

 <p><b>POLICIES AND GUIDELINES ON SISTER CITIES, FRIENDSHIP CITIES, AND INTERNATIONAL DELEGATIONS FOR THE CITY OF CUPERTINO</b></p>	<i>Citywide Policy Manual</i> Policy #
	<b>Attachments:</b>
<b>Effective Date:</b>	<b>Responsible Department:</b> City Manager's Office
<b>Related Policies &amp; Notes:</b> Prior versions: 2005, 2013, 2016, 2018, 2023	

**Background:**

Cupertino has four active Sister Cities registered with Sister Cities International; the cities of Toyokawa, Japan; Hsinchu, Taiwan; Cupertino, Italy; and Bhubaneswar, India. In addition, Cupertino has established several Friendship City relationships and attracts many international delegations for cultural, educational, business, and economic development reasons. This policy is applicable to Sister Cities, Friendship Cities, and International Delegations, as defined below.

**Definitions**

- **Sister City:** An international municipality formally recognized by the City Council through an official agreement or resolution establishing an ongoing cooperative relationship.
  - **City-Supported Committees:** Sister City Committees with a student delegation are considered City-Supported Committees. **If international travel is not possible due to travel complications (such as restrictions on travel visas), two or more community events per fiscal year may substitute a student delegation.**
  - **Non-City-Supported Committees:** Sister City Committees without a student delegation are considered Non-City-Supported Committees.
  
- **Friendship City:** A municipality that is formally acknowledged by the City Council as having a cooperative relationship with the City that is more limited or informal than a Sister City relationship.
  
- **International Delegation:** a group of representatives or officials from a foreign government, municipality, or organization, visiting the City for official or cultural purposes, without establishing an ongoing relationship.
  
- **Dignitary:** An official representative of the host Sister City or Friendship City who holds a position of authority, protocol status, or ceremonial leadership, and who is formally

receiving the delegation on behalf of the host government.

## SISTER CITIES

### **Intent of Sister City Affiliations:**

The City recognizes the value of developing people-to-people contacts as a way to further international communication and understanding. Sister City partnerships have proved very successful in fostering educational, technical, economic, and cultural exchanges.

Sister City relationships are effective only when organizations of interested residents in one community work with interested residents in another city to promote communication and understanding among people of different cultures.

The ideal affiliation should involve a large number of citizens and organizations in both cities, engaging in exchanges of people, ideas and cultures on a long-term, continuing basis.

The City intends to provide limited financial support to those Sister City Committees that operate student exchange programs. Those Sister City organizations which do not operate student exchange programs shall be completely financially independent from the City, except for limited City facility use.

### **Sister City Citizen Committee Responsibilities (Receiving City Support):**

- Identify, manage, coordinate, and implement all activities related to the Sister City Program.
- Establish a formal, incorporated 501(c)(3) structure, with officers and subcommittees.
- Solicit donations and in-kind contributions from the local community as appropriate.
- Maintain communication with the affiliate Sister City Committee, ensuring the counterpart committee is equally committed to the program.
- Finance activities from fundraising efforts and resources other than public funding, including all travel and program expenses, postage, fax, copying, and printing costs for events in which the City is participating. This includes fundraising or securing gifts for special celebrations, such as anniversaries.
- Prepare a detailed budget including funds raised through fundraising efforts and public (City) funding for events and activities and keep track of expenses. The budget should show funds available and should identify adequate, ongoing funding sources for program activities.

- Work with City staff at least one month in advance in arranging official promotional gifts and meetings for foreign delegations. For local groups traveling abroad and bringing promotional gifts, similar notice is required, unless waived by the City Manager.
- Meet the following eligibility requirements/annual submittals by the end of the fiscal year:
  - Proof of 501(c)(3) status
  - Detailed accounting of prior year actual revenue and expenses
  - Certify that student delegation occurred during the fiscal year
  - Summary of prior year activities
  - Proposed budget plan
  - Fundraising plan

**Sister City Citizen Committee Responsibilities (Not Receiving City Support):**

- Identify, manage, coordinate, and implement all activities related to the Sister City Program.
- Establish a formal, incorporated 501(c)(3) structure, with officers and appropriate functional sub committees.
- Solicit donations and in-kind contributions from the local community as appropriate.
- Maintain communication with the affiliate Sister City Committee, ensuring the counterpart committee is equally committed to the program.
- Meet the following eligibility requirements/annual submittals by the end of the fiscal year:
  - Proof of 501(c)(3) status
  - Detailed accounting of prior year actual revenue and expenses
  - Certify that a student delegation did not occur during the fiscal year
  - Summary of prior year activities
  - Proposed budget plan
  - Fundraising plan

**City of Cupertino Responsibilities (With regard to City supported Sister City Committees):**

Coordinated through the City Manager’s Office, the City will serve as a support for programs and activities by:

- Providing set-up and complimentary access to a large City facility, including large meeting rooms and the Civic Center Plaza, for three community events, not including festivals, per Sister City per fiscal year. All cost of food, drinks, and materials are the responsibility of the Sister City Committee. Any facility usage must comply with all regulations outlined in the facility rental information and policies.
- Providing the use of conference room space (up to 18 per fiscal year) at no cost to

the Sister City Committee for related activities. Conference room space does not include Cupertino Community Hall, Senior Center Reception Hall, or the Quinlan Community Center's Cupertino Room or Social Room. Any facility usage must comply with all regulations outlined in the facility rental information and policies. Cancellations within 48 hrs. of a reservation will be counted as a use for that fiscal year.

