New Sister City Proposal for: Zhuzhou, Hunan Province, China

(Name of the proposed Sister City)

1. Please provide the contact names, titles, physical and e-mail addresses and telephone numbers of the primary individuals and/or organizations coordinating the submission of this proposal.

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2. Provide a demographic profile of the proposed Sister City, including its size and its notable geographic features.

Zhuzhou city has an urban population of approximately 1.5 million, and a population of about 2 million spread across its 5 rural counties. Zhuzhou along with its 5 counties has a total area of approximately 4100 sq miles.

It is conveniently located in south central China as one of the "Triangle Cities" of Hunan Province: Changsha (Capital), Zhuzhou and Xiangtan, a city cluster connected by highways within 30 minutes drive from each other, similar to the Raleigh -Durham-Chapel Hill Triangle region. Zhuzhou can be reached in about 1 hour by air from Shanghai or Guangzhou, or 2 hours by train from Guangzhou or by air from Beijing.

Zhuzhou is rich in history and Chinese culture as it is the birth place of Yan Emperor, one of the two ancestors of Chinese Culture and People (Yan and Huang).

Zhuzhou is a high-tech city with over 100 technological inventions in China. There are several top ranked universities and vocational colleges within 1 hour drive of Zhuzhou, including Xiangya School of Medicine which is one of the top medical schools in China originally established by American missionaries from Yale University.
(http://www.yalechina.org/dynamicpage.php?Id=9&SubId=106)

3. Detail access to the proposed Sister City, i.e., How easy will travel be for participants to and from Durham to the proposed city.

Zhuzhou is conveniently located in south central China. There are direct flights from Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Beijing to Changsha/Zhuzhou airport. From Durham, it takes two connections to fly to China: one to Washington DC, Chicago, New York, or Atlanta, the second to Beijing, Hong Kong or Shanghai. It can also be reached by train from Guangzhou (2 hours) or Shanghai (6 hours).
During the off-season (September - May) airfare from Durham to Zhuzhou is approximately $900 - $1200. During the peak season (June - August) airfare is about $1500 - $2000.

4. Describe the potential benefits to both cities.

Potential benefits to Durham: a) It offers a long-term relationship with a history and culture-rich city in China. Therefore, it provides a living textbook for students, teachers and the general public in Durham to learn about Chinese culture and history through sister city exchange activities; b) it provides a framework for developing sister schools and colleges; c) it provides a platform for economic cooperation as both cities share similar roles in the "triangular" city clusters and high-tech oriented economy; d) it will enable Durham students and teachers to fully take advantage of the Hunan-North Carolina Bridge Scholarship as the Zhuzhou-Durham sister city relationship will be complementary to the North Carolina-Hunan Sister State/Province relationship (A letter of intent was signed in 2007).

Benefits to Zhuzhou: a) It offers a long-term relationship with a history and culture-rich city in USA. Therefore, it provides a living textbook for students, teachers and the general public in Zhuzhou to learn about western culture and history through sister city exchange activities; b) it provides a framework for developing sister schools and colleges; c) it provides a platform for economic cooperation as both cities share similar roles in the "triangular" city clusters and high-tech oriented economy; d) it will enable Zhuzhou students and teachers to fully take advantage of the Hunan-North Carolina Bridge Scholarship as the Zhuzhou-Durham sister city relationship will be complementary to the North Carolina-Hunan Sister State/Province relationship.

5. Describe how the proposed Sister City relationship will support the goals and objectives of Sister Cities of Durham.

The proposed sister city relationship will support the overall goals and objectives of sister cities of Durham through the establishment of sister schools, sister colleges, teacher exchange and training programs, K-12 exchange programs and summer camps, "Zhuzhou expo" in Durham and "Durham expo" in Zhuzhou, cultural and arts shows, and business cooperation forums. The Carolina China Council will fully support the proposed Durham-Zhuzhou sister city relationship. We have provided scholarships to 1 teacher and two students from Durham to travel to Hunan Province and attend a two-week Chinese summer camp in 2010. We also awarded a $1000 scholarship to 1 teacher and 1 student from Durham to participate in the 2011 Chinese culture summer camp in Zhuzhou. We will continue to support Durham teachers and students in their efforts to promote educational exchanges between Durham and Zhuzhou.

6. Describe any existing linkages and possible future educational, cultural, business, religious, medical or other programs and exchanges between the cities.

1) Mr. Qun Wang, Mayor of Zhuzhou, visited Durham and met Durham Mayor Bill Bell in 2009. Both Mayors expressed an interest in establishing a sister city relationship;
2) Ms. Margaret Harrison, a member of Durham Sister City Board and teacher from Durham Riverside high school visited Zhuzhou and signed a letter of intent to establish sister city relationship between Durham and Zhuzhou in June 2010;
3) One teacher and two high school students from Durham participated in a two-week Chinese culture summer camp in Hunan province in June-July 2010. Their trip was fully funded by a scholarship from the Carolina China Council;
4) Mr. Liu Jie, Director General of Hunan Department of Commerce led a high-level Hunan Commerce delegation to visit Durham and held an economic cooperation forum in Duke's Fuqua Business school in November 2010. Mr. Thomas Wenger, member of the Durham Sister City Board along with the Dean of Duke Fuqua School of Business and over 50 other local businesses attended the event;
5) One teacher and one high school student from Durham attended the 2011 Chinese summer camp in Zhuzhou (July 8-18, 2011);
6) Three Durham Sister City Committee members participated in the 2011 Hunan-NC Business Cooperation Forum in Raleigh, NC on September 22, 2011.

7) Durham-based business leaders, Mr. Mark Goodwillie, Mr. Scott Long, Mr. Ismail Abdelkhalek and Mr. Mark Herman were part of the North Carolina friendship delegation that visited Hunan Province from October 16 to 25, 2011.
8) Zhuzhou-Durham Sister City Committeee members, Dr. Kevin Xiao, Ms. Lusia Li and Ms. Shijun Nauor attended the Durham Sister City annual meeting on Oct. 20.

7. List Durham area residents or organizations and proposed Sister City residents, organizations, or officials interested in participating in the Sister City relationship, including the address, phone number and e-mail address for each person, if available.

A large number of residents in who either work or live in Durham are interested in participating in the Durham-Zhuzhou sister city relationship. A Durham-Zhuzhou sister city committee has been established with the following initial members.

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8. Please attach the letter of invitation from the Mayor of the proposed Sister City, if available.

The Mayor of Zhuzhou signed the letter of intent to become a sister city of Durham in 2010. This letter of intent has been provided to Durham Sister City (through Margaret Harrison). Zhuzhou Mayor intends to visit Durham again in the near future to either sign the formal sister city agreement or simply to promote friendship. An invitation from Hunan Province for Durham Mayor to visit Zhuzhou is attached.

9. Please attach letters of potential collaboration from businesses, educational institutions or other potential partners, if available.

Zhuzhou Tianyi Group has authorized Carolina China Council to represent Tianyi Group in future business exchanges between Zhuzhou and Durham;

Zhuzhou Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries is ready to partner with Durham Sister City Committee in coordinating Sister city exchanges.

All communications to Sister Cities of Durham related to new city proposals should be sent to:

Attention: New Cities Evaluation Committee
Sister Cities of Durham
P.O. Box 767
Durham, NC 27702-0767
Email: sistercities@durhamnc.gov