



Report to: Development Services Committee

Meeting Date: September 11, 2017

---

**SUBJECT:** 29<sup>th</sup> World Hakka Conference, Hong Kong, October 12-15, 2017  
**PREPARED BY:** Sandra Tam, ext. 3883

---

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1) That the report titled “29<sup>th</sup> World Hakka Conference, Hong Kong, October 12-15, 2017” be received; and
- 2) That the City support the “Hakka Canadian Association” in the bidding for hosting rights for the 31<sup>st</sup> World Hakka Conference in Markham in October, 2021; and
- 3) That Council approve the Hakka Canadian Association's invitation to Mayor Frank Scarpitti, Regional Councillor Joe Li and Senior staff Sandra Tam to attend the 29<sup>th</sup> World Hakka Conference, Hong Kong, October 12-15, 2017 at no cost to the City to assist the Association in bidding for the 31<sup>st</sup> World Hakka Conference to be hosted in Markham in October, 2021; and,
- 4) That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to request Council's approval for business travel for Mayor Frank Scarpitti, Regional Councillor Joe Li and Senior Business Development Officer Sandra Tam to participate in the 29<sup>th</sup> World Hakka Conference in Hong Kong from October 12 to October 15, 2017 in support of to the Hakka Canadian Association's application to host the 31<sup>st</sup> World Hakka Conference in Markham in October 2021.

The business trip is an integral part of the City's 10-Year Economic Strategy “Markham 2020”. It addresses the objective of building Global Markham and Branded Markham.

**BACKGROUND:**

The World Hakka Conference

The World Hakka Conference is one of the major Hakka international events. The conference has been successful in building a platform for global Hakka leaders to meet and network, and to promote greater awareness of Hakka culture, especially amongst the younger generation.

Since its first conference in Hong Kong in 1971, it has evolved from “*simply a grand union and association into the cultural (large-scale entertainment and performance, art and literature, cuisine), academic (International Conference on Hakka Studies), economic (business and trade talks), and political (United Front work) spheres. It is not only an important carrier for the Hakka to maintain bonds of friendship with other villages and enhance multinational and multiregional interaction, but also a platform and arena for pluralistic ethnic group identification and cultural production in the new era.*” ~*Global Hakka: Hakka identity in the Remaking* by Jessieca Leo

The conference is held every two years in different countries and has been successful in attracting thousands of Hakka from around the world. Recent conferences held in Jakarta, Indonesia (2013), Hsinchu, Taiwan (2015) were attended by over 6,000 delegates who were representatives of global Hakka organizations. Hosting cities benefit from the surge in visitors and media and relating cultural and economic impacts. The bidding to host the World Hakka Conference is similar to that of a major international sports event.

#### Hakka Canadian Association

The Hakka Canadian Association, a non-profit organization aiming at promoting Hakka culture and fostering international cultural exchanges, was established earlier this year to be the lead organization in bidding and hosting the 31<sup>st</sup> World Hakka Conference in Markham. The Association is comprised of local prominent Hakka association leaders and community members who are passionate and supportive of the initiative. A delegation of 7 members from the association has already registered to attend the 29<sup>th</sup> World Hakka Conference in Hong Kong in support of the bid.

The Association invited Mayor Frank Scarpitti, Regional Councillor Joe Li and one Senior Business Development Officer to join their delegation to Hong Kong to support its bidding. The cost of this trip is borne by the Association as part of their mandate to foster cultural exchanges and community spirit.

If successful, it will be the first time that a World Hakka Conference is held outside of Asia. The Association is prepared to raise \$2.0 million to cover the estimated cost of hosting the World Hakka Conference. The Association has already received support from a private donor with a commitment of \$500,000. Regional Councillor Joe Li, and Shaun Chen, M.P., who are part of the delegation are committed to sourcing funding from the Ontario and Federal Governments. The City of Markham is not obligated to contribute financially.

Successfully bidding for and winning the rights to host the World Hakka Conference involves a close collaboration between the host association and the municipality where the conference will be held. Markham’s participation in the bidding process is essential to winning.

**OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:**

Markham, being the most diverse community in Canada and with a Hakka population of more than 15,000, will benefit from the hosting of this signature international Hakka event. With an estimated 3,000 delegates attending from over 20 countries (e.g. China, Hong Kong, India, Singapore, Malaysia, Australia, Mauritius, United States, United Kingdom, France, Trinidad, Jamaica and Brazil etc.) for four days, and the media exposure attracted, Markham will have a unique opportunity to participate on the world stage. It will not only showcase Markham's diversity, but bring significant economic and culture opportunities. The benefits for Markham to host the 31<sup>st</sup> World Hakka Conference include:

1. Showcase Markham as a welcoming and inclusive community
2. Increase Markham's international awareness/reputation
3. Raise Markham's profile on the world stage
4. Build a value-adding global network
5. Attract international talents and business leaders for knowledge sharing and collaboration
6. Promote Markham as the preferred location for investment
7. Increase in tourist spending that benefits local economy

The proposed business travel to join the Hakka Canadian Association at the 29<sup>th</sup> World Hakka Conference will involve participation in the presentation to the Organizing Committee to bid for the hosting rights. The itinerary in Hong Kong is as follows:

**Itinerary:**

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| October 12 (Thursday) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrival in Hong Kong</li> <li>• Registration and Networking</li> </ul>   |
| October 13 (Friday)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in the Hakka Cultural Form</li> <li>• Attend Hakka Youth Summit</li> <li>• Attend Opening Ceremony</li> <li>• Attend "Sailing Out Over the Sea" Multi-Media Show</li> </ul>  |
| October 14 (Saturday) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in Ministers' Conference</li> <li>• Presentation to World Hakka Conference Organizing Committee</li> <li>• Participate in Ministers' Luncheon (Winning country to host 31<sup>st</sup> World Hakka Conference Awarded)</li> <li>• Attend side programs in Hong Kong</li> <li>• Attend the World Hakka Conference Flag Handover Ceremony</li> </ul> |
| October 15 (Sunday)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-arranged activities/Depart Hong Kong</li> </ul>   |

---

The Association is committed to paying the estimated cost of \$12,450 for three Markham representatives to attend the 29<sup>th</sup> World Hakka Conference. This includes the conference registration fee, costs of airfare, accommodations, ground transportation and most meals.

Estimated cost (tax included) for three Markham representatives to participate in the 29<sup>th</sup> World Hakka Conference in Hong Kong from October 12<sup>th</sup> to October 15<sup>th</sup> is

Conference Registration @\$150/person	\$450.00
Airfare @\$2,000/person	\$6,000.00
Accommodation, local transportation & Meals 4 days @\$500/day	\$6,000.00
<b>Total:</b>	<b><u>\$12,450.00</u></b>

#### **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

None

#### **HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS**

None

#### **ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

Markham 2020 Economic Strategy

#### **BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:**

None

#### **RECOMMENDED BY:**



---

Stephen Chait, EcD., CMC  
Director, Economic Growth, Culture and  
Entrepreneurship