



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: General Purposes Committee **Date:** November 14, 2013
From: Amarjeet S. Rattan **File:** 01-0100-20-SCIT1-04/2013-Vol 01
 Director, Intergovernmental Relations & Protocol Unit
Re: **Sister City Three Year Activity Plan (2014-2016)**

Staff Recommendation

That the Sister City Advisory Committee Three Year (2014 – 2016) Activity Plan, as outlined in the November 14, 2013 report from the Director of Intergovernmental Relations, be approved.

Amarjeet S. Rattan
Director, Intergovernmental Relations & Protocol Unit
(604-247-4686)

Att. 1: Three Year Activity Plan and Budget (2014 - 2016)

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO: Finance Division	CONCURRENCE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
REVIEWED BY STAFF REPORT / AGENDA REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE	INITIALS: A	APPROVED BY CAO

Staff Report

Origin

This report is in response to the following, July 2, 2013 General Purposes Committee referral:

That the Sister City Advisory Committee Three Year Activity Plan (2014-2016) be referred back to staff for clarification and further information on:

- (1) the timing of any exchanges to Xiamen and Quindao;*
- (2) the details and objectives related to the proposed initiatives;*
- (3) our aspirations for the City of Richmond's attendance at the Mayor's forum at the China International Fair for Investment & Trade (CIFIT);*
- (4) Pierrefonds' vision with regard to the future of the Sister City relationship; and*
- (5) opportunities for educational and cultural exchanges with China as opposed to business and economic development activities;*

Analysis

The City of Richmond has enjoyed a Sister City relationship with Pierrefonds, Quebec since 1967 and Wakayama, Japan since 1973. The City of Richmond formed a Friendship City relationship with Qingdao, China in 2008 and a Sister City relationship with Xiamen in 2012.

The Sister City Committee Advisory Committee (SCAC) completed a very active 2011-2013 program which was supported with a Program Activity Budget of \$234, 410 and the annual Sister City Program (SCP) Administration Operating Budget of \$11,000. Some of the milestone activities included:

- (2012) signing of the Sister City agreement with Xiamen, China
- (2012) Official 40th anniversary Delegation visit from Wakayama
- (2013) Official 40th anniversary Delegation visit to Wakayama
- (2013) Wakayama Children's Choir performance in Richmond
- (2013) Qingdao Xiao Bai Fan Art School performance in Richmond
- (2013) comprehensive review of the Sister City Program

The next three year (2014 – 2016) offers many opportunities to further develop and strengthen our four Sister/Friendship City relationships through official visits, student, sport and cultural exchanges.

2014-2016 Goals and Focus of the SCAC

In accordance with the SCP Program Objectives, the primary focus for the proposed SCAC base program activities with our Sister Cities and Friendship City will be to foster activities with the Richmond Community and its Sister/Friendship cities in projects and youth exchanges that promote cultural awareness and joint learning opportunities. (**Attachment 1**)

The proposed SCAC 2014 – 2016 Program Activity Budget for the entire three year period is \$220,000, along with the annual SCP Administration Operating Budget of \$11,000. This proposed activity budget was recently endorsed by the SCAC for presentation to Council. **(Attachment 1)**

The following information is provided with respect to the specific referral questions:

(1) *the timing of any exchanges to Xiamen and Quindao;*

An official delegation visit to Qingdao, combined with a visit to Xiamen, is proposed in September of 2015. An official delegation visit to Qingdao, in 2013 to commemorate the 5th Anniversary, was approved in the 2011-2013 Activity Plan but was not carried out. As well, 2016 will mark the 5th Anniversary of the sister city relation with Xiamen and they are likely to consider sending an official delegation to Richmond at that time. Combining these visits in 2015, with attendance at the *China International Fair for Investment & Trade (CIFIT)* will be cost effective and reinforce the relatively new relationships with both Xiamen and Qingdao.

(2) *the details and objectives related to the proposed initiatives;*

The success of the annual Wakayama school exchange program has demonstrated that youth exchange activities contribute to building stronger sister city relationships. The other initiatives proposed in the three year plan include new youth 'summer camp, sport and art' exchanges with each of our sister and friendship city partners.

(3) *our aspirations for the City of Richmond's attendance at the Mayor's forum at the China International Fair for Investment & Trade (CIFIT);*

As part of the 2015 Qingdao/Xiamen visit, the City delegation would also attend the annual CIFIT – Mayors Forum. Xiamen has invited the City to attend this for a number of years. Combining these visits will be more cost effective and further solidify our relationships with both Xiamen and Qingdao.

(4) *Pierrefonds' vision with regard to the future of the Sister City relationship; and*

This is our longest sister city relationship, and our 45th Anniversary, in 2012, was marked by photo and painting gift exchanges.

