



NOTICE OF MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the next ordinary meeting of an
Sister City Advisory Committee will be held on
Thursday 27 November 2025
in the Council Chambers, 43-51 Tanunda Road, Nuriootpa,
commencing at 5.30pm.



Martin McCarthy
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
THE BAROSSA COUNCIL

A G E N D A

Welcome by the Chair

1. ATTENDANCE RECORD

1.1 Members Present

Apologies

Nil

Not Present

Nil

Leave of Absence

Nil

2. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

2.1 Minutes of previous meetings – for confirmation:

- 2.1.1 Sister Cities Advisory Committee meeting held on Thursday 25 September 2025 at 5.30pm

2.2 Matters arising from previous minutes

Nil

3. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

- | | | |
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4. DISCUSSION

Discussion - Grapevine Study Tour 2026

5. DEBATE REPORT

- | | | |
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| 5.1 | City of Grapevine Texas Sister City Relationship - September 2025 Visit Delegation Report | 19 |
| 5.2 | Future of the Sister City agreement between The Barossa Council and Kumenan Town, Japan | 59 |

6. CONFIDENTIAL AGENDA

Nil

7. URGENT OTHER BUSINESS

- 7.1 Terms of Reference
- 7.2 Membership

8. NEXT MEETING

To be determined.

9. CLOSURE

MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

3.1 BAROSSA AUSTRALIA - GRAPEVINE DELEGATION VISIT SEPTEMBER 2025 REPORT AND NORTH AMERICA TRIP REPORT

**Author: Scott Hazeldine
25/94511**



Grapefest Texas 2025 – Activation Report

Overview

Barossa Australia represented the region at the **39th Annual Grapefest** in Grapevine, Texas between 11-14 September 2025 — one of the United States' largest consumer wine festivals, attracting around **200,000 visitors**. The activation formed part of Barossa's **North America engagement program** under the *2025–2026 Annual Operating Plan*, delivering against the pillars of **Brand & Demand Driving** and **Regional Leadership**.

The event continues to strengthen the long-standing **Grapevine–Barossa Council Sister City relationship** and positions Barossa as Australia's benchmark premium wine region through direct consumer, trade and media engagement.

Participating Producers

Barossa's presence showcased regional collaboration and diversity, with wines poured by:

Two Hands Wines, Yalumba, Pewsey Vale, Elderton, Hewitson, Stage Door Wine Co., Kalleske Wines and Lambert Estate (represented by Vanesa Lambert).

Objectives

To:

- Reinforce **Barossa's premium positioning** within the U.S. market.
- Support member wineries through **trade and consumer visibility**.
- Promote **Barossa's unified wine and tourism story**.
- Leverage the **Grapevine–Barossa sister-city partnership** for future cultural and tourism exchange.
- Maintain Barossa's **year-round North America presence** as part of the two-year Export Market Development Grant (EMDG)-supported strategy.

Key Activities

- **International Wine Pavilion:** Poured across VIP and public tasting zones, introducing approximately 7,000 consumers to Barossa wines.
- **Media Engagement:** Broadcast interviews with **WBAP, KLIF, KTCK Radio, CBS** and the **"We Know Texas Vino"** podcast generated strong exposure.
- **Consumer Masterclass:** Hosted a **Barossa Masterclass for ~45 guests**, including Grapevine Sister City members, reinforcing Barossa's heritage and people-centric storytelling.

- **Joint Barossa Australia/Qantas “Visit Barossa” Competition:** Support for 2 winners to visit Barossa in 2025/2026
- **Trade Relationships:** Provided opportunity for additional activations in US market such as regional updates to **MaryAnn Worobiec (Wine Spectator)**, connection with **SATC and Tourism Australia** including attendance at **Americas Market Place** Tourism Trade Show in San Francisco and time with **Napa Valley Vintners**, sharing insights on governance and collaboration.

Outcomes

Outcome Area	Result
Reach	~200,000 festival attendees; multiple radio, podcast and media features (final figures tbc)
Regional Unity	Eight Barossa producers presented collectively under “One Barossa” branding
Trade Relations	Strengthened U.S. wine trade connections; sister-city collaboration renewed
Consumer Impact	High engagement through tastings and masterclass; strong response to Barossa authenticity and diversity
Media Visibility	Five broadcast pieces, including national radio and podcast coverage
Member Value	Direct exposure to new markets; collaborative platform for export storytelling
Data Base	Expansion of Barossa Australia Database

Insights & Learnings

- **Authenticity Wins:** U.S. consumers value genuine, people-led stories — heritage and humility differentiate Barossa from other premium regions.
- **Texas Opportunity:** Grapevine and the broader Texas market remain high value for Barossa's full-bodied wine styles.
- **Trade & Tourism Synergy:** Grapevine provides a foundation for integrated campaigns connecting **wine, food and regional travel** experiences.
- **Ongoing Visibility:** Continued participation should be evaluated through ROI and alignment with other U.S. trade events (ATE, SATC/TA activations).

Performance Measures (AOP Alignment)

Measure	FY26 Target	Grapefest 2025 Result
Trade Engagement Events	3+ per year	Achieved 1
Media Features	5+ per year	Achieved 3 confirmed
Member Participation	≥6 producers	Achieved 8
Brand Exposure	National reach	Achieved
CRM Data Capture	Annual tracking	In progress

Next Steps

1. **Sister-City Collaboration:** Possibility to develop a further co-branded campaign between Grapevine and Barossa (e.g. *Taste the Sister Cities*).
2. **Trade Expansion:** Leverage media exposure to secure wider Texas distribution and retail engagement and ultimately listings.
3. **Education & Advocacy:** Deliver Barossa Wine School sessions at future Grapefests.
4. **Tourism Conversion:** Align with **SATC and Tourism Australia** to position Barossa within Texas travel itineraries.
5. Investigate access to further **event insights** through **festival committee information exchange**.
6. **CRM Integration:** Record all media, trade and partner contacts in **Zoho CRM** for EMDG and performance tracking.

Conclusion

The Grapefest activation reaffirmed that **connection, collaboration and continuity** remain central to Barossa's success in North America.

By showing up, telling our story and sharing our wines together, Barossa continues to strengthen its reputation as a **world-class region** where wine, people and place are inseparable.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

SUPPORTING REFERENCES

Nil

MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

3.2 TRADE DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP UPDATE

**Author: Executive Support Officer
25/94587**

Sister Cities Trade Development Working Group – 20th November 2025

Present

Rolf Binder (Chair), Scott Hazeldine, Heidi Helbig, Laura Hodgson, Anthony Grundel (via Teams)

Apologies

Carol Dadds, Elaine Burridge

Where to from here?

Our Sister City relationship with Grapevine Texas is a friendship and wine is a great opportunity for first engagement, but how do we go beyond wine to open the door?

Anthony (Austrade) noted that wine merchants are export ready and know the procedure. Outside wine, generally SA traders are not market ready and not prepared until they get an order and do not generally have the required FDA or SQF certifications. This process can take 18-24 months. The main targets are currently Texas and San Francisco. The Central Market chain will be meeting with Austrade on 3 December 2025 to explore new brand opportunities.

It is noted, 'Trade' developments will sit quiet for a few months until after the State Election and will depend on who gains power and what trade strategies they have in place.

