
City of Greater Geraldton

2.2 ESTABLISHING INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

SUSTAINABILITY THEME

Economy

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this policy is to set out the goals, objectives, selection criteria, and the requirements for managing processes associated with the development and operation of formal relationships between the governments of the City of Greater Geraldton and Cities in other nations.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Council of the City of Greater Geraldton may establish formal or informal relationships with the Governments of Cities in other Nations for the purposes or economic, social, cultural or environmental development in the mutual interests of the Cities.

This policy addresses all international city-to-city relationships involving the City of Greater Geraldton, whether informal or formal.

This policy applies to all City employees, contractors, the Mayor and Councillors.

POLICY DETAILS

1. Goals and Objectives

International relationships should offer many benefits to the City of Greater Geraldton including enhancing economic development, cross cultural community development, international cooperation and educational exchanges and learning. The objectives of individual relationships may differ, but all International relationships should align with the City of Greater Geraldton's strategic directions as outlined in the City's current Community Strategic Plan, and other key planning documents, including the *Growing Greater Geraldton* plan.

All international relationship proposals should be analysed based on the following goals and objectives and must be submitted to Council's *Sister City Economic & Cultural Development Advisory Committee* for endorsement prior to being submitted to Council for deliberation.

GOAL	OBJECTIVE
Economic Development	Support the City of Greater Geraldton's strategic priorities
	Expand the City's network of business contacts and relationships
	Increase international private sector investment in the Mid West
	Provide a conduit between local innovation and international industry
	Accelerate economic growth through commercial partnerships
	Leverage existing industry strengths into increased innovation and job creation
	Grow the Traded Sectors of the City's regional economy
	Promote the Mid West region as an attractive tourist destination
Cross Cultural Development	Promote City of Greater Geraldton as an innovative City
	Promote City of Greater Geraldton's cultural community
	Establish relationships between cultural institutions, universities and colleges, museums, heritage institutions, community arts, libraries and sports
International Cooperation	Support international education, research and cooperation
	Increase global awareness of the City of Greater Geraldton and the Mid West

2. Principles of Establishing International Relationships

The following principles should apply to International relationships:

- The proposed Candidate City must be in a country with which the Federal Government of Australia and/or Government of Western Australia has some form of positive relationship;
- The City of Greater Geraldton may add a maximum of one Sister City each year, with a maximum of six ongoing Sister City relationships, one per Nation, at any one time;
- Geographic concentration of Sister Cities in one global region should be avoided;
- In addition to formal Sister Cities, the City may establish Strategic Partnership relations with cities in other nations, as determined by Council.
- Following analysis, proposals for establishing new Sister City or Strategic Partnership relations must be submitted to Council's *Sister City Economic & Cultural Development Advisory Committee* for endorsement prior to being submitted to Council for deliberation and – prior to any action - final approval; and
- Establishing International relationships should take into account cultural, ethical and/or moral issues pertinent to the community at the time.

3. Selection Criteria

The following criteria should be utilised in the selection of Sister City or Strategic Partner City. Note that high rankings in some categories may negate lower rankings in other:

- **People-to-people relationships:** It is desirable that there be an existing economic, social or cultural link between the Candidate City and the City of Greater Geraldton to act as a foundation for building and sustaining the relationship;
- **Gross Domestic Product:** should be comparable to the Mid West region or larger or of an equivalent proportional GDP ratio of country to region;
- **Growth:** Candidate Cities should have favourable growth rates;
- **Economic Activity:** Candidate Cities should have strong trade activity;
- **Potential:** Candidate Cities should be identified as priorities for future development;
- **Investment:** Candidate Cities should have potential for mutual investment;
- **Commercialisation:** Candidate Cities should have potential for cooperation in commercially applicable research;
- **Academic organisations:** Candidate Cities should have academic institutions such as colleges, universities and research centres;
- **Innovation:** Candidate Cities should encourage new technologies, research and invention;
- **Tourism:** Candidate Cities should provide some opportunity to increase tourism activity; and
- **Affiliations:** Candidate Cities should have a Chamber of Commerce or other business or industry associations – or if equivalent bodies are not the custom in the country, some body through which the Mid West Chamber of Commerce and Industry may engage with business entities in that City or state/province.

Some lower socio-economic regions may not meet all of the above criteria, and the Council may take that into consideration for humanitarian, philanthropic or other reasons.

Depending on cultural conventions of the international community or city, an agreement forming an international relationship might variously be referred to as a Treaty of Friendship, or a Friendship Agreement. The nature of the relationship with a particular city will be determined by Council i.e. either a Sister City Relationship, or a Strategic Partnership.

The development of International relationships should be prioritised where multiple suitable candidates are identified for consideration. Candidates meeting the following criteria are likely to be prioritised for the establishment of a Sister City relationship or a Strategic Partnership:

- Cities that are at Prefecture Level or above, if the candidate city is in the People's Republic of China;
- Cities that have a sea port and/or an airport which could facilitate trade and exchanges with the Mid West Port Authority and/or the Geraldton Airport.

