



Agenda

Sister City 40th Anniversary Task Force

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, August 28, 2024 at 3:00 PM

City Hall Cowles Council Chambers In-Person & Via Zoom Webinar

Homer City Hall

491 E. Pioneer Avenue
Homer, Alaska 99603
www.cityofhomer-ak.gov

Zoom Webinar ID: 969 4359 4973 Password: 403783

<https://cityofhomer.zoom.us>
Dial: 346-248-7799 or 669-900-6833;
(Toll Free) 888-788-0099 or 877-853-5247

CALL TO ORDER, 3:00 P.M.

AGENDA APPROVAL

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON MATTERS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA (Public May Comment on Items already on the agenda. 3 Minute Time Limit)

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

a. [Unapproved](#) Meeting Minutes for June 26, 2024

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

REPORTS

a. Staff Liaison Report

PENDING BUSINESS

a. [Student](#) Delegation 2025

Memorandum SCTF-24-009 from Staff Liaison as backup.

b. [Status](#) of the Peace Post

Memorandum SCTF-24-010 from Staff Liaison as backup.

NEW BUSINESS

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

a. [Sister](#) City Budget Update

b. [Final](#) Invoice for Banner Design

c. [2025](#) Summit Presentation Overview Japan US Update and Hajimari Project

d. [Resolution](#) 24-029, Creating the Sister City 40th Anniversary Celebration Task Force and Establishing Scope of Work and Parameters under which the Task Force will Operate.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE (The audience may comment on any topic. 3 Minute Time Limit)

COMMENTS OF CITY STAFF

COMMENTS OF MAYOR/COUNCIL MEMBER (If Present)

COMMENTS OF THE TASK FORCE

ADJOURNMENT

Next Regular Meeting is scheduled for **WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2024 at 3:00 p.m.** All meetings scheduled to be held via Zoom Webinar and in person in the Upstairs Conference Room located at City Hall 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

CALL TO ORDER

Session 24-03 a Regular Meeting of the Sister City 40th Anniversary Task Force was called to order by Acting Chair Alexander Underwood at 3:03 p.m. on June 26, 2024 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar.

PRESENT: TASK FORCE MEMBERS, CHARLES ANDERSON, SCOTT STEAD, ALEXANDER UNDERWOOD,
AND GARY LYON

ABSENT: None

STAFF: SISTER CITY COORDINATOR, LORI POND

CONSULTING: ACTING CITY CLERK, RENEE KRAUSE

AGENDA APPROVAL

Acting Chair Underwood called for a motion to approve the agenda.

ANDERSON/STEAD MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NO OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS UPON MATTERS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA (3 minute time limit)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Acting Chair Underwood called for a motion to approve the minutes.

ANDERSON/LYON MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NO OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

Presentation from Wes Schact – Wes is from Homer and is a member of the Taiko drum group with the Alaska Japanese Club and has a big interest in Japanese culture and our sister city. The Taiko drum group has been practicing on the Spit, with a lot of people coming and going. They have a lot of visitors from out of state coming up to them to “pound on a drum.” There is interest there. He stated a desire to communicate more with the sister city delegation to get more influence going. He mentioned the Taiko drum group that visited Homer from Anchorage, Tomodachi Daiko, and how they donated drums to the Alaska Japanese Club and showed everyone how to make drums. The drumming is also a way to get exercise for body and mind.

Presentation from Cathy Stingley – Cathy Stingley is a resident of Homer and visited Teshio recently with her granddaughter and her friend as a graduation trip for her granddaughter. She expressed how amazingly wonderful the people are there and they couldn’t have felt more welcomed! Cathy presented, and passed around to the Task Force to see, many gifts that they were given during their

visit to Teshio. They were given hand stitched aprons made from recycled kimonos, a table runner made from kimonos, they made chopstick holders out of clay, they were shown how to do origami and pastel painting and were given beautiful fans. They were shown how to hand make paper and were given handmade paper placemats. The gifts just kept coming and coming. Very giving people. They stayed at a hotel and the owner and her son treated them like family.

Cathy and the girls were taken to a city museum for a tour, which included a large section on Homer and Teshio that is a permanent installation. They also had a chance to visit city council chambers to meet the Mayor and the president of the Rotary Club. Cathy was able to present a gift from Mayor Ken Castner. Cathy was impressed how they all wear suits and ties to their meetings and work every day. Cathy and the girls also had an opportunity to visit the Junior High School where the banner from Homer is displayed. The 15-foot banner is a peace banner that was donated by the Rotary Club and was created by students at Homer's West Homer Elementary School. The students had painted panels which Nomar sewed together.

Their visit to Teshio was 2 days out of a 2-week trip. They are gracious people and they had lots of fun and laughter together. They had reached out to friends in Teshio to let them know they were coming and it snowballed from there. It was a graduation trip for her granddaughter that turned into a reconnection with our friends in Teshio.

