

**THOMAS C. LEPPERT
MAYOR**



MAYOR'S ASIA TRADE MISSION South Korean Investor Response Encouraging

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Dallas Mayor Tom Leppert and his business development delegation have wrapped up two days in South Korea, the first leg of a week-long trade mission to Asia.

Mayor Leppert and Councilmember Ron Natinsky have been meeting with top government and business leaders in Seoul, Daejeon and Suwan to boost trade and investment between Dallas and South Korea.

“We need to build awareness of Dallas and its attractive investment climate. With better awareness will come our ability to attract jobs and new business, benefitting all of Dallas,” said Mayor Leppert.

With \$9 billion in trade between the two in 2008, Korea is the 2nd largest trading partner for DFW. It is the first official visit to South Korea by a Dallas mayor.

On Tuesday afternoon, Mayor Leppert and Councilmember Natinsky met with more than 50 investors at KOTRA, the Korean Trade-Investment Promotion Agency.

In KOTRA's auditorium, they briefed the group on Dallas' new economic development tool, the City of Dallas Regional Center (CDRC). The CDRC program provides US investor visas for individuals investing at least one million dollars in qualified projects that create a certain number of jobs.

“It was clear from the number of questions during and after the session, there was very strong interest in the program,” said Councilmember Natinsky, who chairs the Council's Economic Development Committee. “It was very encouraging.”

The 22 member delegation includes Dallas business leaders, city economic development staff and leading members of the Korean-American business community in North Texas.

Earlier in the day the group met with the Vice Speaker of the National Assembly, and two key senators, including Doon Hyon Lee, who recently visited Dallas. Senator Lee has been a strong advocate of trade between Dallas and Korea.

On Monday, the delegation visited the cities of Daejeon and Suwan, home to global technology giants such as Samsung and LG. The group visited the headquarters for Samsung, which has a strong North Texas presence. Mayor Leppert encouraged Samsung officials to consider expanding operations in Dallas.

The delegation also toured Daedeok Innopolis, a major technology and research park. It is home to 21 corporate research centers and five universities. Monday evening, the group dined at the home of the Gyeonggi Province Governor Moon-soo Kim, who visited Dallas in 2007.

The Dallas business development delegation is focused on boosting investment, trade and business ties with South Korea and China. Despite the economic downturn, Mayor Leppert said it's important that Dallas continue to raise its profile with its largest trading partners.

"As the economy improves, more and more people are going to be looking for investment opportunities, we want them to look at Dallas," said Mayor Leppert.

The group will next visit Beijing, Nanjing and Shanghai. The delegation returns on Sunday.

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PHOTOS: MAYOR'S ASIA TRADE MISSION

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Above: Delegation at Daejeon



Above: Delegation at Daedeok Innopolis

Below: Delegation at National Assembly, Seoul

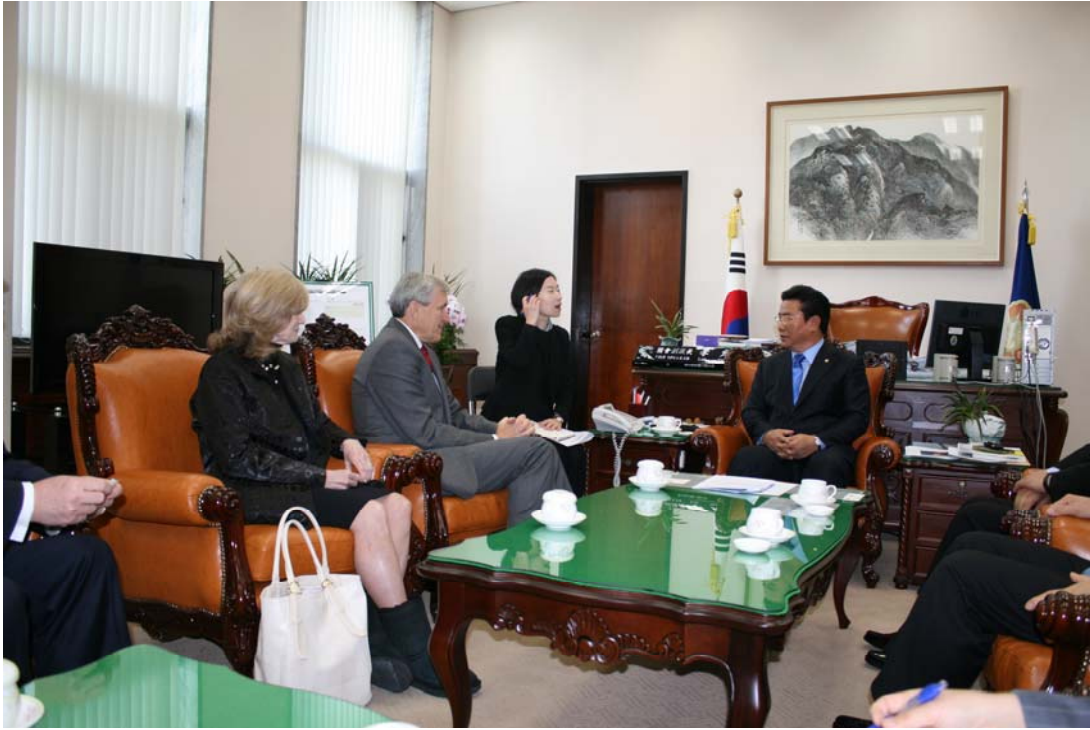




Above: Delegation at Samsung, Suwan

Below: Leppert leaving National Assembly, Seoul





Above: Leppert with Vice Speaker of Korean Assembly