

**City of Millbrae
Sister Cities Commission
Annual Work Plan
Fiscal Years 2025-2027**





Sister Cities Commission Work Plan Fiscal Years 2025-2027

Chairperson: Kathleen Kimura

Vice Chair: Sammy Yim

Members: Aline Lee
John Chang
Eunice Danli
John Muniz
Akiko Soda
Chi Ying Wong Po
Peter Yeh

Vacancies: Two (2)

I. Vision, Mission, and Values

The Vision Statement

Enhancing the quality of life in our community, providing great services, encouraging community engagement, fostering economic growth, and embracing cultural diversity in a safe environment.

The Mission Statement

1. To promote a greater global understanding of other cultures and an international perspective for Millbrae in light of the significant changes happening throughout the world.
2. To grow relationships with sister cities and friendship cities.
3. To foster cultural and educational exchange programs, and identify and promote trade relationships.
4. To perform such other duties as may be assigned by the City Council.

The Values Statement

1. All meetings shall be conducted in a courteous, professional, and efficient manner, and all persons in attendance shall comport themselves in a manner befitting the proceedings.
2. Speaking without the Chair's permission or speaking out of turn in the course of any discussion is not acceptable and may be ruled out of order.
3. Obscene language or gestures, excessively loud tones, personal attacks, or any other threatening speech or actions are unacceptable and shall be ruled out of order.
4. Repetitive or unduly argumentative testimony or discussion is not acceptable and may be ruled out of order.

II. Background & Achievements

1. The Sister Cities Commission of Millbrae was started in 2001 after it had been a Sister Cities Committee since 1971.
2. La Serena Plaza was established in Millbrae in 1972. The Commission was able to rekindle their relationship with La Serena, Chile in the 1990s.
3. Established Mosta Grove Park, Millbrae in 1996.
4. The Prime Minister of Malta, the Honorable Dr. Lawrence Gonzi, visited Millbrae in 2009. The Archbishop of the Diocese of Malta visited in 2012. The President of Malta, Her Excellency Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, visited in April 2018. The Speaker of the House of Malta, the Honorable Dr. Angelo Farrugia, visited in March 2015.
5. Commissioners took a trip to Malta in April 2019. The Mayor of Hanyu has visited Millbrae three times. The Commission took four trips to Hanyu, signing the agreement in 2014. In 2017 students visited Hanyu with some of the Commissioners. In 2019, three Sister Cities Commissioners, the Mayor and the former Mayor were able to visit Hanyu, Japan again. Chair Kimura took a visit to Hanyu, Japan along with other City representatives in November 2024, at the invitation of Hanyu Mayor, Komei Kawata.
6. The Sister Cities Commission adopted Ramallah, Palestine and Dongguan, China as Friendship Cities in 2020.
7. An olive tree was planted outside of the Millbrae Recreation Center on June 2, 2022. Olive trees were planted at the exact same time with our sister city, Mosta, Malta; and

friendship city, Ramallah, Palestine. The olive tree is a symbol of peace and friendship between the three cities.

8. A ceremony to unveil the olive tree plaque was held on December 6, 2024. Representatives from the cities of Millbrae, Ramallah, and Mosta were in attendance. A notable guest was the Dr. Angelo Farrugia, Leader of Maltese House of Representatives, who also shared some words.

The following tasks were accomplished during the 2024-2025 fiscal year:

Programs and Events.

- The Sister Cities Commission hosted a booth at the 2024 Japanese Culture Festival to promote the commission's history and current relationships with other cities to the community.

Strengthen relationships with all current Sister and Friendship Cities.

- Chair Kimura took a visit to Hanyu, Japan along with other City representatives in November 2024, at the invitation of Hanyu Mayor Komei Kawata.
- A ceremony was held to officially unveil the Olive Tree plaque on December 6, 2024. Representatives from both Ramallah, Palestine, and Mosta, Malta were in attendance, along with City Representatives and City Council members. A notable guest was the Dr. Angelo Farrugia, Leader of Maltese House of Representatives, who also shared some words.

Japanese Garden/Area.

- Discussions and meetings took place regarding this new area. Concept Designs have been provided to the City and Commission, and the project continues to move forward.

Commission Statuses, Memberships, and Partnerships.

- Payment to keep the website licensing and membership to Sister Cities International was made. The commission also plans to once again be a publicity partner for the San Francisco AAPI celebration (no cost required).

III. 2025-2027 Fiscal Year Work Plan

Task 1 – Advisory Body to the City Council

As an ongoing activity, serve as the recommending body for matters as defined in Resolution No. 16-01.

Timeline: Ongoing

Cost Estimate: None.

Primary Lead: Full Sister Cities Commission

Staff Lead: Roland Tiano, Recreation Coordinator

Task 2 – Programs and Events

Annually, conduct an evaluation of programs and events for consideration and recommendation to the City Council. Collaborate with other Committees and Commissions as necessary if recommendations coincide.

