



SUBJECT: Mundialization trip to Itabashi, Japan – Mayor’s trip report

TO: Committee of the Whole

FROM: Mayor’s Office

Report Number: MO-18-19

Wards Affected: All

File Numbers: 160-05

Date to Committee: December 2, 2019

Date to Council: December 16, 2019

Recommendation:

Receive and file Mayors Office report MO-18-19 regarding the Mayor’s trip to Itabashi, October 2019.

Purpose:

This action supports our goals of:

A City that Grows

- Promoting Economic Growth

An Engaging City

- Community Building through Arts and Culture via Community Activities
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Background and Discussion:

The City of Burlington began its twinning relationship with Itabashi, Japan thirty years ago as part of our mundialization efforts. Mundialization is the act of a city or local authority declaring itself a "world citizen" and being aware of global issues with a sense of shared rights and responsibility. Through the belief that peaceful cooperation depends on mutual trust and appreciation among peoples of different nations, races, cultures and systems, mundialization encourages citizen connections as a way of fostering world peace and global understanding.

Every five years, as an anniversary of our twinning, representatives from each city including the Mayor, City Manager and Committee Clerk, and select members of the Mundialization Committee visit one another to maintain and grow our shared relationship. A delegation from Itabashi visited the City of Burlington in July of 2019, and our delegation travelled to Itabashi this past October in reciprocity.

The Mayor's trip resulted in some new ideas for Burlington, including:

- a) Creating an annual public event to celebrate our city's history, arts, culture and community, with a proposed name of "Burlington Day"
- b) Creating an art exchange between the Art Gallery of Burlington and the art community in Itabashi, Japan.

Appendix A is a full recap of the Mayor's trip and experiences.

Financial Matters:

The cost of the Mayor and key city staff attending these trips are budgeted for in the city's budget process via input from the Mundialization Committee, who reports to City Council through Committee of the Whole.

The budget for mundialization is positioned to cover the greater expenses associated with anniversary years. The approval for anniversary trips was done by council in January of 2007 via report CL-01-07.

The Mundialization Committee has its own operating budget as a citizen committee to support its programs on an annual basis. This is presented annually as part of the citizen advisory committee budget. They also have a corporate mundialization initiatives account that exists to support anniversary years. Additional reference to this account is found in report CL-06-19 to Committee of the Whole on April 1st of this year.

The expenses for this trip can be found in Appendix B.

Public Engagement Matters:

Feedback from the community throughout the trip as a result of the Mayor's social media posts was overwhelmingly positive. The Mayor's posts garnered 3500 likes and 489 comments including such feedback as:

Hiro M. – "I really admire how you and delegates are not doing just fun "tourism" stuff, how you are all deeply going into areas and history of devastating parts of Japan as well - which will help move forward with understanding and knowledge on how to better promote friendship, peace and camaraderie between both communities and cities and countries! I'm learning so much from your posts. Thank you for sharing."

Bridget S. – “Thank you Mayor for representing our community in Japan! Sounds like and awesome, informative and important trip. I can’t imagine a better representative! I appreciate you doing this for us.”

Kilcoo70 – “You are a great ambassador for us. Well done Madame Mayor.”

Conclusion:

Celebrating the 30th anniversary of our twinning initiative with the people of Itabashi was a remarkable experience. Sharing parts of their history and community with us helped build an even stronger bond between our two communities and further deepened our understanding of their people and culture. The goals of mundialization continue to be successfully achieved through this long-standing relationship and related events.

Respectfully submitted,
Mayor Marianne Meed Ward
905-335-7607

Appendices:

- A. Full trip recap
- B. Trip expenses

Report Approval:

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, Director of Finance and Director of Legal. Final approval is by the City Manager.