- The City shall accept gifts from the Sister City, which will be considered the property of the City and may be displayed at a City facility or offered to the Sister City Committee at City's discretion.
- The City will establish and maintain a written record of said gifts, regardless of actual or perceived monetary value. The written gift log will include: donation City, gift date, gift occasion (if applicable), and whether they are being offered to the Sister City Committee.
- Providing up to \$2,500 per year for a Sister City with a student exchange program of up to 9 student delegates and up to \$5,000 per year for a Sister City with a student exchange program of 10 or more student delegates.
- Sister City Committees that are hosting a festival must also adhere to the City's festival procedures outlined on the [City Festival webpage](#).
- Providing access to postage, fax, copying and printing equipment to Sister City Committee members for support of Sister City events in which the City is participating. City staff is not responsible for preparing mailings or printed materials.
- Providing City promotional gift items, when budget allows, typically given at community events to government representatives and student delegations from visiting countries. These include but are not limited to: branded t-shirts, pens, reusable bags, and lapel pins. The cost of each promotional gift or gift bag shall not exceed \$25. Additional gifts presented to members of a Sister City delegation are the responsibility of the Sister City Committee.
- Councilmembers on an official delegation visit to a Sister City or Friendship City typically present a gift to the host city dignitary, such as the Mayor. This host-City dignitary gift should not exceed \$200.
- Facilitating participation of City officials.

**City of Cupertino Responsibilities (With regard to non-City supported Sister City Committees):**

- The City shall maintain registration with the Sister Cities International organization.
- Provide the use of conference room space (up to 4 per fiscal year) at no cost to

the Sister City Committee for related activities. For additional conference room uses, non-City supported Sister City Committees shall be charged the facility use resident non-profit rate on the rental of any City facility. Meeting room space does not include Cupertino Community Hall, Senior Center Reception Hall, or the Quinlan Community Center's Cupertino Room or Social Room. Any facility usage must comply with all regulations outlined in the facility rental information and policies. Cancellations within 48 hrs. of a reservation will be counted as a use for that fiscal year.

- If the sister city committee has prepared a student delegation and requires a large meeting room space, the City Manager, or designee, may approve complimentary access to a large city facility.

### **Travel and Program Expenses:**

#### Program Expenses:

- The City Council will, as part of its annual budget adoption process, establish a program budget for anticipated City supported Sister City program activities. This budget will include up to \$2,500 for a Sister City with a student exchange program of up to 9 student delegates and up to \$5,000 for a Sister City with a student exchange program of 10 or more student delegates, as funds allow. The City Council will consider funding for student delegations with less than four students on a case-by-case basis. An additional \$5,000 will be considered for adult delegation visits every 5 years. This adopted budget, less the cost of the Sister City membership fee, will be remitted to the Committee once an accounting of the prior year's expenditures has been received and reviewed by the Finance Department. These funds represent the City's sole monetary commitment each fiscal year with the exception of the items listed above.

#### Travel Expenses:

- The City will pay 50% of one trip per year, as budget allows, for the Mayor or another City Councilmember, as designated by the Mayor, provided the trip is in conjunction with an official delegation.
- All other Council or City Staff travel for Sister City programs shall be funded by Sister City Committee fundraising activities, when feasible, or by the individual traveling council or staff member, unless authorized in advance by the City Council.

### **New Affiliations:**

To ensure that there is a broad base of community support for a global partnership, the citizen committee responsible for implementing the Sister City program should include at least 10 active Cupertino residents who are committed to making a new affiliation successful.

No more than one Sister City relationship may be established in any given country.

## **Proposal Process**

The new Sister City Committee will prepare and submit the following to the City of Cupertino:

- Detailed demographic profile of the prospective city
- Application for a formal, incorporated 501(c)(3) structure, with officers and appropriate subcommittees
- Documentation of broad-based community support, with a minimum of 10 members on the organizing committee
- A preliminary program plan outlining objectives and funding sources

If the City Council adopts a resolution establishing a new Sister City relationship, the City shall register that new Sister City with Sister Cities International. If the proposed new Sister City Committee desires to operate a student exchange program (with a minimum of 4 student delegates and open to any school within the Cupertino Union School District and/or Fremont Union High School District boundaries) and demonstrates that it can meet its responsibilities as a City supported Sister City Committee, the budget for the following year shall be adjusted, if approved by Council, to provide for financial support.

## **Terminating a Sister City Affiliation**

While regrettable, it is sometimes necessary for a city to terminate a Sister City affiliation. Sister City affiliations are meant to be long-standing, official city linkages that involve extensive community participation beyond government. For a variety of reasons, a Sister City relationship may lose community interest and support, and Cupertino or the Sister City may opt to terminate the Sister City relationship.

