

MAYOR
James Thomas, Jr.
CITY MANAGER
Billy Edwards
CITY CLERK
Sarah Lumpkin
CITY ATTORNEY
Linnie L. Darden, III



MAYOR PRO TEM
Charles Frasier
COUNCIL MEMBERS
David Anderson, Sr.
Keith Jenkins
Kenneth Shaw

Background

The City of Hinesville sister city plan began in 2007 under the Ratcliffe Administration through an initiative by state Senator Judson Hill. The first agreement was signed in April 2008 by Hinesville Mayor Thomas and was followed by a visit to China in November 2008. The City of Yichun also visited Hinesville in December 2009 to sign the agreement and met tour the area. The first visits were to formally establish the Hinesville-Yichun sister city relationships and introduce the delegations to each area.

The Coastal Georgia Delegation comprised of representatives from the cities of Savannah, Hinesville and Brunswick visited China Sept. 19 -29, 2010. The purpose of the trip was to further develop relationships with each city's sister city and attend the Central China Expo 2010 as a region. Overall, the city of Savannah focused on promoting it's clean energy conference in October 2011, the city of Hinesville participated in discussions about cultural and educational exchanges, and the city of Brunswick shared medical technology with their sister cities. Collectively, the group met with industries and government leaders to market Coastal Georgia as a perfect area for Chinese businesses to enter the U.S. market.

The coastal Georgia delegation is comprised of 2 port cities and a logistics center that can introduce companies to the U.S. market while developing long-term business relationships. From this visit, many contacts were made that will prove useful to both the public and private sectors. Our students will benefit from educational exchange opportunities, our residents will benefit from cultural exchange opportunities, our businesses and industries may benefit from new relationships abroad, and collectively we will all benefit from possible tourism opportunities and increased awareness of what the Coastal Georgia region—specifically Hinesville, Savannah and Brunswick—have to offer.

The total cost of the visit for the City of Hinesville was \$36,555.89. This total includes international flights, domestic flights, meals, lodging and Chinese Visas for the four City of Hinesville representatives. The cost for printing and translation of a Coastal Georgia brochure, gifts for the sister city exchange and consultants are also included in the cost for the 2010 visit to China.

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Fact Sheet

- Beijing is the capital and seat of government in China with a population of more than 12 million.
- Shanghai is the commercial and retail capital of the country and is considered the most cosmopolitan city in China.
- Hong Kong reverted from British to Chinese rule in 1997 and has a relatively high standard of living. Hong Kong business people use western business practices and many speak English.
- The Jiangxi province possesses 94 industrial parks and three zones for export processing.
- The Jiangxi province is made up of 11 prefecture-level cities.
- The City of Yichun is approximately 7,220 square miles made up of one district, 3 cities and 6 counties.
- Yichun literally means “Pleasant Spring.” It is located in the northwest of the Jiangxi province along a river and surrounded by mountains.
- Yichun has a total population of 5,100,000.
- Savannah’s sister city is Jiujiang and Brunswick’s sister city is Ganzhou.

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Itinerary

Sept. 19

4 a.m. Wake-up calls
5:30 a.m. Arrive at Savannah-Hilton Head International Airport
7 a.m. Board plane to Dallas
10 a.m. Debriefing at Dallas airport to discuss itinerary, dietary needs, concerns, etc.
NOON: Board plane for Tokyo, Japan
10 p.m. Arrive in Hong Kong, China after 16 hours of flying
11:30 p.m. Arrive at hotel in Hong Kong, China

Sept. 21

8 a.m. Breakfast
9 a.m. Meet for shuttle to the Hong Kong airport
11:30 a.m. Flight from Hong Kong to Nanchang
1 p.m. Lunch on behalf of the Jiangxi Association of International Economic Cooperation
2:30 p.m. Bus to Jingdezhen with bus tour/briefing by Parker Xie of Jingdezhen Foreign and Overseas Affairs Office- Section of Sister Cities
6:30 p.m. Arrival in Jingdezhen, "The Porcelain City"
7 p.m. Dinner

