



Agenda Report

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, April 25, 2023

TO: City Council

FROM: CITY CLERK ORTIZ

THROUGH: CITY MANAGER MENDEZ

SUBJECT: ESTABLISHING NEW COUNCIL SISTER CITY POLICY IN THE
CITY OF WATSONVILLE

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Adopt a resolution rescinding Resolution No. 161-18 (CM), adopted on October 9, 2018, which established the Sister City Policy, and replace with a resolution approving an updated Sister City Policy.

BACKGROUND:

In 1986, the City of Watsonville established its first Sister City partnership with Kawakami-Mura, Japan. Since then, the City added five additional cities to the program and found the need to establish a policy to manage the increase in partnerships. In 2018, the City Council approved a policy to manage the process for establishing existing and new sister city affiliations. One additional partnership was created after the policy was established.

DISCUSSION:

Following the example of Sister Cities International, which was created at President Eisenhower's 1956 White House conference on citizen diplomacy, the City endeavored to create a program to create connections between people in Watsonville. President Eisenhower envisioned an organization that could be the hub of peace and prosperity by creating bonds between people from different cities around the world. By forming these relationships, President Eisenhower reasoned that people of different cultures could celebrate and appreciate their differences and build partnerships that would lessen the chance of new conflicts.

The purpose of the proposed Sister City Policy is to update the existing Policy to provide more flexibility on how the City interacts with sister cities. The criteria for Watsonville to participate in sister city relationships is and will continue to be based on promoting peace, understanding, and prosperity through people-to-people relationships, cultural understanding, cultural exchange, and sharing arts, education, trade, agricultural practices and customs. The update to the Policy will clarify incentives for establishing new

partnerships, update language to lessen the burden of costs for the committees overseeing the partnerships, and allow the City to use City funds to support the partnerships.

The City has established a total of 7 sister city partnerships:

1. 1986 – Kawakami-Mura, Japan
2. 2006 - Pinghu, Zhejiang Province, People’s Republic of China
3. 2013 - San Pedro Masahuat, Department of La Paz, Republic of El Salvador
4. 2017 - Tangancícuaro Michoacán, México
5. 2018 - Municipality of Jocotepec, Jalisco, Mexico
6. 2018 – Cavtat, Konavle, Croatia
7. 2021 – Velas, São Jorge Island, Azore Islands, Portugal

STRATEGIC PLAN:

This program is consistent with the Strategic Plan Goal 5. Community Engagement and Well-Being.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

To be identified in the City’s budget process.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION:

The Council could decline to change the existing policy or rescind the existing policy with no replacement.

ATTACHMENTS AND/OR REFERENCES (If any):

None.