



SISTER CITIES

NEW ZEALAND

Connecting people globally for peace and prosperity

NEWSLETTER

March 2021

Sister Cities New Zealand 2021 40th Anniversary Annual Conference

LOCATION: Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington

DATE: 15th-16th April

THEME: Celebrating 40 years of Global Connection and Diversity

*Join us to celebrate
Sister Cities New Zealand's
40th Anniversary!*

[Read the current programme HERE!](#)

[Click here to REGISTER NOW](#)

From the SCNZ Board

Introducing:

New National Administrator

The Board wishes to advise you that Jess Skinner was appointed as the new National Administrator at the Board meeting in February.

Jean Chua will resign at the 2021 Annual Conference in April to pursue her career as an artist and we wish her all the very best. We thank Jean sincerely for her commitment, hard work and support to SCNZ over the last three years.

The transition period is for the months of February and March and Jess will be in the position solely from 1st April. The contact email address remains the same: admin@sistercities.org.nz

Jess Skinner (Wellington)

Jess is a British expat who has been living in New Zealand for more than five years. An avid traveller, she brings experience from all over Asia and a shared passion for human and cultural connection and understanding. In addition to Sister cities New Zealand, she also works part time as a yoga teacher for children in primary school and is involved in coordinating locally-grown community dinners.

She loves surfing in summer, sewing in winter and also has some training in Non-Violent Communication. She hopes that through working with Sister Cities she is able to expand her world view, contribute to global connection and shared values.



New Member: Priority One – Tauranga Moana

By Greg Simmons, Chief Operating Officer

Te pai me te whai rawa o Tauranga Moana kit e ao – The prosperity and splendour of Tauranga Moana to the world

Priority One is an economic development enabler focused on creating a prosperous and sustainable city and region. Our most effective contribution to the community is to focus on the creation of highly skilled jobs and the ability of our own people to fill them. Our direct connection to over 300 local business members ensures our effectiveness in delivering intelligent economic growth that delivers social, cultural and environmental benefits. We place significant value on international partnerships as a means to enhance regional prosperity. The Western Bay of Plenty International Strategy, led by Priority One, is a collaborative multi-agency place-based approach to promote tourism and trade, and help attract international skills and investment to the region. The purpose of our place-based approach is to leverage the interlinkages between migration categories, tourism activities, investment activities, trade and international education across the areas of attraction, transition and settlement. The inherent principle of our international efforts is that of mutual benefit, and in particular that they benefit both those that arrive and those who already live here. Tauranga City has two sister cities – Yantai, China (35 years) and Hitachi, Japan (33 years); as well as a friendly city agreement with Ansan, South Korea (8 years).

Are you looking for a new Sister City or Sister School in New Zealand? We may be able to help!

Created by our Director, Jan Fitz-Gerald, we now have quick and easy forms on our website for you to fill out, so that we can assist you on your road to establishing a new Sister City or Sister School relationship.

Sister City relationships foster the growth of a mutual understanding and long-term friendship between countries and regions, as well as the communities within them. This

bond allows for a continuous exchange of ideas and culture, and even facilitates development within the areas of trade and tourism.



Head over to the "Sister Cities" tab on our website sistercities.org.nz for more information, as well as the links to our online forms!



Wellington and Beijing Celebrate 15 Years of Sister City Relationship

Jennifer Zhou, International Relations, Wellington City Council

On 1st February, a gala evening was held in Te Marae of Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa as part of the 15th anniversary celebrations of the sister city relationship between Wellington and Beijing

Wellington City Mayor Andy Foster and guests with Beijing connections attended the event. Beijing Mayor CHEN Jining, New Zealand Ambassador to China Clare Fearnley and Chinese Ambassador to New Zealand WU Xi addressed the special occasion and sent their congratulatory messages over the video.

Regular friendly visits between Wellington and Beijing commenced in 2000. The cities agreed to become sister cities in 2006. The relationship was formalised during the Sister Cities New Zealand Conference that year. Mayoral exchanges have actively pursued on a wide range of subjects, including governance, cultural and sports exchanges, education and tourism, and bilateral trade.

