



CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

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CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

Meeting: March 16, 2021

Subject

Consider Renewal of Friendship City Relationships

Recommended Action

Approve renewal of two Friendship City relationships, including Taichung, China, and Yilan, China.

Discussion

The Cupertino City Council established its Friendship City program in September 2016. Although less formal than a Sister City relationship, a Friendship City relationship is an additional way to foster international cooperation at a local level.

The Friendship City relationships between Cupertino and the affiliate cities are coordinated and managed by local committees of community members. These committees maintain communication with the affiliate city, while coordinating and implementing activities related to the Friendship City Program.

Relationship Renewals

The City currently has eight active Friendship City relationships, including the two renewals. Five relationships are set to expire this month. Staff reached out to the presidents of these committees in January to inquire about renewing. One president stated they were not seeking renewal (Zhaoqing, China) and two others did not respond (Jiangmen, China and Taipei, Taiwan). The two who responded with applications for renewal were:

- Taichung, Taiwan
- Yilan, Taiwan

The *Policies and Guidelines on Sister Cities, Friendship Cities, and International Delegations* states that Councilmembers should review the following as part of the renewal process:

- Intent to renew letter from Friendship City official on official letterhead.
- Summary of Friendship City delegation visits to Cupertino hosted by the Committee over the last two years.
- Summary of Cupertino delegation visits hosted by the Friendship City.

- Description of activities held and outcomes.
- How the relationship has been mutually beneficial for Cupertino and the friendship community.
- An updated profile of the Friendship City Committee.

Activity Summaries

Taichung, Taiwan

In August 2019, a Taichung delegation participated in the Kids 'N Fun Festival. They hosted a tent that highlighted Taichung's culture, technology, and food. In October 2019, the Friendship City organization hosted an online conference between Cupertino and Taichung where 70 high school seniors participated. While events and activities were difficult to host due to the pandemic, the organization cosponsored a meeting with an Alzheimer's association and donated tens of thousands of masks within Cupertino.

Yilan, Taiwan

In February 2019, the Friendship City organization hosted an exhibit at the Main Street Lunar New Year Festival to promote Yilan's culture. In August 2019, the organization hosted two booths at the Kids 'N Fun Festival that showcased Yilan artifacts and tourist attractions. While most activities were stifled due to the pandemic, the organization distributed medical-grade masks to local businesses and residents in Cupertino.

Conclusion

The full activity summaries and applications are attached. Staff requested that Friendship City representatives attend the March 16, 2021 meeting to answer questions from Councilmembers. If approved, these Friendship City relationships would last for two years and expire in March 2023. They would be subject for renewal by the City Council at that time.

Fiscal Impact

The *Policies and Guidelines on Sister Cities, Friendship Cities, and International Delegations* states that each member of a delegation can receive a gift that shall not exceed \$25. There is staff time involved with the preparation of gifts and folders, presentations, and tours.

Prepared by: Brian Babcock, Communications Officer

Approved for Submission by: Dianne Thompson, Assistant City Manager

Attachments:

A – *Policies and Guidelines on Sister Cities, Friendship Cities, and International Delegations*

B – Cupertino Friendship Cities List

C – Cupertino-Taichung Friendship City Committee Activity Report

D – Cupertino-Yilan Friendship City Committee Activity Report