

### **SISTER CITIES POLICY**

**Intent** To clearly articulate Council's objectives in establishing and maintaining Sister Cities relationships and to describe the role and function of Council's Sister Cities Ambassador in managing relationships.

**Scope** Sister Cities and Friendship Cities across the world, with no more than one Sister City and one Friendship City to be established in any one country, except in exceptional circumstances.

### **PROVISIONS**

#### **SISTER CITY OBJECTIVE**

The objective is to promote sister city relationships that affiliate Cairns with cities in other countries where such relationships have a significant positive influence on the communities involved.

In pursuit of this objective, Council with the assistance of its Sister Cities Ambassador may undertake or facilitate such activities as:

- stimulating exchanges of individuals, information and ideas across a wide range of community, cultural, economic and environmental interests;
- arranging and/or coordinating visits to sister cities by individuals and groups;
- promoting to our Sister Cities information on aspects of life in Cairns;
- arranging exchanges of news items and reports between newspapers, radio and television in the respective cities;
- supporting information exchanges from sister cities and their respective countries;
- exchanges and communications between churches, educational institutions, sporting bodies, clubs, societies or groups with common interest in sister cities;
- exchanges of arts, crafts and educational material between schools and other groups; and
- promotion of mutually beneficial business outcomes.

#### **CITY CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM**

Council operates a two-tier level of affiliation with cities and towns seeking Sister City status with the Cairns Regional Council:

- Sister Cities – those recognised through a formal agreement to develop and maintain a substantial program with mutual long-term benefits;
- Friendship Cities – those consisting of a less formal arrangement with less administrative and financial expectation, which may be appropriate in meeting short term needs and supporting programs run by other sections of the community.

The consideration of Sister City status, now and in the future, is based on qualitative assessments against a range of criteria around:

- General matters such as access, links, geography, history
- Economic links
- Social and cultural links
- Educational links.

Refer to Sister Cities Eligibility Criteria below for further details.

Importantly it is necessary to gauge the potential for mutual benefit. With regard to relationships existing at the time of adoption of this policy, there is to be ongoing assessment in relation to communications, outcomes and current and proposed projects.

Prior to formalising any new Sister City Agreement, Cairns Regional Council will enter into a Friendship relationship to explore the potential benefits.

Friendship Cities will be reviewed every four years by Council with assistance from the Ambassador, at which time any decision to upgrade the affiliation to that of a Sister City relationship or to discontinue the affiliation may be assessed on the basis of actual program outcomes and the above criteria. Recommendations will be referred through to Council.

### **SISTER CITY REVIEWS**

Existing Sister City relationships will be reviewed every four years by Council with assistance from the Ambassador based on the criteria below to ensure relevance and that the original objectives are still appropriate and achievable.

Sister City relationships may be recommended to Council to be reclassified as Friendship Cities if sustainability is no longer viable.

### **SISTER CITIES ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

The following factors will be considered in choosing or reviewing a Sister City or Friendship City relationship:

#### **General**

- Population and demographics (nationals of one Sister City residing in the other)
- Geographic location and assets
- Ease of access
- Existing linkages
- Relevance to local community
- History of diplomatic relations and/or cooperation in political, economic, commercial and cultural fields

#### **Economic**

- Comparison of key industries
- Similar economic conditions
- Trade and investment climates and opportunities
- Tourism potential

#### **Social**

- Similar social infrastructure and issues
- Opportunity for broad based social activity
- People to people interest, energy and commitment

#### **Educational**

- Export opportunities
- Student/teacher exchange program opportunities
- University and TAFE linkages

In considering the above factors it is necessary to compare not only the similarities but the potential for these similarities to provide mutual benefit within the existing scope and limitations of the program.

Existing relationships are also assessed against:

- Level of communication with Sister/Friendship City
- Outcomes to date, benefits seen
- Current and proposed projects.

**APPOINTMENT OF CAIRNS SISTER CITY AMBASSADOR**

The roles and responsibilities of the Ambassador are:

- With the approval of the Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer to act as Council's representative at official functions involving visiting Sister Cities groups.
- Should the need arise, the Mayor may request the Ambassador to travel on Council's behalf either to Sister Cities events within Australia or to represent Council as part of a visit to one of Council's Sister Cities. A report will be provided to the General Manager on opportunities arising from these activities.
- The Ambassador, with assistance from Council staff will identify suitable contact persons within the local community for each of the seven Sister Cities. Should an event or delegation warrant it, contact can then be made with these local communities quickly and efficiently;
- Communications with external Sister Cities parties will need to be either endorsed by General Manager Community, Sport and Cultural Services or the Mayor's Personal Assistant. This will assist in ensuring that all parties are aware of upcoming events or activities.

◆◆◆◆◆

**This policy is to remain in force until otherwise determined by Council.**

**General Manager Responsible for Review:**

**Community, Sport & Cultural Services**



**ORIGINALLY ADOPTED: 9/09/2009**  
**CURRENT ADOPTION: 19/07/2017**  
**DUE FOR REVISION: 19/07/2021**  
**REVOKED/SUPERSEDED:**

**John Andrejic**  
**Chief Executive Officer**