



SISTER CITY UPDATE

Study Session Meeting | October 21, 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

1 Birth of program Began on September 11, 1956

2 Past cost for related trips and expenses to Sister Cities Program:

Category	Estimated Cost	Notes
Hosting Sister City	\$30,000	Includes events & logistics
Travel Abroad	\$10,000	Delegation visits
Annual Membership	\$350–\$520	Sister Cities International

3 Criteria for Choosing Sister City

- Comparable population or community scale
- Shared economic sectors
- Cultural or historic ties
- Commitment from elected officials
- Citizen group support
- Feasibility of engagement (cost, distance, language)

4 Expansion of Sister City Program into Mexico City and South Korea

- Establish agreement between highest elected officials

Sister City Commonalities

Bassetlaw, England commonalities with Farmers Branch:

- Strong job sector correlation
- Slight cultural, educational and trade distinction with FB
- Population variances are noted but do not preclude participation – the Sister City program prioritizes alignment in civic, economic, and cultural goals over population size.

Garbsen, Germany commonalities with Farmers Branch:

- Strong job sector correlation with FB
- Slight cultural, educational, and trade distinction with FB
- Population variances are noted but do not preclude participation – the Sister City program prioritizes alignment in civic, economic, and cultural goals over population size.

Mexico City, Mexico Expansion Sister City candidate:

- Potential for strong cultural, financial, educational and trade distinction
- Population variances are noted but do not preclude participation – the Sister City program prioritizes alignment in civic, economic, and cultural goals over population size.

Sister City Commonalities

South Korea Expansion Sister City candidate:

- ☐ Potential for strong cultural, educational, and trade distinction
- ☐ Population variances are noted but do not preclude participation - the Sister City program prioritizes alignment in civic, economic, and cultural goals over population size.

Summary of Findings

- ❑ Existing Sister Cities (Bassetlaw, Garbsen) show strong job sector alignment but limited recent engagement.
- ❑ Program has been inactive since 2020; reactivation would require selecting a liaison and budget allocation.
- ❑ Mexico City offers high cultural and trade potential
- ❑ South Korea offers high educational, cultural, and trade potential
- ❑ Recommend formal review and cost-benefit evaluation before expanding the program.

Sister City Liaisons

- ❑ Past Sister City Liaisons were Bronson Blackson and Rachael Johnson
- ❑ Program stalled since 2020, needs new liaison(s) chosen

Next Step:

Select a new liaison(s) and consider formal expansion with Mexico City and South Korea



Questions



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