REPORT ON CHINA TRADE MISSION

Itinerary Summary

Shanghai, Suzhou, Changsha, Tianjin and Baotou | October 20 – 30, 2012

Participants:

- Mayor Dean Fortin, City of Victoria
- Gail Stephens, City of Victoria
- Sheryl Masters, City of Victoria
- Dallas Gislason, Greater Victoria Development Agency
- Robert Gialloreto, Tourism Victoria
- Curtis Grad, Greater Victoria Harbour Authority
- Dave Cowan, The Butchart Gardens
- Dr. Saul Klein, University of Victoria
- Maggie Li, University of Victoria
- James Lee, University of Victoria
- Cyndi McLeod, Royal Roads University
- Connie Chan, Royal Roads University
- Dr. Tom Roemer, Camosun College
- Joan Yates, Camosun College
- Allan Rathbone, Sooke School District #62
- Louis Lui, Sooke School District #62
- Jeff Kwok, Neverblue Media
- Daniel Hsu, DFH Real Estate Ltd.
- Quentin Hu, Ayase International Consulting Inc.
- Anita MacKinney, AB Mack Immigration Canada
- Thomas Chan, Chan & Associates Chartered Accountants
- BC International Trade and Investment Offices (in Shanghai, Beijing, and Guangzhou)
  - John MacDonald, Shanghai
  - Alvin Liu, Shanghai
  - Leanne Yi, Guangzhou
  - Tom Wang, Guangzhou
  - Jenny Zhai, Beijing

Highlights and Outcomes

Shanghai | October 20 – 22, 2012

Population: 20 million (35 million regionally)  Key Sectors: Tourism, Business Investment and Immigration

Shanghai is the largest industrial economy in China with GDP of $297 Billion and is one of the most significant business centres in all of Asia.

- The delegation had a productive meeting with Shanghai-based and UVic Alumnus Jason Inch – a renowned international business consultant. Jason has agreed to help build a bridge with local networks and Victoria-based opportunities.
- Shanghai is home to many tourism operators, major airlines, and travel companies – key partners to get tourists to Victoria.
  - The Tourism delegation met with several Shanghai-based tour operators to refine how to get more tourists into Victoria from China and how to package Victoria within the Canada package. The Butchart Gardens and Tourism Victoria led these meetings.
  - The Tourism delegation also made a day trip to Houngou to meet with tour operators.
- Met with Canada’s Consul General Rick Savone in Shanghai to discuss VISA processing, the main source of bottleneck for tourists and visitors from Asia.
- Met with Managing Director of BC International Trade Office in Shanghai (John McDonald). They can help streamline business-related VISA application processes. Their office offered to link investment opportunities in Victoria directly with his network in Shanghai.
- The Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai helped facilitate a meeting for the delegation and several investors, entrepreneurs, and investment brokers. One attendee is looking for a Victoria-based high-tech firm to invest in. One attendee is looking at a local winery.
- Immigration (also PNP)
  - Several meetings took place in Shanghai with investors who are looking for opportunities to immigrate using the BC Provincial Nominee Program. These investments have a huge impact on Victoria because the PNP program guidelines dictate that the investment must create full-time jobs for local citizens in addition to the immigrant.
**Suzhou** | October 22 – 24, 2012

**Population:** 12 million  
**Key Sectors:** Tourism, Education, Business Investment and Immigration

With a population of 12 million and a new 500,000-employee industrial park, Suzhou is now the second most industrially advanced region of China, behind Shanghai. Many international firms produce their advanced-technology products here (i.e. Apple Macbook). Suzhou has been a sister city to Victoria for over 32 years.

- Victoria has had a “Sister City” relationship with Suzhou for 32 years, but from a tourism perspective the community has yet to leverage it into any sort of tactical business driver. Following the meeting with the Suzhou Tourism Board, we discussed such tactics about how to cross promote our destinations to increase awareness and ultimately help drive visitation from this affluent part of this vast country.
  - Victoria and Suzhou will explore opportunities to have web site linkages to examine what kind of traffic we can each drive to our tourism web sites.
  - We will examine the option of having a presence in Suzhou's massive Global Tourism Festival which features promotion of other destinations over a 10 day period in April
  - We will look to launch a Victoria presence on Weibo, which is the Chinese equivalent of Twitter in order to promote ourselves and monitor our effectiveness
  - We will look at promoting Suzhou on our Tourism Victoria Facebook page as they will promote us on their Ren Ren, which is the Chinese equivalent of Facebook, and the second most significant social network on earth.
  - We will share marketing collateral and strategic plans in order to increase our learning

- The Suzhou Tourism Bureau was clearly impressed with the work of our tourism industry, which continues to solidify Victoria's strong reputation.