Presentation from Megumi Beams – Megumi is a Sister City Liaison and Interpreter/Translator as well as Coordinator and Instructor with Japanese International Exchange. She shared an idea and a vision of a student delegation to visit Teshio next Spring. She has spoken to Mr. Sugawara who is a coordinator of sister city in Teshio. Teshio suggested that 5th through 12th graders would be the best age group to visit classes at their schools, have lunch, and visit the museum. The students and chaperones would stay with host families. March of 2025 is the Homer students spring break and it was agreed that it would be a good time to visit Teshio.

Megumi also shared an experience from a past exchange student, Julie Jones, who visited Teshio recently with her twin children, who are in 5th grade. They had a wonderful experience visiting the elementary school and high school. They were able to meet Teshio's Mayor, who is also a principal of Teshio Elementary School, along with meeting other students and community members.

Megumi also shared the experience of Cathy Stingley's recent visit. She also shared that Charles Anderson, who is Chair of the Sister City Task Force, will be taking a personal trip to Japan this Fall and will be visiting Teshio as well.

There are many Homer to Teshio contacts that are currently active. Megumi stated, "I strongly believe that those incredible interactions will make human connections stonger and closer. Their great memories to visit Teshio, and having their amazing experiences in Teshio will bring back to our community to share it with us. I think that those interactions help new generations to come to understand more of each other, learning each other's culture, and become global citizens."

A proposed proclamation, compiled and written by Donna Hall, was provided which states the commitment of continuing to foster this Sister City relationship with Teshio and to designate students and chaperones as Ambassadors of the City of Homer, representing our shared history and the promise of our future as Sister Cities. The Task Force will consider the proclamation during this meeting.

Megumi informed the Task Force as well that if the Mayor, City Council Members, or others from the City wish to travel with the delegation, we will need to let Teshio know so they can budget and put it in front of their City Council as well.

REPORTS

Staff Report provided by Lori Pond, Liaison and Sister City Coordinator. The first item to report is the street banner designs have been finalized and sent to the printer. They should be delivered soon. The only budget change was the deposit paid to the printer. Finalized designs were included in the meeting packet along with an updated budget. There was also \$1,000 allocated from PARCAC commission towards the Sister City banner project expenses. A huge thank you to the commission for this contribution!

PENDING BUSINESS

A. Memorandum SCTF-24-005 Election of Chair and Vice Chair

The Clerk introduced the topic of proper procedures for electing a Chair and Vice Chair. Written procedures were included in the meeting packet. Task Force chose to vote by a show of hands. Charles Anderson offered to fill the role as Chair since Xander Underwood is also pursuing the 501c3 non-profit creation for the Sister City Program in Homer going forward. The Clerk recognized that Mr. Anderson indicated he would accept the role of Chair. The Clerk requested any nominations for Vice Chair. Xander Underwood spoke up that he would like to fill the role as Vice Chair and confirmed he is very interested in pursuing the non-profit aspect. There were no other nominations for either role.

TASK FORCE MEMBER ANDERSON NOMINATED XANDER UNDERWOOD AS VICE CHAIR

VOTE: NO OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

TASK FORCE MEMBER LYON NOMINATED CHARLES ANDERSON FOR CHAIR

VOTE: NO OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

Meeting turned over to Charles Anderson as Chair moving forward.

B. Memorandum SCTF-24-006 Timeline, Budget, Events, and Strategy

Miss Pond pointed out in Resolution 24-029 it states that a member of the Task Force should report to City Council on a regular basis, either written or verbal. A timeline template was presented for quarterly events or topics to be added and a plan could be developed, budgeted for, and completed for the duration of the Task Force.

Mr. Underwood pointed out the 3rd quarter item listed on the timeline, the Peace Post restoration. He said we should definitely reach out to our community artists for new ideas. Miss Pond explained more about the condition of the post. The Task Force members discussed ideas. They will look at the post in person to have a better idea of what options may be best.

The museum exhibit in Teshio was brought up. The current post could be displayed along with other Sister City items. Miss Pond will check into options for a museum display to see if it is feasible and if there are any costs. Mr. Lyon also had a contact he could reach out to about options. This topic can be added to future agenda once there is more information.

There was also a call to the public to submit ideas for future celebration events. They can address the Task Force at a meeting or reach out to Lori Pond as Liaison/Sister City Coordinator.

C. Memorandum SCTF-24-007 Assigning of roles outlined in Resolution 24-029

Role assignments as specified in Resolution 24-029 was discussed. These will be the point people.

1. Communicating with Teshio – Megumi Beams
2. Track event ideas and coordinating volunteers – Xander Underwood
3. Report regularly to City Council – Charles Anderson
4. Community engagement – Not assigned to one person – case-by-case basis.

TASK FORCE MEMBER UNDERWOOD/STEAD MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE ABOVE ASSIGNMENTS

VOTE: NO OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Student Delegation to Teshio 2025

- a. Proposed Proclamation was introduced in the Presentation section of the meeting today. The desire is that the Proclamation be presented to City Council.

TASK FORCE MEMBER UNDERWOOD/STEAD MADE A MOTION TO PRESENT THE PROCLAMATION TO CITY COUNCIL.

