



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

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Agenda Item Number: 4.

Agenda Date: 2/12/2019

In Control: Economic and Workforce Development Committee

DEPARTMENT: Economic Development

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Rene Dominguez

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: City-wide

SUBJECT: EWDC Briefing on International Activities for Fiscal Year 2019

SUMMARY:

The City of San Antonio manages official relationships around the world, including 11 Sister Cities and two Friendship Cities. During the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2019, the Mayor and members of the City Council have participated in various international initiatives including trade and investment missions abroad. This presentation serves as a report-out on two recent trips, and as a preview of key initiatives in FY2019.

BACKGROUND:

Prominent international engagement activities for the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2019 commenced with travel to the Jiangsu Province, China. From October 19-27, 2018, Councilman John Courage led a delegation to Shanghai, Nanjing, Wuxi, and Suzhou, China. The group attended the Sister Cities Exhibition in Nanjing, participated in the Sister Cities Forum in Wuxi, visited the UNESCO World Heritage Site in Suzhou, and engaged in educational and economic development meetings in the various cities.

From November 17-21, 2018, Mayor Ron Nirenberg and Councilwoman Rebecca Viagran led a trade mission to Japan's Mie and Aichi prefectures. The group visited the Toyota headquarters in Toyota City, met with economic development prospects, in Tokyo and Nagoya, and met with First Lady Mrs. Akie Abe to discuss Sister City activities.

These pasts efforts complement upcoming initiatives in FY19 including a high-level delegation from San Antonio's German Sister City, Darmstadt, which will visit San Antonio from February 23-28. Headed by Lord Mayor Jochen Partsch, the 30-member group includes a member of the German Bundestag (Parliament), the presidents of two major universities, the head of Darmstadt's utility provider, economic developers, cybersecurity experts, youth and cultural representatives, private sector leaders, and a retired astronaut.

Just one month later, San Antonio will be the host city for the inaugural Japan-Texas Leadership Symposium slated for March 27, 2019. The symposium will be curated by Sister Cities International in association with the Koyamada International Foundation, with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. This first of

its kind symposium is presented to enhance the longstanding bonds of friendship and collaboration between Japan and the U.S. at the subnational level, especially as it pertains to business, cultural, and community exchanges. The symposium's national chair is former Transportation Secretary Norm Mineta, and Councilwoman Viagran serves as the local chair.

From June 30-July 3, 2019, the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce will facilitate a Mayor-led trade mission to Mexico City to explore a new economic Memorandum of Understanding and a Friendship City Agreement with Mexico City, and from October 25-November 3, 2019, IRO is planning a Mayor-led trade and cultural mission to San Antonio's Sister Cities in South Korea (Gwangju) and Japan (Kumamoto).

A follow-up report-out on these future initiatives will be provided later during the year.

ISSUE:

Throughout FY2019, EDD and the International Relations Office will continue their collaboration with the Brookings Global Cities Initiative and various local partners. This aligned effort will culminate in a new community-wide strategy for international engagement.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is a staff briefing and requires no recommendation.