

**COUNCIL POLICY**

SUBJECT: SISTER CITY PROGRAM  
POLICY NO.: 000-18  
EFFECTIVE DATE: September 12, 2000

**BACKGROUND:**

The Sister City Program was officially established in 1956 by President Eisenhower for the purpose of aiding in the development of mutual understanding between U.S. cities and international cities. One facet of the program was furthering economic and cultural cooperation and interchange between the participating entities.

Official Sister City relationships are consummated by formal agreement between the governing body of a city in the United States and a city in another country. This is a protocol agreement, not a political agreement. These relationships are recorded with the Town Affiliation Association (Sister Cities International), the national organization which maintains contact with the U.S. Department of State.

The City of San Diego established its first Sister City relationship with Yokohama, Japan, on October 29, 1957. Since that date, at the recommendation and with the concurrence of the International Affairs Board, The City of San Diego has established additional Sister City ties with the cities of:

- Leon, Republic of Mexico on July 29, 1969
- Cavite City, Republic of the Philippines on September 11, 1969
- Tema, Republic of Ghana on May 29, 1976
- Edinburgh, United Kingdom of Great Britain on June 8, 1977
- Alcala De Henares, Kingdom of Spain on July 29, 1982
- Chonju, Republic of Korea on December 16, 1982
- Taichung, Taiwan, Republic of China on October 10, 1983
- Yantai, People's Republic of China on July 15, 1985
- Perth, Commonwealth of Australia on September 29, 1986
- Vladivostok, Russia on September 10, 1991
- Tijuana, Republic of Mexico on July 9, 1993
- Campinas, Republic of Brazil on February 8, 1995
- Warsaw Province, Republic of Poland on June 7, 1996

On December 9, 1992, the San Diego International Sister Cities Corporation was incorporated to serve as an umbrella organization to guide the development of proposed sister city relationships and increase the visibility, effectiveness, efficiency and viability of San Diego's existing Sister Cities, thereby supporting their missions in the areas of cultural, educational and economic relationships.

**PURPOSE:**

The City Council wishes to establish a uniform policy as guidelines for the maintenance and expansion of San Diego's Sister City Program.

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The San Diego International Sister Cities Corporation will analyze and guide development of Sister City twinning and confer with the International Affairs Board, a commission of the City of San Diego, which is liaison to all international organizations for appropriate recommendations to the City Council concerning the establishment of additional Sister City relationships.

In considering the establishment of additional Sister City relationships the San Diego International Sister Cities Corporation and the International Affairs Board should recommend additional Sister City relationships only if the following requirements are satisfied:

1. There must be a logical area of mutual interest with the City in prospect, in the fields of culture, commerce, education or history.
2. There must exist in San Diego an identifiable, substantial citizen group or association which favors the proposed affiliation, and intends to pursue a meaningful program after the relationship is established. The group must be in a position to finance its own activities, as the City cannot give assurance of financial backing.
3. A similar identifiable civic or official group must exist in the city with which affiliation is proposed, with a clear indication of intent to carry out active mutual programs. The foreign city itself must evidence a desire to affiliate.
4. The proposed city must not have a sister city affiliation with another U.S. city.
5. After formal agreement consummation, a new Sister City organization shall maintain active participation with the San Diego International Sister Cities Corporation by appointing a representative who shall become a Trustee of the San Diego International Sister Cities Corporation.

**HISTORY:**

Adopted by Resolution R-213312 05/15/1975

Amended by Resolution R-293795 09/12/2000