



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: January 15, 2008

ITEM NUMBER:

SUBJECT: SISTER CITY COMMITTEE FORMATION

DATE: DECEMBER 21, 2007

FROM: CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

PRESENTATION BY: COUNCIL MEMBER KATRINA FOLEY

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: CAROL PROCTOR, MANAGEMENT ANALYST, AT (714) 754-5688

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council consider the formation of a Sister City Committee as noted in the report and formation application.

BACKGROUND:

Costa Mesa entered into a Sister City Agreement with Wyndham, Victoria, Australia in August 1996. This action was taken, in part, to fulfilling the people-to-people principles and program espoused by President Dwight Eisenhower back in 1956. The Agreement goal is to reach a deeper understanding between the nations of Australia and the United States with particular emphasis on fostering mutual interests in the areas of technology, commerce, industry, education and culture. Several Wyndham City Councillors (Council Members) have visited Costa Mesa since the Sister City relationship was established. The most recent visit was by Mayor Shane Bourke and his family last month.

In 1998, the City of Costa Mesa and the Newport-Mesa Unified School District signed a Joint Resolution to work in partnership to strengthen the educational component of the Sister City Agreement between the two cities. The goals included teacher and student exchange programs. There have been nine visits to Costa Mesa by visiting teachers representing Wyndham and four Wyndham student exchange visits. There have been three such visits to Wyndham by Estancia High School students and representatives. Estancia High School has taken the lead on the teacher/student exchange programs, but there is interest from Costa Mesa High School as well.

Council Member Katrina Foley requested that the City Council consider the creation of a Sister City Committee to better coordinate the various facets of the program, and expand the program to involve the tourist industry of both cities. Attachment 1 to this report is the Committee Formation Application.

ANALYSIS:

The Sister City Agreement and subsequent Joint Resolution educational component have initiated an exchange of information, heightened cultural awareness and first-hand contact experiences with representatives of a foreign country. The result has been increasing goodwill between Wyndham and Costa Mesa. With heightened interest in the Sister City program over the last number of years, there has been more involvement in the education exchange program and increased opportunities to learn about and communicate with the people of Wyndham. Other key areas the Sister City program promotes include tourism, and economic and cultural development.

An informal survey of ten Orange County cities (Attachment 2) notes that 80 percent of those ten cities have a sister city. Of those eight cities, seven have sister city groups which coordinate the overall efforts and meet goals. These groups are non-profit organizations and are described as either sister city associations or sister city foundations. All have very similar goals and activities as the Costa Mesa-Wyndham Sister City Agreement states. Some are members of Sister City International, based in Washington, D.C.

If a Costa Mesa sister city committee was formed, it could work more creatively and effectively to meet goals, expand educational component to include both Costa Mesa and Newport Harbor High School, secure and coordinate program funding equitably, enhance program activities, and possibly work toward either becoming a nonprofit corporation or coordinate through the Community Foundation.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Do not create a Sister City Committee.

FISCAL REVIEW:

For the remainder of this fiscal year, a budget adjustment of \$2,000 from the General Fund would need to be prepared if the City Council approves this expenditure, as the request is not included in the 2007-08 Budget. \$4,000 would be budgeted for the Committee for FY 2008-09 (Attachment 3). This funding would be used to support the administrative operations of the Committee. It should be noted that starting in FY '06-07, the City Council has budgeted \$10,000 annually to support sister city travel-related expenses. The Estancia High School Sister City Education Exchange Program Coordinator, Sue Smith, will be providing an estimated budget on the costs associated with that program.

LEGAL REVIEW:

No legal review is required for this item.

CONCLUSION:

The City Council needs to determine whether or not to create a Sister City Committee.

CAROL C. PROCTOR
MANAGEMENT ANALYST

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ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER

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ATTACHMENTS: 1 [Committee Formation Application Form](#)
2 [Sister City Survey](#)
3 [Estimated Committee Budget](#)

File Name Sister City Comm Formation Rpt Date 12/21/07

Time 10:45 am