

Response to Toronto Francophone Affairs Advisory Committee Information Request

Issue:

The Toronto Francophone Affairs Advisory Committee requested the Director, Arts and Culture Services to report back to the Toronto Francophone Affairs Advisory Committee with more details about the partnership with Marseilles, as well as with information about partnerships between Toronto and other Canadian Cities.

Marseilles:

- The City of Toronto does not have a formal relationship with the City of Marseilles, France.
- Over the past few years, Toronto and Marseilles have exchanged delegations to discuss best practices. In October 2019 Deputy Mayor Thompson led a Toronto delegation to Marseilles.
- The focus of the delegations was to augment Marseilles' interest in the Toronto region by promoting Toronto as a gateway to the North American market, advancing local relationships, exploring potential joint initiatives with Marseilles and exchange best practices on a variety of issues.
- A draft MOU was created with Marseilles to establish a mutually beneficial relationship to help foster the growth of each of the municipalities' economic and cultural ecosystems in:
 - Waterfront Revitalization
 - Entrepreneurship and Start Ups
 - Digital Economy
 - Arts and Culture
- Over Summer/Fall of 2019, Toronto and Marseilles circulated a draft MOU. However, the MOU was not activated and all plans were put on hold due to direction of City Council and the ensuing COVID pandemic. Notably, in December 2019 Toronto City Council directed the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, to undertake a formal review of the International Alliance Program. This Council direction contained within it a moratorium on signing new City-to-City agreements until said review of the International Alliance Program had been completed and its results considered.
- This review and report has been delayed due to COVID-19 and will likely go forward in late 2021.

Other City Partnerships with the City of Toronto:

- Currently the City of Toronto has 29 City-to-City Agreements:
- City of Toronto staff collaborate with other cities, both nationally and internationally, in areas of mutual interest. Collaboration is led by various divisions depending on the focus of the discussion.
- The City is a member of municipal organizations such as [the Federation of Canadian Municipalities](#), [C40 Cities Network](#) and [The Great Lakes and St Lawrence Cities Initiative](#).
- Although not a City-to-City partnership, the City of Toronto participates in data sharing with other Canadian municipalities through the Municipal Benchmarking Network Canada ([MBNCanada](#)) which produces an annual report with performance indicators for cities across the country.
- EDC is a part of MBN's culture panel measuring nationwide investments in culture, which is chaired by the City of Montreal – [2019 MBNCanada Culture Benchmarking report](#).
- Recently the French consulate has reached out to the City of Toronto to advertise French products to the City's BIAs. <https://www.franceison.com/>

Background:

Partnership Cities	Friendship Cities	Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)	
Chicago, U.S.A	Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam	Austin, U.S.A.	Monterrey, Mexico
Chongqing, China	Kyiv, Ukraine	Dubai, U.A.E.	Shenzhen, China
Frankfurt, Germany	Quito, Ecuador	Hong Kong Trade Development Council	Hong Kong - Chiu Chow Chamber of Commerce
Milan, Italy	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	Sao Paulo, Brazil	Maharashtra, India
	Sagamihara, Japan	New Delhi, India	Trakya, Turkey
	Warsaw, Poland	Montevideo, Uruguay	Dunedin, U.S.A.
		Matera, Italy	Jaffna, Sri Lanka
		Wuxi, China	Mexico City, Mexico
		Panama City, Panama	Chengdu, China
		Lisbon, Portugal	The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Portugal

Engagement with technology sectors in Francophone countries:

- Toronto Global, a not-for-profit investment attraction agency (co-funded by City of Toronto, Greater Toronto Area Regional Governments, Province of Ontario and Canada) supports the expansion of foreign-owned businesses to the Toronto Region.
- Toronto Global has worked with a number of French firms seeking expansion opportunities in the Toronto Region. In doing so, Toronto Global works with partners like the federal Trade Commissioner Service based in Paris, the French Chamber of Commerce in Ontario and Business France.
- Toronto Global organized two missions to Paris, France in 2017-18. Since then, France has become a reactive (non-priority market) for Toronto Global.
- Toronto Global responds reactively with Quebec-based firms seeking expansion assistance into the Toronto Region.
- The majority of firms in both cases are in the technology sector, or are working on innovative platforms in traditional or legacy sectors.

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