

Monday, October 15, 2018

Eileen Dondero Foley City Council Chambers



**Mayor's Blue Ribbon
Committee on
Sister Cities and Citizen
Diplomacy
Final Report to the
Portsmouth City Council**



Agenda

- A. Re-introduce Committee and Objectives
- B. Research results
 - 1. Robust Sister City Programs
 - 2. Survey Monkey
 - 3. Community Forum
- C. Committee Final Recommendations to the City of Portsmouth

Mayor's Committee

1. Karina Quintans, Resident, Committee Chair
2. Nancy Carmer, Portsmouth Economic Development Program Manager
3. Mike Nelson, Portsmouth Poet Laureate
4. Valerie Rochon, President, Chamber Collaborative of Greater Portsmouth
5. Stephanie Seacord, Leading Edge Marketing
6. Steve Zadavec, Superintendent of Schools

Committee Objectives

Objective 1. Evaluate the level of activity, benefit and local interest in continuing the Sister City or other citizen diplomacy relationships

Objective 2. Research successful Sister City/Friendship City relationships to recommend a framework for long term administration, promotion and success of the Portsmouth Sister City Program

Objective 3. Explore ways to engage the community in the program (business, educational, cultural and humanitarian groups)

B.1
Research Results
Robust Sister
Cities Program



Research: Robust Sister City Programs

- Grand Rapids, MI
- Newport, RI
- Anderson, SC
- Portland, ME
- Ft Lauderdale, FL
- Essex, CT

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Comparable Sister Cities Research

How many? Up to 18

How old? As much as 56 years. But dormancy is common (often due to leadership changes)

Organizational structure: Nonprofit; Mayor's office; all volunteer, small budgets (\$3-\$45K as mentioned)

Committee structure: Organized by Sister City; membership fees (\$20-25), officers with term limits

Funding: fundraisers, raffles, small city funds, grants, membership fees

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Comparable Sister Cities Research (continued)

How is relationship sustained? Business/student exchanges, cultural celebrations

Marketing: Websites, newsletters, email list, notices to local groups (eg Rotary, Kiwanis, churches, schools)

Program activities: Student, artist or business exchanges

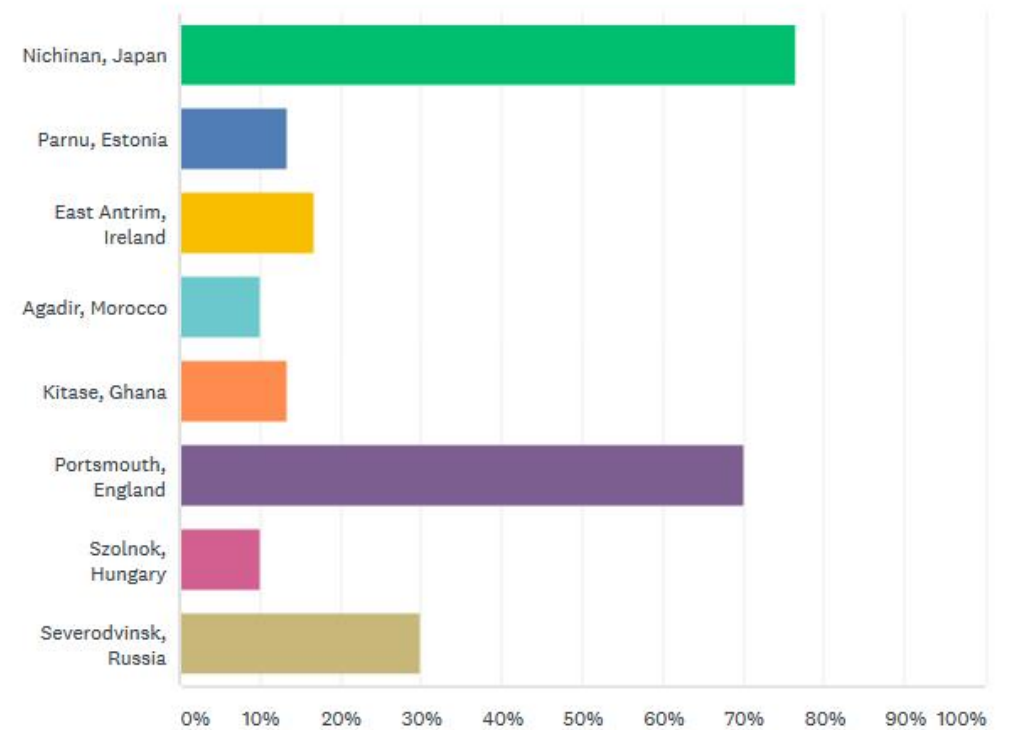
Partnerships: Educational institutions, hotels, Chambers of Commerce, cultural groups, city government

Biggest struggle: Funding, volunteers, continuity/sustainability, getting the word out, negative perception (“junkets”)

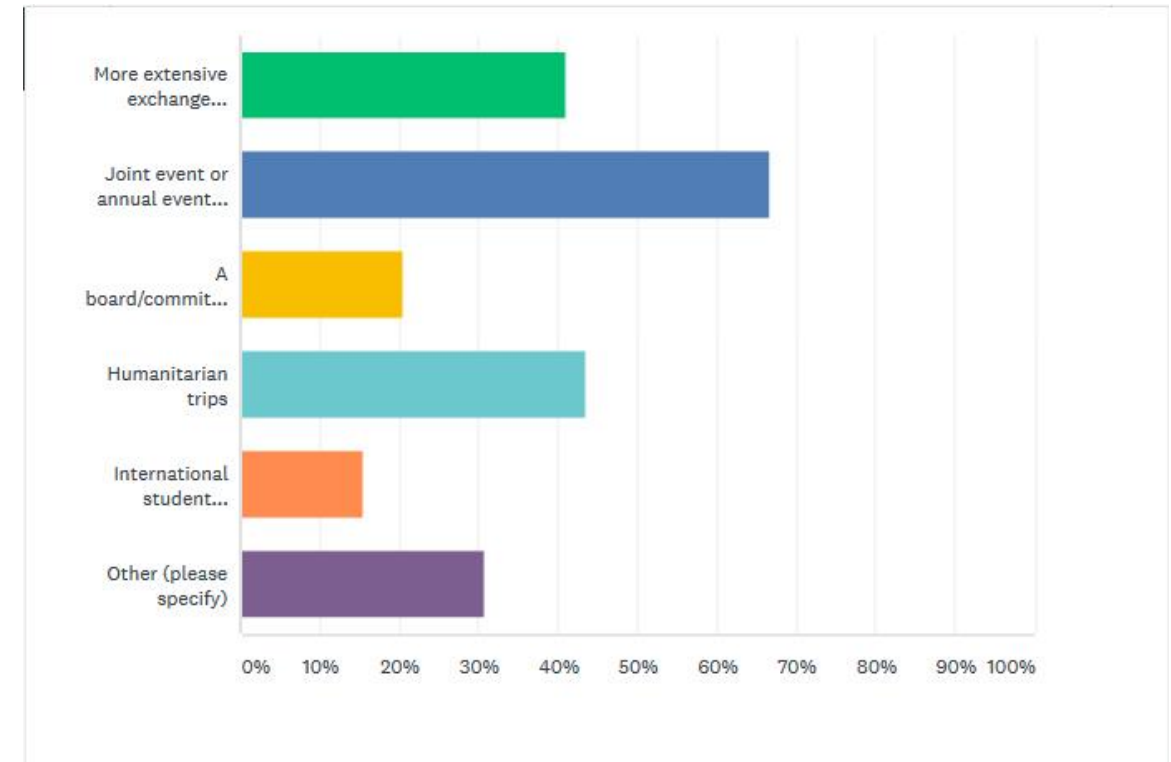
B.2 Research Results Survey Monkey, 45 respondents



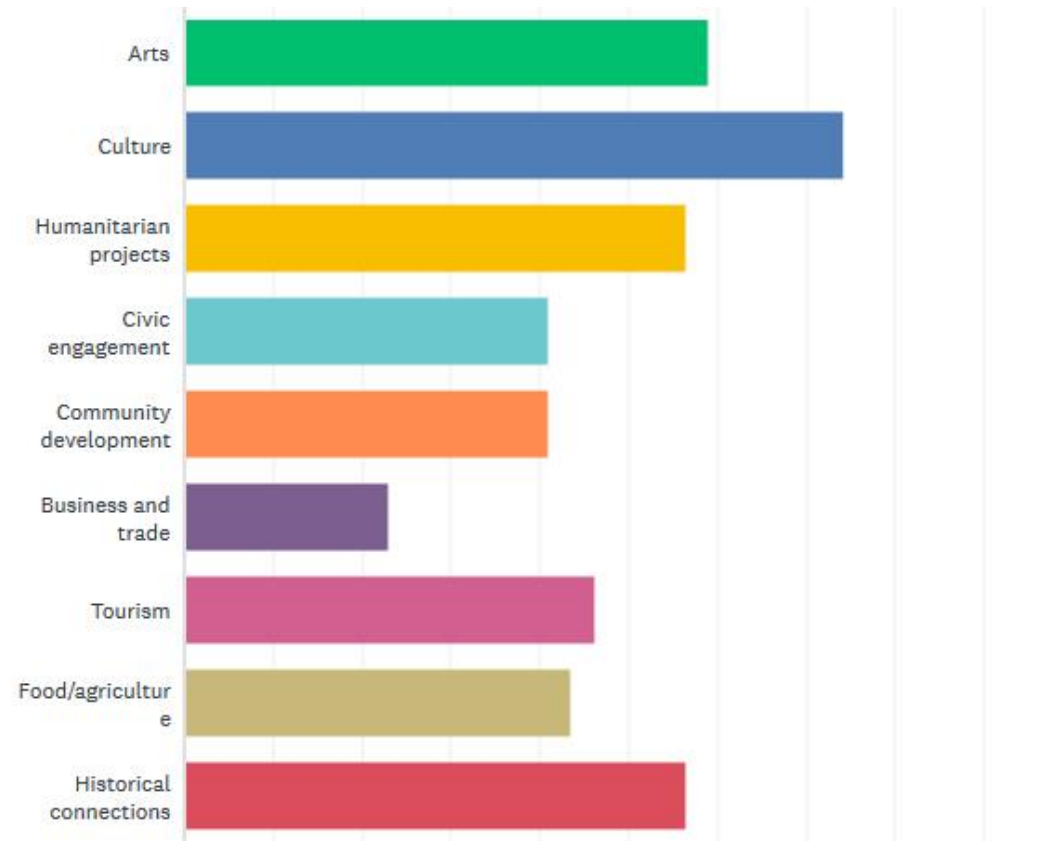
Which cities were you familiar with?



