

Department:	Mayor and Council	Division:	
Policy area:	TBD		
Subject:	Sister and Friendship Cities Policy		
Issued to:	TBD		
Issued date:	TBD	Effective date:	TBD
Approved by:	Council	International Relations and Friendship Cities Committee	

1 PURPOSE

To establish a structured framework that guides the City of Burnaby in forming and maintaining relationships with local governments and communities globally. This Policy outlines the objectives, principles, and criteria for initiating and accepting sister or friendship city requests and aims to sustain and enhance these relationships for the mutual benefit of all parties involved.

2 POLICY STATEMENT

The City will consider establishing sister or friendship city relationships that fosters sustainable economic development, trade, art and culture, education, environment, science and technology, and mutual exchange between cities.

3 SCOPE

This Policy covers all members of Council, City staff, any person or organisation acting on behalf of the City, including any person or organisation participating in delegations led by the City.

4 OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of the Sister and Friendship Program is to:

- Develop economic, trade, artistic, cultural, educational, environmental, scientific and technological, and other beneficial exchanges;

- Perpetuate an understanding between people at all levels in different countries and cultures;
- Bring together like-minded interest groups from each city;
- Provide a forum for the exchange of sister or friendship city experiences;
- Promote knowledge, learning and understanding and extend the level of contacts through all sectors of the community,
- Engage the Burnaby community and its sister or friendship cities abroad in projects and exchanges that promote economic development, trade and economic development, artistic and cultural awareness, joint learning opportunities, and joint environmental, scientific and technological initiatives ..

5 BACKGROUND

The City of Burnaby operates a two-tier level of affiliation with international communities looking to become sister or friendship cities.

A sister city relationship is a long-term, formal agreement that may include cultural, educational, economic and other mutually beneficial opportunities. These relationships are approved by Council and are formalized through a Sister City Agreement, with measurable goals and objectives. Sister cities relationships allow both parties to maximize mutual learning and the sharing of best municipal practices. Sister city partnerships have the potential to carry out the widest possible diversity of activities, including every type of municipal, business, professional, educational and cultural exchange.

The friendship city relationship is a partnership that is more limited in scope and term. Friendship cities are a way for the City to initiate relationships with international local governments on a less formal basis. The primary goal of the relationship is to open lines of communication between the Burnaby community and its organizations (i.e., Burnaby Board of Trade, Burnaby Tourism, School District 41, SFU, BCIT etc.) and the friendship city. Friendship cities are governed by a Friendship Agreement approved by Council, with measurable goals and objectives. Occasionally, the friendship city status is used as a first stage in the relationship. If the relationship evolves and both partners are sure they want a long-term relationship, the partner may become a sister city.

6 POLICY

6.01 PROPOSAL PROCESS

6.01.1 The International Relations and Friendship City Committee shall consider that the number of sister and friendship city relationships the City enters into does not exceed available resources (e.g. Administrative support). The City will establish a maximum of five (5) Sister City relationships and five (5) Friendship City relationships.

6.01.2 Prior to initiating or responding to a request to/from a prospective sister or friendship city relationship, the prospective local government must submit a detailed, written proposal as outlines in section 6.02.3 to Council. As a minimum, written proposals shall include:

- the name of the local government and country;
- population and demographic profile;
- brief description of the short and long-term benefits to both cities including identifiable similarities and mutual interest;
- description of the local government's expectations of the relationship with the City.

6.01.3 Upon receipt of a proposal, the International Relations and Friendship City Committee shall review the proposal and provide a recommendation to Council for approval to proceed or recommendation to decline a request from a prospective local government.

6.02 CRITERIA / RATIONALE FOR PARTNERSHIP

The consideration of sister or friendship city status shall be based on qualitative assessments against a range of criteria.

6.02.1 Core Principles

Proposals for sister and friendship city relationships shall be assessed based on the following core principles which shall form part of the selection criteria:

- Similarity: There are identifiable similarities or mutual interests between the City and the prospective sister or friendship city. Strong consideration should be given to cities comparable to the City in areas such as population and demographics, geographic location, arts and culture, business, education, science and technology, environmental aspects and relevance to local community.
- Reciprocity: There are reciprocal benefits and opportunities for both parties to develop relationships through Similarity.
- Community Driven: There is active leadership, involvement and support by the community, through the local government, an existing organization, or business, to both establish and maintain the relationship.
- Strategic Benefit: The short-term and long-term benefits of the relationship should outweigh the public cost of entering into or maintaining the relationship.
- Exclusivity & Proximity: The proposed partner should not have a sister or friendship city relationship with any other local government in the same province or within close proximity (i.e. region) of another established sister city location.

Stability:	The country in which the sister or friendship city is situated has a stable political climate in which the Government of Canada has a diplomatic relationship and no diplomatic conflicts.
Historical Linkage:	There should be an historical connection or linkage with the community or region.

6.02.2 Other Considerations

Prospective sister or friendship city relationships shall only be entered into if it is likely to yield one or more of the following mutually beneficial outcomes:

Economic

- a) Similar economic conditions;
- b) Business partnerships and opportunities;
- (b) Trade and investment climate and/or export opportunities;
- (d) Industry attraction and expansion;
- (d) Introduction of new technologies or processes,
- (e) Tourism potential and promotion opportunities.

Education

- (a) Enhanced education and training opportunities;
- (b) Student/teacher exchange opportunities;
- (b) Local Government knowledge sharing and information exchange.

Social/Cultural

- (a) Cultural and arts enhancement and awareness;
- (b) Attraction of sporting competitions and events,
- (c) Improved leadership and governance.

Environment

- (a) Climate action;
- (b) Green energy initiatives,
- (c) Impacts and responses to climate-related events,

Other

- (a) Science and technology,
- (b) Urban development.

In considering of the above factors, it may be necessary to compare not only the similarities but the potential for these similarities to provide mutual benefit within the existing scope and limitations of the Program.

6.02.3 Sister and Friendship City Application

- i. Where appropriate, all incoming proposals received from international communities seeking the City's consideration for forming a sister or friendship partnership shall be asked to submit a Sister / Friendship City Application Form (**ATTACHMENT 1**).
- ii. The International Relations and Friendship Committee shall use the Sister / Friendship City Application Form to form the basis of evaluation against established criteria.

6.04 ESTABLISHMENT PROCESS

6.04.1 The International Relations and Friendship City Committee shall be responsible for making recommendations to Mayor and Council on entering into a sister or friendship city relationship.

6.04.2 Sister or friendship city relationships may only be established by resolution of Council.

6.04.3 Governing Documents

6.04.4 Successful sister city or friendship city applicants are required to enter into a formal agreement through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to formalise the relationship. The MOU shall be a protocol agreement, not a political agreement. The MOU shall outline measurable goals and objectives.

All Friendship City MOU shall be approved by Council of the two cities and shall be valid for five (5) years.

All Sister City MOUs must be approved by both city councils, reviewed every five years (5), and remain valid for thirty (30) years with a possibility of an extension at Council's discretion.

6.04.5 By entering into a sister city or friendship city relationship, the City does not recognize or endorse political actions of the respective foreign local government.

6.05 TERMINATION PROCESS

Sister and friendship relationships may be dissolved upon mutual agreement of the two cities, or if the City determines upon review that the relationship has ceased to meet the assessment criteria. Dissolution of a sister or friendship city relationship will be a decision for Mayor and Council, following review and recommendation of the International Relations and Friendship Committee.

6.06 BUDGET AND EXPENSES

The budget and costs associated with the operation of a sister or friendship city shall be determined by the International Relations and Friendship Committee and approved by Mayor and Council through the annual financial planning process.

7 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 7.01 The International Relations and Friendship Committee is responsible for:
- Making policy recommendations to Council.
- 7.02 The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) or delegate is responsible for:
- Ensuring City staff adhere to this Policy.
- 7.03 The Corporate Services Department (Legislative Services Division) is responsible for:
- Providing administrative support to the Sister and Friendship City Program.