In 2002 the City of Pierrefonds ceased to be a separate municipality and instead became a 'borough' of Montreal. Our sister city relationship was kept active by Mayor Monique Worth and her husband Harry, who was City Councillor.

Montreal had municipal elections on Nov. 3, 2013 and Mayor Worth did not stand for re-election. We hope to initiate discussions, in the new year, with the new Mayor and Councillors, as to their interest in retaining and developing an active sister city relationship. The Pierrefonds 2014-2016 program activities and budget are subject to continuing this sister city relationship.

(5) *opportunities for educational and cultural exchanges with China as opposed to business and economic development activities;*

One of the challenges in nurturing the relatively new China relationships is the emphasis of their government officials to initiate 'business related' activities, as opposed to community and educational type of activities. For this reason, the SCAC hope to foster more youth related sport and summer camp exchange initiatives in the hope that this will lay the groundwork for more community to community relationships to develop.

Financial Impact

The SCP has had an annual Administration Operating Budget of \$11,000, which is part of the City's annual base budget. The 2014 Administration Operating Budget remains at \$11,000.

The SCAC 2011-2013 Program Activity Budget of \$234,410 was funded from surplus from the 2010 budget. The proposed 2014-2016 Program Activity budget is \$220,000. Staff recommends that this request be considered as a one-time additional expenditure request during the City's 2014 budget process.

Conclusion

The Sister City Program is a valued and long-standing City initiative. The program is supported by the Sister City Advisory Committee, a dedicated group of community volunteers who are very committed to achieving the SCP goals. The approval of the 2014-2016 Three Year Plan will set clear direction for the Sister City Advisory Committee to maintain robust and meaningful Sister and Friendship City relationships.



Amarjeet S. Rattan

Director, Intergovernmental Relations & Protocol Unit
(604-247-4686)

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Sister City Advisory Committee Three year (2014 – 2016) Activity Plan and Budget

The Sister City Committee Advisory Committee (SCAC) completed a very active 2011-2013 program which was supported with an activity budget of \$234,410. Some of the milestone activities during this period included:

- (2012) signing of the Sister City agreement with Xiamen, China
- (2012) Official 40th anniversary Delegation visit from Wakayama
- (2013) Official 40th anniversary Delegation visit to Wakayama
- (2013) Wakayama Children's Choir performance in Richmond
- (2013) Qingdao Xiao Bai Fan Art School performance in Richmond
- (2013) comprehensive review of the Sister City Program

The next three year (2014 – 2016) offers many opportunities to further develop and strengthen our four Sister/Friendship City relationships through official visits, student, sport and cultural exchanges. An activity budget allocation of \$220,000 is proposed for this period.

The following sections provide additional information on proactive engagement activities that the SCAC will carry out as well as detailed budget information for 2014-2016.

More Community Involvement

The strength and success of any Sister/Friendship City relationship is often determined by the level of community participation. A good example is our relationship with Wakayama which involves many individuals, organizations throughout the Richmond community. The SCAC must explore all avenues, including developing volunteers and using social media, to increase community participation in all four of the current Sister/Friendship City relationships.

The November 2012 Community Tea, demonstrated the value in maintaining active contact with Sister City exchange alumni. Those who have taken part in the school exchanges over the years are often the same people who are willing to become advocates (or even sponsors) of our initiatives in the community.

The SCAC will create and regularly update an email contact list of alumni participants who are interested in staying in touch with SCAC initiatives via E-Newsletters. This invitation should aim to also include current high school students who have participated on such exchanges in recent years.

To build onto the alumni email update list, SCAC can also consider inviting the general public to join the same list and receive regular email updates. Once again, this allows the SCAC to stay in touch with residents who are interested in Sister/Friendship City events, and possibly return again for future initiatives.

The SCAC will distribute the E-Newsletters to this group of "supporters" on a periodic (quarterly, semi-annual, or annual) basis.

Social Media Tools

SCAC is an extremely dedicated team and has achieved great results through various Sister City events and initiatives over the years. With technology driving rapid changes in communication channels, SCAC

can integrate new elements to build greater exposure for upcoming events, and ultimately generate greater involvement from Richmond residents of all ages who wish to participate in joint- cultural activities.

SCAC currently has a dedicated page on the City of Richmond's website, but it lacks information on upcoming events. As more and more residents turn to the internet first, before newspapers and print ad announcements, we may be missing those who are genuinely interested in being a part of our upcoming events.