Anthony and Heidi are working on a campaign "Are you export curious?" and would like to work together with RDA, Barossa Australia and The Barossa Council to increase the exposure and explore if there is an appetite in the local community.

Would there be interest in presenting case studies of local businesses that have international trade experience:

- JT Johnson (Kapunda) – export stockfeed pellets
- EAC Animal Care (Tanunda) – international stockists

Barossa Australia Visit to the US

Ruby's visit to the US was strategic with a tourism focus; to look at the marketplace in San Francisco, especially with United Airlines direct flights from Adelaide commencing, visited Napa vintners and Canada. It is becoming more challenging from a wine perspective, but tourism is strong.

Opportunities in Grapevine

- Opportunities for shop frontage in Grapevine is very limited. Is there an opportunity for our products to be in bottle shops/hotels, especially during Grapefest?
- Grapevine events work in 13-week cycles and are the staff are very busy. It would be beneficial to come up with an easy opportunity that is hard to refuse.
- Grapevine brand is their Christmas Festival and being the Christmas Capril of Texas. Would importing US products improve export opportunities?

Exchanges

Could we draw on their festival expertise?

- The Grapevine delegation has not included their events team as they are always planning and working on events.
- There have been wine maker swaps with the US for many years. Would there be capacity for council staff to do a swap or exchange around festivals and tourism.

Barossa Young Ambassador Program

Barossa Young Ambassador Program is of great interest to Grapevine in terms of the ambassador being fully immersed and being a spokesperson for the region.

- Suggestion that we contact Grapevine to assist with initiating this program.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

SUPPORTING REFERENCES

[About Austrade | Austrade](#)

[Export Pellets - JT Johnson's](#)

[Horse & Pet Care Supplements For Health & Wellbeing – EAC Animal Care](#)

MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

3.3 UPDATE - NURIOTPA HIGH SCHOOL STUDY TOUR TO GRAPEVINE TEXAS - SEPTEMBER 2025

**Author: Milly Hoffmann
25/95001**

The 2025 Nuriootpa High School Study Tour to Grapevine, Texas, was an extraordinary milestone for our school, our students, and our community. It represented the coming together of education, agriculture, and culture, and a pioneering partnership that continues to grow between the Barossa and Grapevine, Texas.

A Journey Built on Community and Vision

This international exchange was over a year in the making. Through BBQs, raffles, sausage sizzles, and sponsorships, students and staff worked together to raise over \$40,000. It was more than a fundraising campaign; it was a lesson in perseverance, teamwork, and pride. Each event united families, businesses, and students around a shared goal to give young people the chance to experience agriculture and education on a global stage.

As Rick Lane reflected, "The year-long campaign of fundraising the money to provide for the experience was the perfect lead up to the actual travel and group bonding." The preparation did not just fund a trip; it built a team and strengthened the belief that regional students can achieve incredible things through hard work and community support.

The Barossa Council, Sister City Advisory Committee, and many local sponsors were instrumental in making this vision possible. Their ongoing investment in this Sister City relationship has created an opportunity that will inspire a generation of young agricultural leaders.

The Texan Experience

From the moment we landed, the Texan hospitality shone through in every detail. Our hosts in Grapevine went above and beyond, crafting an itinerary that was both educational and unforgettable. Students stayed in pairs with host families, allowing them to experience daily American life: school, sport, food, and family in a genuine and meaningful way. The warmth of our hosts turned this study tour into a true cultural exchange.

Students attended Grapevine High School, participating in agriculture and technology classes, exploring livestock barns, and meeting students involved in FFA (Future Farmers of America). They were inspired by the scale and professionalism of agricultural education in Texas and quickly saw the parallels between their own experiences at Nuriootpa and those of their Texan peers.

At Tarleton State University, we toured the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, an institution home to over 2,500 students studying disciplines such as Meat and Food Science, Horticulture, and Ranch Management. Highlights included visiting the "Purple Tractor" student-run teaching lab, touring the dairy and equine centres, and tasting student-prepared Texan BBQ brisket. It was a clear example of how applied learning and industry partnerships prepare young people for the realities of modern agriculture.

Culture, Pride, and Connection

The trip was filled with unforgettable moments: the emotional 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony where Miyu laid a wreath alongside Mayor Bim Lange, the lively Grapefest Grape Stomp where "Team Old Skool" (Mr Lane and Miss Hoffmann) narrowly took the win, the Fort Worth Stockyards where students experienced the heritage of the cattle industry firsthand, and the Mexican rodeo during Mexican Independence Day, which highlighted Texas' rich cultural diversity.

Rick described it perfectly: "The simple aspects of life like food, sport, education, and shopping were amazing to our students. The balance of learning experiences and free time was ideally balanced, and we always felt that we were supported and prioritised."

Every part of the trip highlighted how agriculture, culture, and people are connected. The students learned that while we may live on opposite sides of the world, our values of hard work, innovation, and community are the same.

Agriculture: A Global Connector

As an educator and Wine and Agriculture Coordinator, I have long believed that agriculture is one of the most powerful tools for teaching resilience, leadership, and connection. This tour reinforced that belief in ways I could never have imagined.

Watching our students stand in university lecture halls, tour feedlots, speak with industry mentors, and proudly represent South Australian agriculture on the international stage was one of the proudest moments of my career. It reminded me why I do what I do: to create pathways for young people to see agriculture not as an obligation or a fallback, but as a profession of purpose and innovation.

We need more students in agriculture. Not just those who love the hands-on side, but those who are driven to innovate, problem-solve, and find new ways to feed the world. Agriculture today is about technology, sustainability, leadership, and global connection. The students who joined this tour felt that passion deeply both through their involvement in the Barossa community and through their connection with the FFA students in Texas. They saw how agriculture can unite people, spark ideas, and inspire purpose across continents.

This experience reaffirmed how critical it is to showcase agriculture. It is not enough to teach theory in classrooms; students need to see, feel, and live the scale of the industry, its diversity, its challenges, and its global reach. The study tour showed our students that agriculture connects people across borders, industries, and generations. It is both a science and a story of community.

The Lasting Impact

The relationships forged between students, staff, and host families will last a lifetime. Our young people returned home with a deeper understanding of the world, an appreciation for culture, and a stronger sense of identity as future leaders in agriculture.

For me personally, this tour was a reminder of the power of education when it is grounded in authenticity and community. As someone deeply invested in agricultural education, I saw the spark this experience lit in our students, and it reaffirmed my own purpose: to keep building programs that empower regional youth and celebrate the value of agriculture in every sense.

As Rick said, "The food, the transport, the hospitality, and the whole feel of the tour was unforgettable." And it truly was. This was far more than a trip. It was a transformation for our students, for our staff, and for me as an educator. It was a reminder that when we invest in connection, community, and agriculture, we invest in the future.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

SUPPORTING REFERENCES

Nil

MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

3.4 FOREIGN ARRANGEMENTS SCHEME - DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE

**Author: Manager Governance and OMCEO
25/95058**

The Barossa Council has been contacted and met with representatives from the Department of Foreign Affairs to discuss and be informed of Local Governments entering into foreign arrangements including Sister City relationships.

