



## COUNCIL REPORT

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**TO:** MEMBERS OF COUNCIL **DATE:** 2008 March 03

**FROM:** MAYOR DEREK R. CORRIGAN **FILE:** PA 2400-20  
*Reference: Sister Cities*

**SUBJECT: BRITISH COLUMBIA ASIA PACIFIC INITIATIVE  
 BC ASIA LOCAL GOVERNMENT TWINNING RELATIONSHIPS**

**PURPOSE:** To outline a Memorandum of Agreement for Local Government Twinning between the City of Burnaby and Province of British Columbia.

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. **THAT** Council approve the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement between the City of Burnaby and the Province of British Columbia in support of our twinning relationships, as outlined in this report.

**REPORT**

Appearing on this agenda as an item of 'Correspondence' is a letter from the Minister of Community Services regarding the BC Asia Twinning Program. The Minister of Community Services has advised that the City of Burnaby is one of 29 municipalities eligible to receive one time funding of \$50,000 for its local twinning initiative and to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Province of B.C. in support of twinning or sister city initiatives with an Asia-Pacific city.

The City of Burnaby has a strong tradition and history associated with international sister cities or twinings. Burnaby was one of the first communities in Canada to recognize the economic and cultural opportunities of 'twinning' with Asian cities, and has supported a 'sister city' relationship with Kushiro, Japan since 1965. The Province has recognized that Burnaby's existing twinning with Kushiro is rooted in a philosophy of mutual intrinsic benefits that provides an example for pursuing long-term robust Asia-B.C. relationships.

In 2007, at the invitation of the Burnaby Board of Trade, I joined a ten member delegation to visit various cities in China in order to facilitate exchange and establish ongoing relationships. In September, 2007 Burnaby Council hosted a delegation from City of Changshu, China and has since extended an invitation to the Mayor Jiankang and Council of Changshu to enter into a Friendship Agreement. These activities are supported given the significant economic potential that these ties provide with the growing economies of Asia.

The Province of British Columbia has been developing a strategic interest in fostering local government twinning relationships as part of its Asia Pacific Initiative. In 2007, the Province sponsored a workshop at the Union of B.C. Municipalities convention to focus attention on the importance of Asia as an emerging market, and British Columbia as the North American

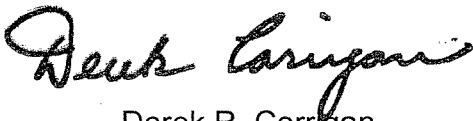
gateway. To further demonstrate its commitment to twinning initiatives, the Province of B.C. has launched a new program to provide information, technical assistance and grant funding to support local government leadership in twinning with Asian cities.

Under the MoA, the Province will provide information, support and guidance for the City's initiatives that may include: research on target countries and cities; guidance to establish twinings; statistics, education and training; senior government liaison and support; city specific expressions of interest; and contact with consular offices, embassies and trade and investment offices. The proposed Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) will provide the City of Burnaby access to a conditional grant of \$50,000 to accomplish any of its selected initiatives which qualify under the program to support either its existing sister city relationship with Kushiro or a Friendship Agreement with a new city, such as Changshu. This program could include:

- **Research and Planning** – to establish a vision with goals and objectives for future twinning relationships.
- **Training and Communication** – to create and improve educational materials and translation opportunities to support twinning relationships.
- **Human Resources** – to support the cost of staff dedicated to twinning relationships.
- **Exchange Missions** – to support visits and hosting of twinning relationships.

This proposal from the Ministry of Community Services requires that a resolution of Council accepting the terms of the MoA be adopted before March 12, 2008 and the funds be used for the intended purpose prior to March 31, 2009. With acceptance of the proposed MoA, I will prepare a proposal for twinning initiatives to be supported by the \$50,000 local government grant for further consideration. This program will enhance the ability of our City to support the multi-faceted economic and cultural opportunities presented by Asian twinning relationships.

Respectfully submitted,



Derek R. Corrigan  
MAYOR

cc: City Manager  
Director Finance  
Director Planning and Building  
Director Engineering  
Director Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services