VOTE: NO OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

- b. Megumi Beams confirmed that the proposed timing of the Student Delegation in Spring of 2025 would be during the students Spring Break in March. That was the best timing for Homer students and Teshio students.

Mr. Anderson brought up the point that City funds should not be used toward the travel or meals of the delegations. The trips should remain all through private funds to not create conflicts of interest. The Task Force could support or help with logistics. If City funds are allocated they can be used toward needed logistics, translations, or gifts from the City of Homer to Teshio.

This item will be added to the next Task Force meeting agenda. How will the Task Force support the delegation? What can the Task Force do to promote it?

- c. The presentation by Megumi Beams mentioned an idea for a potential Zoom call between the visitors from Charles Anderson's group, the Teshio group, and Homer community members. Charles Anderson clarified his group will only be in Teshio 2 days

and it would be hard to integrate an in-person delegation and a virtual delegation into one meeting. His recommendation was to schedule a separate time to have an informal Zoom call between their community members and Homer community members. It may make it a more enjoyable experience. Megumi said she can share Mr. Anderson's thoughts and ideas on this topic. Mr. Anderson said they will have someone traveling with them who can take video to show City Council when they return.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

- A. Resolution 24-029
- B. List of Suggested Topics for Upcoming Celebrations
- C. SCTF-24-008 Memo re Banners Final Design and Printing
- D. Final Banner Designs and Invoice from GraphicWorks

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE (3 minute time limit)

Megumi Beams – Megumi expressed words of appreciation to Task Force Members and Liaison Lori Pond. Thanks also to Kelly Smith, Wes Schact, Charles Anderson, and Gary Lyon for participating in the upcoming 4th of July parade with the Japanese Club float with Taiko drumming.

Wes Schact – Expressed appreciation to all as well. He encouraged everyone to come out to see the float in the 4th of July parade. He looks forward to continuing to volunteer.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Liaison, Lori Pond, welcomed and thanked Scott Stead for joining the Task Force. She pointed out there is still one more seat open on the Task Force, so if anyone is interested in joining, they can contact the City Clerks Office or herself to joint or for more information.

COMMENTS OF THE MAYOR/COUNCIL MEMBER (If Present)

None present.

COMMENTS OF THE TASK FORCE

Welcome to Scott Stead.

Gary Lyon – Thanked the new Chair, Charles Anderson, and the new Vice Chair, Xander Underwood, for being willing to serve in those roles.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Acting Chair Anderson adjourned the meeting at 3:49 p.m. The next regular meeting is Wednesday, June 26, 2024 at 4:17 p.m. All meetings are scheduled to be held in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers and via Zoom Webinar.

LORI POND, SISTER CITY COORDINATOR/STAFF LIAISON

Approved: _____



MEMORANDUM

Student Delegation Spring 2025

Item Type: Action Memorandum
Prepared For: Sister City 40th Anniversary Task Force
Date: July 12, 2024
From: Lori Pond, Liaison and Sister City Coordinator

At the June 26, 2024 Sister City Task Force meeting, there was a presentation from Wes Schact, Cathy Stingley, and Megumi Beams encouraging the continued relationship with our Sister City Teshio, Hokkaido, Japan. Wes spoke about the events in Homer, such as the Taiko drumming. Cathy spoke on her most recent visit to Teshio, and Megumi spoke on the desire to have a student delegation visit Teshio in March 2025.

There is a lot of interest in the students visiting. Megumi has been in touch with Mr. Sugawara, who is coordinator of Sister City Teshio. Teshio has said they would welcome visitors and have discussed ideas around a potential visit.

There was a discussion among the Task Force members during the meeting on June 26th. Chair, Charles Anderson asked that an agenda item be added to the July 24, 2024 meeting agenda to discuss:

- a. How will the Task Force support the delegation?
- b. What can the Task Force do to promote it?

The Task Force discussed that City funds should not be used toward the travel or meals of the delegations. The trips should remain all through private funds to not create conflicts of interest. The Task Force could support or help with logistics. If City funds are allocated they can be used toward needed logistics, translations, or gifts from the City of Homer to Teshio.

Recommendation: The Task Force should specify how they will support the delegation, and what they can do to promote it.



MEMORANDUM

Peace Post

Item Type: Action Memorandum
Prepared For: Sister City 40th Anniversary Task Force
Date: July 12, 2024
From: Lori Pond, Liaison and Sister City Coordinator

At the June 26, 2024 Sister City Task Force meeting, the topic of the Peace Post was discussed as an item to address in this 3rd quarter.

The Task Force members were able to look at the physical post in person and will consider options.

Ideas that were discussed were:

- Keeping the post as it is to be displayed along with other Sister City items.

- A new design to use the current post but refurbish the parts that are deteriorating.

- A newly designed post.

Along with keeping the post as it is, should other art pieces be considered to represent the Sister City relationship.

Recommendation: It is the recommendation by City Staff that the current post be maintained as it is and introduced into the City's Sister City collection.

