

#4

CITY OF SEATTLE
ORDINANCE _____
COUNCIL BILL 117804

AN ORDINANCE relating to the Seattle Sister Cities program, amending sections 1.24.010 and 1.24.020 of the Seattle Municipal Code; and adding new sections 3.14.440, 3.14.450, 3.14.460, and 3.14.470 to the Seattle Municipal Code.

WHEREAS, with the creation of Seattle's first sister city relationship in 1957, the residents of Seattle have demonstrated a desire to learn more about the people of other cities throughout the world and enhance international communication and understanding; and

WHEREAS, the residents of Seattle wish to encourage educational, cultural, sports, trade, technical and governmental exchanges to help acquaint themselves with the diverse countries of the world; and

WHEREAS, we wish to provide residents of Seattle with opportunities to give service to and derive benefit from community projects of international scope; and

WHEREAS, the City and its residents have benefited greatly from the activities of our sister city associations and their counterparts in other countries; and

WHEREAS, Seattle's international landscape has changed significantly since our current sister city affiliation policy was established more than fourteen years ago; and

WHEREAS, we wish to encourage best practices between Seattle and our sister cities in industries central to Seattle's international landscape, such as global health, technology, and sustainable development; and

WHEREAS, we wish to encourage international trade and tourism between Seattle and our sister cities; and

WHEREAS, Seattle's sister cities should be carefully selected to assure that these special relationships will be based upon common interests and characteristics important to both Seattle and our international partner;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. A new Section 3.14.440 is added to the Seattle Municipal Code as follows:

Objectives of Program and Office of Intergovernmental Relations Responsibilities.

1 A. Objectives. Seattle will seek to develop sister city relationships that serve the following
2 objectives:

- 3 1. The development of people-to-people relationships between Seattle residents and the
4 residents of our sister-city affiliates;
- 5 2. The education of our residents and the residents of the affiliated cities;
- 6 3. Mutual enhancement of our residents' cultural awareness and sensitivity;
- 7 4. The development of international trade and tourism;
- 8 5. The development and sharing of best practices in government departments and
9 industries engaged with and/or representing Seattle's contemporary international landscape.

10 B. Office of Intergovernmental Relations Responsibilities. The City of Seattle's Office of
11 Intergovernmental Relations (OIR) shall:

- 12 1. Act as the City's liaison for the Seattle Sister Cities program, including the Seattle
13 Sister Cities Coordinating Council;
- 14 2. Retain budget oversight for the Seattle Sister Cities program, including management
15 of the annual process of reimbursement payments to individual sister city associations for
16 eligible expenses;
- 17 3. In coordination with the Seattle Sister Cities Coordinating Council, execute a
18 Memorandum of Understanding with a local 501(c)(3) organization designated to act as a
19 treasurer for sister cities program revenues that originate from fundraising efforts rather than
20 from the City's budget; act as the authorizing agent for expenditures by the 501(c)(3) drawn
21 against these revenues.

22 Section 2. A new Section 3.14.450 is added to the Seattle Municipal Code as follows:

23 **Establishment, Duration, Modification and Termination**

24 A. In accordance with Section 1.24.020, the City Council may by resolution designate a sister
25 city. In accordance with the provisions of this section 3.14.450, the City Council may by
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1 resolution recognize a sister city association, change the status of a sister city association from
2 active to emeritus, or terminate the relationship with the sister city association.

3 B. In order to ensure that sister city affiliations genuinely engage Seattle's values, represent
4 Seattle's current international landscape, and can be managed by resident associations with
5 resources adequate to the task, proposals to the City for establishing sister city affiliations shall
6 be initiated by sister city associations in the following two-step process:

7 1. Step One.