Timeline: Ongoing

Project milestones:

1. Identify what City events the Sister Cities Commission will support.
2. Millbrae events will be reported to the Commission as they come along through information from the Mayor's Civic Coordinating Council Meeting.
3. Plan date(s) to meet with and collaborate with appropriate Committees and/or Commissions as necessary.

Cost Estimate: None. Sister Cities Commission currently has its own funds should they be needed/deemed appropriate in relation to this task.

Primary Lead: John Muniz

Secondary Lead: Kathleen Kimura

Staff Lead: Roland Tiano, Recreation Coordinator

Task 3 – Re-evaluate relationships with all current Sister and Friendship Cities

The Commission will re-evaluate Sister City relationships with La Serena, Chile and Mosta, Malta; and strengthen Friendship City relationships with Hanyu, Japan; Taishan, China; Ramallah, Palestine; and Dongguan, China. Re-evaluating these relationships will help the Commission decide whether to continue or end relationships with these cities.

Timeline: Ongoing

Project milestones:

1. Analyze the current relationship/correspondence with each Sister City and Friendship City.
2. Identify the relationships lacking any kind of impact or correspondence.
3. Decide how to move forward with each relationship (continue to strengthen or discontinue the relationship).

Cost Estimate: None; Sister Cities Commission currently has its own funds should they be needed/deemed appropriate in relation to this task; trips to other cities are paid for out of pocket by the traveler(s).

Primary Lead: Full Sister Cities Commission

Staff Lead: Roland Tiano, Recreation Coordinator

Task 4 – Japanese Garden

The Sister Cities Commission would like to continue the implementation of the Japanese Garden with planted cherry trees installed along the Spur Trail near the area of Magnolia Avenue and Millbrae Avenue. This garden would help recognize the City of Millbrae's relationship with Hanyu, Japan.

Timeline: To be determined. Goal for Commission is to have construction started by October 2025 (before the 20th Annual Japanese Culture Festival).

Project milestones:

1. Approve a design concept for the garden (with approval of the City of Millbrae/City Council).
2. Continue to work with the City of Millbrae on the garden as the project continues to move forward.
3. Fundraise for funds to go toward the project if needed.

Cost Estimate: TBD

Primary Lead: Kathleen Kimura

Secondary Lead: Akiko Soda

Staff Lead: Roland Tiano, Recreation Coordinator

Task 5 – Establish relationship with Taichung, Taiwan

The Sister Cities Commission has been in contact with the city of Taichung. One Commissioner made a visit and gathered a packet of information regarding the city. The Commission hopes to pursue a friendship with the City of Taichung.

Timeline: To be determined.

Project milestones:

1. Suggest the new relationship with Taichung, Taiwan to City Council for approval (if not approved during FY 2024-2025).
2. Accept the invitation given to the Commission to visit Taichung.
3. Invite Taichung representatives to visit the City of Millbrae.
4. Become a Friendship City and begin a relationship (if not approved during FY 2024-2025).

Cost Estimate: TBD; Sister Cities Commission currently has its own funds should they be needed/deemed appropriate in relation to this task; trips to other cities are paid for out of pocket by the traveler(s).

Primary Lead: John Chang

Secondary Lead: Sammy Yim and Kathleen Kimura

Staff Lead: Roland Tiano, Recreation Coordinator

Task 6 – Update Sister Cities Commission public information materials such as handouts, pamphlets, albums, and website

The Sister Cities Commission would like to update the materials and information regarding the Commission to share with the public. Each year, the Commission has a presence at the Japanese Culture Festival to share information about the Commission, their relationships, and accomplishments. The pamphlets, photos, and overall information provided for this event are dated and should be updated.

Timeline: Have all updated materials before the next Japanese Culture Festival in October 2025.

Project milestones:

1. Sort through the current materials the Commission possesses.
2. Update the necessary items with dated information/looks.
3. Print new materials for sharing.
4. Keep the website up to date.
5. Share new materials at the next festival the Commission decides to booth.

Cost Estimate: \$350 per fiscal year

Primary Lead: Aline Lee

Primary Lead: Kathleen Kimura

Staff Lead: Roland Tiano, Recreation Coordinator

Task 7 – Commission Statuses, Memberships, and Partnerships

The Millbrae Sister Cities Commission wishes to keep their annual membership with Sister Cities International, website licensing, and partnerships with certain events and organizations (with approval of the City of Millbrae).

Timeline: Ongoing

Project milestones:

1. Renew membership to Sister Cities International (annual).
2. Renew website licensing (annual).
3. Be an event partner to promote upcoming events (as approved by the City of Millbrae). Example of this is being a publicity partner with the San Francisco AAPI Celebration at no cost.

Cost Estimate: ~\$440 (annual Sister Cities International membership); ~\$192 (annual website licensing cost); Total: ~\$632 per fiscal year

Primary Lead: Eunice Danli

Staff Lead: Roland Tiano, Recreation Coordinator