

NO: R199

COUNCIL DATE: October 20, 2015

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **October 13, 2015**

FROM: **City Manager**

FILE: **0410-01**

SUBJECT: **Mayor's Participation in Premier's Trade Mission to China**

RECOMMENDATION

The City Manager recommends that Council:

1. Receive this report for information; and
2. Authorize Mayor Hepner to travel to China to participate in the Premier's trade mission to China, from October 30 to November 7, 2015.

INTENT

The intent of this report is to seek Council's approval for the Mayor to participate in the Premier's trade mission to China, from October 30, 2015 to November 7, 2015.

BACKGROUND

Mayor Hepner has been invited by the Premier of British Columbia to participate as a delegate in her upcoming trade mission to China.

The delegation accompanying the Premier will include a broad cross-section of business, industry and government officials from across British Columbia. Meetings, conferences, seminars and match-making sessions with key industry officials and investors will take place in a number of cities including, Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Hong Kong and Guangzhou. While in Guangzhou delegates will also take part in the 2015 World Shipping Expo.

The high-level goals of this trade mission are to:

- Open new markets for exports;
- Promote BC/Surrey's competitive advantages in priority sectors;
- Attract foreign direct investment and create employment opportunities; and
- Promote BC/Surrey as a strategic headquarter location for Chinese companies seeking a North American presence.

The approximate cost for the Mayor to participate in the trade mission is \$20,000. This includes the cost of flights, ground transportation, hotels and meals. All costs will be covered by the Mayor's Office budget.

DISCUSSION

The Premier's trade mission to China will focus on transit and transportation infrastructure and technology as well as sectors of the economy that directly align the City's Economic Diversification Plan and the City's Smart Surrey Strategy. These sectors include Clean Technology, Agricultural Innovation and Information and Communications Technology (ICT).

China has one of the most sophisticated and technically advanced rail transit systems in the world. With transit, specifically LRT, being a continuing priority for Surrey, it's important to note that this trade mission will facilitate senior level discussions that may help to advance current strategy.

Building connections with industry leaders in China has the potential to also help advance existing economic initiatives and enable new collaborations that may result in positive local economic impacts to the City of Surrey.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The trade mission's focus on economic development in the clean technology, agricultural innovation and ICT sectors will assist the City of Surrey in achieving the objectives of the City's Sustainability Charter including:

*“Having a full range of local employment opportunities and green business”; and
“Striving to achieve one local job for every employed resident in Surrey and a range of high-value local jobs in Surrey”.*

CONCLUSION

Based on the information provided in this report, the City Manager recommends that Council:

1. Receive this report for information; and
2. Authorize Mayor Hepner to travel to China to participate in the Premier's trade mission to China, from October 30 to November 7, 2015.

Vincent Lalonde, P. Eng.
City Manager

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