



Memorandum

To: Mayor and City Council

April 1, 2008

From: Suja Lowenthal, Second District 

Subject: India Trade Mission

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Receive and file report on trade mission to Indian cities of Mumbai, Kolkata and New Delhi with the World Trade Center Association Los Angeles-Long Beach, Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation, Long Beach International Trade Office and Port of Long Beach on March 2 – 9.

BACKGROUND:

During a visit to Long Beach in 2006, Kolkata Mayor Shri Bikash Bhattacharya conveyed to Mayor Foster and I that he would like to strengthen the existing relationship between our two cities beyond ceremonial and Sister City Association activities. In particular, we discussed Kolkata's desire to create a deepwater port and whether the Port of Long Beach and our local engineering companies could offer their expertise or participate in future projects.

Following Mayor Shri Bikash Bhattacharya's visit, I worked with our Economic Development team to initiate a meeting with the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) and Long Beach International Trade Office (LBITO) about the possibility of organizing a trade mission to Kolkata and other Indian cities. We were informed that LAEDC had just begun discussing the need to focus on India and its expanding economy. With our common goals in mind, we set upon leading a delegation of business and civic leaders from Southern California to Kolkata, Mumbai and New Delhi with an important objective of forging beneficial ties with public and private sector industries in the fields of infrastructure, health care, tourism, academia, technology and transportation.

The trade mission received support from the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, the U.S. consulates in Mumbai and Kolkata, and the West Bengal Chamber of Commerce. India trade mission delegates included high-profile organizations such as AECOM, California State University, Long Beach, City of Long Beach, Clean Energy, KPC Group, KPMG, Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC), Los Angeles World Airports, Oasis, Paramount Studios Licensing, Port Of Long Beach, Seyfarth Shaw, LLP, World Trade Center Association Los Angeles-Long Beach, and Worldwide Consulting.

The preliminary outcome of this mission was highly successful with participating companies reporting in excess of \$70 million in projected export sales; anticipated attraction of an airline to Los Angeles in 2009 with an eventual benefit of 3,100 jobs and \$623,000,000 in annual business revenue to the region; and a hotel attraction that could bring up to \$100,000,000 in Indian investment to Long Beach and the region and add 500 to 600 jobs. In addition, three inbound missions to Long Beach and the region are being scheduled with scrap metal buyers; a Bollywood/IMPAA delegation is expected in April; and a West Bengal mission in September. Finally, a West Bengal developer was referred by the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation to the New York World Trade Center Headquarters for the franchise rights to a Kolkata World Trade Center that could result in a finder's fee of \$10,000.

I look forward to providing the Mayor and City Council with additional updates on the economic benefits stemming from our trade mission and appreciate the expertise and hard work of all those involved.