



STAFF REPORT

TO: Mayor Keis and Members of City Council
FROM: Chris Heineman, City Administrator
DATE: October 9, 2019
RE: Consider Creation of Sister City Advisory Committee

BACKGROUND:

A sister city is a broad-based, long-term partnership between two communities in two countries. Sister City relationships help to foster community engagement, and often include local residents, volunteers, and elected officials in ongoing partnership activities. In 1977, the City of Thunder Bay, Ontario was asked to be a Sister City of Little Canada. Since then, Little Canada and Thunder Bay have come together for a weekend of food and fun, celebrating their international friendship on an annual basis. Other Minnesota sister-city relationships include the following:

Minneapolis

- Cuernavaca, Mexico
- Eldoret, Kenya
- Harbin, China
- Ibaraki City, Japan
- Kuopio, Finland
- Novosibirsk, Russia
- Santiago, Chile
- Tours, France
- Uppsala, Sweden
- Najaf, Iraq

Saint Paul

- Changsha, China
- Ciudad Romero, El Salvador
- Culiacandan, Mexico
- Manzanillo, Mexico
- Tiberias, Israel
- Lawaaikamp, South Africa
- Nagasaki, Japan
- Neuss, Germany
- Novosibirsk, Russia

Rochester

- Moosburg, Germany
- Xianyang, Shaanxi, China
- Shiheung City, South Korea
- Kathmandu, Nepal
- Akita, Japan (Project City)

Duluth

- Thunder Bay, Canada
- Ohara/Isumi City, Japan
- Petrozavodsk, Russia
- Vaxjo, Sweden

Bloomington

- Izumi City, Osaka Prefecture, Japan

Columbia Heights

- Lomianki, Poland

Elbow Lake

- Flekkefjord, Norway

Fergus Falls

- Nordhordland Region, Norway

Hibbing

- Waldsrode, Germany

Moorhead

- Druskininkai, Lithuania
- Vimmerby, Sweden

New Ulm

- Neu-Ulm, Germany
- Ulm, Germany

Paynesville

- Paynesville, Liberia

Red Wing

- Ikata, Japan
- Qyizhou, China

Saint Peter

- Petatlan, Mexico

Shoreview

- Einhausen, Germany

St. Anthony

- Salo, Finland

Winona

- Bytow, Poland
- Misato, Japan

Worthington

- Crailsheim, Germany

While most cities have an established Sister City Committee or Commission to carry out the goals and activities of these partnerships, Little Canada has relied on the efforts of a few key individuals and informal relationships that have been established over the years. Establishing a formal Sister City Committee may help to sustain this Sister City relationship for another 40 years.

REQUESTED ACTION: The City Council is asked to review the attached information on Sister City programs and provide guidance to staff regarding how to proceed.



Whereas divergent peoples and cultures can, with unity of purpose, draw from each other what is finest and most worthy;

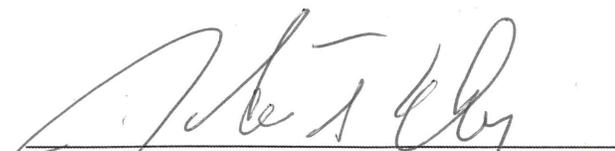
And whereas municipalities together may enjoy the benefits of international friendship and work toward the goal of peace and understanding among peoples;

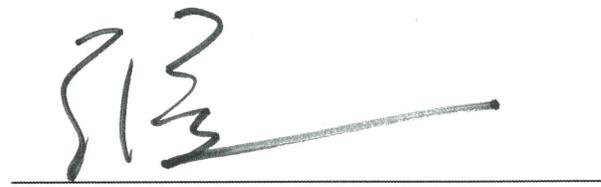
And whereas it is the expressed wish of the people of the communities party to this accord, as represented by their duly elected municipal councils, that their two cities should be united in this cause;

Now therefore this accord witnesseth that the City of Little Canada, Minnesota and the Corporation of the City of Thunder Bay are twinned and joined in sisterhood for the benefit of citizens of both; and,

The elected representatives of the people of the two communities will at all times be mindful of the need to foster understanding between their cultures through an ongoing exchange of information, and will lend their best efforts to this end.

Dated this 2nd day of August, 2019.


MAYOR, CITY OF LITTLE CANADA, USA


MAYOR, CITY OF THUNDER BAY

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Sister Cities Advisory Committee

(Adopted by Committee – June 20, 2018)

1. Name of Committee

The Committee shall be named the “Sister Cities Advisory Committee.” The accepted acronym will be SCAC.

2. Background and Assumptions

City Council resolved to adopt the Sister City Policy on April 10, 2006 that outlines the purpose and direction for the program, and Council further resolved to establish the Sister Cities Advisory Committee to oversee the implementation of the policy and the operations of the program. The program is to be administered and supported through the Office of the City Clerk.

It is assumed that community partners from the cultural, educational, and business sectors will be invited to participate in and supporting the program. That the existing active volunteer base, formalized in the Sister City Hospitality & Hosting committee, will continue to form an active and integral part of program.

It is further assumed that our Sister Cities will each pursue the development of the twinning relationship along similar principles to those articulated in the City of Thunder Bay’s Twinning (Sister City) policy.

