

1.0 Policy Intent

The purpose of this policy is to create guidelines within which twinning/sister city or project relationships with other municipalities may be established by the Town of Yarmouth.

2.0 Goals

The goals of the Twinning / Sister Cities Policy are:

- a. to create a global network of social community and economic relationships that will enhance the quality of life of Town residents;
- b. to expand and enhance cultural diversity and awareness;
- c. to create international awareness of the Town's assets; and
- d. to advance international understanding, goodwill, and peace for future generations.

3.0 Responsibilities

The responsibilities of Town Council:

- a. Town Council shall make the final decision on all twinning and project requests based on a review by Administration pursuant to the Twinning/Sister City Procedures.
- b. Town Council reserves the right to withdraw from any or all twinning and project relationships at any point in time.

4.0 Funding

Funding to host official delegations is budgeted annually and subject to Council approval. The approved Twinning budget represents the only Town expenditures for these activities. Official travel for the Mayor and Member of Council and Administration regarding twinning shall come from their individual travel accounts.

5.0 Definitions & Abbreviations

Town – The Town of Yarmouth

Town Hall – Located at 400 Main Street, Yarmouth, Nova Scotia

Council – Town of Yarmouth Council

Administration: Office of the Chief Administrative Officer for the Town of Yarmouth

Twining / Sister City – A sister city, county, or state relationship is a broad-based, long-term partnership between two communities in two countries. A relationship is officially recognized after the highest elected or appointed official from both communities sign off on an agreement to become sister cities. - Sistercities.org

6.0 Process

6.1 Community Identification

A request may be received from (or conveyed to) another municipality regarding a potential twinning or specific project relationship with the Town of Yarmouth.

6.2 Evaluation

Administration undertakes research to assess the expression of interest based on established criteria; reviews the benefits and challenges of establishing a relationship; and reports results and recommendation to Town Council.

6.3 Letter of Understanding

At Town Council's direction, a Letter of Understanding is developed outlining the goals, objectives and overall intention of the future twinning or project relationship. The Letter of Understanding is signed by the respective Mayors. It may take up to 12 months to explore areas to be developed (economic development, culture, sports, etc.).

6.4 Twining/Project Agreement

Should exploration of twinning or project relations areas provide successful, the formation of a formal twinning/project agreement is initiated and subsequently signed by the respective Mayors.

6.5 Review

Annual discussions of the twinning or project relationship will form a basis for a formal review of the agreement within five years of the signing date, although events or circumstances may require earlier review.

7.0 Criteria

The following criteria have been established for the consideration and assessment of potential candidates for a twinning or project relationship with the Town of Yarmouth.

8.0 General Connections

In order to be considered for a twinning or project relationship, both communities should:

- a. Promote goodwill and provide potential opportunities for learning.
- b. Benefit from the twinning relationship (not necessarily monetary).

- c. Have a clear understanding of the purpose and objectives of the relationship, and complementary community visions.
- d. Provide necessary resources to ensure a successful relationship and be willing to promote the relationship.
- e. Be able to effectively communicate with each other.
- f. Have demonstrated public desire and support for a reciprocal relationship.

9.0 Social Well-Being

In order to be considered for a twinning or project relationship, both communities should:

- a. Have public access to education, health care, and a variety of social programs (i.e. prevention, youth seniors, religious organizations, etc.,).
- b. Adhere to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

10.0 Cultural/Leisure Connections

In order to be considered for a twinning or project relationship, both communities should:

- a. Have public access to cultural and leisure opportunities (i.e. museum, library, performing/visual arts, festivals and sports), and that these are made available to all levels of society.
- b. Potential opportunities for the development of community relationships between cultural and sport groups.

11.0 Economic Connections

In order to be considered for a twinning or project relationship, both communities should:

- a. Have the potential to create economic development opportunities (i.e. trade, investment opportunities, and business associations) and have complimentary economic development goals and visions.
- b. Be economically comparable to Yarmouth and have a stable political and economic environment.
- c. Have complimentary industrial base/sectors and provided a range of potential opportunities for the development of relationships with small to large scale Yarmouth businesses.

12.0 Environmental Connections

In order to be considered for a twinning or project relationship, both communities should demonstrate efforts to improve the quality of life for all its citizens with respect to its environment. Efforts may include: climate change, government programs, waste diversion, recycling, water conservation, and carbon reducing measures.

13.0 Other Connections

Both communities may:

- a. Be of similar population size.
- b. Share historical significance/ties or ethnic and cultural similarities.
- c. Have similar infrastructure, amenities, geographic location.
- d. Have considerable community strengths which may facilitate in the development of cultural sport, civic, educational, technical, economic and business exchanges on a continuous basis.

Clerk's Annotation for Official Policy Book

Date of Adoption: February 13th, 2020

I certify that this 'Twinning / Sister Cities Policy' was adopted by Council as indicated above.

Town Clerk:

Date: