

**Superior, Colorado and Khandbari, Nepal**  
***Sister City Project***  
***May 26, 2020***

**Mission Statement:**

The sister city relationship between Khandbari, Nepal and Superior, Colorado is being proposed to share resources, exchange cultural ideas and express the beauty, culture and assets of both locations. Monetary and Experiential. Promoting peace and understanding of citizens of both locations.

**Introduction:**

Khandbari Municipality is located in Sankhuwasabha district under province no.1 of north-eastern Nepal. The city was first recognized as 'Khandbari Municipality' in 1997. Since its establishment as a municipality, Khandbari has been one of the fastest growing and developing cities in the eastern hilly region of Nepal. Khandbari is not only the administrative center of the district but also the hub of that region's economy which is aggressively emerging from its rural to urban setting. Khandbari covers an area of 122.78 sq.km with 35,000 people living here heavily dependent on agriculture and trade. It is an amazing piece of land with green hills, slopes and valleys where diverse ethnic groups reside in harmony having their unique culture and traditions. Within the city, there are two colleges, seventeen high schools, several hospitals, a well-run airport, and the city has road access to the rest of the country. Khandbari itself is a tourist destination and a gateway to the world's 5<sup>th</sup> highest peak Mt. Makalu and Makalu Barun National Park as well. There are several other places of interest with religious and historic importance within the city limit.

***A letter from a Khandbari resident explaining the background to create and establish a Sister City relationship with Superior:***

*Dear Residents of Superior,*

*About nineteen years ago, a native of Khandbari and Superior resident Narayan Shrestha organized a mayoral visit from the city of Khandbari to the city of Superior. Friendship was inaugurated and promise was made! But it could not continue because of unstable political situation that Nepal had to go through for years. Even in those difficult years, Mr. Shrestha was continuously connecting the two cities visiting himself back and forth, organizing hundreds of health camps and educational visits from Superior and across America to Khandbari. I, myself, was one of the educators from Khandbari to get an opportunity to visit Superior Elementary School in 2007, in an exchange program organized by Mr. Shrestha. Thanks to Mr. Shrestha for that one-month educational visit which not only helped me to increase my confidence as school Principal; but I also realized the importance of exchange program while going back to school after the visit. One person benefits, benefits the community! Ever since Mr. Shrestha has been telling the story of Khandbari community to Superior and vice versa; it has been realized that there be an official relation established between the two cities.*

*With the above introduction and background story, this letter confirms the willingness of people of Khandbari to establish a friendly exchange relationship with the people of Superior to promote mutual understanding, cooperation and friendship. On the basis of mutual benefit, the two sides will carry out all kinds of exchanges and cooperation in the fields of agriculture, tourism, economy, science and technology, culture, education, sports and public health to promote common prosperity and development.*

*Thank you!*

*Padma Raj Tamang*

*Former Principal*

*Surya Boarding School, Khandbari*

*(A private school founded by Narayan Shrestha in Khandbari)*

# **Questions & Answers**

## **Superior, Colorado and Khandbari, Nepal**

### **Sister City Project**

#### **Describe sister city relationships**

*The **sister city** relationship unites tens of thousands of citizen diplomats and volunteers who work tirelessly to promote peace and understanding through programs and projects focusing on arts and culture, youth and education, economic and sustainable development, and humanitarian assistance.*

#### **Why do cities and towns form sister city relationships?**

*Cities and towns form relationships in order to form social and commercial bonds. To enhance the cultural experience of their respective citizens.*

#### **Where do the requests to form sister city relationships typically come from, residents, elected officials or others?**

*Requests typically come from the citizens in order to promote a more culturally diverse and rich community.*

#### **Describe the inspiration for the Superior – Khandbari sister city relationship.**

*The Superior - Khandbari sister city relationship is coming from a deep connection between current citizens in the Superior community. Narayan Shrestha who has been a Superior resident and influential community member for many years has shared the cultural connection between Khandbari and Superior by hosting young Nepali's from Khandbari seeking higher education and providing opportunity for young Americans to experience the beauty and rich culture of Nepal by hosting them in his home village of Khandbari. Members of the Superior-Khandbari Sister City board Thomas Appel and Ron Parise have both volunteered their time helping and teaching at The Surya School in Khandbari and have felt strongly enough about the relationship to serve on the board to enhance the relationship between Khandbari and Superior. All members of the board have lived in and shared homes with Khandbari citizens which has resulted in a shared experience to help support and grow the relationship between the two cities.*

#### **How many former residents of Khandbari live in Superior now?**

*There are about 15 former residents of Khandbari currently living in Superior and about 150 living in other parts of Boulder County. The original citizens include Narayan Shrestha, his wife Sreejana and kids Anu and Regina. The Shrestha's moved to Superior in 1993 and have lived there ever since. After Narayan and his family moved to*

Superior, he was joined by his brother Dharma's family of 10 and the Pokharel family of 4.