- Met with Suzhou regional chamber of commerce and determined that many investors in Suzhou look to direct investment into foreign markets for a variety of reasons. Since Suzhou is a Sister City to Victoria, this relationship can be fostered. Prior to the China mission, the Greater Victoria Development Agency put together a list of companies and various land/real-estate investments in Victoria that are seeking investment. This list will be shared as a follow-up.

- Met with the Director of the Suzhou Industrial Park – an industrial region in Suzhou with 500,000 workers and students. Several Universities are located here and possibly joint-ventures or research partnerships can be explored with Victoria-based institutions.

- Met with the Vice-Mayor of Suzhou and she desires a much stronger working relationship.

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**Changsha** | October 24 – 26, 2012

**Population:** 7.4 million  
**Key Sectors:** Tourism, Education, Business Investment and Immigration

Changsha is an emerging tier-two city in China growing rapidly. In 2010, Victoria Mayor Dean Fortin signed a friendship agreement with Mayor of Changsha. From this relationship, educational projects emerged with the University of Victoria (with Hunan University) and Sooke School District (with Mingde School). A joint venture agreement with Victoria's tech park and the Changsha industrial Park was also signed in 2010 – a relationship for information sharing and joint venture exploration.

- University of Victoria and Hunan University
  - Led by Dr. Saul Klein, Dean of UVic’s Business School, UVic continues to develop this relationship, growing their joint program each year. This trip brought the Mayor of Victoria to the campus as a key milestone of this long-term relationship.

- Changsha Industrial Park
  - Met with 20 leading local firms along with local decision makers. These firms have many products that offer collaboration for Victoria-based firms. For example, smart metering technology to support environmental changes.
**Changsha** | Continued

- Sooke School District launched the VicStar Scholarship Program with Mingde School in an announcement by Mayor Dean Fortin in front of an audience of 250 students and parents. The VicStar program will provide a chance for Mingde students to attend Sooke School District's international program in Victoria as part of the “4 Step Pathways Program” through to post-secondary education at the University of Victoria and other institutions.

- Through meetings with the Changsha Tourism Bureau, and the Municipal International Exchange Office, we learned that Changsha strongly desires a direct flight connection to Victoria. This requires a longer runway. The City also wishes to host 50 Victoria-based students next summer in an international exchange program to experience Chinese culture.

- Immigration: Changsha is a region with a strong desire to immigrate to Canada. Canada is well regarded in Changsha as a safe place to live, a stable place to work, and a future full of opportunities for their children. Several clients have been approached already as potential immigrants and investors in Victoria.

- Changsha also expressed desire for Victoria and West-Coast Style micro-breweries. The young and energetic culture in Changsha would be a strong fit for a Victoria-based investor to enter the Chinese marketplace. Changsha is experiencing significant GDP growth and recently landed a major international automotive manufacturing plant.

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**Tianjin** | October 27, 2012

**Population:** 14 million  
**Key Sectors:** Tourism and Education

Tianjin was recently named by the Chinese Government as the 3rd major industrial zone, which will spread wealth from Beijing into the new industrial areas of Tianjin – just a 30 minute train ride from Beijing. Tianjin is a major centre for tourism and business already, with regional population of 14 million.

- During a day-trip by train to Tianjin, the delegation helped Royal Roads University launch a new Masters program in Environmental Leadership. The first cohort will have 44 students, with rapid growth expected for the second cohort.

- The delegation fostered a relationship with the Canada International School in Beijing – an important and emerging partner of Royal Roads University worth $2 million over four years.

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**Baotou** | October 28 – 29, 2012

**Population:** 2.4 million  
**Key Sectors:** Education, Tourism and Business Investment

Baotou is a small remote city in the province of Inner Mongolia. Despite its size, Baotou is the world’s largest producer of rare earth metals. 85% of China production and 35% of global market share. Baotou’s major employer – BaoGang Steel – employs 400,000 people.

- Camosun College signed an MOU to move forward with new initiatives that will phase into a permanent presence in Baotou.

- Camosun College agreement with Baotou is worth an initial amount of $500,000 and will grow over time.

- The delegation met with the Mayor and Vice-Mayor of Baotou and agreed that a strong working relationship is desired by both parties moving forward.

- Many meetings took place with investors, economic leaders, the Mayor's staff and other business leaders with expressions of interest in future partnerships, delegations, and investment opportunities.