

CHARLOTTESVILLE SISTER CITIES COMMISSION AGENDA

Tuesday, December 3, 2024, 4:30pm – 6:00pm

CitySpace, Large Conference Room, 100 Fifth Street NE, Charlottesville, VA 22902

CALL TO ORDER

- 1. Approval of Minutes** – October 1, 2024 CSCC meeting; November 12, 2024 CSCC meeting
- 2. Discussion:** SCI State Conference
- 3. Discussion:** CSCC Long-term Goals
- 4. Website Revision Update** – Claire Denton-Spalding & Murray Susen
- 5. Traveling Trunk Recommendation** – Edward Herring & Claire Denton-Spalding
- 6. City Reports**

- ~~a. Huchuetenango, Guatemala – Edward Herring~~
- ~~b. Besancon, France – Elizabeth Smiley~~
- c. Poggio a Caiano, Italy – Stella Mattioli
- d. Winneba, Ghana – Kimberly Hayes
- ~~e. Pleven, Bulgaria – Edward Herring~~

7. Committee Reports

- a. Budget & Finance – Casey Eriksen
- b. Grants – Kimberly Hayes
- c. Education – Alicen Brown
- d. Programs & Events – Sylvia New Strawn

ADJOURNMENT

Next CSCC meeting: Tuesday, January 7, 2025, at 4:30 pm at CitySpace, 100 Fifth Street NE, Charlottesville, VA 22902

Individuals with disabilities who require assistance or special arrangements to participate in the public meeting may call (434) 970-3182 or submit a request via email to ada@charlottesville.gov. The City of Charlottesville requests that you provide a 48-hour notice so that proper arrangements may be made.

Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission

MINUTES

Tuesday October 1, 2024

CitySpace Main Conference Room

Present: Kimberly Hayes (observing remotely), Edward Herring, Stella Mattioli, Sal Moschella, Sylvia New Strawn, Elizabeth Smiley, Cherry Stewart, Murray Susen

Absent: Alicen Brown (on maternity leave), Claire Denton-Spalding; Casey Erickson

Non-voting Members Present: Maxicelia Robinson, Deputy Clerk of Council

Meeting opened at 4:50 pm. Edward Herring presided.

A quorum was NOT deemed present until the later arrivals of Cherry Stewart and Sal Moschella

Late arrivals noted: Cherry Stewart arrived 4:54 pm; Sal Moscella arrived 4:56 pm

I. **Introduction of Mayor Wade** (Elizabeth Smiley)

Elizabeth introduced the Mayor, who was invited to the meeting today to report on his official visit to Besançon September 6-9, 2024, as an honored guest of Mayor Anne Vignot, to participate in the events commemorating the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Besançon by troops of the US 3rd Infantry Division on September 8, 1944.

II. **Report: Visit to Besançon September 6-9, 2024** (Mayor Juandiego Wade)

Mayor Wade thanked the Commission for preparing him for his visit to Besançon September 6-9, 2024. Our partners in Besançon made him feel very welcome; he participated in several ceremonies with high-ranking American and French military officers. He offered three sets of prepared remarks and was also invited spontaneously to speak at other events including a community concert with an audience of 300.

Mayor Wade offered 5 takeaways on the issues of greatest importance to him:

1. The partnership is strong, thanks to the prior and ongoing work of the Commission and City staff. It's important that we continue to have regular visits between citizens and our elected officials.
2. Besançon has successfully created a pedestrian friendly community; seeing this reinforced the value of working in C'ville to share our streets even more.
3. Racial diversity: while on the surface Besançon might appear racially homogenous, he learned that there are 180 ethnic groups living and working in the greater Besançon area. Their current municipal council believes strongly that the more diverse the community is, the stronger and more resilient it is.
4. Ways in which Besançon has invested in youth include designated community spaces, activities offered on school holidays, and discount coupons for use in local venues and businesses.
5. Transit/public transportation : Besançon has benefited from national investment to make this a priority in ways that also address environmental issues, such as

parking lots that have been reclaimed for public spaces and an electric tramway system that serves the entire metropolitan area.

