

[Sidebar]

Roots of the Sister City Movement

The following brief history illustrates the significance of this event.

1931 The mayors of Toledo, Spain and Toledo, Ohio agreed on a mutual exchange of cultural and educational activities. A mosaic from Toledo, Spain was given to the City of Toledo (now on the east side).

1956 Sister City movement began with President Dwight D. Eisenhower's people-to-people program, with goals of citizen diplomacy and personal relationships to lessen the chance of future world conflicts.

1967 Originally a part of National League of Cities, Sister City International became a separate, non-profit corporation due to tremendous growth and popularity of the U.S. program.

Late 1980s Dissolution of the Soviet bloc. Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur spearheaded Eastern European sister city relationships.

1991 Official pairing of Toledo, Ohio with Poznan, Poland in recognition of Toledo's strong Polish immigrant population. At the official signing ceremony in Poznan, Marcy said, in essence, that the citizens of the United States, a country of immigrants, now have the unique opportunity to offer back to the countries from which they came, an understanding of how a democracy works with its faults and failings, but nevertheless to share what we had learned so that these countries held in the grip of the Soviet bloc for 40 years might reorganize how they lived and worked.

1992 Toledo Sister Cities International (TSCI) was organized on the initiative of Congresswoman Kaptur. Through grants, TSCI has developed strong ties to Former Soviet Bloc nations, especially in the training and exchange of local government officials. Toledo hosts business delegations and sponsors cultural exchanges in visual arts, library sciences and sports.