To date, 211 companies have graduated across

It has been an incredible experience for me to work so closely with you all. You truly are the lifeblood of this organization



14 contributing TAP business partners. These TAP alumni have grown their export sales by an average of 28% and total sales by an average of \$1 million, which is a testament to the benefits that thoughtful and well-executed collaboration can bring.

I'm also incredibly proud of the newly launched Diversity and Inclusion Leadership Council which champions and advocates for the participation and promotion of underrepresented groups while supporting

the greater business community to achieve their diversity and inclusion goals.

And lastly, I am gratified to have been involved with the appointment of the GVBOT's first female CEO in its 133-year history. "The best person for the job" has been my mantra throughout my career, and I am pleased to see that in Bridgitte Anderson, the best person for the position, especially in this current socio-economic climate, was appointed. It has been a joy to work with her.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your Chair for these past 12 months, and I look forward to continuing my involvement as an active Member. It has been an incredible experience for me to work so closely with you all. You truly are the lifeblood of this organization. **KY**

Kari Yuers is 2019-20 Chair of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade. She is also President and CEO of Kryton International Inc.

## COMMUNITY | Health during a time of COVID-19: Understanding the impact of the pandemic

**Analysing British Columbians' experience with the health care system**

**H**aving an accurate picture of how the public thinks is crucial to informing the important decisions that need to be taken as we build the next normal. With this in mind, the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade recently tasked our team with surveying British Columbians to understand their experiences with the health care system during the pandemic and how COVID-19 is impacting them.

We learned that simply accessing health care has become increasingly challenging for many, with providers operating at reduced capacity (or not at all) and patients feeling uneasy about in-person visits. Since the start of COVID-19, two-in-five (40%) British Columbians have had health care appointments or treatments postponed by providers. Additionally, individuals delayed seeking support from health care providers, notably dentists (48%) and doctors

(31%).

With social distancing requirements in place, the adoption of virtual care has become crucial and widespread. B.C.'s health care providers quickly adapted to the new reality by implementing video and telephone (telehealth) appointments, which are playing a pivotal role in providing health care access during the pandemic. Overall, British Columbians who used telehealth were satisfied with their telehealth experience, and just over half of British Columbians said they would use telehealth in the next six months.

Beyond physical health, COVID-19 has also impacted mental health in our province in many ways. With social distancing contributing to loneliness, along with job losses and an economic recession, the pandemic has negatively impacted British Columbians' mental health. One-third (32%)

of British Columbians feel their mental health is worse now, but only 12% have sought support, indicating that many people are not asking for help even if needed. Job performance has also been negatively impacted, as 15% of working British Columbians feel their mental health has prevented or reduced their ability to perform their job.

Moving forward, newer COVID-19 testing technologies can be explored to ease the minds of British Columbians during the pandemic. The possibility of Rapid Diagnostic Testing (RDT) may encourage B.C. residents to participate in more activities. If RDT was available, British Columbians feel that they would be more comfortable engaging in certain outings, such as attending a family wedding (51%), going to restaurants/bars (35%), spending time at a shopping mall (34%), travelling outside of Canada for pleasure (33%) and taking a business trip (24%).

As our health care system continues to adapt to the pandemic, British Columbians believe that



Heather Owen

new policies and procedures can be explored to ensure they are being provided with the health care they need, in addition to peace-of-mind. Through services like telehealth, along with the possibility of RDT, British Columbians have the potential to find a new normal in our health care system. **HO**

Heather Owen is Vice President of Leger, the largest Canadian-owned market research and analytics company, with more than 600 employees in eight Canadian and U.S. offices. For more information: leger360.com.

As our health care system continues to adapt to the pandemic, British Columbians believe that new policies and procedures can be explored to ensure they are being provided with the health care they need



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