Mayor Foster spoke about the significant role of the sister city relationship in enhancing the economic, social and cultural prosperity of Wellington. He pledged to advance the understanding and co-operation across multiple sectors with Beijing to rejuvenate the economy amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The Beijing Wellington sister city relationship forms a vital link in the network that unites tens of thousands of citizen diplomats and volunteers who work tirelessly to promote peace and understanding.

Given the need of co-operation and shared understanding the world will increasingly need to fight the COVID pandemic, Sister Cities will undoubtedly be called upon to energise the global rebuild in post-COVID."

In a video message, Mayor of Beijing CHEN Jining spoke highly of the sister city relationship Beijing had with Wellington in support of the national bonds; and expressed sincere gratitude for the long-standing support from the people who have promoted this relationship.

The progress in technology has allowed opportunities to develop and maintain international relationships regardless of current international travel restrictions. The gala evening featured spectacular performances from Beijing based artists by making use of the technology. Several joint activities will be organised throughout the year to further strengthen co-operation and exchange between the two cities.



Chinese lion dance, the Wellington Chinese Sports and Cultural Centre



Andy Foster, Mayor of Wellington City



Haka Powhiri, Nga Marere Maori Club

Dunedin City - Updates of Sister City Related Events

By Hui Zhang, China Project Coordinator, Economic Development, Dunedin City

1. Mayoral meeting with Dunedin local Chinese agents

On 8 October 2020, Mayor Hawkins hosted a meeting with seven Dunedin local tourism and education agents. Enterprise Dunedin director John Christie, Project China Coordinator Hui Zhang attended the meeting.

Mayor Hawkins introduced what we have done with China during the last couple of months, including interaction with the Mayors of our China sister cities to support each other; Video conference between SDHB and Shanghai Health Commission shared knowledge and experience fighting with COVID-19.

Mayor Hawkins admitted this year is a difficult year for all agents and really appreciated their hard work to keep close connections and continued interaction with China business partners. All the agents appreciated the time and opportunity to meet with Mayor Hawkins. Agents and Mayor Hawkins had very productive discussions of the areas of potential co-operation and work. The strength and warmth of the relationships was evident with agents and Mayor Hawkins all having photos together at the end of the meeting.

2. Enterprise Dunedin meeting with New Zealand-China Non-Communicable Diseases Research Collaboration Centre (NCD CRCC)

On 29 October 2020, Enterprise Dunedin had a meeting with NCD team. Enterprise Dunedin director John Christie, Economic Development Programme Manager Fraser Liggett, and Project China Coordinator Hui Zhang attended the meeting. For NCD team, Professor Jim Mann, Dr Hu Zhang, and Fia Jephson Sandstrom attended.

Dr Hu Zhang, on behalf of NCD, did a presentation showing what NCD had achieved with the support from Enterprise Dunedin last three years. MBIE decided to continue to fund \$1.6M over the next four years for research collaboration with China in Non-Communicable Diseases areas. NCD is keen to work with Enterprise Dunedin for future cooperative projects in China, mainly in Shanghai and Chengdu through existing local government connections and relationships.

3. Video Conference between Dunedin Mayor and Deputy Chairman of Shanghai Standing Committee



On 23 November 2020, Dunedin Mayor – Aaron Hawkins and Shanghai Standing Committee Vice Chairman – SHA Hailin lead the meeting from both two cities.

Dunedin City Council CEO Sandy Graham; Enterprise Dunedin director John Christie; Economic Development Programme Manager Fraser Liggett, and Project China Coordinator Hui Zhang attended the zoom meeting.

The meeting went for one hour. Mr. Sha updated everyone on Shanghai's epidemic prevention and control, the

running of the 3rd China International Import Expo (CIIE) in Shanghai in October. He re-iterated Shanghai values the deep friendship with Dunedin and would like to continue and deepen the cooperation through fields of economy, trade, education, scientific research, health, horticulture, culture, justice, and talent training. Mayor Hawkins totally agrees Mr. Sha's comments and discussed Dunedin's long history and strong relationship with China. Mayor Hawkins introduced our plan to work with Shanghai next year which includes four MoUs which need to be updated and resigned, continued research collaboration in areas like health and non-communicable disease, to look at exploring gaming industry opportunities, and to continue to work together on not only facing COVID-19 challenges but also those of climate change.

