



Request for City Council Committee Action from the Department of Intergovernmental Relations

Date: September 29, 2009

**To: Council Member Betsy Hodges
Chair, Intergovernmental Relations Committee**

**Subject: 1) Global Partnerships Report
2) Criteria for Minneapolis Sister City relationships**

**Recommendation: 1) Receive report on Minneapolis Global Partnerships
2) Approve the revised process and criteria for Minneapolis
Sister City relationships**

Previous Directives: July 17, 1998, Petition Number 263925, Sister Cities Criteria.

Department Information

Prepared by: Jenny Chayabutr
Approved by: Gene Ranieri *Gene Ranieri*
Presenters in Committee: Jenny Chayabutr, Bill Deef

Supporting Information

About Sister Cities

The sister cities program was started in 1956 by President Eisenhower as part of his citizen diplomacy initiative. There had been several informal sister or twin city relationships between towns in Europe but Eisenhower's backing started the American initiative. The program has taken off since then and Sister Cities International counts almost two thousand sister city partnerships between communities in the United States and the rest of the world.

Sister Cities International is the international membership association for the sister cities program and the official organization that links jurisdictions from the United States with communities worldwide. Originally a part of the National League of Cities, Sister Cities International became a separate, nonprofit corporation in 1967, due to the tremendous growth and popularity of the U.S. program.

Sister Cities International creates and strengthens these sister city partnerships in an effort to increase global cooperation, promote cultural understanding, and stimulate economic development. Sister Cities International leads the movement for local community development and volunteer action, by motivating and empowering private citizens, municipal officials, and business leaders to conduct long-term programs of mutual benefit.

Minneapolis Global Partnerships

In 2009 the Minneapolis Sister Cities program was assigned to Meet Minneapolis and named "Global Partnerships." As part of the Global Partnerships initiative Meet Minneapolis and the City's Intergovernmental Relations department work in partnership to manage Minneapolis' sister cities program. The direct work of supporting each sister city relationships is done by a volunteer sister city committee. Meet Minneapolis manages the sister city committees and the City's Intergovernmental Relationships department acts as the City Hall contact for all city related business (e.g. correspondence, scheduling meetings).

Minneapolis has sister city relationships with:

- Santiago, Chile (established in 1961)
- Kuopio, Finland (established in 1972)
- Ibaraki City, Japan (established in 1980)
- Novosibirsk, Russia (established in 1989)
- Tours, France (established in 1991)
- Harbin, China (established in 1992)
- Uppsala, Sweden (established in 2000)
- Eldoret, Kenya (established in 2000)
- Cuernavaca, Mexico (established in 2008)
- Najaf, Iraq (Sister City Agreement pending)

Highlights of the revised process and criteria

The Sister Cities Criteria approved in 1998 has several strong components, including a description of the benefits for both cities, and strong current and long-term support.

Additions to the written process and criteria for sister city relationships include:

- A description of the process for reviewing a sister city proposal
- Definitions of sister city terms
- Additions to the proposal requirements, such as a description of the expectations the proposed sister city has for the relationship with Minneapolis.
- Additions to the criteria, such as limiting Minneapolis' sister cities to 1 city per country
- Requirements for maintaining a sister city relationship
- Objectives for the program

The objectives of the program are to:

1. Explore economic development synergies between cities.
2. Share best practices for city government.
3. Develop and support educational, cultural and people-to-people exchanges.
4. Use sister cities as a catalyst for international promotion.

The most significant change to the written criteria is the addition of written requirements for maintaining a sister city relationship. Staff will work with the City Attorney's Office to draft a template for a sponsor agreement between the City and each new sister city committee. Agreements with current sister cities will be negotiated.

Communication and upcoming exchanges

Staff will present an annual update to the Intergovernmental Relations Committee.

As additional information is received during the year staff will report to the Council President.

Anticipated remaining visits and exchanges for 2009 include:

- November – Council Member Schiff will visit Santiago, Chile.
- December – Governor Pawlenty's trade mission will include a trip to Santiago.

Anticipated exchanges for 2010 include:

- February – The Minneapolis Uppsala Friendship Committee will host a delegation from Uppsala, Sweden to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the sister city agreement.
- April – Staff recommends sending a delegation to Uppsala, Sweden to recognize the 10th anniversary of the Minneapolis-Uppsala sister city agreement.

If elected officials or citizens are traveling to a sister city independently of City business staff are supportive and can arrange meetings and appropriate letters of greeting.

When a representative or delegation (either elected or citizen) from a sister city to Minneapolis plans to make a visit to Minneapolis staff will notify all council members by e-mail. As much advance notice as possible will be given.

Previous Directives: July 17, 1998, Petition Number 263925, Sister Cities Criteria.

The criteria approved in 1998 is attached (page 4-5 of this Request for Council Action).

Previous Directives: July 17, 1998, Petition Number 263925, Sister Cities Criteria.

CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS
OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
PROCESS AND CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING
NEW SISTER CITIES RELATIONSHIPS

Approved July 17, 1998

A. PROCESS

Organizations and/or individuals interested in starting a sister cities relationship should contact the Sister Cities Coordinator who will provide instructions on developing a written proposal which addresses the seven basic requirements. The Sister Cities Coordinator will present the proposal together with a recommendation to the Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) Committee. After approval by the IGR Committee, the proposal will be submitted to the City Council for review and approval. The Sister Cities Coordinator reviews proposals in relation to the City's criteria for new sister cities relationships and makes recommendations to the City Council. All sister cities relationships must receive preliminary approval by the City Council before an official invitation to proceed can be extended.

B. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

1. A demographic profile of the proposed sister city.
2. A description of the mutual benefits for both cities.
3. A membership list from the proposed sister cities group, which includes resumes, statements of interest in the relationship and intent to become active members of the sister cities committee.
4. A two year work plan projected from the date of the City Council preliminary approval, including arrangements for formalizing the relationship.
5. A proposed budget for the work plan with identified proposed funding sources.
6. Commitments from potential members to make the organization financially self-sufficient and a willingness to raise money.
7. An indication of interest, including contact names, on the part of the proposed sister city.

C. CRITERIA

1. The relationship is multi-purpose.
2. The sister cities relationship is targeted toward and would support the City of Minneapolis international goals.
3. There is solid current and long-term local support for the new relationship.
 - a. Business linkages
 - b. Financial support from groups and individuals
 - c. Cultural and political interest
4. The potential short- and long-term benefits have been shown to outweigh the public costs of entering into the relationship.
5. The potential partner city has demonstrated strong interest in and commitment to the relationship.
6. The economic, political, cultural and geographic profiles of the two cities indicate common elements which would make them a good match.

D. CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS GOALS FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

1. Provide opportunities for City officials and others to position Minneapolis as a world-class city and center for international business.
2. Develop avenues for local businesses who want to establish or expand international commercial initiatives.
3. Increase citizen awareness of the influence and impact that foreign policy and the global marketplace have on our community.
4. Provide more options for citizens to experience, understand and appreciate other cultures.
5. Expand and enrich existing international relationships.