



Agenda Report

19-447

Agenda Date: 4/23/2019

REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

SUBJECT

Action on Friendship City Memorandum of Understanding with Icheon City, Republic of Korea

BACKGROUND

A Sister City, County, or State relationship is a broad-based, long-term partnership between two communities in two countries. A relationship is officially recognized after the highest elected or appointed official from both communities sign an agreement to become sister cities. A city may have any number of sister cities, with community involvement ranging from a half dozen to hundreds of volunteers. In addition to volunteers, sister city organizations can include representatives from nonprofits, municipal governments, the private sector, and other civic organizations. Each sister city organization is independent and pursues the activities and thematic areas that are important to them and their community including municipal, business, trade, educational, and cultural exchanges and projects with their sister city.

Through this program, the City of Santa Clara has established relationships with three Sister Cities around the world: Coimbra, Portugal, established on August 4, 1974; Izumo, Japan, established on October 11, 1986; and Limerick, Ireland, established on August 1, 2014. The Santa Clara Sister Cities Association ("SCSCA") organizes a majority of the cultural and educational exchanges and activities with the City's Sister Cities. SCSCA is a non-profit organization that brings different cultures together with the goal of enriching the lives of students through cultural exchange. The City provides annual funding to SCSCA to support its cultural exchange program, which totaled \$5,659 in Fiscal Year 2018-19.

A "Friendship City" is different from a Sister City in that it is often the first stage in the relationship before partner cities establish an official "Sister City" relationship. Whereas a Friendship City relationship is not required prior to two cities establishing an official Sister Cities relationship, the City has established a practice of exploring Friendship City relationships with potential Sister Cities, such as Limerick, Ireland and, most recently, Nagpur, India.

Icheon City is located in the Gyeonggi Province of South Korea, approximately 60 kilometers from Seoul. The city is known as the center of South Korean ceramic manufacturing and is designated as an UNESCO City of Crafts and Folk Art. A popular tourist attraction is Icheon Ceramic Village, which features over 300 ceramic workshops and retailers, using traditional skills in the production of porcelain in some 40 traditional firewood kilns. Local institutions of higher learning include Korea Tourism College and Chungkang College of Cultural Industries. SK Hynix, the world's second largest manufacturer of memory semiconductors, is also headquartered in Icheon City. Icheon City currently has six Sister Cities: Jingdezhen, China; Seto, Japan; Guandong, South Korea; Gangnam, South Korea; Limoges, France; and Taipei, Taiwan.

On August 20, 2018, Consul General Park Joon-yong and Consul Sanghun Oh from the Korean Consulate of San Francisco, and President Sang S. Anh and the Vice President of the Silicon Valley Korean American Federation, met with Mayor Lisa Gillmor and members of the Santa Clara City Council to discuss a potential Friendship City/Sister City relationship between Icheon City and City of Santa Clara. At a subsequent meeting on October 29, 2018, members of the Santa Clara City Council and the President of the Santa Clara Sister Cities Association met with representatives from the Consulate General of the Republic of Korea and the Silicon Valley Korean American Federation, who conveyed Icheon City's interest in pursuing a Sister City relationship with the City of Santa Clara. Mayor Gillmor sent Mayor Eom Tai-joon of Icheon City a letter dated November 7, 2018 expressing the City's appreciation and interest in building a potential relationship with Icheon City (Attachment 1).

Mr. Sang S. Anh, President of the Silicon Valley Korean American Federation and Mr. John Chung, Senior Vice President of the Silicon Valley Korean American Federation attended the Cultural Commission on February 4, 2019 meeting to share general information about Icheon City. The Cultural Commission requested the group to bring back a proposed plan of activities.