The Foreign Arrangements Scheme commenced on 10 December 2020. Its purpose is to ensure that arrangements between state or territory governments (and their entities) and foreign entities do not adversely affect Australia's foreign relations and are not inconsistent with Australia's foreign policy.

The Scheme provides for states and territories and their entities to notify or seek approval from the Minister for Foreign Affairs if they propose to negotiate, or enter, or have entered a foreign arrangement. It creates obligations in respect of both future arrangements and existing arrangements. It also deals with subsidiary arrangements entered into for the purposes of implementing a foreign arrangement.

The Barossa Council has formally registered with the portal (link below).

Please find attached correspondence from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in relation to the Foreign Arrangements Scheme.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 Letter to local councils [↓](#) 
- Attachment 2 Guidance Note on Considerations for negotiating and entering foreign arrangements [↓](#) 
- Attachment 3 Fact sheet 3 - Local Government [↓](#) 

SUPPORTING REFERENCES

[Foreign Arrangements](#)



Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

13 June 2025

Dear Lord Mayors and Mayors

Copy to: Chief Executive Officers

Foreign Arrangements Scheme

I write to you from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) regarding the Foreign Arrangements Scheme (the Scheme).

As you may already be aware, the Scheme commenced on 10 December 2020 following the passage of *Australia's Foreign Relations (State and Territory Arrangements) Act 2020* (the Act). It regulates state and territory government, local government, and Australian public universities.

The Scheme requires local governments to notify the Foreign Minister (via DFAT) of written arrangements that they enter into with foreign entities. Arrangements are written agreements, contracts, understandings or undertakings between state and territory entities and foreign entities. They can include Sister City Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding. Failure to notify an arrangement is a breach of the Scheme and may lead to the arrangement being voided or cancelled by the Foreign Minister through their powers under the Act.

DFAT has undertaken a comparison of open-source reporting of arrangements entered into by Australian local governments, against local government arrangements that have been notified under the Scheme. This revealed what appears to be considerable under-notification of such arrangements, suggesting a lack of awareness within the local government sector of obligations under the Scheme. We are keen to work with local governments to ensure all written arrangements (existing and new) are notified to us and work collaboratively with you to manage foreign policy risks.

To assist, I attach copies of our Fact Sheet for Local Government, and our updated guidance note on ***Considerations for negotiating and entering foreign arrangements*** that reflect the most current and applicable advice from DFAT for Australian entities. We hope this guidance supports you in your understanding of the Scheme, and your interactions with foreign entities and decision-making on arrangements. We will be updating other guidance documents and fact sheets (available on our website¹) throughout the year and welcome feedback on these products.

DFAT representatives will soon be visiting all states and territories for our outreach program and hope to meet many of you in-person. We will also be in attendance as an exhibitor at the Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly in Canberra from 24-27 June and look forward to engaging with you there.

For those who we are unable to meet with in-person, DFAT will also deliver an **online webinar series** in the second half of 2025, with several different 60-minute sessions including an

¹ www.foreignarrangements.gov.au

introduction to the Scheme, foreign policy updates on specific geographic regions and themes, and practical user advice for the Online Portal. We encourage your staff to register their interest by completing the webform [here](#).² Further information on session dates and timing will be provided to the registrants.

We have also developed a **free e-Learning course** to aid local government understanding of the Scheme. The course provides an overview and purpose of the Scheme, information about notification requirements for different entity types and using the Online Portal. Further information about the Course can be found on our website.³

We thank you for your continued support and remain ready to assist your international engagement needs. Please do not hesitate to contact us regarding prospective or current arrangements, please contact us by emailing foreignarrangements@dfat.gov.au.

I would also be happy to speak directly if there are any issues you wished to raise with us in advance of our state and territory outreach.

We look forward to engaging with you.

Yours sincerely



Julie Heckscher
First Assistant Secretary
Regulatory and Legal Policy Division
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

² <https://forms.office.com/r/Fqx2PFcukS>

³ www.foreignarrangements.gov.au/e-learning

JUNE 2025



Australian Government

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

AUSTRALIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS (STATE AND TERRITORY ARRANGEMENTS) ACT 2020

GUIDANCE – CONSIDERATIONS FOR NEGOTIATING AND ENTERING FOREIGN ARRANGEMENTSⁱ

State and Territory entities play an important role in advancing Australia's interests globally. The Foreign Arrangements Scheme, established by *Australia's Foreign Relations (State and Territory Arrangements) Act 2020*, fosters a systematic and consistent approach to foreign engagement across all levels of Australian government. It ensures that arrangements between State or Territory entities and foreign government entities do not adversely affect Australia's foreign relations and are not inconsistent with Australia's foreign policy.

This Guidance Note should be read together with 'Fact Sheet 6—Comparative Schemes'.

Purpose

International engagement by States, Territories, universities and local government supports Australia's economic and social interests, promoting innovation and building people-to-people links. However some arrangements carry higher risk of exposure to undue influence or acts that can undermine not only participant's security, but also Australia's national interests.

Under the Foreign Arrangements Scheme (the Scheme), the Minister for Foreign Affairs has the power to vary or cancel a foreign arrangement if satisfied the arrangement:

- would adversely affect, or would be likely to adversely affect, Australia's foreign relations; or
- would be, or would be likely to be, inconsistent with Australia's foreign policy.

This Guidance Note identifies some of the matters (including particular provisions) in a foreign arrangement that the Commonwealth pays particular attention to when reviewing arrangements under the Scheme. Accordingly, while the Foreign Minister retains a broad discretion, careful application of this Guidance Note in the development of foreign arrangements may increase the prospects that the Foreign Minister will not be called upon to exercise their powers under the Scheme.

This Guidance Note outlines general principles that State and Territory entities should consider when negotiating or entering into foreign arrangements to help avoid, and mitigate against, risk to Australia's foreign policy and foreign relations interests. State and Territory entities should recognise that the foreign policy and foreign relations risks may change during the life of an arrangement and ensure that arrangements are able to appropriately adapt to such circumstances.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE ENTERING AN ARRANGEMENT

Who are you dealing with?

What are you cooperating on?

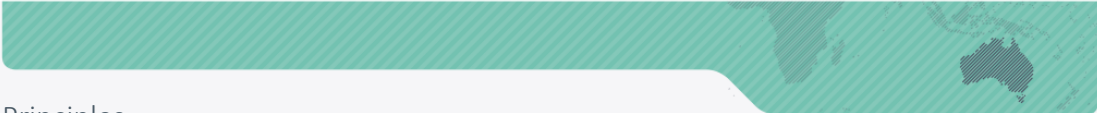
Is the arrangement too good to be true? What may the foreign entity gain?

How can you mitigate risks that may arise over the life of an arrangement? How can you exit the arrangement?

Does the arrangement operate in a manner that could be contrary to our foreign policy or national interests?

Be alert to concerning behaviours by the foreign entity or others associated with an arrangement.

@DFAT DFAT.GOV.AU



Principles

State and Territory entities should apply the following general principles in negotiating or entering foreign arrangements.

Due diligence

All State and Territory entities subject to the Scheme are expected to know their foreign partners.

State and Territory entities should undertake due diligence to understand foreign entities *prior to* negotiating and entering foreign arrangements with those entities. This includes understanding the nature of the foreign entity and its role within or connection to a foreign government. For example, it is important to determine if foreign universities do not have 'institutional autonomy' from a foreign government and therefore fall within scope of the Scheme (see Guidance – Institutional Autonomy).