If a Sister City affiliation is inactive for a period of three years and there is a lack of community support for the Sister City relationship to continue, the City may initiate the process to terminate the Sister City affiliation with the Sister City and Sister Cities International. Termination process resulting from inactivity shall be administered by the City Manager or designee, who shall inform the partner sister city of the decision through a written letter. The City Manager's Office will reach out to each Sister City Committee 60 days prior to termination. City Manager's Office shall also inform the Council of the termination through an informational memo.

## **Definition of Inactivity**

Sister Cities would be considered inactive if all of the following occur for three consecutive years:

- No event or delegation visits organized.
- No log or record provided by the Sister City Committee to the City Manager's Office of correspondence maintained with the affiliate Sister City Committee.

- No correspondence between the City of Cupertino and the local Sister City Committee.

## **FRIENDSHIP CITIES**

### **Intent of Friendship City Affiliations:**

The City recognizes the value of developing people-to-people contacts as a way to further international communication and understanding. Friendship city partnerships can be effective in fostering increased global cooperation and communication. Friendship cities may be established, however, they will not be considered official Sister Cities and are not eligible for City funding.

### **New Affiliations:**

All proposed Friendship City relationships must have Councilmember and community sponsorship and be approved by the City Council. The Friendship City will submit a Friendship City application to the City of Cupertino, which requires sponsorship from a Council Member and a citizen's committee to ensure the new affiliation is successful. If approved, the City will issue a signed Letter of Intent establishing the Friendship City relationship.

A Friendship City affiliation will be effective for two years and may be renewed administratively every two years. They City may have no more than six Friendship City relationships at any given time.

### **Friendship City Committee Responsibilities:**

- Identify, manage, coordinate and implement all activities related to the Friendship City program.
- Maintain communication with the affiliate Friendship City, ensuring the counterpart is equally committed.
- Work with City staff at least one month in advance in arranging official promotional gifts and meetings for foreign delegations. For local groups traveling abroad and bringing city gifts, similar notice is required, unless waived by the City Manager.

### **City of Cupertino Responsibilities:**

Coordinated through the City Manager's Office, the City will:

- Issue a signed Letter of Intent establishing a new Friendship City relationship in an effort to assist international delegation visits from the Friendship City.
- Provide City promotional items typically given at community events to government representatives from visiting countries not to exceed \$25 each, as the

budget allows. These may include, but are not limited to: City t-shirts, pens, reusable bags, and lapel pins, to the extent there remains a budgeted amount to purchase such gifts and promotional items.

- Councilmembers on an official delegation visit to a Sister City or Friendship City typically present a gift to the host city dignitary, such as the Mayor. This host-City dignitary gift should not exceed \$200.
- Facilitate meetings with City officials.
- Conduct tours of city facilities.

#### **Travel and Program Expenses:**

Friendship City travel and program expenses will be treated as those of international delegations and will follow the guidelines outlined in this policy in the “Travel and Program Expenses” section under “INTERNATIONAL DELEGATIONS.” Friendship Cities must establish a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization before participating in the travel program.

#### **Renewal of Friendship City Relationship**

Friendship City renewals should be requested by an official of the Friendship City with support of the Friendship City Committee. The Friendship City Committee should submit a renewal application, which includes:

- Intent to renew letter from Friendship City official on official letterhead.
- Summary of Friendship City delegation visits to Cupertino hosted by the Committee over the last two years.
- Summary of Cupertino delegation visits hosted by Friendship City.
- Description of activities held and outcomes.
- How the relationship has been mutually beneficial for Cupertino and the friendship community.
- An updated profile of the Friendship City Committee.

Notification of the intent to renew the Friendship City relationship should be sent to the City at least 60 days in advance to ensure sufficient time to process the renewal. Renewals will be processed administratively through the City Manager’s Office. Friendship City committees are not required to prepare a presentation for the City Council. However, Friendship City committees may submit presentation materials to be included as part of the renewal process.

#### **Terminating a Friendship City Affiliation:**

A Friendship City affiliation will be effective for two years. After two years the Friendship City affiliation will automatically expire unless renewed. Renewal requests after the expiration date has passed will be considered at the City Manager’s discretion.

While regrettable, it is sometimes necessary for a city to terminate a Friendship City affiliation prior to the end of the two-year term. For a variety of reasons, a Friendship City

relationship may no longer be mutually beneficial, and Cupertino or the Friendship City may opt to terminate the Friendship City relationship by notifying the City Manager's Office in writing.

## INTERNATIONAL DELEGATIONS

### **Intent of International Delegations:**

The City recognizes the value of developing people-to-people contacts as a way to further international communication and understanding.

Delegations must contact city staff at least 60 days in advance in arranging meetings, unless waived by the City Manager.

### **Travel and Program Expenses:**

#### *Program Expenses -*

The City Council will, as part of its annual budget adoption process, establish a program budget for promotional items for delegations. Promotional gifts shall not exceed the cost of \$25 each, as budget allows.

#### *Travel Expenses -*

International travel to International Delegations and Friendship Cities shall be at the expense of the traveling Councilmember or any accompanying staff member unless authorized in advance by the City Council.