3. Resources and Finances

The Committee will be funded through the City of Thunder Bay’s annual budget process. In September of each year the Committee will review its budget and make recommendations for the budget submission, which is to be made through the Office of the Clerk’s Divisional budget. The finances and accounts of the Committee will be administered through the Office of the City Clerk, such work to be done in accordance with all finance and accounting policies, procedures and practices established by the Corporation of the City of Thunder Bay. A quarterly review of the budget is to be included on the agenda of the Committee’s regularly scheduled meetings.

Financial support for the Sister City program from community partners and other sources may be sought as the Committee deems appropriate. Representatives of community partners participating in outgoing delegations to Sister City partners will be responsible

for their expenses unless specifically provided for otherwise by resolution of the Committee. In order to benefit from cost saving air travel, representatives of community partners will be asked to put a substantial deposit or pay their portion of the air travel prior to final booking.

4. Deliverables

The Committee will engage in ongoing communications with each of the Sister City partners, and plan and encourage exchange activities in accordance with the Policy. The Committee will plan for and take part in visits to and from the Sister City partners.

The Committee will prepare and maintain a work plan of at least a twelve month period identifying specific activities and events in which the Committee will be engaged. Plans for delegations, conferences and out of town travel will be included in the budget. Overseas delegation travel for SCAC committee members will be determined by the Committee to the best advantage of the visit objectives. Plans for travel, once participants and a visit outline and budget are determined, will be presented to the SCAC meeting for approval.

Community members expressing an interest in delegations to our Sister Cities partners will provide the non-refundable costs of travel prior to final booking.

The Committee will be provided with written details of all persons travelling on delegations including itinerary and projected costs for consideration and approval.

Following overseas travel, actual costs will be presented at the following SCAC meeting. Travel overseas by Committee Members will not exceed once every three years.

The Committee will, as outlined in the Policy, review each Sister City relationship individually at least once every five years and make a recommendation to Council on whether or not to continue in it.

The Committee will, as it deems necessary, make recommendations to City Council on changes to the Policy, and will formally review the Policy once every five years.

It will be the specific goal of the Committee to fulfill the following objectives:

1. To provide advice and direction on the implementation of the Twinning (Sister Cities) Policy.
2. To develop program activities that advance the relationships established, in accordance to the Twinning (Sister Cities) Policy with each Sister City.
3. To increase the awareness and participation of community partners in Sister City exchanges and visits.
4. To make recommendations for future changes to the policy and program to City Council for its consideration.

5. Membership and Responsibilities

The Committee shall be comprised of the Mayor, two members of Council, up to nine citizens at-large; of whom five will be appointed as the key person attached to each of the city's Sister Cities. The Committee will continue to draw on the expertise and assistance of volunteers in the broader community to assist in supporting the activities and events of the Sister City Program.

Citizen members of the Sister Cities Advisory Committee will be appointed to staggered terms to ensure an overlap of terms and continuity of experience. Council representatives shall be appointed for their elected term or annually, at the discretion of City Council.

All members are to be voting members. Members are expected to participated in meetings of the Committee and be actively engaged in the planning and execution of program activities and initiatives. The members will, from amongst themselves, select and appoint a Chair for the Committee whose role it will be to preside over the meetings of the Committee and generally provide leadership to the Committee in its activities.

In addition the Committee members will select and appoint a Vice Chair to act on behalf of the Chair in his/her absence. The selection of the Chair and Vice Chair is to be conducted on an annual basis.

Administrative resource to the Committee will be provided by the Office of the City Clerk and Corporate Strategic Services, and the City Clerk will administer the Sister City program on behalf of, and under the direction of the Committee.

Members are expected to participate as fully as they are able in visits to the City of Thunder Bay by Sister City partners.

The Committee will be provided with written details of all personal travelling on delegations including itinerary, actual costs as well as projected costs for consideration and approval.

Committee members attending the International Sister Cities Conference will be determined by the Committee to the best advantage of visit objectives and will exclude those having attending the previous year's conference. Committee members attending the conference will provide a written or verbal report of the conference at the following SCAC meeting.

6. Governance

Established to encourage the development and advancement of Twinning (Sister City) Relationships, under the direction of the Corporate Policy on Twinning, the Committee will report to Committee of the Whole through the regular presentation of its minutes on the agenda of the Community Services Committee of the Whole session. In addition the Committee will present such reports and information it deems appropriate to Committee of the Whole, so as to inform Council and the community at large of the actions, activities and programs of the Committee under Policy.

Voting on motions and questions before the Committee shall be in accordance with the procedural rules for Council and its Committees. Quorum for meetings will require at least 7 members to be present. Members of Council not appointed to the Committee may, with the permission of the Chair, participate in discussions and debates on matters before the Committee, and provide information, advice and assistance to the Committee as they are able, but will have no vote at the Committee.

The Committee will set a calendar of meeting dates for each year, and shall otherwise meet at the Call of the Chair.

7. Timelines

It is expected that the Committee will generally meet on a monthly basis throughout the term of Council, holding such additional meetings as the programming might demand.

Budget information will be provided at each SCAC meeting.

8. Contact

The Administrative Contact for SCAC is the City Clerk. Each SCAC member is asked to make sure his or her contact information is kept current with the City Clerk.

The Office of the City Clerk is reached by:

Telephone: 625-2230

Facsimile: 623-5468