8 DEFINITIONS

The terms used in this policy are defined as follows:

- 8.1 Sister City A formal, long-term relationship based on diverse linkages between the two cities, including but not limited to: economic development (including tourism and business), trade, arts and cultural, education, environment, science and technology. The relationship requires a high degree of commitment from both sides.
- 8.2 Sister City Agreement A formal, long-term agreement that involves the commitment of municipal resources (i.e. staffing and financial) to achieve specific goals and objectives such as involvement and participation in projects and/or exchanges that promote cultural awareness, joint educational opportunities, environment, etc., approved by Council
- 8.3 Friendship City A less formal relationship with a lower profile. Community support and involvement are not as high as a sister city. The purpose may only be for a particular sporting event held on an annual basis, cultural diversity, a specific project, specific objectives and opportunities, etc., A friendship city may evolve into a Sister City if respective criteria are met.
- 8.4 Friendship Agreement A term agreement that outlines measurable goals and objectives promotes friendship, learnings and cooperation between the two countries communities.

9 **ATTACHMENT 1:** *Sister and Friendship City Application Form*

Version:	Date:	Description:	Updated by:
1		Sister and Friendship Cities Policy	

SISTER / FRIENDSHIP CITY APPLICATION FORM

DETAILS OF YOUR CITY:		
City Name:		
State/Province:		
Country:		
TYPE OF PARTNERSHIP REQUESTED:		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sister City	A formal, long-term relationship based on diverse linkages between the two cities, including but not limited to : economic development (including tourism and business), trade, arts and cultural, education, environment, science and technology.. Sister cities often have similar demographics and other characteristics. The relationship requires a high degree of commitment from both sides.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Friendship City	A less formal relationship with a lower profile. Likely to be a long-term relationship, but the level of required community support and involvement is not as high as a sister city. For example, the purpose may be for only a particular sporting event held on an annual basis, student/teacher exchange, cultural diversity, a specific project, specific objectives and opportunities between the cities, or mentoring.
ABOUT YOUR CITY:		
Population and demographics		
Geographic Location		
Geographic Size		
Ease of Access		
Key Industries		

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EVALUATION / RATIONALE FOR PARTNERSHIP:

Similarity: Describe any similarities and/or mutual interests between the City of Burnaby and your City. (i.e. population and demographics, geographic location, arts and culture, business, education, science and technology, environmental aspects and relevance to local community, etc.,)

Reciprocity: Are there reciprocal benefits and opportunities for both parties to develop relationships (i.e. economic development, arts and culture, education, science and technology, environmental aspects, etc.)? Is the applicant in touch with the respective diaspora community? What would be the main focus area(s) of an Agreement?

Community Driven: Is there active leadership, involvement and support by your community, either through your organization, an external non-profit organization, or business that would establish and maintain the proposed partnership? If so describe:

Strategic Benefit: Describe the strategic alignment. Would the short-term and long-term benefits of the partnership outweigh the public cost of entering into or maintaining the relationship?

Exclusivity & Proximity: Does your organization have a sister or friendship relationship with any other local government in British Columbia, Canada or within close proximity of the City of Burnaby?

Stability: Does your country have a stable political climate in which the Government of Canada has a diplomatic relationship? Are there any diplomatic conflicts?

Historical Linkage: Is there any historical connection or linkage, such as diaspora, immigration, events, tourism etc, with the City of Burnaby and/or British Columbia?



EVALUATION / RATIONALE FOR PARTNERSHIP:	
How would a Partnership be mutually beneficial and what outcomes are desired in respect of the following evaluation factors?	
Economic (e.g. trade and investment, tourism, business)	
Education (e.g. training, student/teacher exchanges, local government sharing)	
Social/Cultural (e.g. cultural and arts enhancement and awareness, environment, sporting competition, events)	
Other (e.g. science and technology, urban development, environment)	

CONTACT DETAILS:	
Name:	
Title:	
Affiliation:	
Address:	
Email:	
Phone:	
Date:	

Please provide any other information relevant to your Sister / Friendship City Application via separate letter. Mail to:

City of Burnaby
4949 Canada Way
Burnaby, British Columbia
Canada, V5G 1M2

Attention: Legislative Services