8 a. The City of Seattle will consider a new sister city affiliation if the
9 following steps are completed:

- 10 i. Submission of a letter of intent;
- 11 ii. Submission of documentation indicating why a prospective sister
12 city is proposed and verifying that it is the center of significant educational, civic, cultural,
13 and/or political resources that offer Seattle's residents and/or City agencies significant two-way
14 exchange opportunities, which will serve to enrich the understanding of both parties;
- 15 iii. Submission of documentation indicating that a prospective sister
16 city has the prospect of being a significant business partner, or has some other major economic
17 aspect that is similar to or complementary to the economic character of Seattle;
- 18 iv. Confirmation that a prospective sister city does not have a sister
19 city affiliation with another city in the United States, or confirmation that any U.S. city having
20 prior affiliation with the foreign prospective city does not object to Seattle establishing a new
21 affiliation with the prospective sister city;
- 22 v. Confirmation that there should be no existing sister city
23 relationship between the City of Seattle and any other city of the same foreign country;
- 24 vi. Submission of a description of the sponsoring group and/or
25 sponsoring individuals;
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1 b. The above documentation must be submitted to the Seattle Sister Cities
2 Coordinating Council for its review and consideration. The Seattle Sister Cities Coordinating
3 Council may reject or accept the application by a majority vote of the full Council, and so advise
4 the Mayor, the City Council, and the applicant(s);

5 i. No further action will be taken on an application once it is rejected,
6 unless otherwise directed by a majority of City Council members or by the Mayor;

7 ii. If the application is accepted, the prospective sister city applicant
8 then must meet the criteria listed in Step 2, subsection 3.14.050.B.2, below.

9 c. The City of Seattle will recognize only one sister city association per sister city
10 affiliation.

11 2. Step Two. In order to be recognized by the City of Seattle, a sister city association
12 must verify that it has the following:

13 a. At least 30 paid members, reflecting a diverse representation of the Seattle
14 community, committed to meet the objectives of the sister city program, as outlined in section
15 3.14.440;

16 b. A formal incorporated structure in accordance with Washington State Law
17 governing nonprofit corporations (see RCW 24.03) and 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization status
18 with the Internal Revenue Service;

19 c. Established bylaws outlining annual election of officers and board
20 members, and any appropriate functional subcommittees;

21 d. A comprehensive work plan for the twelve-month period following the
22 request for formal affiliation, showing how the activities of this association will further the
23 objectives of the Seattle sister city program;

1 e. A budget for the first year's activities, showing any funds available to
2 meet the budget requirements and indicating how the association plans to fund its activities in the
3 future; and,

4 f. A preliminary indication from the government of the foreign city that a
5 sister city relationship with the City of Seattle would be welcome.

6 3. Upon a favorable review by the Seattle Sister Cities Coordinating Council, the
7 association's application will be sent to the Mayor and City Council with a recommendation for
8 a final vote.

9 C. Duration of Sister City Affiliations. Each sister city affiliation will enjoy a five-year term
10 of active status, subject to the following provisions:

11 1. Review. Beginning six months prior to the end of an affiliation's five-year term, the Seattle
12 Sister Cities Coordinating Council will make a formal recommendation to City Council on the
13 question of whether or not to renew the sister city affiliation for an additional five-year term.

14 Renewal will be the default recommendation for each affiliation, unless the Seattle Sister Cities
15 Coordinating Council or City Council, using the following independent indicators, determines
16 that the affiliation should not be renewed:

17 a. The relationship with the affiliated city continues to embody qualities and/or
18 values central to Seattle's core interests and international landscape;

19 b. The respective sister city association has maintained active status, as defined
20 by the provisions of subsection 3.14.450.D below;

21 c. The respective sister city association has avoided any punitive action(s) taken
22 by the Seattle Sister Cities Coordinating Council for faults in ethical behavior of its members;

23 d. The respective sister city association is not currently under emeritus status
24 and is not currently under Seattle Sister Cities Coordinating Council review for reactivation.

1 2. Timing of five-year terms – existing associations. Associations that hold active status
2 at the effective date of this ordinance will be subject to review in staggered groups of five
3 associations each year. The initial reviews for the first group of five associations will begin
4 within three years of the effective date of this ordinance. The next group will be reviewed within
5 four years, and so on. Following the initial review, each group of associations will be subject to
6 the five-year reviews described in this subsection 3.14.450.C.1. The groupings for these
7 staggered five-year reviews will be determined by the Seattle Sister Cities Coordinating Council.