Ciy of Homer
Budget for Sister City 40th Anniversary Celebrations
2024 - 2025

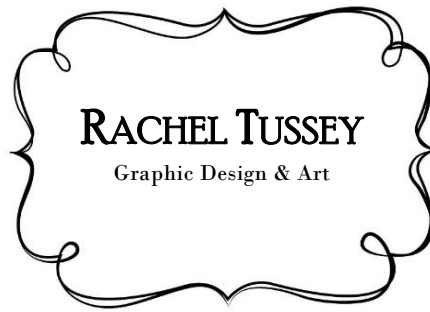
As of 8.20.24

Donation Account: 809-0375-5202 for spending (809-0375-4905 received donations)										
Date	Item	Paid	Actual				Estimated			Notes:
			Revenue	Expense	Balance		Revenue	Expense	Est. Balance	
2/13/2024	Donation		\$ 60.00							
Total			\$ 60.00	\$ -	\$ 60.00					

General Fund: Sister Cities: 100-0100-5605										
Date	Item	Paid	Actual				Estimated			Notes:
			Revenue	Expense	Balance		Revenue	Expense	Est. Balance	
	Fund Budget		\$ 4,000.00				\$ 4,000.00			
	PARCAC allocated - Mike Illg - for Theater		-				500.00			
5/9/2024	Tomodachi Daiko - Fuel	check		600.00				600.00		Fuel
5/9/2024	Tomodachi Daiko- Performance	check		500.00				600.00		Performance
4/24/2024	B&B - Flat Fish Lodge	check		1,500.00				1,200.00		B&B
4/30/2024	Brick Mouse LLC Joe Miller - Meals - 5/3 - Dinner (14 people)	check		210.00				540.00		5/3 meals
4/30/2024	Brick Mouse LLC Joe Miller - Meals - 5/4 - Lunch & Dinner (14 people)	check		610.00				696.00		5/4 meals
				-				336.00		5/5 meals
5/7/2024	Mariner Theater	PARCAC						500.00		Mariner Theater
5/1/2024	KPB Campus room	Credit Card		60.00				-		
4/4/2024	Museum Shelves	Credit Card		430.33				500.00		Museum Shelves
	Labels & Signs	n/a		-				100.00		In-house?
5/3/2024	Drink Supplies for Events	Credit Card		51.25						
Total			\$ 4,000.00	\$ 3,961.58	\$ 38.42		\$ 4,500.00	\$ 5,072.00	\$ (572.00)	

Sister City Fund for 40th Anniversary Celebrations: 156-0399-5605										
Date	Item	Paid	Actual				Estimated			Notes:
			Revenue	Expense	Balance		Revenue	Expense	Est. Balance	
2/13/2024	Appropriated by Ordinance 24-11(A)		\$ 20,000.00				\$ 20,000.00			
6/12/2024	GraphicWorks - Banner Printing - Deposit	check		2,132.62				2,132.62		Print - Deposit
7/17/2024	GraphicWorks - Banner Printing - Final Invoice	check		2,008.38				2,008.38		Print - Final Pmt
7/12/2024	Banner Design - Rachel Tussey (see PARCAC below)	check		665.00				1,440.00		Graphic Design
7/17/2024	Carlile - shipping fee for banners from Anchorage	check		179.34						
Total			\$ 20,000.00	\$ 4,985.34	\$ 15,014.66		\$ 20,000.00	\$ 5,581.00	\$ 14,419.00	

PARCAC Account:										
Date	Item	Paid	Actual				Estimated			Notes:
			Revenue	Expense	Balance		Revenue	Expense	Balance	
	PARCAC allocated - Mike Illg - for Theater		500.00							
	Mariner Theater	PARCAC		475.00						
	PARCAC allocated funds toward Banner Project		1,000.00							
7/12/2024	Banner Design - Quote from Rachel Tussey (see Sister City Fund above)			1,000.00						
Total			\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,475.00	\$ 25.00		\$ -	\$ -		



Rachel Tussey
4104 Mattox Road
Homer, AK 99603
Phone (907) 399-0991
r.tussey@outlook.com

INVOICE

Invoice #2024-06
Date: 6/30/2024
Due Upon Receipt

TO:

City of Homer
Attn: Lori Pond
491 E Pioneer Avenue
Homer, AK 99603
lpond@ci.homer.ak.us

FOR:

Sister City Street Pole Banners Design

DESCRIPTION	HOURS	RATE	AMOUNT
Graphic Design Work for 12 designs (6 banner designs total): Includes Concept Meeting(s), Concept Design Creation, Sample Preparation, Graphic Work Time, Final Version Creation & Delivery	27.75	\$60.00	\$1,665.00
Tax Exempt			\$0.00
TOTAL			\$1,665.00

Payment due upon receipt of invoice.

- Please make checks payable to Rachel Tussey.
- Bank transfers are accepted through Zelle using the contact info above.

Thank you for your business!



