

Report by Peter Robinson, Urban Planning Project Manager and David Hazeldine, Acting Director Technical Services

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That Council note the success of Council's Sister City visit to Gapyeong County and associated study tour of South Korea.**
- 2. That Council investigate the resources, time and general implications of establishing possible friendship city relationships with the South Korean Municipalities that were visited on the study tour.**
- 3. That Council seek to apply the lessons learned on the South Korea study tour to its projects, including the Korean Garden, Strathfield Town Centre, Parramatta Road Corridor, and Waste Management (inc. investigation of an automated waste system for Strathfield).**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

Council, at its meeting on 7 May 2013, resolved (Minute No.87/13):

- "1. That Council approve the proposed Sister City visit to Gapyeong County and associated study tour of South Korea.*
- 2. That Council note the dates and proposed itinerary for the Sister City visit and associated study tour of South Korea.*
- 3. That Councillors finalise nominations to attend the proposed Sister City visit and associated study tour of South Korea.*
- 4. That Council note the proposed costs of the Sister City visit and associated study tour of South Korea."*

This report has been prepared to provide an update to Council following the successful Sister City visit to Gapyeong County and associated study tour of South Korea.

REPORT

Council representatives, including Mayor Gulian Vaccari, Deputy Mayor Andrew Soulos, Councillor Raj Datta, Councillor Sang Ok, and Councillor Stephanie Kokkolis visited South Korea between 18 and 25 May 2013.

The primary purpose of the tour was to fulfil Council's obligations under its sister city agreement with Gapyeong County, with the associated opportunity taken for a Planning, Building and Infrastructure study tour particularly of South Korea's largest cities, Seoul and Busan. The post-tour report and learning is Attachment 1.

Feedback from the Study Tour

A Councillor Workshop was held on 25 June 2013 to discuss the outcomes of the Sister City visit and study tour. The following feedback includes the collective views of tour participants.

Council representatives regard the tour as a great success, particularly in building the Sister City relationship with Gapyeong County, as well as building friendships with the other municipalities that were visited, Geoje, Gumi, Gwacheon, Haeundae, and Suncheon, as well as the Suncheon International Garden Exposition organisation. It was considered that this also increased cross-cultural understanding both ways.

The Council representatives were overwhelmed by the very generous welcomes, the good will and hospitality that they received at each of the Municipalities that they visited.

A number of lessons were experienced relating to Strathfield Council and its wider community. These lessons include:

- The value of good planning and design, as shown in Haeundae (Marine City/Centum City), Seoul (special project and urban regeneration areas), Suncheon International Garden Exposition, and Gwacheon (Gwacheon 3 residential area);
- The value that a high standard of design can bring to a place, and how it can change the image and economy of a place for the better – Haeundae/Busan (Busan Cinema Centre, Marine City, Centum City/BEXCO) or Seoul (Cheonggyecheon, Gwanghwamum Square, Seoul Plaza, Dongdaemun Design Centre), Gwacheon (Gwacheon 3 residential area), Suncheon (Suncheon International Garden Exposition);
- How different design approaches, including active and highly visible retail and hospitality uses of up to three levels in downtown locations (in taller buildings), or wide use of bright colours (Seoul, Busan), can inspire us to rethink what is possible in our centres to improve them;
- The value of planning ahead for good infrastructure, as shown by Waste/Recycling (Seoul, Gwacheon), KTX High Speed Rail (Gimcheongumi new town), Intermodal inland port location and layout (Gumi), Public Transportation (Seoul Metro), Landscape/Streams/Water (Seoul Cheonggyecheon, Suncheon International Garden Exposition), Major transport corridor linkages (Geoje bridges/tunnels);
- The importance of a good economic development strategy, as shown by Gumi (Branding, Marketing, Special Economic Areas, Economic Clustering), Seoul (Catalyst Developments like Dongdaemun Design Centre, Urban Regeneration), Haeundae (Busan Cinema Centre, Marine City, Centum City/BEXCO, Aquarium investment model), Geoje (leveraging the largest employers), Suncheon (using gardens as economic development - Suncheon International Garden Exposition).

There were also lessons for the projects that Council is currently undertaking, including:

- Building our Community – with the possibility of educational, cultural, artistic and business exchanges with Gapyeong County, and elsewhere in South Korea;
- Korean Gardens – the possibility of commemorating the joint sacrifice made by both Australia and Korea in the Korean War, and building a closer link with Gapyeong County through this and cultural understanding;

- Korean Gardens – the value of getting the design right, with the right meaning, the right elements and the right plants (Seoul, Biwon; Haeundae; Suncheon International Garden Exposition);
- Strathfield Town Centre Project and Parramatta Road Corridor – the value that a high standard of design, even iconic design (like Marine City), can bring to a place, and how it can change the image and economy of a place for the better;
- Strathfield Town Centre Project and Parramatta Road Corridor – the value of planning high quality infrastructure ahead of development;
- Strathfield Town Centre Project and Parramatta Road Corridor – the value of getting the economic side of development right to support viable and sustainable long term economic value for an area;
- Council Waste Management – how food organics is handled and recycled in dense city environments, and the value and operation of automated waste systems in medium and higher density areas.

REFERRAL FROM OTHER DEPARTMENT

Referral was made to the General Manager's Office.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Expenditure: \$15,122.65

Funding was provided in the 2012/2013 budget for this purpose as set out below:

Budget Item	Approved Budget	Expenditure to Date
Korean Sister City Visit	\$20,000	\$15,122.65

ATTACHMENTS

1. Korea Sister City Visit and Study Tour Report