



## CITY COMMISSION POLICY MANUAL

### International & Sister City Relationships

**Department:**  
City Treasurer-Clerk

**Date Adopted:**  
August 18, 1999

**Last Revised Date:**  
May 14, 2025

#### 142.01 AUTHORITY

City Commission

#### 142.02 PURPOSE

To establish formal guidelines for the selection and recognition of sister city and other relationships between the City of Tallahassee and international cities.

#### 142.03 OBJECTIVE:

Tallahassee citizens have historically shown an interest in actively participating in the development of sister city and other international relationships, to provide for the mutual exchange of ideas and understanding between the cities. "Grass roots" citizen participation in the establishment, exchange and enhancements in these relationships is encouraged by the City Commission. Guidelines are provided for the city government's formal selection, adoption and recognition in such relationships to ensure quality, beneficial affiliations for Tallahassee's citizenry. The intent is to promote activities and exchanges that increase international trade, economic and community development and promote cultural and educational opportunities.

#### 142.04 SCOPE OF APPLICABILITY:

These guidelines shall apply when the City Commission is recognizing a sister city and any other international relationship.

#### 142.05 DEFINITIONS:

For the purpose of this policy, the following terms shall be defined:

**Sister City Committee:** A "grass roots" citizens-established organization composed of at least fifteen (15) active and participating members dedicated to supporting the relationship between the City of Tallahassee and a single prospective sister city. Each committee shall define "active" to meet its individual committee's needs, which will be subject to approval by the City Commission. The City of Tallahassee may have more than one sister city.

**Sister City Agreement:** An agreement which encompasses all aspects of a relationship between the City of Tallahassee and a prospective Sister City and is generally formalized through an agreement between mayors and recognized by Sister Cities International. Twinning Agreements: Agreements signed between communities that express a desire to cooperate on specific issues. The agreement is not recognized by Sister Cities International.

## **142.06 RESPONSIBILITIES:**

### **A. The Sister City Committee:**

1. A relationship will exist only after a "grass roots" citizens established Sister City Committee has met established criteria, been recommended for selection, and has been formally recognized by the City Commission.
2. The affiliate city proposed by the "grass roots" Tallahassee Sister City Committee must formally agree to promote activities and exchanges of mutual interest that increase international trade and economic development and/or promote cultural and educational opportunities.
3. The citizen-established Sister City Committee must meet the following objectives:
  - a. The Committee shall be committed to making the relationship a success.
  - b. The Committee membership should encourage broad community base, not derived exclusively from groups of citizens who share an ethnic heritage with the prospective city wherever possible.
  - c. The Committee must submit evidence of intent to file for not-for-profit status and appropriate evidence about its board of directors membership. Upon approval by the City Commission, the committee must file for not-for-profit status within 30 days.
  - d. The Committee must submit a proposal to the Office of the Mayor that outlines the mission and/or goals it will pursue; the programs, services or products it will offer to accomplish this mission and/or goals; and how it will attract and utilize the resources needed - people, money, expertise, facilities, etc. - to accomplish this mission or goals. The plan shall be presented to the City Commission, after review by the Office of the Mayor, for approval. Until the proposal is approved, no sister city relationship shall exist. The proposal may be amended by the Committee if approved by the City Commission.
  - e. There must be an established counterpart committee or similar group in the prospective sister city, with which the Committee has corresponded and reached an affiliation.

### **B. Office of the Mayor:**

1. Formally incorporated Sister City Committee(s) seeking formal recognition by the City of Tallahassee must submit its request to the Office of the Mayor.
2. Upon the City Commission's adoption to formally recognize a sister city relationship, the Office of the Mayor shall act as a liaison between that Sister City Committee, City Commission and City Manager.
3. The Office of the City Treasurer-Clerk is responsible for maintaining all Memorandum of Understandings between the City and Sister Cities International, Inc., as well as resolutions and proclamations dealing with each prospective sister city. The Office of the Mayor will be responsible for initiating such resolutions and proclamations for "other matters of protocol" in dealing with existing and prospective sister cities and any other international relationships.
4. The Office of the City Treasurer-Clerk will request an annual report from each Sister City Committee to monitor the activities and participation of the Committee members. If a Sister City Committee fails to submit an annual report, the relationship will be deemed inactive. An inactive relationship may return to active

status upon the submittal of an annual activity report by the relevant Sister City Committee.

#### **142.07 PROCEDURES:**

##### **A. Formally Recognized Relationships:**

1. The City Commission shall formally recognize international sister city relationships through the adoption of a resolution, after review and a recommendation on selection is made by the Office of the Mayor.
2. The Office of the Mayor shall make recommendations through the City Manager to the City Commission on the selected sister cities for recognition, based on established criteria, to ensure relationships will be beneficial to our citizens.

##### **B. Funding, In Kind Services, and Other City Government Support:**

1. All funding to maintain and fulfill the activities of each Sister City Committee and relationship will be the responsibility of the citizens-established committee.
2. The City of Tallahassee may provide in-kind services to Sister City Committee(s) for activities or events involving official city government participation.
3. In-kind services by city departments may be provided to the Sister City Committee at the discretion of the City Manager.

#### **142.08 EXCEPTIONS:**

None

#### **142.09 EFFECTIVE DATE:**

This policy guideline is to become effective immediately upon City Commission adoption.

#### **142.10 RESPONSIBLE AGENCY:**

The Office of the City Treasurer-Clerk shall recommend amendments as required for the purpose of keeping this policy complete and up-to-date.

#### **142.11 SUNSET REVIEW:**

This policy is subject to sunset review by the City Commission no later than five (5) years from the date of adoption. Subsequent reviews by the City Commission are to occur no later than five (5) years from the date of the prior review. Revisions will become effective immediately upon City Commission approval.

##### **Revisions**

March 28, 1990

August 18, 1999

March 14, 2002

July 6, 2011

November 13, 2019

May 14, 2025