2025年日米姉妹都市サミット 2025 U.S.-Japan Sister Cities Summit

September 16-19, 2025





Dates

Tuesday, Sept 16, 2025

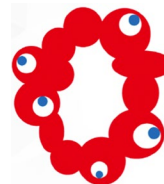
to

Friday, Sept 19, 2025



U.S. - JAPAN
TOURISM YEAR 2024

日米観光交流年 2024



OSAKA, KANSAI, JAPAN
EXPO2025



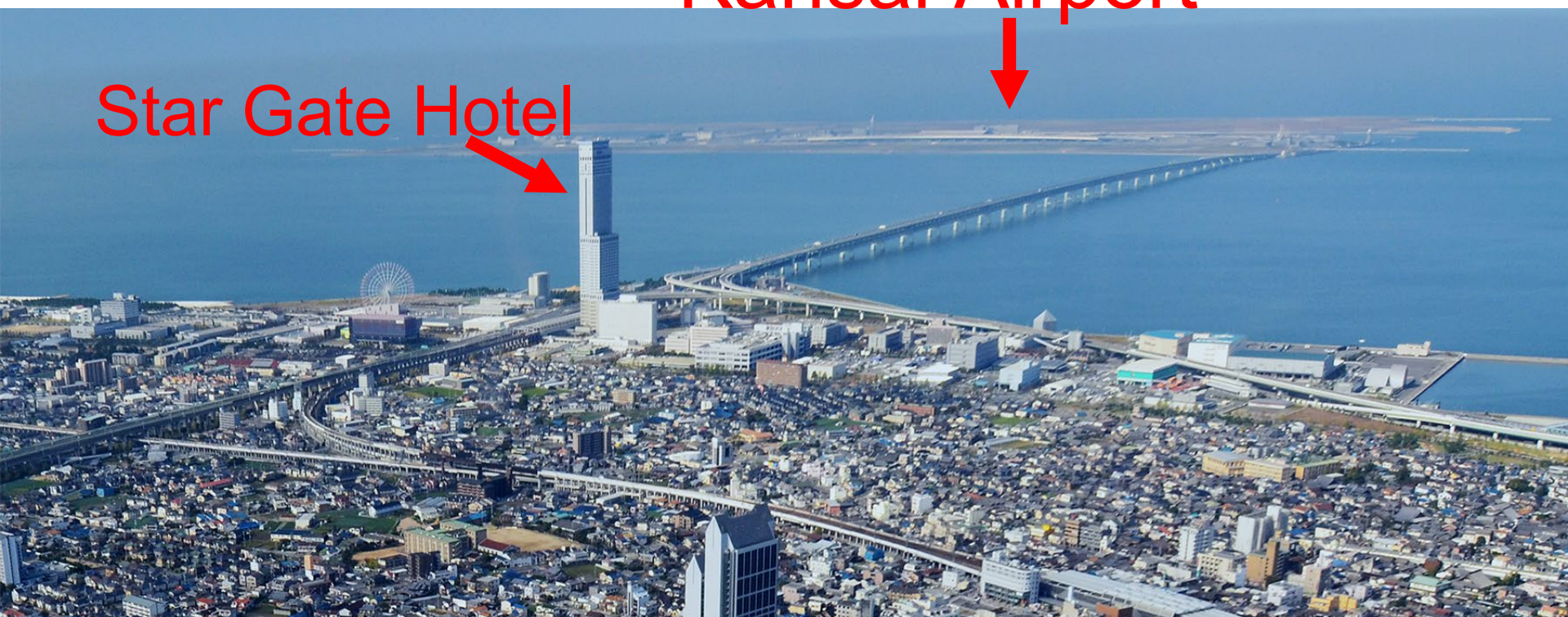
Izumisano, Osaka Prefecture



Kansai Airport



Star Gate Hotel



Izumisano 泉佐野







The Pitch

“Experience the Conference”

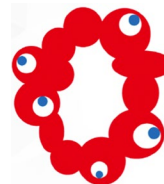
“Visit the Expo”

“Meet your Japanese partner”



U.S. - JAPAN
TOURISM YEAR 2024

日米観光交流年 2024



OSAKA, KANSAI, JAPAN
EXPO2025





☆
Currency in JPY
10 (-0.7548%)
Market open.

Comparison | Date Range 1D 5D 1M 3M 6M YTD 1Y 2Y 5Y **Max** | Interval 1W Line Draw

150 Yen

(2024)

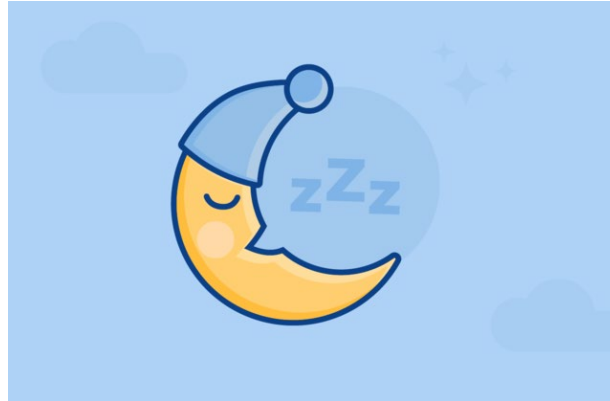




Day #0

Monday, 9/15/25

- Arrive and check in





Day #1

Tuesday, 9/16/25

- Opening Session
- A.M. breakout, lunch
- P.M. breakout
- P.M. - Mayor's Reception



