

**TO:** MAYOR & COUNCILLORS  
**FROM:** INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND FRIENDSHIP CITIES COMMITTEE  
**SUBJECT:** **VISIT OF THE MAYOR OF HWASEONG TO BURNABY**  
**PURPOSE:** To seek approval for a budget to host a delegation from Hwaseong City, South Korea, in August 2025 in support of renewing the Sister City agreement.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT** the budget for up to \$10,000 to host the delegation of Hwaseong City to Burnaby in August 2025, as recommended at the International Relations and Friendship Cities Committee meeting held on July 2, 2025, be approved.

## **1.0 POLICY SECTION**

This report aligns with the Sister and Friendship Cities Policy (2024).

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

At its meeting on March 10, 2025, the IRFCC recommended the renewal and formal reaffirmation of the Sister City relationship between the City of Burnaby and Hwaseong City, South Korea. This recommendation was approved by Council at its meeting on March 25, 2025.

During the IRFCC meeting on July 2, 2025, the Director Intergovernmental Relations and Public Affairs provided a verbal report confirming that the Mayor of Hwaseong will visit Burnaby in August 2025 to formally renew the Sister City agreement.

Arising from discussion, the Committee recommended that Council approve a budget of up to \$10,000 to support hosting the Hwaseong City delegation.

## **3.0 GENERAL INFORMATION**

The City of Burnaby and Hwaseong City have shared a Sister City relationship since September 28, 2010. Hwaseong is among the largest municipalities in South Korea and is projected to surpass a population of one million in 2025 – marking its designation as “Hwaseong Special City”.

The year 2025 also marks a 15th anniversary of the Burnaby–Hwaseong Sister City relationship. In May 2025, Hwaseong City extended an invitation to the City of Burnaby to visit Hwaseong City on June 18 – 20, 2025, for a special program that included cultural experiences, official meetings, and opportunities to explore the AI and development of

Hwaseong City, as outlined in the Attachment 1 to this report. At that time, the City of Burnaby could not accept the invitation due to the short notice of the request.

On May 13, 2025, a delegation from Hwaseong City visited Burnaby and signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Burnaby Board of Trade to foster economic development opportunities. During the event, officials from both municipalities provided an overview of business opportunities and explored ways to foster cross-border collaboration. Correspondence regarding this event and the MOU document are attached to this report as Attachment 2 and Attachment 3 respectfully.

In June 2025, Hwaseong City formally confirmed that the Mayor of Hwaseong will visit Burnaby on August 25, 2025, as a part of a broader North American visit. The communication proposed that the visit include a renewal of the Sister City agreement. The composition of the delegation has not been finalized, but the expectation is that the delegation from Hwaseong would include 20 participants in total.

While final details are still being coordinated with Hwaseong officials, the visit is expected to include transportation to and from the airport, an official reception, signing ceremony, and a possible tour, which would include transportation, of the Korean Cultural Centre. Although specific costs and itinerary are still being finalized, the Committee is recommending a budget of up to \$10,000 to support the official visit.

#### **4.0 COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Not applicable.

#### **5.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Funding for International Friendship and Sister City initiatives has been budgeted through the City's Gaming Reserve and there are sufficient funds available to support up to \$10,000 estimated budget to host the Hwaseong visit to Burnaby.

On behalf of the International Relations and Friendship Cities Committee,

Councillor Pietro Calendino, Chair

Councillor James Wang, Vice Chair

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 – Invitation to Visit Hwaseong City from June 18 – 20, 2025

Attachment 2 – Correspondence Regarding Hwaseong City Visit

Attachment 3 – Memorandum of Understanding between Hwaseong City and Burnaby Board of Trade

## **REPORT CONTRIBUTORS**

This report was prepared by Anastassiya Denissenko, Administrative Officer 1, and reviewed by Samantha Pellizzari, Policy and Governance Administrator, Rajvir Rao, Director Intergovernmental Relations and Public Affairs, and Noreen Kassam, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer / CFO.