The SCAC will explore options to expand on our current official webpage to include:

- Upcoming events and how to participate (ex. Tickets for concerts)
- Photos from recent events

By showcasing our events on the web and engaging our "biggest fans", we will be able to draw the attention of the Richmond community and inspire local residents with meaningful Sister/Friendship City exchanges

SCAC display in City Hall

On the recent visit to Wakayama, it was noted that the City had developed an interactive visual display in the main lobby of their City Hall. This display, incorporating iPods, pictures and videos, highlighted various aspects of their Sister City relationships with Bakersfield, USA; Richmond, Canada; Jeju, South Korea and Jinan, China. Funds have been identified in the proposed 2014 – 2016 SCAC budget to develop a similar Sister/Friendship City display in Richmond.

Annual City to City Gift Exchange

An annual budget allocation of \$500, per city, has been made to send a yearly greeting message and recognition exchange from the City to each of our Sister/Friendship cities. Each annual message would be accompanied with a special piece of local art. This will provide an opportunity to support local artists by purchasing their works as exchange gifts for this purpose.

Consular Relations

Most countries maintain diplomatic offices in the Metro Vancouver region and these can often be a useful resource for the SCAC. The SCAC should develop closer working relations with the Consulate General offices of Japan and China with respect to our Sister/Friendship City's in those countries. Extending invitations to these diplomats to participate in SCAC program activities and scheduling annual dinners with them would assist in developing these relationships.

SUMMARY OF 2014 – 2016 SCAC PROGRAM ACTIVITY BUDGET

	<u>Pierrefonds</u>	<u>Wakayama</u>	<u>Xiamen</u>	<u>Qingdao</u>	
2014	\$3,500.00	\$7,500.00	\$12,500.00	\$14,500.00	
2015	\$4,000.00	\$ 14,500.00	\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00	
2016	\$7,000.00	\$ 14,500.00	\$19,500.00	\$14,500.00	
Subtotal	\$14,500.00*	\$36,500.00	\$39,500.00	\$36,500.00	
TOTAL					<u>\$127,000.00</u>

*(subject to continuing the Pierrefonds sister city relationship)

SCAC SPECIAL ACTIVITY BUDGET:

Official Delegation Visit from Pierrefonds (2014)	\$ 8,000.00
Official Delegation Visit to Xiamen (CIFIT Mayors Forum) and Qingdao (2015)	\$60,000.00
SCAC Social Media, Website and City Hall Interactive Display development	\$25,000.00
TOTAL	<u>\$93,000.00</u>

TOTAL 2014 – 2016 SCAC ACITIVITY BUDGET **\$220,000.00**

SCP ADMINISTRATION:

3 years @ \$11,000.00 per year **\$33,000.00**

2014 – 2016 PROGRAMS
PIERREFONDS, QUEBEC

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	
Youth Art Exchange Exhibit	\$3,000.00		\$3,000.00	
Youth Exchange: Richmond Judo Group Visit to Pierrefonds		\$3,500.00		
Youth Exchange: Pierrefonds Judo Group Visit to Richmond			\$3,500.00	
Annual City to City Recognition Exchange	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	
TOTAL (Pierrefonds 2014- 2016)	\$3,500.00	\$4,000.00	\$7,000.00	\$14,500.00

2014 – 2016 PROGRAMS
WAKAYAMA, JAPAN

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	
School Exchange Program	\$7,000.00	\$7,000.00	\$7,000.00	
Richmond Youth Choir Visit to Wakayama		\$7,000.00		
Richmond Soccer Visit to Wakayama			\$7,000.00	
Annual City to City Recognition Exchange	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	
Subtotal	\$7,500.00	\$14,500.00	\$14,500.00	
TOTAL (Wakayama 2014 to 2016)				\$36,500.00

XIAMEN, CHINA

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	
Youth Summer Camp Exchange Program	\$7,000.00	\$7,000.00	\$7,000.00	
Chinese New Year's Delegation Visit from Xiamen	\$ 5,000.00			
Official Visit from Xiamen Secretary General			\$ 5,000.00	
Xiamen Badminton Team Visit			\$ 7,000.00	
Annual City to City Recognition Exchange	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	
Subtotal	\$12,500.00	\$7,500.00	\$19,500.00	
TOTAL (Xiamen 2014 to 2016)				\$39,500.00

2014 – 2016 PROGRAMS
QINGDAO, CHINA

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	
Youth Summer Camp Exchange Program	\$7,000.00	\$7,000.00	\$7,000.00	
Visit from Qingdao Martial Arts Group	\$7,000.00			
Richmond Martial Arts Group Visit to Qingdao			\$7,000.00	
Annual City to City Recognition Exchange	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	
Subtotal	\$14,500.00	\$7,500.00	\$14,500.00	
TOTAL (Qingdao 2014 to 2016)				\$36,500.00