

Criteria and Procedures for Selection of New Sister Cities Dallas, Texas, U.S.A

All sister cities are required to adhere to the rules and regulations established by Sister Cities International (SCI), one of which is that United States cities may only have one sister city per foreign country; this information can be checked on the SCI website. Also, before beginning the process, please contact Dallas Protocol to verify that Dallas does not already have a sister city in the country in question.

Criteria

Proposals for new sister cities must meet two primary criteria:

1. *Strong community support.* It has been the experience of Dallas as well as other cities that the success of a sister city relationship depends in large part on broad based community support from business, arts, culture, academia, the local ethnic community, etc. Support should also be distributed among individuals, corporations, civic leaders, and the local government.
2. *Strong economic and cultural ties.* This allows for more exchange possibilities. It also provides a common ground and familiarity between the two cities. Examples of economic ties include pairing with another port city or one with a heavy concentration in the energy, medical, high technology, and aerospace industries. A city may have strong cultural ties with Dallas if we have a proportionately large percentage of people from foreign city/country living here.

Procedures

Following is a summary of steps involved in forming a sister city affiliation. This is intended to serve as a guideline for groups interested in initiating the process. On average, we have found that it takes one to two years to establish a new association.

1. A group voices an interest in establishing a sister city affiliation and calls Dallas Protocol to learn if it is possible to do so, given the above-mentioned criteria. If the city is available and meets the criteria, the group sends a letter of intent to Dallas Protocol.
2. The group needs to gain the support of at least two City Council members to begin the process of ensuring support from the city.
3. The group initiating the request forms a committee of private and public sector parties with representatives on the committee from a variety of fields including business, culture, academia, medicine, technology, fundraising, and a volunteer coordinator. A reciprocal committee in the proposed foreign city should be formed and both committees should begin regular meetings and report activities to each other and Dallas Protocol.
4. To proceed, the Dallas committee should submit the following to Dallas Protocol:
 - a. *Overview.* A summary of how the project came into being and how it is being developed – who initiated it when, and purpose of relationship.
 - b. *City Profile.* This should include detailed economic and cultural data and relevant business and commercial statistics. **The following information is required:** demographics; a list of Dallas companies doing business in the proposed sister

city; and a list of companies from the proposed sister city doing business in Dallas.

- c. **Developing Committee Lists (2).** This should consist of separate lists for Dallas and the proposed sister city consisting of supporters of the project who have committed to being active members in the planning committee and the sister city association after it is established. Their corporate affiliation, titles, addresses, phone numbers and fax numbers should be included.
 - d. **Report of volunteer/membership base.** Because sister city associations are completely run by volunteers, evidence of a strong volunteer base must be provided. This should include possible volunteer sources, strategies for recruiting members, membership and funds.
 - e. **Report of fundraising strategies.** Describe how the association plans to raise operating funds so that it will be self-sufficient. Include a preliminary budget, descriptions of planned events, target sponsors, etc.
 - f. **Programs.** Describe the types of events that the association envisions. A sister city association should cover several areas of exchanges so your events should be from at least three of the following areas: commercial, cultural, tourism, educational and humanitarian.
 - g. **Draft Documentation.** This should include the draft Articles of Incorporation, By-Laws and proposed Board of Directors.
5. After meeting the Sister Cities criteria and completing procedures 1 - 4, Dallas Protocol strongly recommends that committees form a Partnership/Friendship agreement signed by the Mayor or an elected official for a minimum of one year before entering the final phase of requesting full Council approval in order to demonstrate the sustainability of a city-to-city relationship with Dallas.
 6. After successfully completing terms of the Partnership/Friendship agreement, a city council member must place it as an item on the City Council agenda for a vote before the entire council.
 7. If approved by the Mayor and City Council, a signing ceremony must take place with the mayors (or their representatives) of both cities in one of the two cities within one year of the approval.
 8. Copies of the final registered Articles of Incorporation, By-laws, and Board of Directors must be submitted to Dallas Protocol. The new sister city association must adhere to all sister cities policies as administered by Dallas Protocol. Both the Dallas and foreign city committees must inform Dallas Protocol of all changes and updates to board members and elected officials as well as all programs sponsored or co-sponsored by the sister city association.
 9. The Sister City Committee should meet regularly and submit their minutes and activities to Dallas Protocol quarterly. Representative of the committee should participate in Sister Cities' activities. If the committee fails to meet for a year, then the relationship will be subject to review and a recommendation to discontinue the relationship may be made.