



## MAYOR LEE BRAND

Greetings!

On behalf of the people of Fresno, I want to welcome you to the Sister Cities International of Fresno web site. Fresno Sister Cities is a Mayor-to-Mayor City partnership, with citizen diplomats volunteering on each committee. This official organization helps support the development of partnerships between Fresno and our Sister Cities across the globe – Châteauroux, France; Etchmiadzin, Armenia; Kochi, Japan; Münster, Germany; Verona, Italy; and Taishan, China.

By way of introduction, Fresno is a city of more than half a million people, and is the fifth-largest city in California. Geographically, Fresno is located in the center of the state, about three hours south of San Francisco and three hours north of Los Angeles. The view to the east is the snow-capped Sierra Nevada mountain range, and two hours to the west lays the Pacific Ocean. In between is some of the richest farmland on earth. Yes, agriculture is our economic backbone, though we are currently diversifying our economy to meet the global demands of the 21st Century. We also have an incredible diversity of cultures and ethnicities that is a reflection of California's rich heritage – Mexican, Hmong, Chinese, African American, Filipino, Vietnamese, Laotian, Indian and Native American, among others.

Feel free to look around the Fresno Sister Cities website. Here, you can learn a bit about Fresno, about the Sister Cities program and the good work that it is doing to advance cultural understanding and exchanges, and about our Sister Cities across the globe. I am looking forward to lasting relationships with each of our Sister Cities and hope to visit each one someday. I'm also hopeful that I will host a delegation from each of our Sister Cities at some point during my time in office. May we all move into the future as vibrant and prosperous cities!

Sincerely,

Lee Brand  
Fresno Mayor