If a third party is acting as an intermediary or facilitator, consider whether they are, in effect, acting for the foreign partner, acting inappropriately or in a manner inconsistent with their purported role.

The University Foreign Interference Taskforce Due Diligence Working Group has developed two resources to support due diligence processes:

- [Factsheet on using open-source information for due diligence.](#)
- [Due Diligence Assistance Framework.](#)

The Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) Due Diligence Integrity Tool can be requested by emailing: outreach@asio.gov.au

Language

It is important that foreign arrangements are negotiated carefully, and that the commitments and obligations in foreign arrangements are clear, able to be easily understood, and not open to different interpretation. It should be clear whether the arrangement intends to create legally binding obligations, and under which jurisdiction. If the arrangement is not intended to be legally binding, care should be taken to avoid using language that unintentionally binds the parties.

Where foreign arrangements are negotiated in multiple languages, each language version of the arrangement should be specified in the text. Generally, the text of the foreign arrangement should make clear that all language versions have the same effect, but it is also acceptable - in an Australian context - that the English language version prevails.

It is important to ensure that each language version faithfully corresponds with others, including by seeking comparative translations where necessary. This ensures all parties have the same understanding of their commitments and obligations, and are clear about the relationship they are creating.

Duration, Termination and Variation

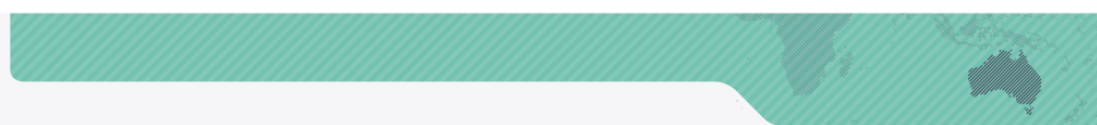
Foreign arrangements should not be drafted to remain in operation for an indefinite period of time. Including an end date, or defined period of operation, provides an opportunity to review commitments and obligations and consider whether the arrangement should be renewed or allowed to expire.

Foreign arrangements should include provisions that allow for the Australian entity to terminate a foreign arrangement by written notice to the foreign entity, or vary by mutual consent. This provides the Australian entity with the flexibility to manage the arrangement, including in the event there is a shift in Australia's foreign policy or foreign relations interests.

A provision which allows for termination if required under Australian law, without penalty, may also assist to manage the financial consequences of any declaration of the Minister for Foreign Affairs under the Scheme.

Foreign laws

State and Territory entities should very carefully consider provisions in a foreign arrangement that incorporate by reference or otherwise assert the application of a foreign law, particularly where the subject of the arrangement is activity occurring in Australia. Depending on the specific foreign law, subject matter and context, this could give rise to foreign policy or foreign relations risk.



Consider also whether the proposed foreign partner to an arrangement might be subject to foreign laws obliging the entity to comply with demands from other State bodies to pass on intellectual property or sensitive information under the auspices of foreign interests. For countries in which such laws apply, confidentiality agreements or similar are ineffective mechanisms to prevent the unwanted transfer of sensitive information or research.

Governance

Foreign arrangements should provide for clear and transparent governance, including specifying the roles and responsibilities of parties with respect to decision-making. State and Territory entities should be wary of 'unbalanced' governance arrangements; for example, provisions that establish boards of management that give a majority membership or right of veto in decision-making to the foreign entity. Ceding control of decision-making to a foreign entity has the potential to create or hinder the effective management of foreign policy or foreign relations risk.

Consider whether the arrangement is intended to be legally binding. If the arrangement is not intended to be legally binding, such as a non-binding Memorandum of Understanding, avoid using legally binding terms and language.

Dispute resolution provisions in arrangements should not provide undue control over disputes to the foreign party. If there is external dispute resolution, it should be provided by a neutral third party, such as a specified court or tribunal for legally binding arrangements.

Alignment with Commonwealth Government Policies

Ensuring consistency across the implementation of Australian government policies provides greater protection against contravening foreign policy or acting against foreign relations interests. For example:

- the [*List of Critical Technologies in the National Interest*](#);
- the [Defence Export Controls framework](#);
- [Safeguarding Australia's Military Secrets legislation and program](#);
- [Australia's sanctions regime](#).

Intellectual Property Provisions

Before formally entering an arrangement, ensure that provisions regarding Intellectual Property reflect policy settings, priorities and protect Australian investment, innovation and commercial interests.

Academic freedom

The Australian Government is committed to protecting academic freedom and freedom of speech in Australian education. This ensures that Australia's educational institutions remain critical institutions where ideas are debated and challenged.

Provisions in foreign arrangements that ensure respect for academic freedom and freedom of speech, and ensure Australian entities retain control over the delivery of educational courses, including curriculum and course content, help to mitigate foreign policy and foreign relations risk. For example, the mandated inclusion of military training or political ideology within curriculum may not effectively mitigate foreign policy or foreign relations risk.

Interactions with foreign entities

State and Territory entities should exercise a degree of caution in professional interactions with foreign entities, and their intermediaries or facilitators, and be wary of possible coercive behaviours. These kinds of behaviours could include (but are not limited to): being presented with excessive or lavish gifts, strongly encouraged to consume alcohol, pressured to make decisions in unrealistic timeframes, receiving abrupt, urgent or demanding communications, efforts to bypass agreed communication or decision-making channels, offers of cash or bribes, or interactions of a threatening or harassing nature.

Foreign policy and foreign relations risk

Overall, entities should be aware of the international environment in which they operate and the potential for foreign policy or foreign relations risk. This includes asking

- is there a publicly-stated foreign policy position on engagement with the foreign entity's government?
- are there any relevant UN or Australian autonomous sanctions?
- does the foreign entity have defence or intelligence links?
- are there any other concerns with the foreign entity, such as human rights track record, intellectual property protection, espionage and foreign interference?
- does the arrangement align with Australia's stated foreign policy positions and values?
- does the arrangement relate to technology listed on the List of Critical Technologies in the National Interest?
- does the arrangement relate to dual-use technology?
- does the arrangement involve a sensitive location, such as Antarctica, the high seas or space?
- does the arrangement involve personnel who could be targeted for their knowledge of, or access to, sensitive information?
- would the foreign arrangement require the Australian entity or its staff to act in breach of Australian law, or act inconsistently with Australian foreign policy (even if outside Australia).

If in doubt, seek advice from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade:
foreignarrangements@dfat.gov.au.

Comparative schemes

This Guidance Note should be read alongside guidance issued by other government agencies that ensure international engagement is undertaken consistent with Australia's national interests.

For example, the *Guidelines to Counter Foreign Interference in the Australian University Sector*, developed by the University Foreign Interference Taskforce (available [here](#)), provide principles-based guidance for universities to mitigate against risks from espionage and foreign interference in the university sector.

The higher education sector has obligations under the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021*, which higher education providers must meet and continue to meet to be registered to operate in Australia. Higher education providers have obligations for arrangements where delivery of a course is undertaken with other parties, including with overseas entities. Higher education providers are also responsible for ensuring that all Threshold Standards are met when delivering Australian qualifications, regardless of whether the deliver takes place in Australia or in an offshore location. Resources published by the [Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency](#) provide advice on preventing non-compliance with the Threshold Standards.