Day #2

Wednesday, 9/17/25

- Opening Keynote
- A.M. breakout, lunch
- P.M. breakout
- P.M. – Reception/Explore Izumisano

Day #3

Thursday, 9/18/25

➤ World Expo





Day #4

Friday, 9/19/25

➤ Closing Keynote

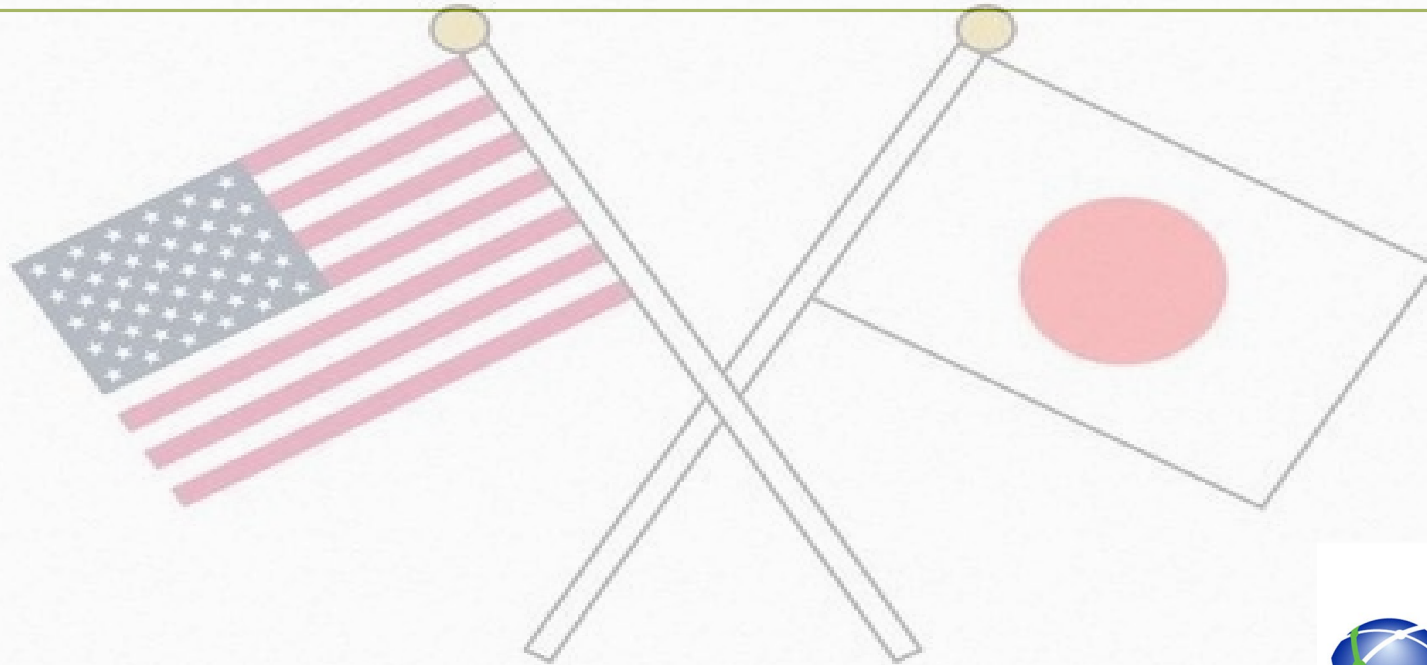


2025年日米姉妹都市サミット 2025 U.S.-Japan Sister Cities Summit

September 16-19, 2025



US-Japan Relations in 2024



Currency Rate

- Yen remains at the lowest rate against the dollar since 1986 (38 years)
 - 161.96 JPY to 1 USD

Japan Is Getting New Money!

- Japan will start issuing new banknotes this month with the world's first use of cutting-edge holography that makes the portraits of historic figures look like they are rotating in 3D on the bills (an anti-counterfeit measure)
 - First design change in 20 years
- 10,000 yen - Eiichi Shibusawa, "the father of Japanese capitalism"/Tokyo Station
- 5,000 yen - Umeko Tsuda, who rose the status of women in society/wisteria flowers
- 1,000 yen - Shibasaburo Kitasato, "the father of modern Japanese medicine" for his contributions to the treatment of tetanus/"The Great Wave off Kanagawa" by ukiyo-e artist Katsushika Hokusai



Japanese Economy

- #4 economy in the world, expected to slip to #5 in 2025 after the US, China, Germany, and India
- A weaker Japanese yen was a key factor, since comparisons of nominal GDP are in dollar terms
- However, Japan's relative weakness also reflects a decline in its population and lagging productivity and competitiveness

Japanese Politics

- Liberal Democratic Party presidential election (Prime Minister election) in September 2024
- Kishida assumed to be running again but his grip on power has weakened this year due to a party corruption scandal
- Kishida claims to be focused on restoring trust in politics, recovery efforts from the Noto Peninsula earthquake, and promoting a new stage of economic growth

