
City Council

Notice of Motion

MM41.3	ACTION			Ward: All
--------	--------	--	--	-----------

Renewing the Shenzhen-Toronto Memorandum of Understanding - by Deputy Mayor Denzil Minnan-Wong, seconded by Councillor Michael Thompson

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Economic and Community Development Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Deputy Mayor Denzil Minnan-Wong, seconded by Councillor Michael Thompson, recommends that:

1. City Council endorse an extension of the existing Shenzhen-Toronto Memorandum of Understanding for a 2 year term.

Summary

The City of Shenzhen, China has requested an extension to the Memorandum of Understanding between Shenzhen and Toronto.

The City of Toronto has enjoyed a strong, productive relationship with the Municipality of Shenzhen for several years, supported most recently by a 5-year Memorandum of Understanding. Unlike agreements with other cities that fall within the scope of the City's International Alliance Program which are open-ended, a sunset clause was included in Toronto's Memorandum of Understanding with Shenzhen: after 5 years both cities must make the decision to renew the relationship agreement. This mechanism encourages both cities to innovate and helps to ensure that our continued engagement yields tangible mutual benefits which take account of current circumstances and market opportunities.

Among other achievements to date:

- Toronto's collaboration with Shenzhen has resulted in the annual Sci-Innovation Competition. This is the largest innovation competition of its kind in Canada, which since 2016 has awarded over \$1.4 million in prizes to Canadian start-up businesses for the development of innovative technologies.
- In 2019 Toronto sent a business delegation to Shenzhen.
- Recognizing Toronto as an important global hub, Shenzhen established an office in Toronto to encourage, develop and grow relationships between our business communities.

The most recent Shenzhen-Toronto Memorandum of Understanding expired in 2021. While there is currently a moratorium in place which prevents the City from entering into new city-to-city agreements while a review of the International Alliance Program is undertaken, there is no restriction on temporarily extending existing city-to-city agreements with other jurisdictions.

As with many projects and plans during recent times, the review of the International Alliance Program has been significantly delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and a report to City Council is not expected until early 2023.

Extending the City's Memorandum of Understanding with Shenzhen for a period of 2 years will support the continuity of one of Toronto's most productive and important inter-municipal relationships, while allowing time for the implementation of any new recommendations approved by City Council resulting from the review of the International Alliance Program before any longer-term agreement with Shenzhen is considered or confirmed.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM41.3