

EUGENE CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



Work Session: Sister Cities Committee Reports

Meeting Date: November 8, 2010
Department: Central Services
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Agenda Item Number: B
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ISSUE STATEMENT

This work session provides an opportunity for representatives from Eugene's four sister city committees to provide an overview of the cultural, economic, civic and humanitarian relations with friends and civic leaders in Chinju, South Korea; Kathmandu, Nepal; Kakegawa, Japan; and Irkutsk, Russia.

BACKGROUND

The sister cities program has been part of City of Eugene government since 1961, when Chinju became Eugene's first sister city. Eugene also has formalized sister city relationships with Kathmandu (1975); Kakegawa (1979); and Irkutsk (1988).

The sister cities movement supports cooperative agreements between towns and cities (and, sometimes, counties) in geographically and politically distinct areas to promote cultural and commercial ties. There are nearly 600 sister city programs in 49 states throughout the United States, and an estimated 136 countries and regions spanning six continents have active sister city connections.

The City of Eugene has provided varying levels of support to sister city efforts over the decades, in more recent years contracting with the four sister city committees for services and activities including coordination for volunteer efforts, oversight for inbound and outbound delegation visits, and informal translation services. As part of FY10 budget changes, a number of contracts across the organization were cut. The contract amount for each sister city committee was reduced from \$7,500 to \$5,000. The FY11 budget provided for the same amount to each committee, for a total City commitment of \$20,000.

Chinju, also spelled Jinju City, is in southern South Korea, along the Nam River. Chinju is a transportation junction connecting the surrounding provinces and is the economic and cultural center of the western counties of South Kyōngsang province. Chinju Agricultural College is located there. A national park encompassing Mount Chiri (6,283 feet) and the surrounding area is northwest of the city. An old city, Chinju has many historical remains. Its 2008 population was estimated at 334,237.

Kathmandu, also spelled Katmandu, or Kantipur, is the capital of Nepal. Its population numbers about 670,000. The city lies near the confluence of the Baghmati and Vishnumati rivers, at an elevation of 4,344 feet above sea level. The present name refers to a wooden temple (*kath*, "wood"; *mandir*, "temple" or "edifice") said to have been built in the 16th century from the wood of a single tree, and it is believed to remain in the central square. The city has become an important business and commercial

center, and many of the townspeople are engaged in agriculture. Tribhuvan University was chartered in 1959.

Takegawa is a city in western Shizuoka Prefecture, Japan. As of 2010, the city had an estimated population of 117,858. It is bordered to the south by the Pacific Ocean. Takegawa has a mixed economy that includes green tea production and processing, as well as several light industrial complexes. Major products include telecommunications equipment and electronics, cosmetics, automotive components and musical instruments. The Takegawa area has been a regional commercial center, and developed as a castle town. Takegawa Castle was built in the Bunmei era (1469-1487).

Irkutsk is one of the largest cities in Siberia, with a population of about 600,000. It is more than 3,000 miles from Moscow by rail. The city lies at the Angara River, 45 miles below its outflow from Lake Baikal. The Irkut River, from which the town takes its name, is a small river which joins the Angara directly opposite the town. Irkutsk is home to many colleges and universities, including Irkutsk State University. The Irkutsk Hydroelectric Power Station was the first cascade hydroelectric power station in the Irkutsk region.

RELATED CITY POLICIES

Sister city ties help support the council's vision to "Value all people, encouraging respect and appreciation for diversity, equity, justice, and social well-being. We recognize and appreciate our differences and embrace our common humanity as the source of our strength."

COUNCIL OPTIONS

This work session is an information item only. The council may request additional information or action.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

The City Manager makes no recommendation on this item.

SUGGESTED MOTION

No motion is suggested.

ATTACHMENTS

None are provided.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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