

**Summary of Meeting with Sunnyvale City Staff and  
the Sunnyvale Sister City Association (SSCA)  
Monday, February 29, 2016**

Attendees:

- Mark Kato, President, Sunnyvale Sister City Association (SSCA)
- Yvette Blackford, Senior Management Analyst, Office of the City Manager
- Heidi Kirk, Executive Assistant to Council, Office of the City Manager

Summary:

Continuing to pursue its original objective, SSCA is seeking to formalize the current relationship to a formal sister city. Staff has engaged the SSCA throughout the course of this study. Key to this engagement was a meeting between staff and the president of the SSCA to fully comprehend and define the various aspects of their vision and commitment to a potential sister city program between Sunnyvale and Iizuka, Japan. This meeting served to capture SSCA's vision of a sister city program, some enhancements it is seeking from the City of Sunnyvale, and the expanded role it is willing to play were a formal relationship to be established. In concert with this analysis, OCM Staff subsequently met with Jim Stark, Superintendent of Parks and Golf, Department of Public Works, to evaluate these options; and the outcome of that meeting has been incorporated into this report, as well as the alternatives where appropriate. To follow is an outline of discussion items from the February 29 meeting with the SSCA president.

Discussion Items:

The SSCA's vision of an expanded sister city relationship includes the following:

- Establishing dedicated administrative contacts to oversee regular communications between Sunnyvale and Iizuka, in fulfillment of Mayor Saito's request in his January 22, 2016 letter to Mayor Hendricks (per Attachment 5). These contacts would be Yvette Blackford, Senior Management Analyst in Sunnyvale's Office of the City Manager and Miki Hasimoto, Chief Examiner in Iizuka's General Planning Department.
- Implementing quarterly city-to-city communication/exchange meetings, most likely via evening video teleconferences given the 17-hour time difference.
- Potentially naming a new Sunnyvale street "Iizuka Street," and planting additional cherry trees along its borders.
- Expanding the existing Japanese theme at Braly Park to include additional cherry trees for an annual cherry tree viewing party, as well as other additions such as a koi pond or a mural. Also the possible renaming of a specific section of the park.
- Mayor or Councilmember visits to Iizuka, and visits from Mayor Saito or Iizuka Councilmembers to Sunnyvale.
- Continuance of their SSCA's student exchange program (Sunnyvale to Iizuka, and Iizuka to Sunnyvale) and expansion of that program to include adults.
- Enlistment of the Mayor's support in soliciting the key contacts of local

companies to sponsor future travel and other activities. Some current and past sponsors include Heritage Bank of Commerce, Fenwick & West, the Miner Foundation, Benesse, Toshiba, Toyota Sunnyvale, NEC, and Infinity Investments LLC.

- Assistance from the City in finding volunteers to serve on SSCA's board, especially in the areas of finance and education, and especially in acquiring a replacement for their former Treasurer. Meetings would occur irregularly, three to four times a year on weekday evenings from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

The SSCA believes that Sunnyvale could enhance its relationship with lizuka in the following ways:

- Expand technological exchange through sharing what each city is successful at (i.e., Sunnyvale is known for its fire and emergency services; lizuka has had great success in maintaining its water infrastructure.) Department staff from both cities could be enlisted to share their expertise during informational meetings, that could take place either virtually or in-person.
- Expand cultural exchange through hosting catered receptions for visiting exchange students and having these same students contribute to the community through volunteer service while they are here.
- The giving of reciprocal gifts to lizuka, such as trees comparable to the cherry trees that have been planted in Sunnyvale, or the erection of a monument from Sunnyvale to lizuka.
- Provide additional funding to SSCA as a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization, similar to Leadership Sunnyvale, in that SSCA provides special services to the community that the City could not otherwise provide in and of itself. SSCA's current annual budget is \$15,000, but that is not sufficient to finance the expanded vision of their program. (See also Council Policy 7.2.4: *Relationships with Outside Groups*.)

In order to facilitate an expanded relationship, the SSCA is willing to expand its own role/commitment/involvement in the following ways:

- Provide translation and protocol assistance in communications with lizuka officials.
- Coordinate the scheduling of Mayor or Council visits to lizuka, including their attendance at a regular Council meeting.
- Help provide scholarships to needy children towards their travel to lizuka and return.
- Coordinate study-abroad programs that would enable Sunnyvale students to attend a semester(s) at one of two technical universities near lizuka.