

FOREIGN-TRADE ZONES

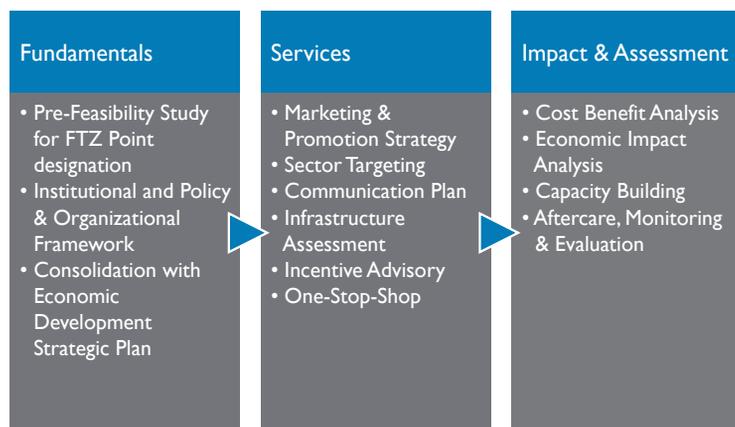
Foreign-Trade Zones: An Engine for Growth

Locations are strategic assets. Every site brings different strengths and liabilities that determine the competitiveness of the business environment, and the ability to attract investments.

Foreign Trade Zones and economic development organizations need to continually evolve, optimize, and focus their investment policies to attract high-quality investments. Canada's Foreign Trade Zone program has a unique competitive advantage, making the entire country open to foreign trade, thus allowing for far greater geographic flexibility for companies to enjoy its cost benefits.

While Canada has policies that encourage foreign trade throughout the country, our global Free Zones experience and knowledge of corporate site selection can help economic development organizations better integrate their specific foreign trade strengths into a comprehensive business and investment attraction strategy. We show how these opportunities can help our clients enhance Foreign Trade Zone activity while simultaneously designing marketing tools to highlight location-specific opportunities and the area's unique value proposition. We help Foreign Trade Zones become economic engines with specifically defined roles by emphasizing how the benefits and services can and should go beyond the typical customs and regulatory benefits.

ICA's Three-Pillar Approach



Does your Foreign-Trade Zone face one of the following challenges? ICA can support optimizing your Foreign-Trade Zone to generate short-term static gains and long-term dynamic benefits.

- Is your Foreign Trade Zone messaging aligned with unique local comparative advantages and do your target industries reflect these comparative advantages?
- Are local Foreign Trade Zone participants strongly connected and anchored within the local economy?
- Is the strategy of your Foreign Trade Zone aligned with the strategy of the local or regional economic development authority?
- Is your organization and staff well-equipped to professionally deal with investor inquiries, complaints, and applications through an FTZ Task Force?
- Does your Foreign Trade Zone strategy attract investments that provide high-quality employment opportunities?
- Are your incentives aligned with the exact needs and requirements of (foreign) investors and are they effective?
- Does your organization have an attractive marketing and investment promotion strategy that communicates the unique benefits of your location for Foreign Trade Zone activity?
- Are you looking to conduct a cost-benefit analysis to gauge the performance of Foreign Trade Zones in your area?
- Does your organization need support with developing a pre-feasibility analysis to pursue FTZ Point designation?
- Is your Foreign Trade Zone strategy a sustainable instrument for future trade and investment promotion given the rapidly shifting economic context?

Client Credential

Panama Investment Partners (PIP)

Request: Investment Consulting Associates (ICA) was approached to support the creation and implementation of a Free Zone Investment & Development (FZID) Corporation for Panama, resulting in the formation of Panama Investment Partners (PIP).

Deliverable: ICA conducted extensive due-diligence research into the competitiveness of Panama's Free Zones. ICA then constructed a Handbook for the establishment of Panama Investment Partners, outlining the vision, mission, and activities of the new entity, which primarily seeks to attract high-end investment into Panama's Free Zones. ICA also provided guidance for stakeholder management, establishing partnerships, legal framework, and organizational framework. In addition to fine-tuning PIP's location value-proposition, the ICA Team also assisted with its marketing and promotion strategy through branding materials, logo creation, and website design.

ICA can similarly use its global Free Zone experience to help optimize the contribution of Foreign-Trade Zones to economic development in the United States.