

## **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE NOVEMBER 19, 2001**

### **MUNICIPAL TWINNING YANGZHOU CITY, CHINA / SANJO CITY, JAPAN**

#### **Recommendation**

Councillor Bernie DiVona, the Deputy City Manager and City Solicitor and the Senior Economic Researcher/Technology Specialist, recommend:

- 1) That this report be received;
- 2) That in respect of Yangzhou City, China that staff be directed to pursue and promote opportunities for business, cultural and educational exchanges with a view to establishing a foundation and deepening friendship leading towards a future international partnership and twinning relationship; and
- 3) That in respect of Sanjo City, Japan that further business, cultural and educational exchanges be encouraged and opportunities be sought to continue these mutually beneficial initiatives for the enrichment and benefit of both Sister cities.

#### **Purpose**

Council requested a City of Vaughan delegation to determine whether Yangzhou City, China would meet the criteria for an international partnership and to reinforce the importance to Vaughan of the continuing relationship with Vaughan's Sister City Sanjo, Japan.

#### **Background - Analysis and Options**

##### **Yangzhou City, China**

A Friendship Agreement was signed between the City of Yangzhou and the City of Vaughan on June 12, 1995. Representatives of the City of Yangzhou, its businesses and schools have made four visits to the City of Vaughan to promote business, cultural and educational exchanges and has for many years demonstrated a great willingness to enhance the relationship between the two cities. Many invitations were extended to the City of Vaughan to become more familiar with the City of Yangzhou, its people, industries and schools.

A City delegation was requested to undertake an exploratory visit to consider whether Yangzhou meets the criteria for international partnerships established by the City of Vaughan and to assess the mutual benefits that may be achievable through a future twinning relationship.

The key in selecting an international partner has been identified to be finding a number of similarities between the partners that allows for meaningful experiences as well as learning and sharing opportunities.

The City of Yangzhou, with a population of 700,000 in its urban area and approximately 3.7 million in the "suburbs", lies in the south of Jiangsu Province in the heart of one of the most developed areas of China. It is a historical and cultural city and an important industrial base. The main industrial sectors are heavy machinery, automobile manufacturing, truck trailer and container manufacturing, plastics, electronic appliances, textiles, chemicals and many locally made specialty products such as lacquerware, jade, shell sculptures, embroidery and toys. There are more than two hundred large and middle sized enterprises in the City of Yangzhou accounting for 17% of the total businesses within the City. In 1999 the construction value of new development was approximately \$2.7 billion.

The Vaughan delegation was impressed with the operation of the City and the significant infrastructure under construction and planned. There are major transportation improvements occurring in many parts of China including Yangzhou. These improvements include major roadways and light rail.

The Mei Ling Middle School welcomed the opportunity to demonstrate its keen interest in fostering exchanges between Vaughan students and Yangzhou students to introduce them both to the experiences of other cultures and the understanding and opportunities that result.

**It is the opinion of the Vaughan delegation that having regard for its large industrial base, its transportation and development issues, its enthusiastic and committed schools and the ongoing interest and commitment to Vaughan, that Yangzhou City is an appropriate city for Vaughan to undertake the activities necessary to form an international partnership.**

Yangzhou officials have advised that all international partnerships must be approved by the Chinese Central Government and can only occur where there has been mutual benefits demonstrated through successful exchanges and business development.

Accordingly, it is recommended that staff be directed to pursue and promote opportunities for business, cultural and educational exchanges with a view to establishing a foundation and deepening friendship for a future international partnership and twinning relationship.

#### Sanjo City, Japan

The City of Vaughan and City of Sanjo have been sister cities since 1993 and a number of positive economic, cultural and educational exchanges have occurred over the past eight years.

The Vaughan delegation undertook numerous industry visits, including Corona Industries, Arcland Sakamoto, Pearl Metals and Kyowa Industries, as well as a visit to the Sanjo Industry Fair. Valuable information was obtained for potential alliances, joint ventures and economic opportunities being sought by Sanjo industries with Vaughan counterparts. There was an opportunity to discuss with Sanjo City officials mutual problems and challenges facing the business environment in the ongoing search by both municipalities for ways to assist our residents.

A student exchange of 12 students from a number of schools in Sanjo City were scheduled to travel to Vaughan in last month to enable students to learn about each others countries, cities, schools and each other. Unfortunately, due to world events this trip has been postponed for consideration next year.

The delegation visited Daisan Junior High School which is twinned with Woodbridge College in Vaughan. The Daisan's Principal has expressed interest in the initiation of a pen pal system and regular ongoing electronic communications for the mutual benefit of both schools and their students.

**The benefits of the close friendship between Vaughan and its sister city Sanjo have fostered an understanding and respect for cultural differences, business relationships and learning opportunities. It is recommended that this relationship be nurtured through continued exchanges and initiatives between the cities.**

#### Conclusion

International partnerships between Vaughan and Yangzhou City, China and Sanjo City, Japan have proven to be mutually beneficial and rewarding and are encouraged to continue and develop.

**Attachments**

Pictures

---

Councillor Bernie Di Vona

---

Theresa A. Caron, Deputy City Manager and City Solicitor

---

Fan Cheng, Senior Economic Researcher/Technology Specialist



*Councillor Bernie Di Vona met with the deputy mayor of Yangzhou City, Mr. Xiang-Yu Pan*



*Jiangsu Yawei Machine-Tool Co., Ltd, YangZhou, China*



*Vaughan delegation in Mei Ling Middle School, YangZhou, China*



*Courtesy visit to the Mayor and Chairman of the City of Sanjo, Japan*



*Vaughan delegation in Daisan Junior High School, Sanjo, Japan*