As a result of his meetings and visits the Mayor made a number of good connections and has already been back in touch with many of them. In addition, he returned with concrete ideas and suggestions that might be implemented in Charlottesville, in particular with regard to youth programs and transit. He also reported that he has already reached out to his contacts in other school districts about their interest in establishing school partnerships with schools in the greater Besançon area.

Commissioners responded to the Mayor's remarks and asked questions. Edward noted that he is working on a possible media interviewing opportunity to inform the community about the Mayor's trip. Mayor Wade will travel to Winneba in the Spring on a trip being organized by the Cville Winneba Foundation (this is not a Sister City Commission delegation visit and the Mayor will be paying his own travel expenses).

- III. **Grantee Report-** 2023 Grantee Benjamin Bernard, "Sister Revolutions" Podcast
Ben Bernard presented virtually. Ben's slide presentation recapped his project, including the timeline, his research in Besançon, the development of the podcast episodes, and the syllabus of the course in which UVA students developed Episode 4 (exploring the remembered revolutionary history in Charlottesville). An event is planned in Besançon on November 15 to highlight the project. The guest list includes those in Besançon who were involved with the podcast as well as a number of amateur historians and community members who have supported the Sister City partnership in various ways.

Edward asked Ben how we might make the project more available to members of both the Charlottesville and Besançon communities. Ben would like for us to have links to the podcast episode available from our website and social media platforms. In Besançon, he has explored the idea of sharing the podcast episodes with the CLA for use with students in their immersive French language classes and programs.

- IV. **Approval of Minutes** (Edward Herring)
Full Commission meeting - August 6, 2024
Motion to approve as written: M. Susen
Motion seconded: S. Mattioli
Motion approved

Annual Retreat - September 10, 2024
Motion to approve as written: S. New Strawn
Motion seconded: S. Moschella
Motion approved

Elizabeth will attach Claire's two summaries from our Retreat brainstorming activities to the October minutes.

IV. **Grantee Report** - no report

V. **CSCC Website Update** (Murray Susen)

Murray and Claire will schedule a meeting to discuss several proposed changes to the website.

VI. **City Rep Reports**

a. **Huehuetenango** (Sylvia New Strawn)

- Book initiative update: after talking with Elias Gonzalez of the Guatemala Alliance (formerly called the Ixtatan Foundation), it was decided that the books being collected should go to the existing public library in Huehue. The books will continue to be collected over the next 6 months, after which Sylvia will arrange a date for a first shipment.

b. **Besançon** (Edward Herring; Elizabeth Smiley)

- A student delegation from the Lycée Ledoux high school will be visiting October 2-11. This is the partner exchange school for Monticello High School. Elizabeth has been invited to greet the students when they arrive in Charlottesville and offer a welcome on behalf of the Sister City Commission.
- Edward reported that the CHS/Lyceee Pasteur Theater exchange scheduled for April 2025 has been approved. Two performance spaces in Besancon have been procured and plans are ongoing with partners at Lycee Pasteur for host families, performance rehearsals, etc.
- An "American weekend" program of events highlighting Charlottesville is being planned in Besançon by the Official of International Relations for November 15-17. We have been asked to send some high quality photos from around Charlottesville for the publicity and promotional materials. Elizabeth will follow up on these.

c. **Poggio a Caiano** (Stella Mattioli)

- Stella will forward names and titles to Edward to prepare a draft for an official invitation.
- Max will need a preliminary request for a delegation visit to give Mayor Wade.

d. **Winneba** - no report

VII. **Committee Reports**

a. **Programs** (Sylvia New Strawn)

- Sylvia asked if we want to participate in the Tom Tom Festival again and if so, we'll need to generate some ideas for the type of event or program

- Sylvia and Elizabeth are working on the IX Market booth idea to present at our next meeting.
- Sylvia plans to invite the Commission to her home on 12/14 for a social gathering. No Commission business will be conducted at this event.
- UVA Global Week is scheduled at end of October; Edward will reach out to individual commissioners to help staff a CSCC information table during this event.