US military in Japan

- There are more than 80 US military facilities in Japan
- More US service members are permanently stationed in Japan than in any other country
- Aimed at a more assertive China and a nuclear North Korea

Japan's Foreign Relations

- Prime Minister Kishida carrying on Shinzo Abe's strategic outlook of intense engagement through multilateralism, but different in style
 - Kishida has strong views on nuclear disarmament
- Japan part of the Quad with Australia, India, and the US; new agreements with the Philippines; naval security agreements with Australia, Britain, and the US
- Japan stepping up as a major supporter of Ukraine--\$12 billion in aid for anti-drone detection

Japanese Demographics

- As of late 2023, 2.74% of 124,352,000 people in Japan are foreign nationals
- Japan will need 970,000 more foreign workers than it will have in 2040 to meet the nation's economic growth target
- This new estimate from the Japan International Cooperation Agency is more than double the estimate from 2022, mainly due to the country drawing fewer people from Asian nations

US Tourism to Japan

- Americans arriving in Japan by air totaled over 900,000 in the first five months of 2024, climbing 17.4% year-over-year and rising 35.5% from 2019 before the pandemic
- While pent-up travel demand since the end of the pandemic has also contributed, the favorable exchange rate has been a key factor

Japan Tourism to the US

- -52.4% compared to 2019 numbers, due in part to unfavorable exchange rate
- 2024 is US-Japan Year of Tourism (please [click link](#))

Prime Minister Kishida's Official State Visit to the US

- Robust coordination in areas of defense and space
- Microsoft will invest \$2.9 billion over the next 2 years in Japan in AI and cloud computing
- Google will invest \$1 billion to improve digital communications infrastructure between the US, Japan, and Pacific Island nations
- Amazon Web Services will invest approximately \$15 billion in Japan by 2027 to expand existing cloud infrastructure to serve as the backbone for AI, which will support about 30,500 jobs
- Toyota will add nearly \$8 billion (and 3,000 jobs) to its investment to increase capacity to support battery electric vehicles and plug-in hybrid vehicles battery production in Greensboro, North Carolina; Toyota's first automotive battery plant in North America

Prime Minister Kishida's Official State Visit to the US

- \$110 million joint AI partnership with University of Washington and University of Tsukuba as well as Carnegie Mellon University and Keio University through funding from NVIDIA, Arm, Amazon, Microsoft, and a consortium of Japanese companies
 - Expanded partnerships in science and technology
 - Joint projects in building resilient critical mineral supply chains
- Japan will be first international collaborator of the US Floating Offshore Wind Shot; aims to reduce the cost of floating offshore wind in deep waters by more than 70 percent and reach 15GW of US domestic deployment by 2035
- The CDC opened a Regional Office for East Asia and the Pacific in Tokyo in February

Prime Minister Kishida's Official State Visit to the US

2025 World Expo in Osaka; for first time since 1988, the US approved federal funding to support the design, build, and operation of the US Pavilion at the World Expo

- New \$12 million “Mineta Ambassadors Program (MAP)” education exchange endowment administered by the US-Japan Council for high school and university students who will “map” the future of the relationship, with support from Apple, the BlackRock Foundation, Toshizo Watanabe Foundation, and other founding donors
- New memorandum of cooperation to expand exchange opportunities for Japanese language specialists to observe US institutions and methods and share their specialized knowledge of Japanese language education; welcome efforts to expand the Japanese Language Education Assistant Program (J-LEAP)

Prime Minister Kishida's Official State Visit to the US

- To coincide with the US-Japan Tourism Year, Airbnb will commit \$1 million to an International Visitors Leadership Program to bring Japanese tourism professionals to the United States to study best practices on rural tourism and support local economies in each nation
- Japan will donate 250 cherry trees to Washington, D.C.'s Tidal Basin to commemorate the United States' 250th anniversary in 2026
- Japan expected to become full member this year in Customs and Border Protection's Global Entry program, a Trusted Traveler Program that allows expedited clearance for pre-approved, low-risk travelers upon arrival at US airports



HAJIMARI PROJECT はじまりプロジェクト

US-Japan Sister Cities Stories of Origin

“HAJIMARI”

はじまり - noun

Beginning, Origin, Start



US-Japan Sister Cities



400+ over 75 years

170 Years of Diplomatic Relations in 2024

185 Years of People-to-People Ties in 2026

and... 70th Anniversary of SCI in 2026

Goals of HAJIMARI PROJECT



DOCUMENT



ENCOURAGE



ADVANCE

We Need YOUR HAJIMARI Story !

- Names of Cities
- Story/Specific Details
- Important Dates
- Key people involved
- Photos (signing, key people)



Questions

kodonnell@sistercities.org



SisterCities
INTERNATIONAL

Connect globally. Thrive locally.