### **How do these residents feel about a sister city relationship between Superior and Khandbari?**

*Many residents of both Khandbari and Superior are aware of the relationship and very excited about it. Many residents of Khandbari including Rameshwari Shakya, and Bhunwan Shretha have spent many years living in Superior and contributing to the communities of Boulder County. While they are not residents of Superior, they are frequent visitors who have spent time teaching in local Colorado schools. They are planning to continue their frequent exchanges, where they are focused on Montessori education programs. Members of the Superior and Khandbari sister city board Matt Bubernick and Zack Hykan spent 5 months respectively teaching and volunteering at The Surya School in Khandbari, which is an established sister school with Superior Elementary School. Narayan has worked tirelessly for many years to create an exchange program between teachers, students and parents in Superior and Khandbari.*

### **What are some examples of things that sister cities do for each other?**

#### **What are some examples of projects completed through other sister city Relationships?**

*A prime example of projects that can be accomplished for sister cities is the connection of children through pen pal programs at the city's respective schools. This promotes cultural unity from a young age and can help assist with curiosity and cross-cultural understanding. We are promoting two countries relationship in the area of tourism, health and education. Nepal and Colorado have a similar mountaineering tourism and records show that many Coloradans have visited Nepal. Having this relationship will enhance our peacemaking efforts by creating such friendship. Helping Hands Health education is already making an enormous impact to the people Khandbari by opening health clinics and education programs that will only improve with a sister city relationship. Khandbari is able to offer host families for visiting Coloradans when they chose to visit Nepal. This allows for Americans to appreciate and learn from other cultures, which is very important for growth and universal understanding. The money raised will go to students who are looking to pursue their journeys in higher education. Board member Matt Burbenik has raised thousands of dollars to sponsor a student who is pursuing a degree in computer science. The money will also be spent on bringing doctors and nurses to Nepal where health care is limited.*

**How can a sister city relationship make philanthropic missions better and more meaningful than a charity organization just going to a city where no sister city relationship exists?**

*Having a sister city relationship in place makes the goal of raising much more tangible. When members of the community have met and formed a relationship people are much more inclined to support each other because they are aligned with the same goal. To raise money, the board will host membership drives to raise money through food, music and gathering.*

**What benefits are the towns going to get from forming the sister city relationship?**

*The benefits of forming a sister city relationship are developing a relationship with a community on the other side of the world. This benefits the children by exposing them to new and different cultures as well as adults by having a place where they can be supported if they chose to travel to their sister city.*

**What are some best practices that other cities follow when evaluating whether or not to form a sister city relationships?**

*When evaluating whether or not to form sister city relationships, one should always consider if there are residents living and working in each respective community. A board of directors is also necessary to have formed to coordinate fundraisers, outreach and events.*

**What are some success stories that have developed because of sister city Relationships?**

*Boulder is an example of the successes that can be found with a sister city as they have 10 current sister cities. Two examples of these successes include their almost 40-year relationship with Jalapa, Nicaragua and a more recent pairing with Yateras, Cuba. Boulder has helped Jalapa and its community with successful environmental and social projects that have vastly increased quality of life for residents. Yateras has also been a success as it has seen the creation of five committees: Arts and Education, Environment and Sustainability, Sports, Music and Dance, and Health. The projects have included hurricane aid, art exchanges, library renovations, putting on a 7K foot race, refurbishing a women's center, and donating health supplies.*

**What are some problems or controversies that have happened with other sister city relationships and how can these will be avoided?**

*Some problems that have occurred with sister city relationships are those with cities that reside in socialist or communist countries. These issues can be avoided by educating the public that all governments operate differently and because economies and*

*populations need different things. We can educate people that just because a government is labeled socialist, does not mean it is fascist or repressive.*

**Are there examples of sister city relationships that have been discontinued? Why did that happen and how can we avoid going there?**

*There are a handful of examples of sister city relationships being severed including San Francisco and Osaka over a statute paying tribute to comfort women in WWII and Lansing, Michigan and St. Petersburg over the latter's discrimination against LGBTQ activists. One of the most common causes of these separations seems to be when there are irreconcilable differences or values between the two cities, often within regards to one specific issue or topic.*

**What are the costs to each town to form the sister city and keep it running on an ongoing basis?**

*There is no additional cost to the town to establish or for the upkeep of a sister city relationship. All costs to fund projects are done by private fundraisers. These can be held at schools or local community gatherings to raise awareness of the educational opportunity of having a sister city relationship. The time needed to raise money is all done on a volunteer basis.*

**How much time and staff would Superior need to commit both in set up and ongoing?**

*Superior would need no full-time staff for this project. Narayan and his team are able to handle all fundraising efforts that include organizing the fundraiser and gathering of people.*

**What do elected officials do with sister city relationships on an ongoing basis?**

*The elected officials are able to act as the representative to the respective communities. Their responsibility is to maintain communication and travel when they are able to explore and learn about their shared culture.*

**How do travel expenses work for elected officials when visiting sister cities? Do the cities pay or do the individuals pay personally?**

*All travel expenses will be paid by the individuals, whether they be committee board members, delegates, or city officials. When formal travel happens between cities, the members of the committee in conjunction with each cities' representatives and officials may choose to allocate funds to host visiting representatives or delegates to a ceremonial meeting, formal dinner, and if possible, a tour of the city and its municipalities such as City Hall.*

## **Superior - Khandbari Sister City Committee:**

### ***Officers/Founding Board of Directors:***

- **Founder & President:** Narayan Shrestha, University of Texas, Dallas Graduate, Boulder County business owner and Town of Superior resident since 1993
- **Vice Presidents:** Matt Bubernack, Monarch High School Class of 2010, Zach Hykan, Monarch High School Class of 2010
- **Secretary:** Thomas Appel, University of Colorado Graduate 2012
- **Treasurer:** Ron Parise, Local Boulder County business owner

### **What does the committee do?**

*The committee organizes all fundraising and helps coordinate visits from the respective cities. The committee also facilitates any events that relate to the two cities, create projects and handle all necessary communication between the two cities. For example, if the mayor Khandbari wants to talk to the mayor of Superior, the committee coordinates communication.*

### **How will the committee be organized?**

*Upon approval of the sister city relationship by the Superior Board of Trustees, the committee will be registered with the State of Colorado and Internal Revenue Service as a 501-C3 nonprofit organization.*

### **What specific goals and objectives does the committee have for the Superior-Khandbari relationship?**

*The committee is planning to initiate ongoing social and cross-cultural projects like pen pal programs between schools, host guests from each community and raise money for projects in Khandbari.*

### **How does the Town of Superior ensure that money raised by the committee goes to worthy causes and using the Town of Superior's name is not going to legitimize something that could potentially embarrass the town or involve the town in a legal matters?**

*All capital raised by the committee as well as all expenditures will be thoroughly documented and accounted for. In the good faith pursuit of transparency, the committee will produce annual reports on all funding and allocations as well as discuss future endeavors which we hope to carry out. These annual reports will be available to mayors and city officials of Superior and Khandbari through email and hopefully through a website portal in the near future. It is important to point out that Mr. Shrestha, through his non-profit organization,*

Helping Hands Health Education, <http://www.helpinghandsusa.org/> and his business, Old Tibet, Boulder, <https://www.boulderdowntown.com/go/old-tibet> he has committed his life to the betterment of the community he resides in, as well as the community he's from, by performing numerous charitable actions which have benefited individuals in both America and Nepal. The committee members have personally worked with, as well as been introduced to, the beneficiaries of this philanthropy and firmly believe that as the actions of this committee become apparent, that members and officials of both Superior and Khandbari will be resolutely impressed and pleased with the outcomes.

**The mayor of Khandbari is a member of the Nepal Communist Party; should this be of concern to Superior?**

*The communist party of Nepal is often misunderstood as an oppressive communist government. When in reality the Communist party of Nepal was founded in 1949 to resist an autocratic imperialist government that did not give any power to the working people of Nepal. This party has maintained relevance in Nepal because it is such a poor country where the working-class people often need government assistance and programs. The country of Nepal is a democratic system where new governments are voted in every 5 years. The current communist party does not define the function of the government only the name was elected not their government practices. There are many cities that share relationships with communist government in Russia and Cuba, compared to those governments the communist party of Nepal is mild and irrelevant.*

**What is the timing for the Superior and Khandbari sister city request?**

*It would be ideal to have the request finalized by mid-June, 2020. This would allow us the summer to host events, fundraisers and begin coordinating the pen pal program for the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year.*

**Khandbari Municipality website:**

<http://khandbarimun.gov.np/>

***These materials have been prepared and provided by Mr. Narayan Shrestha and the other Sister City Committee members.***