8 3. Timing of five-year terms – new associations. The initial review for associations that
9 do not hold active status on the effective date of this ordinance, and that are later established,
10 will occur at the five-year anniversary of the date the resolution granting the association active
11 status. Following the initial review, each association under this paragraph will be subject to the
12 five-year reviews as described in this subsection 3.14.450.C.1.
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14 D. Minimum Criteria for Maintaining Active Status. All of the following minimum
15 criteria are necessary for an association to maintain active status:

- 16 1. At least (30) paid members;
- 17 2. A comprehensive work plan for the calendar year showing how the activities of this
18 association will further the objectives of the sister city program, made available to the Office of
19 Intergovernmental Relations by February 1st of each year;
- 20 3. A calendar year budget for the association's activities indicating how the association
21 plans to fund its activities and how it plans to spend the small sum of City funds available for
22 eligible reimbursable expenses, made available to the Office of Intergovernmental Relations by
23 February 1st of each year;
- 24 4. An annual report of the association's activities including explanations for how each
25 activity furthered the objectives of the sister city program, made available to the Office of
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1 Intergovernmental Relations at the same time the association submits its formal request for
2 annual reimbursement of eligible expenses;

3 5. Indication from the appropriate government officials or other organizations officially
4 delegated by the foreign city that the sister city relationship remains official and active;

5 6. Nonprofit status (see RCW 24.03). Each sister city association must register with the
6 State of Washington's Office of the Secretary of State as a nonprofit organization authorized to
7 solicit gifts or contributions. Each association must renew such registration annually and
8 maintain non-profit status with the United States Internal Revenue Service;

9 7. Annual meeting. Each association must hold an annual meeting that includes election
10 of officers and a board of directors. Such meetings must be open to the public, and a written
11 announcement or invitation must be sent at least two weeks in advance to all members of the
12 association and the Office of Intergovernmental Relations. Results of regular board elections
13 must be reported in writing to the Office of Intergovernmental Relations;

14 8. Assistance facilitating visits to the City of Seattle by sister city dignitaries. It is the
15 paramount duty of each association to help facilitate visits to the City of Seattle by government
16 officials from their respective sister cities. Such assistance often will include: developing and
17 supporting itineraries for the dignitaries of any meetings with the City of Seattle, addressing
18 transportation needs for the dignitaries; offering advice on accommodations in Seattle; and,
19 where appropriate, helping facilitate mutual exchange of diplomatic gifts for the dignitaries;

20 9. Program activity. Each association must sponsor at least two program activities
21 annually (in addition to the annual meeting). Such activities might include a forum on best
22 practices between City of Seattle experts and their counterparts in the foreign sister city; an event
23 focused on education or culture; a public local exhibit or performance, an exchange program or
24 delegation with the counterpart city abroad. These programs must be open to the public, and
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1 written announcements or invitations must be sent to all members of the association, the City
2 Councilmember acting as liaison and the Office of Intergovernmental Relations;

3 10. Seattle Sister Cities Coordinating Council and Seattle Sister Cities Presidents'
4 Committee meetings. Regular attendance by a representative who is a member of the Council
5 and/or Committee will be considered in determining an association's status.

6 E. Review and Determination of Active Status. Separate from subsection 3.14.450.C
7 above (i.e., "Duration of Sister City Affiliations"), and given the importance of maintaining
8 open, active and rewarding relationships with Seattle's sister cities, the Seattle Sister Cities
9 Coordinating Council is tasked with monitoring the vibrancy and productivity of each Seattle
10 Sister City Association. Should a sister city association or sister city affiliation cease to
11 effectively function during its five-year term, the Seattle Sister Cities Coordinating Council will
12 make recommendations about the course of action that Seattle should take with that sister city
13 partner. Active status will serve as the default status for each association. The Seattle Sister
14 Cities Coordinating Council may recommend withdrawal of an association's active status. The
15 following review process will be used by the Seattle Sister Cities Coordinating Council when
16 making these determinations:

17 1. If an association fails to meet the criteria for active status in a specific calendar year,
18 the Office of Intergovernmental Relations shall notify that association, and also will inform the
19 Mayor's Office, the City Council President, and the City Councilmember who is assigned to that
20 association as the City Council's liaison;

21 2. The Office of Intergovernmental Relations shall notify and request a meeting with the
22 association to discuss the association's non-compliance;

23 3. The Seattle Sister Cities Coordinating Council or designated representative shall
24 review the situation and shall meet with the president or other officer(s) of the association to
25 review the criteria for retaining active status;

1 4. The association shall be asked to submit a written plan for meeting the minimum
2 criteria in the next calendar year;

3 5. After completing the process outlined above and reviewing any submissions by the
4 association, the Seattle Sister Cities Coordinating Council may recommend to the Mayor and
5 City Council that a Sister City association be allowed six months to revitalize its efforts, subject
6 to all of the criteria for an active sister city association, or that the sister city relationship be
7 granted "emeritus status," the process for which is governed by section F below.

8 F. Determination of Emeritus Status. Emeritus status is intended to simultaneously honor
9 the historical relationship between the two cities and signify that the sister city relationship is no
10 longer active. Emeritus status further signifies that an association no longer has access to
11 revenues for annual reimbursement of eligible expenses.

12 1. Prior to recommending emeritus status for any sister city association, the Seattle Sister
13 Cities Coordinating Council should fulfill the following steps:

14 a. Document that the local sister city association has been inactive for one year
15 or, alternatively, conclude that the association cannot meet the requisite criteria for maintaining
16 active status;

17 b. Attempt to make contact with last known board members of the sister city
18 association and inquire about the association's posture;

19 c. Determine if the foreign city is actively engaged in additional sister city
20 relationships with U.S. cities other than Seattle.

21 2. Upon receiving this recommendation from the Seattle Sister Cities Coordinating
22 Council, the Office of Intergovernmental Relations shall conduct a review of the formal
23 relationship between the two cities, and submit its recommendation to the Mayor and City
24 Council regarding an appropriate course of action.

1 3. If a sister city association status is changed from active to emeritus status or the
2 relationship is terminated, the city abroad will be notified.

3 G. Regaining Active Status after Emeritus Status or Termination. A sister city affiliation
4 that has been granted emeritus status or had its relationship with the City terminated, may seek
5 reactivation only when City Council is formally considering adding one or more new sister city
6 affiliations. In such a case, the association will be equally subject to any process required for
7 new sister city associations. Associations with emeritus status will not enjoy special
8 consideration during this review process.

9 H. Termination. The City may, after City Council passes a supporting resolution,
10 terminate a contract with a sister city association without cause, with 30 days written notice. All
11 contracts with sister city associations shall contain a termination clause stating this same
12 provision. If the sister city abroad formally terminates its sister city relationship with the City of
13 Seattle, the sister city association's relationship with the City shall also be deemed terminated.

14 Section 3. A new Section 3.14.460 is added to the Seattle Municipal Code as follows:

15 **Coordinating Council – Appointments, Membership and Terms.**

16 A. The Seattle Sister Cities Coordinating Council shall consist of 20 members. Seven
17 members shall be comprised of the following: one representative from each of five sister city
18 associations, rotating membership according to alphabetical order of the name of the sister city,
19 every two years in order to represent all associations; one representative from the City Council,
20 chosen by the City Council President; one representative from the Office of Intergovernmental
21 Relations (OIR), chosen by the OIR Director.

22 B. The remaining thirteen members shall be appointed by the Mayor, subject to
23 confirmation by a majority of the City Council, and shall be comprised of the following: one
24 member shall be a current representative from the Trade Development Alliance of Greater
25 Seattle; twelve members shall be representatives from community, corporate, cultural,
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1 educational, governmental or non-profit institutions that have ongoing interest in sister city
2 programs. At no time shall more than five of these twelve members originate from the same
3 representative category (e.g., community, corporate, governmental).