**CITY OF HOMER
HOMER, ALASKA**

Lord/Venuti

RESOLUTION 24-029

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF HOMER, ALASKA,
CREATING A SISTER CITY 40TH ANNIVERSARY TASK FORCE AND
ESTABLISHING THE SCOPE OF WORK AND PARAMETERS UNDER
WHICH THE TASK FORCE WILL OPERATE.

WHEREAS, The City of Homer has a longstanding and cherished sister city relationship with Teshio, Japan; and

WHEREAS, The 40th anniversary of our sister city relationship in 2024 presents an opportunity for a significant celebration to enhance cultural exchange, understanding, and friendship; and

WHEREAS, A Sister City Working Group, formed in August 2023 of interested stakeholders, has diligently developed plans for the celebration, including events, exhibits, and programs; and

WHEREAS, The Sister City Working Group has proposed many ideas that lie outside the operations of the City of Homer, but may be supported by private groups or individuals; and

WHEREAS, The City desires to create a formal Task Force to clearly distinguish between celebrations sponsored by the City of Homer and privately-supported events, and to manage the City's celebrations without impeding the ability of other groups to develop and promote events of their own; and

WHEREAS, The Task Force is intended to exist until it completes its mission as defined below, but it shall not extend beyond December 31, 2025 at the latest.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of Homer, Alaska, hereby creates the Sister City 40th Anniversary Task Force for the following purposes:

1. Foster close relations with our sister city government in Teshio, by collaborating with them on planning joint activities, possibly including an exchange of delegations in 2025.
2. Plan and organize events for the 40th anniversary celebrations. The Task Force shall formalize a plan for events in calendar years 2024 and 2025, building off the planning already completed by the Sister City Working Group. The plan shall include a timeline, specific budget figures, and a strategy for carrying out the events in collaboration with local businesses and community groups. The Task Force shall present its plan to the

City Council no later than June 30, 2024, with updates provided to the Council at the end of each fiscal quarter thereafter.

3. Keep the celebrations within the constraints imposed by limited funding, and advise the City Council on expenditure of City funds allocated for the 40th anniversary celebrations. Utilizing funds allocated by the City Council for this effort, the Task Force shall follow the City of Homer's Procurement Policy and all other applicable City policies, maintain all requisite financial documentation, and make regular reports on funding status and budget oversight by memo to the City Council. Nothing shall preclude private individuals or businesses from raising funds for their own celebrations, provided it is clear that such events are separate from, and outside the scope of, activities carried out by the Task Force.
4. Community engagement. In coordination with the City staff liaison, the Task Force shall actively conduct public outreach and recruit volunteers in support of its activities. The Task Force shall coordinate and direct volunteer efforts and acknowledge those volunteers at the conclusion of its operations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the task force will set its own meeting schedule through coordination with the Clerk's office, with meetings to be held during regular business hours.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Task Force will consist of five private citizen members. A City staff liaison will be assigned by the City Manager. The deadline to apply for the task force shall be March 25th with appointments made by the Mayor and approved by the City Council at the April 8th Homer City Council meeting.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Mayor will nominate appointees to the Task Force from a list of applicants; nominees must be approved by City Council. All appointees shall serve at the pleasure of the Council and may be removed from their position by a majority of the Council at any time without cause.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Homer City Council this 11th day of March, 2024.

CITY OF HOMER

KEN CASTNER, MAYOR

ATTEST:

MELISSA JACOBSEN, MMC, CITY CLERK

Fiscal note: Staff time and advertising.





MEMORANDUM

Resolution 24-029, A Resolution of the City Council of Homer, Alaska to Create a Sister City 40th Anniversary Task Force and Establishing the Scope of Work and Parameters under which the Task Force will Operate. City Manager.

Item Type: Backup Memorandum
Prepared For: Mayor and City Council
Date: March 11, 2024
From: Lori Pond, Assistant to the City Manager / Sister City Coordinator
Through: Rob Dumouchel

Summary: The purpose of this Memorandum is to recommend the creation of a Sister City 40th Anniversary Task Force and establish the scope of work and parameters under which the Task Force will operate.

Background: The 40th Anniversary of the Sister City relationship between Homer and Teshio, Japan is in 2024. This anniversary offers a chance for a meaningful celebration promoting cultural exchange and friendship. On February 12, 2024, Homer City Council adopted Ordinance 24-11 appropriating \$20,000 from the General Fund Capital Asset Repair and Maintenance Allowance (CARMA) Fund to support events, exhibits, and programs celebrating this 40th anniversary.

Within Ordinance 24-11 City Council additionally requested that a 40th Anniversary Sister City Task Force be formed. Resolution 24-0xx, before you, establishes the 40th Anniversary Sister City Task Force and establishes the scope of work and parameters under which the Task Force will operate.

In addition to a city staff liaison, who will be assigned by the City Manager, the Task Force will consist of five private citizen members.

The duration of the Task Force will exist until it completes its mission as defined in Resolution 24-029, but it shall not extend beyond December 31, 2025 at the latest.

A dedicated Sister City Working Group, established in August 2023, has worked diligently to plan events, exhibits, and programs for the celebration. The Task Force would continue with carrying out those plans.

Recommendation: Adopt a Resolution 24-029