Fact Sheet 6 has more information on comparable schemes.

ⁱ This guidance sets out some of the requirements of the *Australia's Foreign Relations (State and Territory Arrangements) Act 2020*. It is not comprehensive and should not be relied on as a definitive interpretation of the Act. It is also not intended as legal advice. Readers should rely on the substantive provisions of the Act and any applicable rules in assessing their obligations and seek independent legal advice.

JANUARY 2021



Australian Government

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

AUSTRALIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS (STATE AND TERRITORY ARRANGEMENTS) ACT 2020

FACT SHEET 3 – LOCAL GOVERNMENTⁱ

Australia's Foreign Relations (State and Territory Arrangements) Act 2020 (the Act) fosters a systematic and consistent approach to foreign engagement across all levels of Australian government. It creates a scheme to ensure that arrangements between State or Territory governments and foreign government entities do not adversely affect Australia's foreign relations and are not inconsistent with Australia's foreign policy.

This Fact Sheet should be read together with 'Fact Sheet 1–Overview'

How does the scheme apply to local government?

The Foreign Arrangements Scheme (the scheme) creates obligations for local governments that propose to enter, or enter, an arrangement with a foreign entity.

Under the Act, a State/Territory entity includes 'a body established for the purposes of local government by, or under a law of a State or a Territory'.

- Local governments are **non-core State/Territory entities**. As a consequence, all foreign arrangements entered into by local government are **non-core foreign arrangements**. This is the case irrespective of the nature of the relevant foreign entity with whom the arrangement is entered into.
- **Foreign entities** include a foreign country, its national government and a department or agency of that national government, as well as sub-national level governments in foreign countries, departments of those sub-national level governments, public entities established under the authority of a foreign country or its national or sub-national government, universities without institutional autonomy and any other entities prescribed by the rules.

What does the scheme do?

The scheme creates a 'notification' process for 'non-core foreign arrangements'. The scheme applies to prospective arrangements, as well as pre-existing arrangements already in operation. Further detail is in Fact Sheet 1.

How will I comply with obligations under the scheme?

State and Territory entities notify the Minister of arrangements through the online portal:

www.foreignarrangements.gov.au.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade administers the scheme.

Where can I get further information?

Contact the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade at foreignarrangements@dfat.gov.au

ⁱ * This FACT SHEET sets out some of the requirements of the Australia's Foreign Relations (State and Territory Arrangements) Act 2020. It is not intended to be comprehensive and should not be relied on as a definitive interpretation of the Act. It is also not intended as legal advice. Readers should rely on the substantive provisions of the Act as enacted by Parliament, and any applicable rules, in assessing their obligations and seek independent legal advice.

DEBATE REPORT

5.1 CITY OF GRAPEVINE TEXAS SISTER CITY RELATIONSHIP - SEPTEMBER 2025 VISIT DELEGATION REPORT

**Author: Manager Governance and OMCEO
25/94455**

PURPOSE

To provide Council with a Sister City Visit Delegation Report in accordance with Council's Sister City Relationships and Engagement Policy following the official delegation travel to the City of Grapevine, Texas in September 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

That Sister Cities Advisory Committee receives and notes the Sister City Visit Delegation Report provided at Attachment 1 in accordance with requirements set out within Council's Sister City Relationships and Engagement Policy following the official delegation travel to the City of Grapevine, Texas in September 2025.

REPORT

Background

Following the signing of the intention to enter into a Sister City Accord with the City of Grapevine, Texas during their visit in April 2023, the Barossa Council was invited to attend Grapevine's premier event, GrapeFest 2023, in September to sign the official Sister City Accord.

Mayor Bim Lange, Jo Moen, Acting CEO The Barossa Council, Scott Hazeldine, CEO Barossa Australia, and a delegation of Barossa Winemakers travelled to the City of Grapevine, Texas from 12th to 18th of September to attend GrapeFest 2023 which facilitated the official signing of a Sister City Accord between the two local government entities.

Since then, Council has proactively established a Sister Cities Advisory Committee (the Committee) pursuant to Section 41 of the *Local Government 1999*. Council then appointed the member representatives to the Sister Cities Advisory Committee on 20 February 2024, consisting of a diverse group of representatives from education, economic development, events, service clubs, community development and business owners.

Members of the Committee are outlined below:

Committee Member	Who
Chairperson	Mayor Lange
Council Staff	Janine Harding, Sister Cities Program Manager Catherine Nacey, Executive Support Officer
Community Members	• Ingrid Day

	• Carol Dadds • Vanesa Lambert • Louise Hickinbotham
Organisational Members	• Scott Hazeldine – Barossa Australia • Rolf Binder - RDA, BGLAP • Sandie Simons - Rotary Club of Barossa Valley • Milly Hoffmann & Rick Lane - Nuriootpa High School

The Committee, in partnership with Council, industry and community, objectives are to support Council's strategic commitment to the development and maintenance of effective international relations via Sister City and Friendship City relationships and provide a framework for entering into, maintaining and assessing such relationships to ensure that maximum benefits can be realised by both parties.

The Committees Terms of Reference and through the signed Accord with Grapevine outline the following:

The Committee will provide advice and support to Council, industry and the community to enhance Sister City relationships and programs and will actively undertake the facilitation of activities with the objective of nurturing and fostering the relationship and providing cross-cultural understanding, building connected communities, and generating mutual benefits for Sister Cities by:

- 2.1.1 Facilitation of the sharing of best practice and exchange of new ideas and successful experiences across a range of disciplines to improve capability and build more vibrant cities and local government authorities.
- 2.1.2 Fostering trade and investment initiatives that promote business development, provide accelerated access and open doors into key markets to connect our cities more effectively with buyers and sellers.
- 2.1.3 Promotion of each other's cities as visitor destinations, cross participation in festivals and events and facilitation of the exchange of destination marketing expertise and experience to enhance the tourism market intelligence of both cities.
- 2.1.4 Facilitation of education, cultural and sporting exchanges that empower our youth, support the education sector, celebrate our unique heritage, create opportunities for artistic expression and activate community participation.
- 2.1.5 Enhancement of each other's reputation and capacity to meet emerging policy issues facing our cities in addition to capitalizing on opportunities to explore innovations and improvements in science and technology, viticulture, rural and urban design, public infrastructure and sustainability.
- 2.1.6 Fostering friendship, mutual regard, and understanding among the citizens of our communities.

The Committee are committed to facilitating and working towards implementing 'on ground' these objectives with direct benefit to our community and industries within.

Introduction

The Committee has been meeting regularly and actively working towards developing the Sister City relationship with clear benefits coming to fruition over the past 12 months.

In support of the Committee objectives, The Barossa Council hosted a delegation of officials from City of Grapevine during the Barossa Vintage Festival in April 2025.

