September 15, 2005

To the Mayor and Members of Council,

Urgent:

Please consider this recommendation at the General Purposes Committee of Monday September 19, 2005. If you approve this recommendation, the ad for committee membership will need to be revised, as it is due for publication in the paper.

At the meeting of the Sister City committee today it was recommended that:

The terms of reference be amended to include a revision to the membership in the Sister City Committee, to be increased to 12 citizens appointed by council, in addition to the current requirement of a Council representative, a School Board Trustee representative, and a School Board Staff Member, for a total of 15 members.

Background:

The sister city committee at its September 15th meeting, discussed future directions and initiatives for the 2006 year, that include developing friendship cities in China. The 6 current members on the committee devote significant time to maintaining Richmond's current relationship with Wakayama, Japan and Pierrefonds, Quebec.

For example: committee members dedicated considerable volunteer hours to the Expo 2005 project, signing up sponsors, trade participants and planning every detail for the delegation that traveled to Nagoya and Wakayama. The Sister City Committee met weekly, and often more frequently, from August 2004 through May 2005.

A subcommittee has been appointed by the sister city committee to assist in the development of friendship cities in China. Council has not reviewed nor appointed any of the current sub-committee members. The sub-committee intends to meet with consular officials and other Richmond community members. In order to accomplish its goals, it was felt that the current sister city committee needs to expanded to accommodate the experiences and contacts of a broader membership.

The current workload of the sister city committee is significantly greater than in past years. The federal government recently recognized Richmond's sister city committee as being one of the most active committees in Canada.

There are no financial cost implications. The opportunity to increase sponsorship support exists with an expanded committee.

Sylvia Gwozd
Chairperson, Sister City Committee
Jim Kojima
Vice Chair, Sister City Committee
Attached: Terms of Reference

RICHMOND'S SISTER CITY COMMITTEE
TERMS OF REFERENCE
(Approved by Council, September 27, 1999)
(Amended by Council: October 15/02)

PROGRAM

The City of Richmond continue a Sister City Program, with the objectives of that program being to:

- enhance friendship and mutual understanding;
- foster cultural exchanges;
- foster student and athletic exchanges;

foster trade and other economic linkages.

Council has approved the twinning of Richmond with the following cities for the Sister City Program:

- Pierrefonds, Quebec
- Wakayama, Japan

The Sister City Program shall be coordinated by the Sister City Committee (referred to as "The Committee").

MEMBERSHIP

The Committee shall comprise 9 members, including:

- 6 citizens appointed by Council;
- a representative of City Council; and
- 2 representatives of the School District appointed by the School Board, 1 of whom must be at the staffing level.

Membership to the Sister Committee will be advertised. Applications will be reviewed by City staff and a list of applicants will be presented to Council for its consideration and Council will appoint the successful applicants to the Committee.

The Committee will elect their own officers including Chair and Vice-Chair.

The Committee may invite representatives of other organizations or individual citizens to sit on the Committee as associate members without voting rights.

TERMS

The terms of the Committee appointments will be for three years. Members will be appointed for no more than three consecutive terms (9 years total). Appointments will be staggered to ensure continuity of experienced members on the Committee.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Committee's responsibilities shall include:

- arranging all aspects of the program of such visits, including transportation, sight-seeing, ceremonial dinners, and the purchase and distribution of gifts for official visits; (these arrangements would be done in consultation/partnership with the Committee's counterparts in the sister cities);
- presenting and recommending to Council an annual workplan and budget for the Sister City Program;
- administering the Sister City Program budget;
- determining the number and duration of official visits, subject to the budgetary limits established annually by Council;
- recommending to Council the appropriate number of Committee members, Council members and City staff to be included on any official visits to a sister city;
- inviting any other appropriate persons to participate in an official visit, providing that the maximum number of the official party shall not exceed 15.

CITY FUNDING

May be used for:

- 100% of the cost of the Committee members, Council members and City staff members approved to be part of a Sister City delegation;
- 100% of the costs of gifts, ceremonial dinners and similar acts of official hospitality or protocol undertaken in the name of the City;
- the operating costs of the Committee, including paid clerical services.

May not be used to defray costs:

- incurred by School Board representatives participating in official Sister City visits or for gifts or hospitality costs incurred in connection with student exchanges;
- of spouses or other persons invited to participate in a Sister City delegation unless specifically approved by Council

Staff members participating with Council approval in an official Sister City delegation shall be paid their regular salary.

CITY (COUNCIL) APPROVAL

Council must:

- authorize all Sister City visits to or from Richmond prior to Committee initiating discussion on exchange visits; and
- approve all aspects of the Sister City program visits, including approval of the appropriate number of participants in such events.