4. Mayor Hawkins recorded a video greeting message for 2021 New Zealand Chinese New Year Online Gala – 2 December 2020

The Gala created an atmosphere and environment for overseas Chinese living in New Zealand to celebrate the Chinese New Year, provide New Zealand audiences



with a good opportunity to understand Chinese culture, strengthen mutual understanding and cultural exchanges between China and New Zealand, and share the joy and happiness of the Spring Festival of the Year of the Ox with wider communities. Mayor Hawkins sent them a video with greeting messages.

5. Mayor Hawkins hosted an event for the local Chinese community and various stakeholders to celebrate the Chinese New Year – 11 February 2021

On Chinese New Year Eve, Mayor Hawkins hosted a celebration dinner with representatives of Dunedin Chinese Community, Dunedin City council, Otago University and Otago Polytechnic. This event demonstrated DCC's ongoing support for Chinese community and businesses, especially during such difficult times. It was also a good opportunity for various stakeholder to reconnect and network with each other. Dunedin CEO Sandy Graham said it was the first time we had tried something like this, and it was such a success. She suspects it may become a regular civic function in the future.



The 2021 APCS Special Edition Invites NZ Mayors, Deputy Mayors and City Officials

By Diana Lee, International Project Officer, Brisbane City Council

The 2021 Asia Pacific Cities Summit and Mayors' Forum Special Edition (2021APCS Special Edition) will be held in Brisbane, Australia from 8 – 12 September 2021.

Conceived and managed by Brisbane City Council, the Asia Pacific Cities Summit and Mayors' Forum (APCS) is an internationally acclaimed, award-winning gathering of city and business leaders from across the Asia Pacific and beyond. For 25 years, APCS has provided immense opportunities for connection, learning and relationship-building between civic and business sectors.

The coronavirus pandemic in 2020 has forever changed cities and the definition of normal. As local governments have been at the forefront of the challenges of this pandemic, more than ever, APCS is an opportunity not to be missed.



Under the overarching theme of 'Redefining Cities through Opportunities and Challenges', APCS will be presented as a Special Edition this year, utilising latest-generation technology to provide physical participation for those who can attend in person and immersive virtual participation options for those who cannot.

The 2021APCS Special Edition will play an important role in helping our regions adapt, get back on our feet and transform the way our

cities operate so that together, we are more resilient in the future. The inspiring speakers, high-calibre networking opportunities and unique insights will equip attendees to meet the challenges and opportunities of the new world.

To find out how your city could involve and to register, visit www.apcsummit.org #2021APCSSpecialEdition

Wellington Sakai Association (WSA) 27th Anniversary Picnic 2021

By Raewyn MacGregor, Vice-President, Wellington Sakai Association

Wellington Sakai Association is looking forward to a busy year of events to engage the local community in the relationship while New Zealand's borders remain closed due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

On 13 February the annual anniversary celebration picnic was held at the Katherine Mansfield Memorial Park. More than 40 people including the Deputy Mayor Sarah Free and H.E Ito Koichi, Ambassador of Japan celebrated the 27th anniversary of the establishment of Wellington Sakai Sister City relationship.

Attendees enjoyed Japanese modern and traditional music performed in Japanese and English by Nanami, a local music group, shared the Sakai themed birthday cake and finding information about WSA's next special project "Yuru-chara mascot design competition at the Japan Festival in March.

Deputy Mayor Free noted the importance of the sister city relationship to Wellington. She noted that there are friends

in Sakai who cannot be and thanked the Association for fostering the relationship by actively holding events especially in this challenging time due to the pandemic.

It was the first WSA event for the Ambassador Ito. He is from Osaka prefecture, where Sakai City is, and shared his thoughts about Osaka. WSA is looking forward to continuing engaging with the Ambassador Ito and the Embassy on upcoming projects and events.

Esther Harrison, the president of WSA, spoke of the friendships she made as a result of the first picnic she attended a few years prior and of the importance of local sister cities events to bring the community together. The WSA committee worked hard to make this event special and looks forward to creating opportunities for members and local citizens to embrace the strong friendship with Sakai.

