



City of San Marcos

City Council Work Session

November 2025



Presentation Item 1

Receive an update on Sister Cities program and policy.

Purpose



- Staff received a request for a Sister City relationship from Texas State University and would like to know if Council would like to pursue Sister City status.
- Is there Sister City criteria Council deems important before entering such a partnership?

Sister City Request



February 2025 – Received Sister City partnership request from Texas State University, between City of San Marcos, Texas and Inverness, Scotland.



sanmarcostx.gov

Sister City Program Background



- A sister city, county, or state relationship is a long-term partnership between two communities in two countries.
- A city may have any number of sister cities, with community involvement ranging from a half dozen to hundreds of volunteers.
- Each sister city organization is independent and pursues the activities and thematic areas that are important to them and their community including municipal, business, trade, educational, and cultural exchanges and projects.

Program Benefits



- **Promote cultural exchange:** Foster understanding and appreciation between residents of San Marcos and its Sister Cities through cultural events, educational programs, and people-to-people exchanges.
- **Strengthen international relations:** Build bridges of friendship and cooperation with other communities worldwide.
- **Advance economic development:** Explore opportunities for trade, tourism, and investment between the City of San Marcos and its Sister Cities.
- **Enhance civic engagement:** Encourage active citizen participation in international affairs and community development.

Past Sister City Relations



- May 2004: Monclova, Mexico
 - Partnership between Fire departments of the Cities
 - City Clerk's Office & City Manager's Office maintained the relationship and facilitated the process
 - Undefined term limits

Eligibility Criteria



- Enter into and successfully fulfill a Friendship City status.
- Be a legally constituted municipality or equivalent.
- Have a stable and functioning local government.
- Demonstrate a commitment to fostering cultural exchange and international cooperation.
- Share common interests with the City of San Marcos in areas such as culture, arts, education, environment, or economic development.

Program Management & Expectations



- Committee must be formed by interested party and minutes must be submitted to City in order to demonstrate capacity to support the program.
- A policy that guides processing requests for new relationships; supporting approved relationships; and ensuring relationships are maintained.
- Identify funding source to support approved relationships.

Staff Recommendations



- Create and implement a policy with guard rails for future partnerships.
- Enter into friendship city agreement prior to establishing Sister City partnership.
- Texas State to demonstrate adequate personnel, funding, resources to fulfill expectation.

Council Direction Requested



- Does Council want to pursue Sister City status?
 - If yes, shall we first enter into a Friendship City Agreement?
- Is there additional Sister City criteria Council deems important before entering partnership?