4. Process to Establish a New International Relationship

Proposals are to be prepared by City of Greater Geraldton officers or, if framed by another party, analysed by City of Greater Geraldton officers, and a report prepared, for consideration of a proposal by Council's *Sister City Economic & Cultural Development Advisory Committee*.

Assessment of proposals will be on the basis of the goals and objectives of the City of Greater Geraldton establishing International Relations, and the selection criteria, as set out in this policy.

If a proposed relationship is endorsed by the Advisory Committee, officers will prepare a report on the Committee-endorsed relationship, seeking Council deliberation on the proposal. The report to Council will set out the anticipated costs to the City, and benefits, of entering into the proposed new relationship. Discretion rests exclusively with Council to approve or reject the proposal.

Sister City relationships and Strategic Partnerships may be dissolved upon mutual agreement of the two Cities or if the City of Greater Geraldton determines upon annual review that the relationship has ceased to meet stated goals and objectives.

5. Management of International Relationships

Prior to Council consideration of any proposed new relationship, the *Sister City Economic & Cultural Development Advisory Committee* should always ensure that potential partners make contact to check areas of common interest; to discuss individual aims and objectives for the partnership; and to make certain there is consensus on the way forward. Before a preliminary visit both sides should draw up a list of key questions and queries and undertake some basic research on each other's economy and culture.

After a new relationship has been approved by Council, all activities associated with programs (such as visits overseas, hosting visits and coordinating local groups seeking to engage with Sister Cities or Strategic Partner Cities) should be coordinated by the Economic Development Officer responsible for foreign affairs, in consultation as necessary with the Mayor and CEO, to ensure that all activities meet the objectives of this policy.

6. Relationship Plan

Every International relationship under consideration should have a relationship plan outlining:

- The key objectives of the relationship. For example, encouraging and facilitating economic, social-cultural and environmental exchanges, developing networks;
- Long-term goals;
- Key focus areas for the relationship;
- The main stakeholders;
- Key performance indicators to measure benefits/outcomes.

In March of each year, an annual report and review of relationship activities and the relationship plan including an audit of key performance indicators will be provided to ensure that the City of Greater Geraldton is benefitting from the alliance.

7. Budget and Resource Commitment

The City of Greater Geraldton should establish an on-going operational level of funding in order to maintain the regular cost of promotions, travel and sundry costs associated with each Sister City or Strategic Partner relationship. This should be reflected in the City's long term financial plan (LTFP) with programs set out in the City's Corporate Business Plan. For each year the level of funding should be determined through annual budget processes and should be linked to the needs of the various relationships.

Where an existing or proposed new relationship requires a new project or program to be established by the City of Greater Geraldton, a proposal should be developed containing all costs and resource commitments associated with the project or program. This will be subject to the annual budget allocation processes of the City of Greater Geraldton and will be treated as a new proposal to be judged on merit alongside all other projects competing for funding through the annual budget process.

KEY TERM DEFINITIONS

Sister City Relationships and Strategic Partnerships

International relationships between City Governments are two-tiered:

- Sister City Relationships and
- Strategic Partnerships.

Sister City Relationship is a formal relationship between City governments with economic, social and cultural dimensions, involving exchanges in agreed dimensions between City governments on behalf of, and involving, their businesses and communities. Sister City Relationships may focus on all aspects of a City – governance and administration, the economy, society and culture, and the environment.

Sister City relationships are much broader in scope than a Strategic Partnership, with emphasis on developing and nurturing long-term community-to-community relationships, but may also embrace highly focused, mutually supported interests or initiatives in the same manner as a Strategic Partnership.

An Australian City will generally have just one Sister City in another nation.

Strategic Partnership is a formal relationship between cities that is typically less broad in scope than a Sister City relationship. This may involve strong business or community level synergies, focused toward specific areas. For example, a relationship between two cities may be focused upon education, or specific research, or particular economic development or tourism projects, or may involve development of a channel to assist with marketing for a specific traded sector. Multiple Strategic Partnerships may be developed with another nation, focusing on different synergies and exchanges with different cities. There will typically be more direct business, institution or community stakeholder involvement in this type of relationship, with business, institutions and community stakeholders funding their own level of engagement, facilitated by the city.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Director Corporate & Commercial Services is responsible for implementing this policy.

City of Greater Geraldton is the facilitator/enabler of all City-to-City International relationships, including Sister City Relationships and Strategic Partnerships. The City will work with local industries and other groups to maximise benefits from developing international relationships.

WORKPLACE INFORMATION

Local Government Act 1995

City of Greater Geraldton's Code of Conduct

POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Directorate		Officer	Review Cycle	Next Due
Corporate & Commercial Services		Economic Development Officer	Biennial	2019
Version	Decision Reference	Synopsis		
1.	CCS231 – 24 January 2017	CP024 EXISTING POLICY transferred to new template. Review cycle amended.		
2.	CCS256 – 23 May 2017	Biennial review and revision		