Sept. 22

8 a.m. Breakfast
9 a.m. Depart hotel for Jingdezhen Porcelain Institute
11 a.m. Porcelain Market
1 p.m. Lunch at hotel
2:30 p.m. Kiln
6 p.m. Dinner at hotel

Sept. 23

8 a.m. Depart hotel for museum
Noon: Lunch at local restaurant
3 p.m. Arrive in Nanchang, capital city of the Jiangxi Province
7:30 p.m. Arrive in Yichun, Hinesville's sister city
8 p.m. Attended closing ceremony for mid-autumn festival
11 p.m. Dinner with Huang Wei Gao, Secretary General of the Yichun Municipal People's Government

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Sept. 24

8 a.m. Breakfast
10 a.m. Tour Yichun Vocational School and Signing ceremony for the Sino-American Vocational School Cooperation Program
11 a.m. Visit Yichun University
12:30 p.m. Lunch
2 p.m. Tour natural cave
3:30 p.m. Visit 2 enterprises in the Yichun Economic Development Zone
5 p.m. Visit Renmin Park, The Government Square and Meet Yichun Officials.
5:30 p.m. Signing Ceremony
6:30 p.m. Dinner

Sept. 25

8 a.m. Breakfast
9 a.m. Tiangongkaiwu Park
11:30 a.m. Lunch
1 p.m. Transported back to Nanchang
4:30 p.m. Arrive at hotel
6 p.m. Dinner at hotel
8 p.m. Opening Ceremony for the 2010 Central China Expo

Sept. 26

7:30 a.m. Breakfast
8:30 a.m. Arrive at expo
9:30 a.m. Meet with the Ningbo Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation Bureau
11 a.m. Meet with Sui Hui, Managing Director of the United Nations Industrial Development
NOON: Lunch at hotel
1:30 p.m. Visit expo exhibits
6 p.m. Dinner

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Sept. 27

7:30 a.m. Breakfast at hotel
9 a.m. Visit LED manufacturing industry
Noon: Meet with Governor Wu, Jiangxi Province
1:30 p.m. Lunch
7 p.m. Dinner with business representatives offsite

Sept. 28

6 a.m. Depart hotel
9:30 a.m. Flight to Hong Kong
Noon: Lunch at airport
2:30 p.m. Meeting with Hong Kong Trade and Development Center. Christopher Jackson, Assistant Executive Director and Assistants Cherry Lee and Annie Ho.
4 p.m. Window tour of Hong Kong
7 p.m. Dinner

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Outcomes

- Delegation spoke with the instructor for the University of West Virginia program in Jingdezhen about bringing an exhibit to Coastal Georgia.
- Opportunities for a student exchange focused on ceramic arts, pottery and porcelain exist through the University of West Virginia program and each city will receive information for students wishing to enroll.
- City of Hinesville desires to invite the Chinese to participate in the Small World Festival.
- Hinesville Mayor James Thomas extended an invitation for a Chinese musical performer to tour Hinesville or perform when he is in the United States.
- City of Yichun desires a program for Chinese students to come study at Savannah Tech, Liberty campus and would like our high school students to visit Yichun during the summer to tour the city and learn about the culture.
- City of Yichun desires a program for teachers to come into the Liberty County School System and teach Mandarin Chinese or culture.
- The new Hinesville City Hall will adopt the practice of sharing visuals illustrating growth and planning with the public similar to the model used by the City of Yichun. The “Hinesville Room” in the new city hall will have interactive digital displays showing construction projects, city planning, and new developments. It will help visitors to the Room understand what is taking place in the city, history, events and plans for future growth.
- Savannah will send Sui Hui, Managing Director of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization an invitation for the Director General to the Savannah-Austria Clean Energy Conference in October 2011 that will be held in Savannah, GA. The meeting with the Mrs. Hui from the United Nations will also help bridge China and the U.S. for future development projects.
- The City of Hinesville delegation made contacts with Yichun Vocational College, signed a letter of intent to cooperate with them to bring an exchange of students to Savannah Tech in Hinesville and send a group back to Yichun.
- Businessmen who attended were able to foster their business development goals and view projects that will allow them to make contacts. They also collected information requested by other local business owners.
- Business matching services, risk management, and cultural interpretation is offered through the Hong Kong Trade and Development Center. A contact was given to the Coastal Georgia delegation to gain access to this information and share with local businesses.
- Mayor Thomas will explore the possibility of a cultural exchange program for businesses to be created with HKTDC.

