



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: General Purposes Committee
 From: Anne Stevens
 Manager, Community Recreation Services
 Re: **Sister City Initiatives**

Date: May 24, 2007
 File:

Staff Recommendation

1. That Council approve the revised China friendship city list as presented in the report from the Manager of Community Recreation Services;
2. That Council approve the Sister City delegates representing the City as presented in the report from the Manager of Community Recreation Services;
3. That Council approve the funds for the Council representative and Richmond Olympic Business Office staff representative of up to \$19,000 with funds to come from Council Contingency; and,
4. That letters from the Mayor's office be sent to each candidate city and to Wakayama as outlined in this report.
5. That should insufficient funds be raised, that Council authorize the City to underwrite the expenses related to the July Sister City delegation travel on the basis that the shortfall be reimbursed to the City.

Anne Stevens
 Manager, Community Recreation Services
 (4273)
 Attach. 1

FOR ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT USE ONLY					
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE		CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER		
Olympic Business Office	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>		<i>[Handwritten signature]</i>		
Budgets	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>				
REVIEWED BY TAG	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	REVIEWED BY CAO	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Staff Report

Origin

On February 23, 2004 Council passed a resolution directing the Sister City Committee to seek a friendship city in the Shanghai area. On April 10, 2007 Council passed a resolution “that an investigative trip to China be approved, and that a City of Richmond delegation be supported, comprised of members of the Richmond Sister City Committee in Spring 2007, with funding to come from Sister City ‘sponsorship funds’”. This report will give Council an update on:

1. The cities to be visited,
2. The delegates who will be attending on behalf of the City,
3. The funding for a Council delegate,
4. The status of the sponsorship funds to date,
5. Beijing Olympic venues and officials visit, and;
6. The full itinerary with a list of contacts in China with accompanying letters.

Analysis

The City and the Sister City Committee are making plans for their investigative trip to China. In February 2004 Council approved a list of possible cities in the Shanghai area. Through their deliberations, the Committee has received a number of positive responses from cities interested in being friends with Richmond. Based on this feedback the Committee has revised the list to include only those cities, which expressed a positive interest when contacted and also have a good relationship with members of the community.

1. The Cities to be Visited

Presently there are seven potential friendship cities identified which require Council approval. See attached map (Attachment 1). Staff recommends the flexibility to work with the Committee to refine the list to 5 cities limiting the trip to 10 days. This would allow for sufficient review and assessment time for each city. The revised listed is as follows:

City	Rationale
Quingdao	This city has expressed an interest and has visited Richmond in the past year. It is also a Venue City for the Beijing Olympics. The city is similar to Richmond from a geographical perspective.
Yantai	Located near Quingdao. Two committee members feel that this city would be suitable.
Jiaxin	In the Shanghai area. Has visited Richmond a number of times and expressed an interest.
Zhoushan	A member of the committee has done some new business in Zhoushan and felt that they were very receptive from an economic perspective and a friendship perspective.
Yangzhgou	There have been a couple of exchanges with the Mayor’s office and they have expressed an interest in a friendship with Richmond.
Zhongshan	A committee member feels there are good local ties in Richmond and that there maybe a good opportunity with this city.
Xiamen	There have been a couple of exchanges with the Mayor’s office and they have expressed an interest in a friendship with Richmond.

2. The Delegates Who will be Attending on Behalf of the City

The Committee proposes five members of the Richmond Sister City Committee participate in the delegation. Funding to offset the travel expenses will come from sponsorship. Should insufficient sponsors be secured prior to the trip, staff recommends the City cover the shortfall with the understanding that the Sister City Committee reimburse the City. This will provide certainty to the planning and success of the trip.

Those individuals are:

Sylvia Gwozd
Jim Kojima

Francis Turneau
James Hsiesh

Mel Goodwin

3. The Funding for a Council Delegate

On May 14, 2007 Council approved Councillor Bill McNulty to participate as a City Official and Council representative on the upcoming trip to China. Funds for Council travel have not been approved. Staff recommends that funding for the Councillor delegate come from Council Contingency.

4. The Status of the Sponsorship Funds to Date

The Sister City Committee has made a commitment to raise funds but have done so voluntarily to support costs related to this investigative trip. Presently the securing of appropriate sponsorship is under way and once the sponsors are in place a list of sponsors will be given to Council.

In April 2007, Council had approved a short trip to Wakayama. The availability of Wakayama officials should be taken into consideration when finalizing the schedule. It would be prudent for City officials to stop in Wakayama when visiting China. The timing of this visit will need to be confirmed with the Mayor's office in Wakayama and become part of the itinerary, if possible. A letter from the Mayor's office should also be prepared requesting the above.

Senior staff suggest that not all members of the delegation need to travel to Wakayama if sufficient sponsorship is not raised.

5. Beijing Olympic Venues and Officials Visit

There is an additional opportunity for the City to consider during the upcoming friendship city working tour. As the City has made investments into best practices and relationship building with other Olympic cities, and given the natural cultural connection and potential opportunities related to our role in the 2010 games, it would be beneficial for the City of Richmond staff and Council members to establish relationships and contacts with officials from the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympic Games.

The incremental costs to the City would be minimal with considerable benefit value. Staff recommends that Council consider extending the dates for Beijing in order for the Councillor and two staff to participate in Olympic business. It is also recommended that the Acting Director of Richmond Olympic Business Office travel to Beijing to lead a City delegation to make contact with important Games and sport representatives. Although we have to increase the Councillor and staff's budget to accommodate this extra travel, it will provide a cost effective means of initiating Olympic business meetings that are important to our program.

6. The Full Itinerary with a List of Contacts in China with Accompanying Letters

In order to facilitate the delegation visits; a letter of introduction from the Mayor's office should be sent in advance. Once the delegation has arrived a second letter from the Mayor's office should be presented to the host Mayor outlining our interest and expectations of their city.

Once completed, the itinerary will be presented Council.

Financial Impact

Councillor Travel Costs

Airfare (Includes Japan)	\$ 6,500
Accommodation	\$ 2,400
Per Diem	\$ 1,400
Transportation (inter city flights& ground)	<u>\$ 1,400</u>
Total	\$11,700

Staff Travel Costs

Airfare	\$ 5,500
Accommodation	\$ 450
Per Diem	\$ 530
Transportation (ground)	<u>\$ 200</u>
Total	\$ 6,680

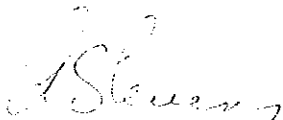
Misc Expenses \$ 620

Cost of Travel **\$19,000**

The cost of this travel will not exceed \$19,000 and will be funded from the Council Contingency account.

Conclusion

The Sister City Committee and City staff and Council representatives have been given approval to investigate potential friendship cities in China. While in China, it would be prudent to combine Olympic business to the City agenda. Approvals for committee delegates, funding, friendship candidate cities and letters from the Mayors office are required to ensure the planning can continue.



Anne Stevens
 Manager, Community Recreation Services
 (4273)



Code:

- 1. Qingdao
- 2. Yantai
- 3. Jiaxin
- 4. Zhoushan
- 5. Yangzhou
- 6. Xiamen
- 7. Zhongshan