b. Budget & Finance (Edward Herring reported in Casey Erickson's absence)

Current balance as of 9/29/24 **\$22,753.27**

Outstanding expenditures of **\$4121.40** (\$4k is the "Mismatch" grant award)

c. Grants - deferred to November meeting

d. Education - deferred to November meeting

VIII. Closing Remarks/Adjournment (Edward Herring)

Meeting adjourned at 6:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Smiley, Secretary and Besançon Representative

Next Commission Meeting:

Tuesday, November 12 @ 4:30 pm CitySpace Small Conference Room

attachments

September 2024 Retreat Event Planning Brainstorm - Summary Report

DRAFT

Event	Festival of the Book
Date	March 2025
Lead	Cherry
Support	Claire
Notes from July 2024 Meeting	
There is a precedent for this: in past years, writers from our Sister Cities have been invited to participate in the festival. We'd need to reach out to the FoTB planning committee soon about their interest in featuring or showcasing authors from our Sister Cities in next year's program (if it's not already too late), and then work with our sister city contacts to find English-speaking authors who would like to attend and discuss their books. There's the issue of language-I'm not sure how this was handled in the past. Or we work with FoTB to showcase authors from our Sister Cities or to showcase travel writings/travel books/photo books about our Sister Cities.	
What will the event look like?	
<i>In conjunction with the Virginia Festival of the Book, Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC) solicits stories from adult learners, publishes them as a book, and hosts a reading of some of these stories by the writers. This experience highlights the stories of adult learners as one of many activities during the Virginia Festival of the Book. The Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission would like to work with PVCC to extend the invitation to participate in this event to adult learners in our sister cities – Poggio a Caiano, Italy; Besancon, France; and Winneba, Ghana, as well as our Friendship City Huehuetenango, Guatemala. CSCC representatives will find comparable adult learning programs in these cities and extend an invitation to participate. Selected stories will be translated by volunteers, included in the book, and read by volunteers during the event. To build the connection to the VA Festival of the Book, PVCC and CSCC can invite an attending writer to speak at the event. CSCC and PVCC will contact the VA Festival of the Book to see who might be an appropriate speaker. Although she has not yet applied for the VA Festival of the Book, writer Luma Mufleh, a writer who wrote about her experience creating a school for refugee children, could bring an international perspective.</i>	
Where will we host the event?	
PVCC – Dickinson Building	
Who will we invite?	
PVCC students and staff; reading ESL K-12 families; TJACE and families	
How will we get the word out about the event?	
Facebook, PVCC Communication, Flyers attached to backpacks with K-12 teachers	
How much will the event cost?	
Potential speaker fees (TBD) food and drink (\$100-150)	
Any other ideas or considerations for the event?	
Looking to see if VA Festival of the Book is inviting anyone if Luma Mufleh (possible speaker) is not attending Include a raffle or giveaway	

Event	Farmer's Market
Date	August, September, and October 2024
Lead	Sylvia
Support	Elizabeth
Notes from July 2024 Meeting	
I have already cultivated a good working relationship with the Cville-Albemarle Visitors Bureau and they are definitely interested in making connections with our sister cities to discuss ways to promote tourism. They bring their mobile visitors booth to the market at IX at least once a month (or maybe every week?). Perhaps we could work together with them to have information about each of our Sister Cities available to distribute from their mobile booth at the Farmer's Market. This would involve each City Rep obtaining brochures, maps, tourism materials (in English as well) from their Sister City's tourism office that the Visitors Bureau would agree to display and distribute. It might involve a Commissioner(s) agreeing to attend the farmer's market to greet visitors to the booth answer questions about the sister cities.	
What will the event look like?	
Hosting a booth at the IX Farmer's Market. We will be under a shade tent with material. We will attend a few times per year based on participant interest.	
Where will we host the event?	
IX Farmer's Market	
Who will we invite?	
Farmer's market customers will stop by	
How will we get the word out about the event?	
Captive audience at the farmer's market.	
How much will the event cost?	
We may need to purchase a pop-up tent for our use. Might have to pay a fee to IX market.	
Any other ideas or considerations for the event?	
Participation by commissioners is important. City reps can collect materials from Sister Cities, especially brochures in English.	