Some of the direct community benefits have been:

- The Committee presented a \$3000 cheque to 2025 Barossa Young Ambassador, Amber Perry, who demonstrated a deep commitment to the community, to attend Grapevine with the other official delegates to perform her role as Barossa Ambassador.
 - Delegates from Grapevine have a keen interest in youth development and education and were particularly interested in the Barossa Vintage Festival's Barossa Young Ambassadors Program which they are now implementing into their 'Grapefest' program.
- The establishment of a Committee Study Tour Working Group
 - Supporting and sending 8 agriculture students and 2 teachers from Nuri High School to join the delegation in Grapevine.
- Supporting our local service groups; Lions, Kiwanis and Rotary to work side by side with the Study Tour students and teachers – connecting, mentoring and creating lasting relationship bridging generational gaps.
 - Seeing amazing fundraising efforts with widespread community support over a 9 month period raising well over \$40,000!
- The establishment of a Working Group focusing on economic development that is working to strengthen regional industries, support economic growth and enhance trade and community prosperity.
- Participation in the Barossa Vintage Festival Parade with a Sister City Float as well as the Touchdown and Taste Off – American Football event, promoting awareness of the Sister City with the community.
- Implementing a 'Meet the Makers' Trade Show so Grapevine delegates could experience some of our local businesses show casing their wares – 14 stall holders including, Aboriginal wines, local gin distilleries, artists, artisan foods and products.

Discussion

A comprehensive itinerary of events, site visits and networking opportunities were curated for The Barossa Council Delegation over the seven day visit providing an opportunity to develop key relationships with City of Grapevine Council Officials, Staff, Business Leaders, representatives from Rotary, Volunteer Groups, the Education Sector and the Tourism industry, Texas government officials to provide a platform for future conversations and collaborations in the pursuit of education, tourism, trade, cultural and innovation outcomes.

In addition to key contacts made with Texas stakeholders, Barossa's delegates also capitalised on the opportunity to establish strong connections with delegates attending Grapefest from the City of Grapevine's other sister cities including West Lothian, Scotland and Parras de la Fuente, Mexico.

Representatives from Barossa Australia and the contingent of Barossa Wineries were also afforded a range of media, education, networking and promotional opportunities as a result of being showcased as a featured wine region at GrapeFest 2025.

A detailed Sister City Visit Delegation Report is provided at Attachment 1 which provides the following for Council consideration:

- Background
- Grapevine Key Statistics
- City of Grapevine Summary & Community Profile
- Detailed Visit Program Overview
- Study Tour
- Barossa Young Ambassador
- Grapevine Visit Key Takeaways
- Financial Analysis
- Acknowledgement and Thanks

The report also sets out a number of observations and opportunities for improvement within the Barossa Council region based on learnings from the visit. These ideas and concepts, summarised in overarching themes within the Key Takeaways section of the report, will be explored further by Council Officers in due course.

To provide Council with additional details on the success of the visit to Grapevine, Attachment 2 provides a collated summary document of Student and Parent commentary and feedback on the experience of being part of the inaugural Study Tour.

Summary and Conclusion

In accordance with Council's Sister City Relationships and Engagement Policy, a Sister City Visit Delegation Report has been prepared for Council consideration following Council's official delegation travel to the City of Grapevine, Texas in September 2025.

ATTACHMENTS OR OTHER SUPPORTING REFERENCES

Attachment 1 Grapevine, Texas Sister City Visit Delegation Report - September 2025



Attachment 2 NHS Study Tour Feedback - Students and Parents - 2025  

Supporting reference

[Sister City Relationships and Engagement Policy](#)

[Terms of Reference - Sister Cities Advisory Committee](#)

COMMUNITY PLAN / CORPORATE PLAN / LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Corporate Plan

- CS10 Economic Development - Facilitating the economic well-being and quality of life of the local businesses and the community
- CS20 Tourism - Provision of a range of tourism services, including; managing the nationally accredited Barossa Visitor Centre, development and maintenance of tourism resources both digital and printed, customer service delivery encouraging longer stays, dispersal throughout the region, and maximising visitor yield and investment in our region, Tourism Business Support, capacity building, training, product development, marketing

Legislative Requirements

Nil

RISK MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

These statements are qualitative in nature and designed to provide an indication of Council's general position when deciding to take or retain risk in pursuit of its objectives.

1. SERVICE DELIVERY

Refers to the delivery of services to the community, which includes the systems and physical assets that enable provision of these services, including structures (such as roads, buildings and facilities) as well as IT infrastructure, plant, vehicles & other equipment.

Nil

2. SUSTAINABILITY & ENVIRONMENT

Relates to measures to preserve, protect and minimise impact on the natural environment, including sacred and indigenous lands, flora, fauna, heritage, water, waste, hazardous materials and pollution.

Nil

3. FINANCIAL

Refers to planning and control of Council's budget to align with the sustainable achievement of the desired outcomes articulated in its Community Plan.

Council's total financial commitment for the Mayor, CEO and Sister Cities Program Manager's visit to Grapevine including flights, entry requirements, minor incidentals in September 2025 is outlined in the report noting catering and accommodation paid by City of Grapevine as part of the reciprocal arrangements under the sister city arrangements and other out of pocket expenses paid by the individuals. Council did not fund any costs of any other visitor. This expenditure was incurred in accordance with approved budget provisions and relevant policy settings (Sister City Relationships and Engagement Policy; Clause 3.5.3 of the Elected Member's Allowances and Benefits Policy; and Clause 4.1.3 of the Employee Travel and Accommodation Policy) and approved by Council at its meeting of 18 February 2025.

Deliverables and outcomes associated with this spend are detailed within the attached report.

4. PEOPLE

Relates to recruitment, retention, wellbeing and safety of employees and volunteers and engagement and management of contractors as well as the wellbeing and safety of the community.

Nil

5. REPUTATION

Relates to policy, decisions, actions and circumstances that may cause Council to lose credibility with the community, ratepayers, key stakeholders, other levels of government and its own employees and contractors.

The delegation visit to Grapevine, Texas has reinforced the community's appreciation of the valuable opportunities created through our Sister City relationship, highlighting the direct benefits it brings, particularly for our young people.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Engagement with the community representatives appointed to the Sister Cities Advisory Committee enabled extensive collaboration across the community to support the official delegation.

The strong community involvement and shared commitment were instrumental to the success of this delegation.

This partnership not only made the visit possible but also strengthened Council's reputation as a collaborative, community focused organisation that values and invests in international relationships.

On behalf of the Sister Cities Advisory Committee, we extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to all who contributed.



GRAPEVINE, TEXAS

Our Sister City

Delegation Report –
September 2025

BACKGROUND

Following the signing of the intention to enter into a Sister City Accord with the City of Grapevine, Texas during their visit in April 2023, Mayor Bim Lange, Jo Moen, Acting CEO - The Barossa Council, Scott Hazeldine, CEO Barossa Australia, and a delegation of Barossa Winemakers travelled to the City of Grapevine, Texas from 12th to 18th of September 2023 to attend GrapeFest which facilitated the official signing of a Sister City Accord between the two local government entities.

Since then, Council has proactively established a Sister Cities Advisory Committee (the Committee) pursuant to Section 41 of the *Local Government 1999*. Council then appointed the member representatives to the Sister Cities Advisory Committee on 20 February 2024, consisting of a diverse group of representatives from education, economic development, events, service clubs, community development and business owners.

The Sister City relationship is based on an alignment of our core values, with both cities incredibly passionate about preserving and upholding character, traditions and cultural identity. We are also equally aspirational about our future and the ways in which we can innovate and diversify to maintain our international brand and build a region that is vibrant, sustainable and owns its place in a global marketplace.

