
REPORT 3
(1215/11/IM)

MAYORAL VISIT TO NORTH AMERICA

1. Purpose of Report

To provide details of and to seek Council approval for the Mayoral visit to Vancouver, Seattle, and Portland in October 2008.

2. Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Council:

- 1. Receives the information.*
- 2. Agrees that the Mayor will undertake an official visit to Vancouver, Seattle, and Portland in October 2008. Note that a major proportion of the costs will be covered by Air New Zealand, and that the balance will be met from the International Relations budget (COST01 C145).*

3. Background and purpose of the visit

Air New Zealand has invited the Mayor, Chief Executive (CE) and several Wellington business leaders to experience their recently instigated long haul service from Auckland to Vancouver, Canada. Air NZ has also invited the Mayor and CE to visit the Boeing factory in Seattle. Air NZ will be paying for the Mayor and CE's flights and accommodation while they are hosting them.

The Mayor, CE and two officials will spend two days conducting research in Vancouver into topics including citizen engagement, event attraction, transportation, environmental sustainability, and sport and recreation. This follows the 2006 study trip to the city by the Chief Operating Officer and the Director of Citizen Engagement. At the suggestion of the US Ambassador to New Zealand, the Mayor and officials will also spend two days in Portland, where they will meet with Portland City officials to discuss a similar range of topics.

4. Discussion

The visit will focus on international best practice in relation to citizen engagement, event attraction, transportation, environmental sustainability, and sport and recreation.

4.1 Vancouver, Canada

Vancouver is a progressive city that has been undergoing a major revitalisation in preparation for the 2010 Winter Olympic Games. In May 2006, the Chief Operating Officer and Director of Citizen Engagement travelled to Vancouver to meet with Vancouver City Executives to discuss best practice in relation to citizen engagement. The Chief Operating Officer and Director of Citizen Engagement recommended that the Mayor and CE travel to Vancouver to conduct further research and learn from Vancouver city officials about innovative practices for engaging with their communities.

The Vancouver City Council Office of Protocol will help to coordinate meetings with Vancouver City Officials.

4.2 Seattle, Washington, USA

Air New Zealand has invited the Mayor and CE to accompany them and several Wellington business leaders on a site visit to the Boeing airplane factory in Seattle, Washington.

Boeing is the world's leading aerospace company and the largest manufacturer of commercial jetliners. The company recently launched the 787 Dreamliner, which has quieter takeoffs and landings, produces fewer carbon emissions and uses 20 percent less fuel than any other airplane of its size. The 787 will also be able to take off and land on shorter runways than existing long haul plans.

These planes will increase capacity by nearly 40 percent on Air New Zealand's long haul flights. They are eager to show the newest addition of their fleet to key New Zealand markets to discuss the benefits to and positive affects for tourism.

The relationship between the Wellington City Council (and its goals of economic development and carbon neutrality), Wellington International Airport Limited, and Air New Zealand are very important to our city and the aim in meeting with Air NZ would be to strengthen the relationship between the three parties.

In addition, Positively Wellington Tourism and Wellington International Airport Limited are developing a strategy to attract at least one daily long-haul flight to the city. It is possible that that the 787 may be utilised for long-haul flights at Wellington International Airport in future.

The visit to Seattle is at no expense to the Wellington City Council. As an invited guest of Air New Zealand, all costs related to the visit to Seattle will be paid by Air New Zealand.

4.3 Portland, Oregon, USA

Portland is a city that the Council has long held in high regard for its values and leadership. The Mayor and CE travelled to the city for a study tour in 1999 and again in 2003 for the Creative Cities Tour in 2003.

The 2008 trip will provide an opportunity to learn about the plans for increasing community engagement in Portland. The city has a strong tradition of neighbourhood involvement and participatory democracy, and prides itself on its openness and sense of community. To further strengthen involvement in Portland's communities, *Community Connect*, an 18-member volunteer workgroup consulted with communities and developed a *Five Year Plan to Increase Community Involvement*. The plan is based on the following goals:

- Goal 1: Increase the number and diversity of people involved in their communities.
- Goal 2: Strengthen community capacity
- Goal 3: Increase community impact on public decision.