Event	UVA Global Week
Date	October 26 – November 2, 2024
Lead	Edward
Support	Stella
Notes from July 2024 Meeting	
Representing CSCC at UVA Global Week.	
What will the event look like?	
One table with CSCC materials and staffed during select hours to present and answer questions about CSCC.	
Where will we host the event?	
UVA – exact location TBD	
Who will we invite?	
Part of an established group at UVA and open to students, faculty, and visitors.	
How will we get the word out about the event?	
1. Part of a UVA Announcement 2. Our own website and FB Page 3. Sent our announcements to International and Language Departments.	
How much will the event cost?	
Max \$250 – TBD	
Any other ideas or considerations for the event?	
We need flyers, pens, and other paraphernalia.	

Event	International Food Tasting / Cultural Event
Date	Before end of year / multiple times per year
Lead	Sal
Support	Kimberly
Notes from July 2024 Meeting	
Partner with PVCC and/or local restaurants for international cooking classes or international food tasting. Perhaps we could partner with the Happy Cook for cooking lessons. CSCC could host 1-4 cooking days/cooking classes to showcase a main dish from each city/culture. The Intl. Center at UVA has a great/useful/large kitchen, I would be willing to reach out to them to inquire about using it. Food/materials are usually quite cheap, and the Commission could reimburse someone to pick up ingredients/lead respective cooking days. I'd be willing to lead one for Besancon. If this is a multiple day/month event, could help round out the calendar without great expenses incurred. If we want to ensure good attendance, we alternatively could invite/organize elementary trips and make the event only open to a class/grade as a school "trip."	
What will the event look like?	
Engage restaurants to create recipes related to Sister Cities. Create a group dining experience for a reasonable price. Includes a mini lecture / talk related to the Sister City.	
Where will we host the event?	
Various restaurants in the area.	
Who will we invite?	
Entire community.	
How will we get the word out about the event?	
Local media, social media, website	
How much will the event cost?	
\$0 – self-sustaining	
Any other ideas or considerations for the event?	
Goals: community engagement exposure, create awareness about Sister City, support local business. Reach out to restaurants directly.	

Event	Harvest and Wine Festival
Date	
Lead	Casey
Support	
Notes from July 2024 Meeting	
A wine-tasting to showcase wines from our Sister Cities as part of an evening event. I feel it could be well-attended and would get us out-and-about for something "seasonal." Virginia is a wine "region," and attendees could share in the harvest of other wine regions surrounding our Sister Cities. Venue-Possibility 1: I am willing to approach Market Street Wine Shop to see if they would be interested in hosting us. This could be beneficial because they already hold regular tastings, have the venue, are centric, etc. People could also buy bottles from the shop, as they usually do at such events, so it brings a commercial benefit to them. They might host us for free/nearly free knowing that they can sell bottles of the region-specific wine. Venue-Possibility 2: I am willing to donate a selection of wines from Besancon/surrounding area, donate Ghana-based palm-wines, acquire Huehue Cab-Sauv wine barrel-aged coffee, and several bottles of Bolgheri Vermentino (Poggio) varieties a CSCC event/wine-tasting. I could reach out to venues nearby, such as Common House or C&O Gallery, to see if they'd consider hosting us there (though there would be a venue-rental fee for the Commission). I would happily host at my house, though it is in the County, and 20 mins from Downtown, so not ideal for access.	
What will the event look like?	
Where will we host the event?	
Who will we invite?	
How will we get the word out about the event?	
How much will the event cost?	
Any other ideas or considerations for the event?	