Delegates attended the City of Grapevine, Texas from 9th to 16th of September to attend GrapeFest 2025:

- Mayor Bim Lange
- Martin McCarthy - CEO The Barossa Council
- Janine Harding - Sister Cities Program Manager
- Rolf Binder & Louise Hickinbotham - Sister Cities Advisory Committee Members
- Amber Perry - Barossa's Young Ambassador for 2025
- 8 Nuriootpa High School agriculture students and 2 teachers

A comprehensive itinerary of events, site visits and networking opportunities were curated for The Barossa Council Delegation over the seven day visit providing an opportunity to develop key relationships with City of Grapevine Council Officials, Staff, Business Leaders, representatives from Rotary, Volunteer Groups, the Education Sector and the Tourism industry, Texas government officials and sister city delegates from Scotland and Mexico to provide a platform for conversations and collaborations in the pursuit of education, tourism, trade, cultural and innovation outcomes.

In addition to key contacts made with Texas stakeholders, Barossa's delegates also capitalised on the opportunity to establish strong connections with delegates attending Grapefest from the City of Grapevine's other sister cities including West Lothian, Scotland and Parras de la Fuente, Mexico.

Representatives from Barossa Australia and the contingent of Barossa Wineries were also afforded a range of media, education, networking and promotional opportunities as a result of being showcased as a featured wine region at GrapeFest 2025.

CITY OF GRAPEVINE SUMMARY



Grapevine, Texas established in 1844 is in the northeast Tarrant County of Texas. It's known for its restored 19th- and 20th-century buildings and authentic Texas charm.

The City represents the best of what Texas has to offer: a thriving historic downtown, an active and vibrant community, fantastic shopping, dining, and entertainment, and a coveted school district in the center of one of the fastest-growing metropolitan areas in the country. Grapevine sits in the center of the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) metroplex with direct access to seven major highways as well as DFW International Airport and the TEXRail commuter line, providing unparalleled connection to Fort Worth now and Dallas by 2024.

Grapevine uses a council-manager government, consisting of an elected city council, composed of the mayor and six at-large council members, with a city manager appointed by the council. Mayor William D Tate is the current Mayor and Mr Bruno Rumbelow is the City Manager.

In addition to services traditionally managed by local government in South Australia, The City of Grapevine also manages water supply, housing, birth and death certificates, municipal court services, and emergency services.

The City of Grapevine Community Profile

The City of Grapevine Estimated Resident Population is 51,454, across 22,637 households.

The City of Grapevine's median age is 37.81, the median household income is \$115,468 USD (\$177,475 AUD), and the unemployment rate is approximately 2.9%.

The city has a total labour force of 33,395 with an average commute time of 23 minutes and access to one of the nation's top passenger & cargo airports.

- ★ Host to Dallas Fort Worth International (DFW) Airport -2,000 plus daily flights around the globe and within four hours of any city in the US, and Canada.
 - ★ 10 minutes from DFW International Airport to Historic Downtown.
 - ★ Over 15 million visitors per year.
 - ★ 20 hotels, over 6000 hotel rooms & suites and 1 million square feet of meeting space.
 - ★ 30 plus boutiques/shops on historic main street and 200 plus restaurants.
 - ★ 20 plus cultural sites and attractions and 8,000 acres of fun on Lake Grapevine.
-

Location and Boundaries

Grapevine is a city located in northeast Tarrant County, Texas, United States, with minor portions extending into Dallas County and Denton County. The city is located in the Mid-Cities suburban region between Dallas and Fort Worth and includes a larger portion of Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport than other cities.

The City of Grapevine has a total area of 35.9 square miles (93 km²), of which 32.3 sq mi (84 km²) are land and 3.6 sq mi (9.3 km²) are covered by water.

Name Origin

The City takes its name from the wild mustang grapes that grew abundantly across the area.

Settlement History

In October 1843, General Sam Houston and fellow Republic of Texas Commissioners camped at Tah-Wah-Karro Creek, also known as Grape Vine Springs, to meet with leaders of 10 Indian nations. This meeting culminated in the signing of a treaty of "peace, friendship, and commerce," which opened the area for homesteaders. The settlement that emerged was named Grape Vine due to its location on the appropriately named Grape Vine Prairie near Grape Vine Springs, both names in homage to the wild grapes that grew in the area. Grapevine is the oldest settlement in Tarrant County, dating back to 1844 when Texas was a republic before statehood in 1845.

The first recorded white settlement in what would become the modern city occurred in the late 1840s and early 1850s. General Richard Montgomery Gano owned property near Grape Vine and helped organize the early settlement against Comanche raiding parties before leading his band of volunteers to battle in the American Civil War. Growth during the 19th century was slow but steady; by 1890, Grape Vine had about 800 residents supported by such amenities as a newspaper, a public school, several cotton gins, a post office, and railroad service. The settlement made continued gains early in the 20th century and on January 12, 1914, the post office altered the town's name to one word: Grapevine.

On Easter Sunday, April 1, 1934, Henry Methvin, an associate of Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow, killed two police officers, E.B. Wheeler, and H.D. Murphy, during an altercation near Grapevine.

Grapevine's population fell during the interwar period, as the economy stagnated, though the city was officially incorporated in 1936. Cotton was the primary crop for Grapevine until the early 20th century when it was overtaken by cantaloupe farms that accounted for 25,000 acres.

For several decades, until the early 1970s, the Rotary Club sign outside of town boasted Grapevine as the "Cantaloupe Capital of the World". Population growth and economic gains resumed to some extent in the decades after World War II. The opening of Dallas Fort Worth International Airport in 1974 spurred massive development. Grapevine depended heavily upon agricultural production prior to the mid-20th century but transformed into a regional center of commerce because of its proximity to the airport's north entrance.

In recent years, several wineries have opened in Grapevine, and the city has been active in maintaining its historic downtown corridor.

Economy

Grapevine's economy is largely centered around travel and tourism, although those sectors also promote strong growth in other areas such as entertainment, retail trade, and transportation. Travelers arriving to and departing from Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport make up the majority of the city's visitors. The Gaylord Texan and Great Wolf Lodge are the two biggest hotels in Grapevine and among the biggest in the Metroplex. The hotels also have large convention centres and entertainment venues. In 2020, Coury Hospitality launched Hotel Vin, a new boutique hotel attached to the recently finished TEXRail station.

Nearby Grapevine Mills Mall is a regional outlet shopping center with many amenities, including a movie theatre. Embassy Suites Grapevine and the DFW Lakes Hilton complex also lay adjacent to Grapevine Mills and Bass Pro Shops.

In addition to these areas, Main Street in historic downtown Grapevine is a popular attraction. Public amenities like City Hall, the Grapevine Convention and Visitor's Bureau, the city library, public parks, and a recreation center are located on Main Street, nestled in between a wealth of small businesses. These include antique stores, restaurants, bars, theatres, and many specialty shops. The Grapevine Vintage Railroad follows a historic route between Grapevine and the Fort Worth Stockyards, departing from a station on South Main Street. The city is also the home of several wineries and tasting rooms including Umbra Winery as well as the Texas Wine and Grape Growers Association.