Mr. Sang S. Anh and Mr. John Chung, along with a group of representatives from Silicon Valley Korean American Federation, also attended the SCSCA meeting on March 21, 2019, to present Icheon City's Friendship City proposal. Mr. Sang S. Anh and Mr. John Chung shared information about Icheon City and discussed potential Friendship City activities, such as a Korean Day Festival at Santa Clara Civic Plaza in October and high school and university student cultural exchanges. Icheon City hopes to learn more about American culture, government processes, and business models through these exchanges. Both groups shared information about their student exchanges and discovered that they were very similar, in which students stayed at sponsors' homes to get a more cultural experience and toured educational and cultural institutions during the day. Additionally, Icheon's neighboring cities are also interested in pursuing Friendship City/Sister City relationships with Santa Clara's neighboring cities, so the potential Friendship City relationship between our two cities can help build that momentum. SCSCA requested that a representative from Silicon Valley Korean American Federation sit on their Board as an at-large member if the City of Santa Clara and Icheon City establish the Friendship City relationship.

Section 2.120.140 of the City's Municipal Code provides for the Cultural Commission to "act in an advisory capacity to the City Council in all matters pertaining to cultural enrichment and beautification of the City, sister city relationships and international exchanges." On April 1, 2019, the Cultural Commission approved the three-year Friendship City MOU with Icheon City, thus providing their recommendation for the potential Friendship City relationship to Council.

DISCUSSION

The attached Friendship City Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Icheon City and City of Santa Clara (Attachment 2) has been reviewed by staff in both cities and includes the following expectations and activities:

- A three-year Friendship City relationship, with the option of renewal upon approval of both cities;
- The two cities will promote exchanges in areas of common interest, such as science, technology, sports, education, environmental protection and corporate activities;

- The two cities will strive to mutually support each other by organizing joint activities and future programs;
- Both cities will exchange representatives and/or staff for visits every alternate year, subject to budget appropriations. Each exchange and/or visit will be reviewed in advance between Icheon City and City of Santa Clara's Mayor and Council Office; and
- Additional activities may be pursued through the efforts of other community groups, such as SCSCA and its counterpart in Icheon City;

A Korean version of the Friendship City MOU is also attached to this report (Attachment 3).

As requested by the Cultural Commission at their February 4, 2019 meeting, Mr. John Chung proposed the following activities during the term of the potential Friendship City relationship in an email that was sent to the City Manager's Office on March 7, 2019:

- Korean Day Festival in October - On an annual basis
- Academic seminar and exchange programs for middle school, high school, and university students - On an annual basis
- Culture and arts exchange - On an annual basis
- Business and information exchange, which includes visits to IT companies - As needed

The MOU requires that any exchanges and/or visits be reviewed in advance between representatives of Icheon City and the Mayor and Council Office.

After Council approval of the MOU, Mayor Gillmor will send a video message to Icheon with subtitles including the Council approval of the MOU and her signing it in her office.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funds for future exchanges and activities, if needed, will be included in future budgets for Council consideration.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The action being considered does not constitute a "project" within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(5) in that it is a governmental organizational or administrative activity that will not result in direct or indirect changes in the environment.

COORDINATION

This report has been coordinated with the City Attorney's Office and the Finance Department.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall Council Chambers. A complete agenda packet is available on the City's website and in the City Clerk's Office at least 72 hours prior to a Regular Meeting and 24 hours prior to a Special Meeting. A hard copy of any agenda report may be requested by contacting the City Clerk's Office at (408) 615-2220, email clerk@santaclaraca.gov <<mailto:clerk@santaclaraca.gov>> or at the public information desk at any City of Santa Clara public library.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve a three-year Friendship City Relationship Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Icheon City, Republic of Korea, and authorize the Mayor to sign the MOU on behalf of the City of Santa Clara;
2. Do not approve a three-year Friendship City Relationship Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Icheon City, Republic of Korea, and authorize the Mayor to sign the MOU on behalf of the City of Santa Clara; or
3. Any other Council direction.

RECOMMENDATION

Alternative 1:

Approve a three-year Friendship City Relationship Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Icheon City, Republic of Korea, and authorize the Mayor to sign the MOU on behalf of the City of Santa Clara.

Reviewed by: Walter C. Rossmann, Chief Operating Officer

Approved by: Deanna J. Santana, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

1. Mayor Gillmor's Letter to Icheon City's Mayor Eom Tai-joon
2. Draft Friendship City MOU between Icheon City and City of Santa Clara (English version)
3. Draft Friendship City MOU between Icheon City and City of Santa Clara (Korean version)