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Next Steps

- Create a continuity packet with all contracts, signed agreements, itineraries, After Action Reports, and media discs for the China Sister City Relationship.
- Prepare detailed reports for city records and public presentations.
- Provide the Liberty County Development Authority with a database from the 2010 Central China Expo.
- Host a public forum to share information about the outcomes and future plans for the sister city relationship.
- Follow-up with the Hong Kong Trade and Development Center.
- Sign a memorandum of understanding with all 3 cities desired goals, outcomes and expectations for use in future planning.
- Further discuss desired educational, cultural and business exchanges with key stakeholders.
- Invite delegation from Yichun to visit in 2011.

Mayor Thomas' Reflections on the visit:

- Accomplishments: We've made contacts with Yichun Vocational College, signed a letter of intent to cooperate with them to bring an exchange of students to Savannah Tech in Hinesville and send a group back to Yichun. We also gained contacts with key business leaders that may be able to work with our current industries and local businesses on future projects.
- Economic Development: Our meeting with the Mrs. Hui from the United Nations will help bridge China and the U.S. "We brought businessmen with us who have been able to foster their business development goals and view projects that will allow them to make contacts."
- Purpose of the Visit: We will gain contacts for cultural, social and business growth in our area.
- Goals: We're hoping to gain interest for the businesses in our current industrial locations. The ultimate goal is to develop contacts for Chinese and American businesses to build long-term relationships and eventually the government won't be part of the equation.
- Purpose of the Expo: It's an opportunity for Central China to market itself to the outside world and open communication. We are here to attract foreign investment and gain contacts.

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Quotes

- “There is no such thing as a free lunch. You can’t invite people to come invest and not give something in return. This is all about creating a win-win situation. That is business.” –Sui Hui, Managing Director of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization on the sister city relationship
- “We hope through this visit, you will have a better understanding of our province. Through this understanding will come positive discussions about our province and further cooperation which will encourage others to do the same.” – Governor Wu Xinxiong, Jiangxi Province welcoming the Coastal Georgia delegation to Jiangxi
- “We are new friends and old friends.” - Governor Wu Xinxiong, Jiangxi Province on the growing relationship between the Jiangxi province and Coastal Georgia
- “We come here to increase knowledge and understanding. Individually, we have much to offer; collectively, we can cooperate and present these assets to the world. With unity we are much stronger, we are much larger and we extend that unity to our friends in China.” -Mayor Bryan Thompson, Brunswick on why the Coastal Georgia delegation came to China
- “We are three cities along the coast, 2 sea ports and a logistics center. We want to develop the coast and partner with Chinese businesses to do it. We also want to identify opportunities and take advantage of them through fostering good relationships.” -Mayor James Thomas, Hinesville on why the Coastal Georgia delegation came to China
- “We want ideas about how to best achieve our goals, what strategies to use and how to approach businesses for overseas expansion and investment. We represent the growing eastern coast of the U.S. and we are anxious to develop it.” Mayor Otis Johnson, Savannah on why the Coastal Georgia delegation came to China
- “We want our business owners to come to China in an atmosphere they are comfortable in and can trust. They need to learn the system.” Mayor Thomas, Hinesville to the Hong Kong Trade and Development Center about why we were in China
- “You must learn the culture before you do business. Some companies fail simply because of cultural differences.” Christopher Jackson, Assistant Executive Director of HKTDC on why companies must build relationships with Chinese before doing business

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