

MOTION

6. **Establishing a Friendship City Program in the City of Vancouver (Member's Motion B.4)**

At the Council meeting on September 21, 2021, Council referred the following motion to the Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities meeting on September 22, 2021, in order to hear from speakers.

MOVED by Mayor Stewart

WHEREAS

1. Partnering with cities located outside Canada is an effective way by which Vancouver can build and strengthen cultural and business relationships around the globe - especially in an increasingly divided world;
2. Vancouver has a long established "Sister City Program" and detailed and extensive Sister City agreements with Edinburgh, Odessa, Guangzhou, Yokohama and Los Angeles;
3. Vancouver is often approached to form official relationships with other cities but has no formal mechanism to do so other than detailed, extensive, and sometimes costly Sister City agreements;
4. The City of Toronto has a "Partnership City Program" similar in nature to Vancouver's "Sister City Program", but also a less formal and more local community-driven "Friendship City Program" which allows Toronto to expand its range of city-to-city relationships without incurring significant additional administrative costs; and
5. Toronto's Friendship City Program applications must be co-sponsored by a Council member as well as an interested community organization, with the candidate city also officially signalling a willingness to participate in a Friendship City agreement.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT Council direct staff to create a "Friendship City Program" including the following provisions:
 1. Applications to add a new Friendship City be initiated by a "sponsoring community organization" that is also a registered non-profit society;
 2. The sponsoring community organization represents a resident community located in Vancouver with an active relationship with the proposed Friendship City;
 3. The sponsoring community organization be responsible for all associated Friendship City activities and costs;

4. The sponsoring community organization demonstrates support and commitment in terms of community interest and active participation in the program;
 5. The sponsoring community organization provides an annual written report to Council with progress and activity updates;
 6. Friendship City agreements expire at the end of five (5) years with an option to renew;
 7. Proposed Friendship Cities have aligned strategic values; shared economic and cultural values with Vancouver, and have a similar size and geography;
 8. There is a limit of one Friendship City per country;
 9. Every Friendship City agreement requires a separate Council motion;
 10. Support provided by the City of Vancouver be limited to a letter signed by Mayor, annual letters to confirm the agreement, and staff coordination of annual reports to Council; and
 11. Any other budgetary considerations are included in the foundational motion to Council establishing the relationship with a new city.
- B. THAT Council direct staff to include a framework for evaluating Friendship City relationships, and a mechanism for terminating the Friendship City relationship, if it no longer meets a standard such as community reporting, active relationship, or shared values.
- C. THAT Council direct staff to review the existing City of Vancouver Sister City Program and provide a report back with recommendations to Council on the program, including a review of the status of current Sister Cities, and suggestions for updating the gendered language of the program.

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