

**Sister Cities of Newport News, Inc.
Policy Resolution #4**

Affiliating with a New Sister City

Whereas item 4 (b) the Articles of Incorporation of the Sister Cities of Newport News (SCNN), being certified by the Commonwealth of Virginia on November 16, 1999 states that the corporation is formed,

to cause the people of the City of Newport News, Virginia and the people of similar cities of foreign nations to acquire a consciousness of each other, to understand one another as individuals, as members of their community, as citizens of their country, as a part of the family of nations; and,

Whereas the Articles of Incorporation of the Sister Cities of Newport News item 4 (f) states that the corporation is formed,

to foster and promote friendly relations and mutual understanding between the people of Newport News and people of friendly nations outside of the United States of America and to act as a coordinating body amount those organizations, groups or individuals desiring to and engaging in the activities of such international municipal cooperation; and,

Whereas SCNN seeks a reasoned and systematic approach to establishing sister city partnerships between Newport News, Virginia and cities in other parts of the world;

Therefore now be it resolved, that the SCNN Board of Directors adopts the attached Procedure for Affiliating with a Sister City and Criteria for Selecting a Sister City.

This resolution is approved by the SCNN Board of Directors at a meeting duly held June 8, 2006.

Aubrey Fitzgerald, President

Terrence K. Martin, Vice-President



Sister Cities of Newport News, Inc.

700 Town Center Drive, Room 256-A
Newport News, Virginia 23606 / USA

Procedure for Affiliating with a Sister City

A. Initiating a Request

- 1) An individual, group, organization or government body, hereinafter referred to as the *Advocate Group*, establishes contacts within the proposed sister city to determine interest in a sister city relationship. A visit, at the sole expense of the *Advocate Group* to the proposed city is optimal, but not required.
- 2) The *Advocate Group* researches the proposed new city and submits a written proposal addressing all issues identified in SCNN's *Criteria for Selecting a Sister City* (attachment #1).
- 3) The *Advocate Group* makes a presentation to the SCNN Board and demonstrates sufficient volunteers willing to take responsibility for establishing a relationship (i.e. a list of individuals, local organizations and institutions that support the partnership) and affirms, before the Board, a willingness to assist in fund raising for the maintenance of the partnership.

B. SCNN Board Response

- 1) SCNN contacts SCI to inquire if there are any impediments to "Sistering" with the proposed city. This information is then presented to the SCNN Board. If another U.S. has a sister city relationship with the proposed city, the Board will need to determine if the existing U.S. city is willing to enter into a cooperative agreement with Newport News to share the same international partner.
- 2) The SCNN Board votes for, or against, pursuing the city recommend by the *Advocate Group*.
- 3) If the vote is negative, a letter is written to the *Advocate Group* explaining why the relationship was not approved and what if anything is needed to approve the relationship.
- 4) If the vote is affirmative, the SCNN Board reports in writing its recommendation to pursue the new city to Newport News' City Manager. The City Manager is asked to send an official information packet to the Mayor of the proposed city, along with a letter asking for the establishment of a "Friendship City" relationship.
- 5) If the response from the Mayor of the proposed city is positive, the SCNN Board **votes** to approve the "Friendship City" relationship and appoints a Chair and New City Committee charged with developing and managing the new "Friendship City" relationship.
- 6) The New City Committee recruits grass roots volunteers with broad community representation and gathers letters of support from local organizations, businesses and institutions.
- 7) If possible, there should be at least exploratory visits between cities; ideally, the delegations should include at least one elected official.
- 8) Not less than one year from the date SCNN approved a "Friendship Relationship", the New City Committee can make a formal presentation to the SCNN Board recommending the establishment of a new "Sister City

Relationship” and requesting that SCNN seek approval from NN City Council to “sister”. The presentation must include:

- a. an overview of the relationship during the initial period as “Friendship Cities”,
 - b. sufficient volunteers willing to take responsibility for managing the relationship and assisting in fundraising,
 - c. letters of support from local organizations, businesses and institutions,
 - d. a proposal for exchanges/programs/activities to be executed over the next two years by the City Committee including a budget for these activities.
- 9) If the vote is approved by the Board, then SCNN will go before City Council with a presentation asking permission to enter into a formal “Sister City” relationship.
- 10) If the SCNN Board does not approve the request to “sister” then they must vote to either continue as “Friendship Cities” or end the relationship.