4 C. Each of these 13 members shall serve for a term of two years. None of these members
5 shall serve more than four consecutive terms. Any vacancy shall be filled for the unexpired term
6 in the same manner as originally appointed. If a person is appointed to fill the duration of an
7 unexpired term, then that term shall qualify as one of the four consecutive terms only if the
8 portion of the unexpired term actually served is one year or more.

9 D. If the appointing authority fails to appoint or re-appoint a person to fill a Council position
10 before the incumbent Council member's term has expired, then the incumbent may remain in his
11 or her position for a period not to exceed 90 days until such appointment or re-appointment is
12 made. The authority that appointed a Council member may remove that Council member at will.
13 ~~The removal from office of a Council member who is absent without excuse from three Council~~
14 ~~meetings during any one year period.~~ The Council shall select a chair, and may adopt,
15 promulgate, amend and rescind administrative rules and regulations for its own conduct.

16 Section 4. A new Section 3.14.470 is added to the Seattle Municipal Code as follows:

17 **Coordinating Council – Purposes and Duties.**

18 The Seattle Sister Cities Coordinating Council shall help coordinate the City's sister
19 cities program, act in an advisory capacity to the Mayor and City Council, and shall have the
20 following purposes and duties:

21 A. Advise the Mayor, City Council and the Office of Intergovernmental Relations (OIR) on
22 existing or needed guidelines and policies for the overall sister cities program;

23 B. On a quadrennial basis, evaluate City resources allocated to the sister city program,
24 assess needs, and advise the Mayor, City Council and OIR appropriately;

1 C. Review proposals from individual associations or other institutions for joint programs
2 and assist in effective coordination of such activities;

3 D. Oversee efforts that incentivize, through supporting funds, programming for sister city
4 associations, which aligns with the City's present-day values and interests, and/or Seattle's
5 predominant international entities;

6 E. Coordinate fundraising and outreach efforts for joint sister city programs; assist efforts to
7 generate new membership for the separate sister city associations;

8 F. In coordination with OIR, execute a Memorandum of Understanding with a local
9 501(c)(3) organization designated to act as a treasurer for sister cities program revenues that
10 originate from fundraising efforts rather than from the City's budget; act as the authorizing agent
11 for expenditures by the 501(c)(3) drawn against these revenues;

12 G. As needed, review and recommend any beneficial update of criteria for establishing new
13 sister city affiliations; review proposals from groups wishing to receive sister city designation
14 and advise the Mayor, City Council and OIR on the selection of such affiliations;

15 H. As needed, review and recommend criteria for retaining active sister status; confer with
16 officers of any association that does not meet the criteria and discuss a plan for remedying the
17 situation. Make recommendations to City Council and/or OIR on the question of whether or not
18 an association shall be granted emeritus status, as defined in section 3.14.450.

19 I. Develop a "Code of Ethics" for the conduct of sister city activities and the responsibilities of
20 association officers and members, and enforce compliance with this "Code of Ethics."

21 Section 5. This ordinance shall take effect and be in force 30 days after its approval by
22 the Mayor, but if not approved and returned by the Mayor within ten days after presentation, it
23 shall take effect as provided by Seattle Municipal Code Section 1.04.020.

1 Passed by the City Council the ____ day of _____, 2013, and
2 signed by me in open session in authentication of its passage this
3 ____ day of _____, 2013.

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5 _____
6 President _____ of the City Council

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8 Approved by me this ____ day of _____, 2013.

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10 _____
11 Michael McGinn, Mayor

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13 Filed by me this ____ day of _____, 2013.

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15 _____
16 Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

17 (Seal)

FISCAL NOTE FOR NON-CAPITAL PROJECTS

Department:	Contact Person/Phone:	CBO Analyst/Phone:
Office of Intergovernmental Relations (OIR)	Mike Peters/684-8266	Jeff Muhm/684-8049

Legislation Title:

AN ORDINANCE relating to the Seattle Sister Cities program, amending sections 1.24.010 and 1.24.020 of the Seattle Municipal Code; and adding new sections 3.14.440, 3.14.450, 3.14.460, and 3.14.470 to the Seattle Municipal Code.

Summary of the Legislation:

This legislation codifies existing resolutions that govern Seattle's sister cities program. It also introduces four central changes to the program, including the introduction of emeritus status, the introduction of time-bound sister city affiliations, the requirement of a MOU between OIR and the nonprofit acting as a treasurer for monies collectively raised by sister city associations and a change to the composition of the Seattle Sister Cities Coordinating Council.

Background:

In 1996, City Council passed Resolution 29446, which placed a moratorium on establishing new sister city affiliations with foreign cities. A core reason supporting the moratorium was to protect the quality of Seattle's sister city program by not exceeding available resources with program expansion. In the 17 years since the moratorium went into effect, Seattle's international landscape has changed significantly and several sectors in Seattle now enjoy international prominence (e.g., global health, green build). In addition, several countries and regions of the world have developed strong ties with Seattle, areas for which Seattle has no sister city affiliations (e.g., India, Turkey, UAE, South and Central America). Responding to a strong desire to modernize Seattle's sister cities program and recognizing that the city still faces resource constraints for the program, the content of this proposed legislation allows City Council to pursue new opportunities without exceeding available resources.

Please check one of the following:

This legislation does not have any financial implications.

(Please skip to "Other Implications" section at the end of the document and answer questions a-h. Earlier sections that are left blank should be deleted. Please delete the instructions provided in parentheses at the end of each question.)

This legislation has financial implications.

(If the legislation has direct fiscal impacts (e.g., appropriations, revenue, positions), fill out the relevant sections below. If the financial implications are indirect or longer-term, describe them in narrative in the "Other Implications" Section. Please delete the instructions provided in parentheses at the end of each title and question.)

Appropriations:

(This table should reflect appropriations that are a direct result of this legislation. In the event that the project/programs associated with this ordinance had, or will have, appropriations in other legislation please provide details in the Appropriation Notes section below. If the appropriation is not supported by revenue/reimbursements, please confirm that there is available fund balance to cover this appropriation in the note section.)

Fund Name and Number	Department	Budget Control Level*	2013 Appropriation	2014 Anticipated Appropriation
TOTAL				

*See budget book to obtain the appropriate Budget Control Level for your department.

Appropriations Notes:

N/A - Because this legislation codifies existing resolutions that have long-governed the sister city program and because no new programs are funded in the proposed legislation, existing appropriation levels remain the same.

Anticipated Revenue/Reimbursement Resulting from this Legislation:

(This table should reflect revenues/reimbursements that are a direct result of this legislation. In the event that the issues/projects associated with this ordinance/resolution have revenues or reimbursements that were, or will be, received because of previous or future legislation or budget actions, please provide details in the Notes section below the table.)

Fund Name and Number	Department	Revenue Source	2013 Revenue	2014 Revenue
TOTAL				

Revenue/Reimbursement Notes:

N/A

Total Regular Positions Created, Modified, or Abrogated through this Legislation, Including FTE Impact:

(This table should only reflect the actual number of positions affected by this legislation. In the event that positions have been, or will be, created as a result of other legislation, please provide details in the Notes section below the table.)

Position Title and Department	Position # for Existing Positions	Fund Name & #	PT/FT	2013 Positions	2013 FTE	2014 Positions*	2014 FTE*
TOTAL							

* 2014 positions and FTE are total 2014 position changes resulting from this legislation, not incremental changes. Therefore, under 2014, please be sure to include any continuing positions from 2013.

Position Notes:

No new positions are indicated in this proposed legislation and the existing position is not

affected.

Do positions sunset in the future?