Sep 2024 Retreat
Website Updates

- Contact Information
 - Need updated members
 - Need updated contact information – Charlottesville gov't website not Gmail
 - Contacts for tourism offices in Sister Cities
 - Contact – who to talk to about planning a trip
- Scholarship / Grant
 - There is a new deadline
 - The website speaks about 2023 like it is in the future – change to 2024 process
 - Need updated details on how to apply
 - What is the process?
 - What is required to qualify for a grant?
- Volunteer / Participate with CSCC
 - Remove green writing, make sure everything is legible
 - About us – change address for questions
- Info about Sister Cities
 - Need to update with information from each commissioner
 - Sister Cities links not working
 - More button not working
 - Page for each Sister City with demo, location, photos, maps, pics of projects, \$\$ travel info, main attractions
 - Links to various resources
 - Past projects from each city with links

Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission

MINUTES

Tuesday November 12, 2024

CitySpace Main Conference Room

Present: Alicen Brown, Claire Denton-Spalding, Kimberly Hayes (participating remotely), Edward Herring, Stella Mattioli, Sal Moschella, Sylvia New Strawn, Elizabeth Smiley, Cherry Stewart

Absent: Casey Erickson, Murray Susen

Non-voting Members Present: Maxicelia Robinson, Deputy Clerk of Council

The Commissioners participating remotely cited the following allowable reasons, per *FOIA Va. Code Sec. 2.2-3708 (Effective Sept 1, 2022)*:

- Kimberly Hayes *(B.4) unable to attend in person due to her employer's requirement that she work two weeks each month in NYC; she attended remotely from NYC.*

Having exceeded the allowed number of meetings that can be attended remotely per the Commission's Policy for All-Virtual Meetings and Remote Participation (Section I, item 4), Kimberly was not permitted to be a voting member at this meeting.

Call to Order

Meeting opened at 4:33 pm. Edward Herring presided and noted an interested community member in attendance. A quorum was not deemed present until late arrivals, as noted: Cherry Stewart at 4:34 pm; Claire Denton-Spalding at 4:35 pm; Alicen Brown at 4:59 pm.

I. **Approval of Minutes** (Elizabeth Smiley)

Commission Meeting October 8, 2024

Approval of October meeting minutes was deferred to the December meeting.

- It was determined that a number of those present had not reviewed the October minutes since Agenda packets were not sent to members prior to the day of the meeting.
- Commissioners were instructed from now on to access and print their own copies of the Agenda packet from the City website prior to each meeting. The Agenda packet will be available for download 5 days prior to each meeting.

II. **Project Proposal - VA Festival of the Book** (Cher Stewart/Claire Denton-Spalding)

Cher provided an overview of the project to work with school partners in Besançon to identify adult learners who are immigrants and to solicit stories from them for inclusion in the Voices of Adult Learners program in the March 2025 VABook festival. Story writers are given a set of tips and rules for writing their stories; the focus is on the immigrant experience of learning a new language in a new country.

Cher has made several initial contacts and is awaiting a clear commitment to participate from teachers in Besançon. PVCC and VABook have already endorsed the project. The program will not require any financing from the CSCC. If Besançon is not interested in participating, Cher and Claire will explore reaching out to one of our other Sister Cities. Cher will follow up at the December meeting with updates and additional details.

- III. **Project Proposal - IX Farmer's Market Program** (Sylvia New Strawn/Elizabeth Smiley)
Sylvia asked members to read over the program proposal in preparation for further discussion and a vote decision at the December meeting. This is a low-cost/no-cost program for the Commission but will require full participation from members to succeed.

There was a brief discussion regarding obtaining tourist info from each of our Sister Cities to make available at the IX Market information table. City Reps were asked to investigate obtaining pdfs of materials that the Commission can print; Claire will coordinate the printing.

Edward stated that he would like to revive efforts to create a "traveling trunk" of CSCC and Sister City promotional materials that can be used at the market events. Claire volunteered to assist Edward in creating a wishlist for such a trunk, which then can be presented to the Commission for consideration and vote at an upcoming meeting.

- IV. **Secretary's Report** (Elizabeth Smiley)
Elizabeth announced that she will be absent from the December meeting. Claire has agreed to take minutes. Sal will assist with minutes during portions of the meeting when Claire is herself reporting.

