



City of Arts & Innovation

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City of Riverside Approves Agreement to Explore Korean-American Cultural Heritage Center Honoring Dosan Ahn Chang Ho

Document creates framework for exploring potential center at California Citrus State Historic Park

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The Riverside City Council on Tuesday (4/11) unanimously approved a memorandum of understanding between the City of Riverside and the Dosan Ahn Chang Ho Memorial Foundation of the Americas to explore the development of a Korean-American Cultural Center in Riverside.

The center would celebrate the accomplishments of Dosan Ahn Chang Ho, who founded Pachappa Camp, home to 300 Koreans, while working in the Riverside citrus industry in 1905 before going on to be a leader in the Korean independence movement to liberate the country from Japanese occupation. Regarded as the father of democracy in Korea, Dosan Ahn Chang Ho is much revered in his homeland.

As a patriot and civil rights leader, he was the Minister of Labor of the Korean Provisional Government in exile, advocating for democracy and freedom. A statue memorializing him was erected on the Main Street Mall at University Avenue in 2001.

“Dosan Ahn Chang Ho exemplifies the values that we treasure as Americans, and this center would help current and future generations understand how his time in our city changed the course of history,” said Mayor Patricia Lock Dawson, whose office has been working on the effort for several months. “As the daughter of a Korean War veteran who fought for democracy, I am especially proud that our city is affiliating with a center that will celebrate all people who hold dear these ideals.”

The Dosan Ahn Chang Ho Memorial Foundation of the Americas is actively advocating for the proposal and fundraising in both California and South Korea. The Foundation would like to lease land inside the Citrus State Historic Park to build the park. Lock Dawson credited Councilwoman Gaby Plascencia, who represents the ward that contains the citrus park, for her leadership and support.

“The Citrus Park honors the contributions of many generations who helped create and grow this vital industry that played such a major role in Riverside’s growth and prosperity,” Plascencia said. “I look forward to seeing the results of what I am sure will be a fruitful dialogue.”

Lock Dawson will lead a trade delegation later this month to Gangnam, South Korea, a Sister City of Riverside, which features a prominent [Dosan Park](#) and statue. The delegation will meet with leaders in clean and green technology and other potential trade and business partners. The memorandum of understanding will be part of discussions during that mission.

“Riverside embraces diversity and has great reverence for its past, especially our citrus heritage,” Mayor Pro Tem Clarissa Cervantes said. “Dosan’s time in the Eastside is an inspiration and testament to the legacy of a civil rights leader who rose from our neighborhood. It is very encouraging to see this effort to embrace our history and uplift his legacy.”