Introduction to Sister Cities Policy

Jeremy Rogers, Community Services Director

Introduction

- In 2022, Staff presented to Council about potential Sister Cities program.
- Council directed staff to work with Community Services Commission to create a Sister Cities Policy
- ► In September, Community Services Commission voted to send this policy to the City Council for review.

Recap What is a sister city?

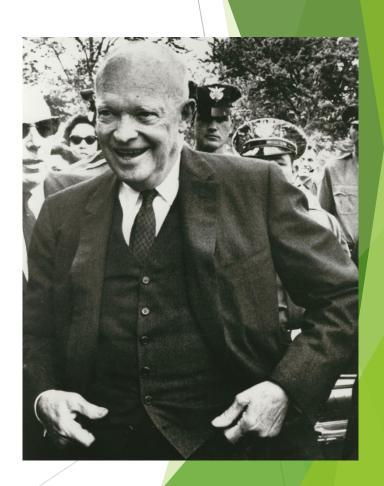
A sister city arrangement is one in which two cities, usually located in different countries, establish a formalized relationship to exchange ideas and collaborate for mutual culture, and possibly economic, advancement.

► Purpose of a Sister City is to promote peace through people-to-people relationships.

Recap What is Sister Cities International?

► Founded in 1956, Sister Cities International is a nonprofit citizen diplomacy network that creates and strengthens partnerships between U.S. and international communities.

Mission: to promote peace through mutual respect, cooperation, and understanding—one individual, one community at a time.



Recap How to start a Sister City relationship?

Cities can, and often do, create their own criteria or requirements for new sister cities. (Policy)

All sister cities are formalized by an agreement between the two mayors or highest elected/appointed officials.



Recap How do sister cities begin? (Cont'd)

- Sister city relationships may develop from a number of sources, including:
 - preexisting mayoral relationships,
 - trade relationships,
 - historical connections,
 - ancestral/demographic connections,
 - expatriate communities,
 - shared geographic/sector challenges,
 - faith-based groups,
 - personal experiences ranging from study/work abroad to marriages

Recap

What do sister cities do?

Cultural Exchange

Arts, music, traditions, customs, performances

Youth and Education

Study abroad, virtual exchanges, learning opportunities, leadership building

Community Development

 Municipal and technical exchanges, best practices, policy exchanges, staff development

Business and Trade

Trade delegations, business incubation, import/export assistance

Recap Service opportunities

- Many sister city programs do humanitarian or development work. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Disaster Relief
 - Medical missions
 - Nurse/doctor exchanges
 - Provision of supplies/funding to hospitals/clinics
 - Water and sanitation projects
 - Educational partnerships aimed at development/health
 - Municipal exchanges in fields such as sanitation or health management

City of Pinole Sister City Policy

- Policy Highlights:
 - ► City should be similar in size
 - ► Similar geographic location
 - ► Near water
 - ► Near large metropolis
 - ► City should have the desire to enter into a Sister City relationship

Process

- City Councilperson or staff make a connection with foreign city that meets criteria of the policy
- ► That person then fills out the application and sends it to the Community Services Director
- ► The Community Services Commission reviews the application and votes to approve or deny the application
- ► The application then goes to the City Council for final adoption and an official agreement is signed between the two cities.

Discussion and Direction