- V. **Finance Report** (Edward Herring for Casey Erickson)

Current balance: \$22,730.27

Outstanding expenditures:

- MisMatch Around the World 2023 Grant reimbursement (\$4000.00)
- Annual Sister Cities International membership dues (\$610.00)
- Flag poles purchased for Sister City flags (\$121.40)
- Breakfast items for Nov 16 Sister City Statewide Conference (undetermined)

Outstanding credit related to meals during the Lycee Pasteur student exchange in February 2024: (\$253.50, due from Charlottesville High School)

- VI. **Chair's Report** (Edward Herring)

- Edward participated in UVA Global Week at the end of October.
- Sister Cities VA Statewide Conference on Saturday November 16, 10 am - 3 pm. The CSCC is hosting the meeting at the UVA Equity Center. Fred Blanton, VA State SCI Rep will run the meeting. We will provide morning coffee and pastries

and assist with technical/av set-up for any remote participants. Edward would like for our Commission to be well-represented, and expects about 20 in-person attendees from around the state.

VII. **2025 Grant Application Review/Program Update** (Kimberly Hayes)

The Grant application process could theoretically go live as soon as next week, however, we will need to promote it to the community first.

Motion to allocate up to \$350 toward the promotion of the 2025 Grants cycle for advertising and printing costs: E. Herring

Motion Seconded: S. New Strawn

Motion passed unanimously

November 25 was set as the date for the 2025 Grant Application Cycle to officially open. The application window will be open for thirty (30) days. Claire will strive to have promotional information distributed to accommodate this timeline.

Kimberly reported that the MisMatch Around the World Grant reimbursement will be processed once she and Grantee Darnell Williams have completed a review of several items submitted for reimbursement.

VIII. **CSCC Strategic Plan 2025-2028** (Claire Denton-Spalding)

Claire and Edward developed a draft 2025-2028 Strategic Plan, which was made available in the Agenda packet. A vote to approve the plan was deferred to the December meeting so that commissioners have time to review the proposed language.

IX. **City Rep Reports**

a. **Huehuetenango** (Edward Herring)

- Mayor Wade has expressed an interest in conducting a mayoral visit to Huehue in October 2025. Edward has reached out to the Mayor of Huehue to request a formal invitation for an official Cville delegation visit. Three City Council members have approached Edward within the past week saying they would like to travel to Huehue when a visit is organized.

b. **Besançon** (Elizabeth Smiley)

- Elizabeth shared a letter received by Mayor Wade following his visit Sept 6-8.
- She announced the retirement on December 31 of longtime sister city partner Dominique Levrey (Asst Dir of International Relations for the City of Besançon).
- November 12-17 is a “Weekend in Charlottesville” program of events, organized by International Relations in Besançon, highlighting Charlottesville and American culture, sports, and politics.

- Plans are underway for a Gospel Choir Exchange, welcoming singers from Besançon to Cville in July 2025
- Elizabeth will give a presentation on Besançon at the Speak!Language Center's monthly "Tea and Travel" series on November 19. Commissioners are welcome to attend.

Alicen reported that she has recently been back in contact with Sylvie Schmidt about the primary school exchange proposal presented by Sylvie during the Besançon delegation visit last April. Alicen will follow up directly with Elizabeth to provide more information and a status report.

c. Poggio a Caiano (Stella Mattioli)

- The official invitation to assemble a delegation to visit Cville (written by Edward, translated by Stella) has been signed by Mayor Wade and will be sent to the Mayor of Poggio.
- Stella inquired about the possibility of an honorary street naming for Poggio, possibly during the anticipated delegation visit. Max reported that the street naming process has been put on hold for the past 2-3 years, but will speak with Kyna (Clerk of Council) about whether this might be a possibility.

d. Winneba (Kimberly Hayes)

- Kimberly met last week with Nana Ghartey (former Winneba Rep, CSCC), Dave Norris (Director, Cville Winneba Foundation), and Mayor Wade to lay the groundwork for making contacts with key partners in Winneba and to explore the viability of organizing her first official City Rep visit to Winneba in 2025. and to establish a positive working relationship with the Cville Winneba Foundation
- It was noted that Kimberly's appointment to be the Winneba Representative represents the first time that there has been a clear separation between the work of the Commission and the work of the Foundation.