The focus of Portsmouth's Sister City program has been educational through high school exchange programs.
How can we expand on this?



What types of Sister City program activities would interest you?



Other countries Portsmouth
should consider:

Netherlands

Canada

Australia

Vietnam

Zimbabwe

Kenya

Portugal

Greece

Italy

Pakistan

South Africa

Spain

Chile

France

“One on each continent”



B.3 Community
Forum
April 2018



Summary of Public Input

- Events get people interested
- Need public education about our program history
- City exchanges have been based on historical, industry and demographics—often the reason why sister cities have stayed active
- Portsmouth needs a clearinghouse for all international activities Instead of just Portsmouth, make it Greater Portsmouth program
- Look into NHCF for support
- Consider international service learning
- Explore opportunities with the international business community who have a local presence in the region (Lonza, etc.)

C.
Committee Final
Recommendations
to the City of
Portsmouth





Objective 1.

Make recommendations to the City Council to “potentially terminate” current relationships with little or no recent activity, resident interest or cultural/economic opportunities

Committee Recommendation:

Leave dormant relationships in place—do not terminate



Objective 2.

Make recommendations to the City Council for a program and strategies to ensure success of existing and future Sister City relationships

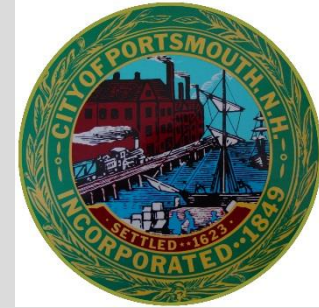
Recommendation 1:

Create a formal application process for establishing or reigniting existing Sister City or Friendship City connections and for proposing special citizen diplomacy projects

Proposed process

1. Individual citizen(s) or organizations submit an application to Sister City/Citizen Diplomacy Committee
2. Committee reviews and recommends to Mayor
3. If accepted, Mayor and applicant sign letter of agreement

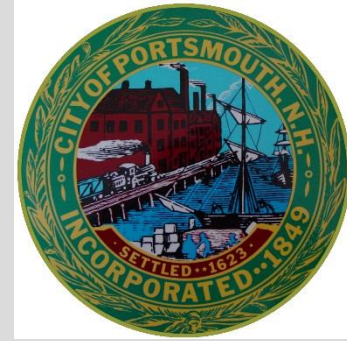
Objective 2. Cont'd



Recommendation 2:

Establish a clearinghouse for existing/active citizen diplomacy programs and projects to enhance awareness, generate interest, and encourage participation.

Objective 2. Cont'd



Recommendation 3:

Regularly update the Committee's City of Portsmouth website page and Facebook group to raise awareness and encourage participation in citizen diplomacy events (maybe hold an annual event).

Objective 3.

Recommend a framework for long term administration, promotion and success of the Portsmouth Sister City Program through a Committee structure: chair, co-chairs, possible sub-committees for each Sister City, staff support requirements, etc.

Recommendation:

Establish a formal ongoing city committee “Portsmouth Sister City/Citizen Diplomacy Committee.” Members serve for 2 or 3-year terms.

Objective 4.

Explore ways to engage the community in the program (business, educational, cultural and humanitarian groups) and make recommendations to the City Council.

Recommendations:

- Explore interest in creating Sister/Friendship City relationships with the home cities of international businesses with a Portsmouth/Greater Portsmouth/Seacoast office
- Encourage individual diplomacy/cross cultural exchanges through community outreach to local groups

Thank you

