



SISTER CITY UPDATE

Study Session Meeting | December 9, 2025

Requested By: Councilmember Elizabeth Villafranca



Purpose:

To evaluate current Sister City relationships and explore reactivation or expansion opportunities aligned with Farmers Branch's mission, vision, and values.

Background

Travel Cost Overview

Category	Mexico City, Mexico	Seoul, South Korea	Taipei, Taiwan
Delegation Size	4–10 People	4–10 People	4–10 People
Flight Cost (Round Trip)	\$511 per traveler	\$1,256 per traveler	\$1,365 per traveler
Ground Transportation Range	\$2–\$33	\$3–\$16	\$2–\$50
Estimated Total Cost (4 travelers)	\$2,088	\$5,046	\$5,500
Travel Frequency	Every 5 Years	Every 5 Years	Every 5 Years
Budget Allocation FY 2025–2026	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000

Secured Meeting Requirements Matrix

Travel is recommended only when the minimum threshold of secured meetings is achieved:

Meeting Category	Threshold to Justify Travel	Mexico City	Seoul	Taipei
Business Recruitment	≥ 3 confirmed	___ confirmed	___ confirmed	___ confirmed
Government / Diplomatic	≥ 1 confirmed	___ confirmed	___ confirmed	___ confirmed
Higher Education / Workforce	≥ 1 confirmed	___ confirmed	___ confirmed	___ confirmed
Supply Chain / Technology	Optional value add	___	___	___
Sister-City or Cultural Partnership	Required for renewal cities	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No

Background

Benefit Indicators & Expected Outcomes

Projected Outcome Type	Mexico City	Seoul	Taipei
Economic Development & Employer Recruitment Potential	Moderate	High	High
Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Potential	Emerging	Strong	Strong
Workforce & Higher-Education Collaboration	High	High	High
Supply Chain, Technology, Innovation Alignment	Moderate	High	Strong
Sister-City Relationship Strengthening	Exploratory	Exploratory	Exploratory
Travel Cost Efficiency	High (Lowest Cost)	Moderate	Moderate-High

*Korean population residing in Farmers Branch: https://www.neilsberg.com/insights/lists/korean-population-in-dallas-county-tx-by-city/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Background

Recommendation Summary

All three cities hold long-term economic and cultural value. However, travel should proceed only when secured meetings justify investment and align with expected outcomes including:

- ✓ Recruitment of target industry employers
- ✓ Workforce and higher-education collaboration
- ✓ Development of trade, innovation, and investment pipelines
- ✓ Strengthening Sister-City and governmental relationships

Former Sister City Liaisons

- ❑ Bronson Blackson (Former Farmers Branch Councilman) and Rachael Johnson (Current Farmers Branch Staff)

State Representatives and Congressional Officials

- ❑ State Representatives – Rafael Anchia and Cassandra Garcia Hernandez have been contacted regarding possible sister city expansion
- ❑ Congressmembers– Beth Van Duyne, Julie Johnson and Marc A. Veasey have been contacted as well regarding the Sister City expansion.

Next Step:

Reactivate the Sister City program with existing locations, select new liaison(s), and consider formal expansion with Mexico City, South Korea, and Taiwan.



Questions



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