Edward asked Kimberly to invite Dave Norris to attend an upcoming CSCC meeting to tell us about the upcoming CWF program and to discuss how we might link, overlap, or support their projects.

e. Pleven (Edward Herring) - no update

X. **Committee Reports** - none scheduled for this meeting

Other Business

- Alicen revived the discussion of having a timekeeper at our meetings. Edward stated that he is not in favor of this, as he has worked to trim the agenda and adjourn the meetings no later than 6 pm. There was no call for a motion to discuss or vote on this item.
- Sylvia asked if members are still interested in having a social gathering at her home on December 14. Members replied in the affirmative. This will be a private social event and no Commission business will be discussed or conducted.

XI. **Adjournment** (Edward Herring)
Meeting adjourned at 5:56 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Smiley,
Secretary and Besançon Representative

Upcoming meetings:

Sister Cities International VA Statewide Conference, hosted by CSCC
Saturday, November 16 from 10-3 @ UVA Equity Center, Downtown Mall
201 W. Main Street, 3rd floor

Next Commission Meeting:
Tuesday, December 3 @ 4:30 pm CitySpace Conference Room

Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission
STRATEGIC PLAN

FY 2025 - 2028

Peace through People



Mission Statement

The mission of the Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission is to promote understanding and foster relationships between residents and organizations in the Charlottesville area and our sister cities through cultural, economic, educational, and humanitarian activities.

Objectives

Objectives for Charlottesville's Sister Cities Commission for the next three years include:

- Strengthen the relationship between Charlottesville and each of our partner cities by increasing connections between Sister City counterparts (e.g., council members, chamber of commerce) and strengthening opportunities for learning and travel between the cities.
- Improve awareness and understanding of the mission and goals of the Sister Cities Commission throughout the city.
- Develop strong, energetic, and comprehensive sister city committees with their own strategic plans and resources for contacts that focus on expanding relationships and exchanges with existing sister cities.
- Approve an annual budget and establish spending guidelines as recommended by the Finance Committee.
- Develop and promote community outreach activities to foster greater awareness and interaction between residents and our sister cities.
- Encourage cooperation and collaboration by the greater Charlottesville community to participate in outreach activities that strengthen ties with our sister cities.
- Develop and implement fund raising activities to support the Goals and Strategies.

Goals & Strategies

The goals and strategies that will support our objectives include the goals that each committee establishes annually:

- **City Activities** – Each city committee will establish activities that best fit the nature of the individual sister city relationship. These can include exchanges and other activities that encourage cultural understanding.
- **Exchanges** – The Sister Cities Commission will support exchanges between Charlottesville and her sister cities. The nature of exchanges may include, but is not limited to:
 - Educational
 - Business
 - Cultural
 - Environmental
 - Civic and Government
 - Humanitarian
- **Partnerships** – The Sister Cities Commission strives to increase partnerships with other organizations in the community. The key organizations for increased partnership include, but are not limited to:
 - City of Charlottesville

- Educational institutions, including UVA and PVCC
- Chamber of Commerce
- Local businesses
- Civic organizations
- Humanitarian organizations
- International organizations
- Local festivals
- Cultural organizations
- The Charlottesville Albemarle Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Media outlets
- **Improved Web Presence** –The Sister City Commission strives to increase awareness by improving our web presence and press coverage.
 - Promote events with connection to sister cities.
 - Identify opportunities for resident engagement.
 - Highlight success stories.
 - Provide regularly updated information on each sister city.

Stakeholders

The stakeholders for the Sister Cities Commission are the residents, businesses, and community organizations in the City of Charlottesville.

Monitoring

The Sister Cities Commission shall monitor and report on the strategic plan by conducting an annual review and providing an update to the City Council.