Portland is known for being a sustainable city and is often cited as an example of "smart growth". This is the result of statewide land conservation policies, and the emphasis on transit-oriented development. Portland was also the first U.S. city to adopt a strategy to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂), and has aggressively pushed green building initiatives.

The US Embassy in Wellington is helping to organise the visit to Portland. US Ambassador to New Zealand Bill McCormick is a native of Portland.

4.4 Draft Itinerary

Vancouver (13 – 14 October)

Meetings with:

- Vancouver Mayor Sam Sullivan
- Johnny Carline, Chief Administrative Officer, Metro Vancouver - Greater Vancouver Regional District, which also operates the Greater Vancouver Water District (GVWD) and the Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District (GVS&DD).
- Cheeying Ho, Executive Director, SmartGrowth, BC, a non-governmental organisation devoted to fiscal, environmental and social responsibility.
- Sue Harvey, Managing Director of Cultural Services, City of Vancouver. Ms Harvey oversaw the extensive public consultation on the redevelopment of Hastings Park, a 66 hectare park in Vancouver, and manages the relationship with all civic departments on developing policy for civic sponsorship.
- Brent Toderian, Director Planning, City of Vancouver. The Planning Department advises Council on policies which guide growth and change in the city with an emphasis on land use and built forms.
- Mary Clarke Zak, Director, Social Planning, City of Vancouver. The Social Planning Department advises Council on policies and action plans relating to the social development of the city.

- Mr Lon LaClaire, Strategic Transportation Planning Engineer / Mr Donny Wong, CE II, Rapid Transport (subway)
- Ms Annette Klein, Director Budget Services, City of Vancouver to discuss governance with tight budgets
- Ms Judy Bader, Deputy GM, Community Services Group. The community services unit comprises ten departments all heavily involved in delivery services and community consultation and partnership

A visit to:

- The Vancouver Public Library's central library to investigate community links the library has as a centre for citizen engagement.

Seattle - Wednesday 15 October

- At the invitation of Air New Zealand, a visit to the Seattle Boeing Factory
- A tour of Seattle's sport and recreation facilities

Portland (16 -17 October)

Meetings with:

- Portland Mayor and former Police Chief Tom Potter, to discuss urban planning growth and expansion issues, public transport, and community policing issues.
- Sam Adams, Commissioner of Public Utilities, which includes waste management, urban planning, and infrastructure. Mr Adams will be the new Mayor from January 2008.
- Dan Saltzman, Commissioner of Public Affairs.
- Police Chief - Rosie Sizer to talk about community policing issues and contemporary challenges in policing urban districts.

Further meetings to be arranged with Portland city officials regarding:

- The office for neighbourhoods, integration of services, community engagement, climate change/the environment, the use of public transport, sport and recreation facilities.

Attendees:

Mayor Kerry Prendergast
Garry Poole, CEO

5. Timing of visit

The Mayor will be away for seven days, including five working days, from Sunday 12 October to Sunday 19 October. The Mayor will miss two meetings during this time: an Audit and Risk Management meeting on 13 October, and a Strategy and Policy Committee meeting on 16 October.

Deputy Mayor Ian McKinnon will act in those situations where the Mayor would be called on (e.g. to exercise the Mayor's role in a Civil Defence Emergency). Under the Local Government Act 2002, the Deputy Mayor can act for the Mayor in the Mayor's absence.

6. Cost

The approximate cost* for the Mayor is estimated as follows:

North America	Cost (estimates)
Return international flight	Covered by Air NZ
Internal flights	
• Vancouver to Portland	\$659
• Portland to San Francisco	\$444
Accommodation	
• two nights	\$860
Daily Travel Allowance	
• Meals	\$705
• Laundry	\$60
• Airport Taxis	\$404
Total	\$3132

* The accommodation/domestic flight costs are subject to exchange rate fluctuations

7. Conclusion

Council approval is required for the Mayor's proposed visits to Vancouver, Seattle and Portland. There is a good basis for these visits in terms of fit with the City Council's international relations commitment and its strategic direction related to economic development and citizen engagement.