

Sister Cities Commission

The Sister Cities was founded in 1992, to promote cultural exchange between cities of different nations to foster strengthened economics, world peace, and a greater understanding of the world issues. The City of Red Wing has two official sister cities – Ikata, Japan and Quzhou, China. The commission also has had an informal relationship with Drammen, Norway.

Interest in a sister city started in the late 1980s. The idea did not take off until 1992. In March 1992 there was a reuniting of World War II Doolittle Raider Commanders who crash landed in China after a raid on Japan, and the Chinese farmers who had rescued them from Japanese soldiers. This event was brought to Red Wing by Wacouta artist and explorer, Bryan Moon. At a luncheon address during this event, Mayor Romeo Cyr suggested the possibility of a friendship connection with a city in the area of China that the rescue had occurred.

At the August 10, 1992 city council meeting Mayor Romeo Cyr requested that the City Join Sister Cities International. At that point two delegates had contacted him from China and Norway to establish a relationship. The Council approved joining Sister Cities International and forming a Sister Cities Commission. Sister Cities International was formed in 1956 by President Dwight D. Eisenhower. The first reading of the ordinance creating the Sister Cities Commission was at the October 13, 1992 City Council meeting.

Ordinance No. 137 was approved at the October 26, 1992 City Council Meeting. In December, fifteen community members were chosen by Mayor Romeo Cyr to be the first Commissioners of the Sister Cities Commission. The current Commission is also made up of fifteen members. The first meeting of the Commission was held in 1993. Red Wings two sister Cities Ikata, Japan and Quzhou, China. The Partnership with Quzhou was formed in 1993 and the partnership with Ikata was formed in 1995.

Mayor Nakamota from Ikata, Japan had been to Red Wing in order to assess Red Wing as a city in which his community wanted to establish an international connection. The reason that Mayor Nakamota was interested in Red Wing was that Ikata had a nuclear power plant that already had an exchange program in place with Prairie Island Nuclear Power Plant in Red Wing. Mayor Nakamota liked Red Wing so along with NSP approached the Sister City Commission and asked to be considered as a Sister City. Official agreements between the two cities were signed in Red Wing on August 8, 1995.