N/A

Spending/Cash Flow:

(This table should be completed only in those cases where part or all of the funds authorized by this legislation will be spent in a different year than when they were appropriated (e.g., as in the case of certain grants and capital projects). Details surrounding spending that will occur in future years should be provided in the Notes section below the table.)

Fund Name & #	Department	Budget Control Level*	2013 Expenditures	2014 Anticipated Expenditures
TOTAL				

* See budget book to obtain the appropriate Budget Control Level for your department.

Spending/Cash Flow Notes:

N/A

Other Implications:

- a) **Does the legislation have indirect financial implications, or long-term implications?**
N/A
- b) **What is the financial cost of not implementing the legislation?**
Financial costs remain the same, whether or not the proposed legislation is adopted.
- c) **Does this legislation affect any departments besides the originating department?**
Whereas the Mayor's Office and City Council are affected by sister city affiliations, the impact remains the same whether or not the proposed legislation is adopted. The proposed legislation functions to codify existing resolutions that govern the sister cities program.
- d) **What are the possible alternatives to the legislation that could achieve the same or similar objectives?** Should the legislation fail to be adopted, the resolutions that currently govern the sister cities program will remain in effect. Because the proposed legislation functions to codify the existing resolutions, there are not many objectives at risk. The proposed legislation, however, should make it easier for the City of Seattle to pursue new sister city affiliations without affecting budget allocations, when compared to the existing resolutions governing the sister cities program.
- e) **Is a public hearing required for this legislation?**
No
- f) **Is publication of notice with *The Daily Journal of Commerce* and/or *The Seattle***

Times required for this legislation?

No

g) Does this legislation affect a piece of property?

No

h) Other Issues:

None

List attachments to the fiscal note below:

N/A



City of Seattle
Office of the Mayor

July 30, 2013

Honorable Sally J. Clark
President
Seattle City Council
City Hall, 2nd Floor

Dear Council President Clark:

I am pleased to transmit the attached proposed Council Bill that codifies a modernized Seattle Sister Cities Program. Respectful of Resolution 29446 (establishing a moratorium on the creation of new sister city affiliations), responsive to Seattle's changing international landscape and recognizing available resources, this proposed Council Bill introduces two important mechanisms for pursuing new directions, including *emeritus status* and *time-bound* sister city affiliations. In addition, this proposed Council Bill would require the Office of Intergovernmental Relations to formalize the relationship between the Seattle Sister Cities Coordinating Council and the nonprofit that acts as the treasurer of revenues collectively raised by Seattle's Sister City Associations (e.g., the Annual Sister Cities Reception). Finally, this proposed Council Bill recommends changes to the composition of the Coordinating Council for the purpose of helping it better achieve its stated objectives, which include program fundraising and community outreach.

In these 17 years that have followed the sister city moratorium, Seattle has witnessed significant changes to its international landscape (e.g., global health and green build sectors, increased trade relations and higher education exports). In addition, a rising number of constituents are expressing their desire to increase the capacity of our sister city relationships to create and promote opportunities for exchange, trade and development. Consistent with the central concern giving rise to the moratorium in 1996, however, we need to remain responsive to the amount of available resources for this program (e.g., FTEs, general fund allocations, requests for meetings with elected officials). Viewed collectively, these realities require that we continue to find ways to pursue new opportunities without current resources. The proposed Council Bill will help us accomplish this objective by introducing mechanisms that allow our City Council to pursue new opportunities, while adhering to the existing moratorium.

I commend the City Council's longstanding commitment to Seattle's Sister Cities Program. Together, our predecessors and we have witnessed many fruitful exchanges and developments between Seattle and our sister city affiliates. I share your collective desire to modernize this program and believe the changes recommended in this proposed Council Bill will help us realize that desire. Thank you for your consideration of this legislation. Should you have questions, please contact Mike Peters, International Programs Director, in the Office of Intergovernmental Relations, at (206) 684-8266.

Sincerely,


Deputy Mayor for

Mike McGinn
Mayor of Seattle

Michael McGinn

cc: Honorable Members of the Seattle City Council

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