C. Newport News City Council Response

- 1) Newport News City Council votes to approve or reject the recommendation from SCNN to enter into a new Sister City relationship.
- 2) If the decision is positive, Newport News City Council adopts a Resolution declaring their intent to “sister” with the proposed city and the counterpart governing body of the new sister city also adopts a similar resolution of intent.
- 3) If the decision is negative, the SCNN Board must **vote** to either continue or end the “Friendship City” relationship.

D. Official Affiliation / Signing Ceremony

- 1) During an official visit (in either city), the Mayor or top elected official available from each city, sign a Sister City Agreement (attachment #3).
- 2) All official documents should be written in English and in the language of the counterpart community. Both communities should receive a signed set of the official documents in both languages for their records.
- 3) One copy of all official letters and resolutions should be sent to Sister Cities International, the U.S. Embassy in the country of the sister city and the partner country’s embassy in the U.S.

Attachment 1: SCNN’s Criteria for Selecting a Sister City

Attachment 2: SCI Sample Cooperative Agreement

Attachment 3: SCI Sample Sistering Agreements

Criteria for Selecting a Sister City

Any Advocate Group requesting the Board of Directors of SCNN to consider a new sister city must provide a written proposal that address the following criteria:

A. General Factors

1. Does Newport News already have a sister city in the proposed city's country?
2. Does the proposed city have another U.S. city partner? (It is preferred that the proposed city not have another sister city relationship in the USA. However, if the proposed city already has an official sister city affiliation with another U.S. city, this should not be an impediment to pursuing a partnership, as long as all parties agree to sign a Cooperative Agreement (see attachment #2).
3. Are there demographic similarities to Newport News?
4. Are there geographic and/or environmental similarities? (E.g. water, parks, rivers, bay or harbor).
5. Does the proposed city should have an established contact person within its governmental structure or an established liaison group to work with SCNN? If so, please give contact information (name and address).
6. Will this new sister city add to the ethnic diversity among Newport News' portfolio of sister cities?
7. Does the foreign community have sister cities in other countries? Are they successful?
8. Are there local resident nationals from the country being considered?
9. Are there local residents who speak the language of the proposed city/country, available for translating and interpreting?
10. Identify three types of exchanges that could be executed with the city/citizens.

B. Cultural, Civic and Educational Factors

1. Are there cultural institutions of interest for NN citizens (e.g. art or historical museums, theaters, symphony, musical or dance groups, libraries)?
2. Does the proposed city have local civic organizations to partner with (e.g. Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, Scouts, ethnic clubs)?
3. Does the proposed city have a formal communication system? (e.g. newspapers, TV and radio stations)
4. Does the proposed city have amateur and/or professional sports – youth and adult (e.g. soccer, baseball, hockey, basketball, tennis, water sports, golf, and lacrosse)?
5. Does the proposed city have educational institutions (e.g. pre-school, elementary, secondary, post-secondary, technical, medical schools)?
6. Does the proposed city have hospitals, health facilities, and social services?
7. Is the language of the proposed city taught in Newport News schools, local private schools and/or universities?
8. Is English taught in their educational system?

C. Economic and Commercial Factors

1. Identify the key industries (e.g. shipping, port, banking, military, tourism, medical research, biotechnology, manufacturing, environmental conservation)
2. Describe the past, current and projected economic conditions, initiatives, and development opportunities.
3. What is the trade and investment climate?
4. Does the proposed city have a Chamber of Commerce?
5. Does the proposed city have an airport or airline?
6. Does the proposed city have practical training opportunities (e.g. work force training, hotel management, information technology, culinary institutes)?
7. Identify the tourism opportunities --numbers of tourists annually, hotels, festivals, attractions.

D. Political and Governmental Factors

1. Is there diplomatic presence in the U.S. and in the country under consideration?
2. What are the protocol resources (e.g. Embassies, Consulates)
3. Does the U.S. have Visa regulations on the proposed county? What is the ease of securing visas?
4. Indicate the present degree of cooperation between U.S. and the country in political, economic, commercial , cultural areas