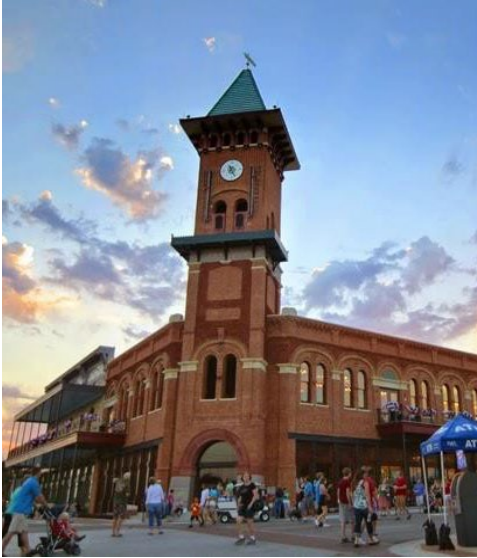
According to the City's 2024 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, the city's top employers are:

#	Employer	# of Employees
1	Dallas Fort Worth International Airport	2110
2	Gaylord Texan Resort	2000
3	Grapevine Colleyville Independent School District	1830
4	Paycom	1180
5	Baylor Medical	660
6	Great Wolf Lodge	600
7	City of Grapevine	590
8	Kubota	520
9	Boeing Distribution	500
10	Hyatt Regency DFW	500

Sister Cities

-  [Krems an der Donau](#), Austria (since 1999)
-  [Parras de la Fuente](#), Mexico (since 1996)
-  [Linlithgow, West Lothian](#), Scotland (since 2008)
-  [The Barossa Council](#), Australia (since 2023)

PROGRAM

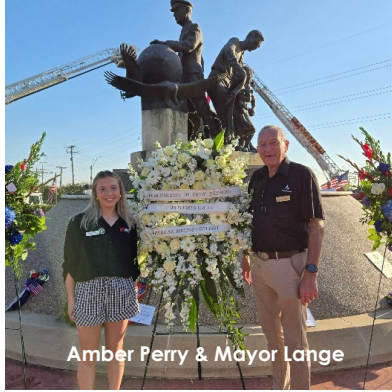
Day 1 - Tuesday, 9 September 2025	
Flight Arrival at Dallas Fort Worth Airport – 4.30pm	
Activity	Notes
Grapevine Convention & Visitors Bureau – Meet & greet of the Study Tour Host families.	The Grapevine Convention & Visitors Bureau is wholly managed under the City Council Governance structure and acts as the promotional arm of the City of Grapevine and is responsible for actively selling, marketing and promoting Grapevine globally. The Bureau promotes the city's hotels, meeting facilities, historic and family attractions, festivals and events, dining establishments and retail businesses to the group meetings and leisure markets.   Nuriootpa High School Study Tour students with Host Family Colleyville students on arrival.

Day 2 - Wednesday, 10 September 2025	
Activity	Notes
Grapevine's Historic Main Street	 Main Street banner including SA Flag
Tour City Hall & Council Chambers with Deputy City Manager, Jennifer Hibbs	Delegates met and received presentations from a range of executive staff including planning, corporate services and finance, Chief of Police, Fire Chief, marketing and media, toured the City Hall and the Mayor's Office and met with Deputy City Manager Jennifer Hibbs. Grapevine, TX - Official Website Official Website (grapevinetexas.gov)     Mayor Tate's office Grapevine Council Chambers

Peace Circle	The Peace Circle Is an interpretation of a moment in time of a meeting of Republic of Texas President Sam Houston and 10 American Indian chiefs/captains on the Grape Vine Prairie in 1843. The work of public art features 11 bronze statues standing 1.25 percent larger than life size, representing Republic of Texas President Sam Houston and American Indian chiefs/captains from the Delaware, Chickasaw, Waco, Tawakoni, Keechi, Caddo, Anadarko, Ioni, Biloxi and Cherokee Nations.  Three of the Peace Circle statues
Grapevine Observation Tower and Harvest Hall	Located in Historic Downtown Grapevine, the 42,000-square-foot rail station consists of Harvest Hall, a European-style food hall with seven globally-inspired kitchens; Third Rail, an indoor/outdoor entertainment and event venue; 38,000-square-foot expansive outdoor Plaza; and a 150-foot-tall Observation Tower with 360-degree views of the city and beyond all connected to Hotel Vin, a six-story, 120-room Marriott and a 552-space parking garage.   View of Main Street from the tower  One of the Visitor Information counters

Grapevine Rotary Meeting and Luncheon.	Barossa was warmly welcomed by the Grapevine Texas Rotary Club who are a key partner in the Grapevine Sister City Program. Mayor Bim Lange made a presentation to Grapevine Rotary Club on behalf of James Dunn, President of Rotary Club of Barossa Valley.   Judge Bill Brandt & Mayor Lange
Tour the Grapevine Service Centre with Public Works Director, Bryan Beck	The center sustained damage during a tornado in Dec 2013. About 95 city employees were displaced after the building had damage to its interior walls, furniture, computers and water damage. Public Works's new facility (2021), consolidates several departments; water, wastewater, streets, and fleet maintenance with new fleet maintenance bays, office, space for storing materials & equipment.  Staff making street signs 
Tour of Dove Park Pickleball Courts & Casey's Clubhouse	A community park with inclusive, wheelchair-accessible play structures and adaptive equipment. The playground includes separate areas for toddlers and older children, a rubberised play surface in most areas, bathrooms, and a large, shaded pavilion. This special playground was inspired by a little girl, Casey, and her dream to play with the other children.   Nuriootpa High School Study Tour

Oak Grove Sports Complex	A multi-field regional complex with batting cages, baseball fields, and softball fields with a shady playground, picnic area, comfortable stadium seating, and a concession stand. Both the park and the play area are handicap accessible. Oak Grove Baseball Complex is an award-winning baseball/softball complex.  
Tour Historic Nash Farm	Delegates and students learnt about Grapevine and the city's heritage by visiting Nash Farm. Purchased by Thomas Jefferson Nash in 1859, this historic landmark brings history to life through exhibits, interpretive programs and touchable displays.  Nuriootpa High School Study Tour & Council delegates
Welcome Dinner at Farina's Winery and Cafe	Farina's Winery and Café is located within the festival district and while Barossa delegates networked with Grapevine City Staff and Sister City Representatives. We were able to watch Council staff and volunteers facilitate Festival set up.  Mayor Lara from Parras, Mexico, Mayor Lange and Grapevine's Mayor Tate  Amber Perry, spoke of her experiences and role as ambassador for our region.

Day 3 - Thursday, 11 September 2025	
Activity	Notes
9/11 Remembrance Ceremony	Delegate's attendance at the 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony at the Grapevine memorial. Mayor Bim Lange and Nuriootpa High School's, Miyu Endersby were honored to lay a wreath on the Barossa's behalf, to remember those who died and reflect on the bravery of first responders.   Amber Perry & Mayor Lange
Tour of Sister City Friendship Hall	The Barossa Council's honorary wall within the City of Grapevine's Sister City Friendship Hall. Barossa was represented along with Krems, Austria, West Lothian, Scotland and Parras, Mexico.   Louise Hickinbotham – Barossa's Sister Cities Committee Member
Mayor's Brunch Reception Honoring GrapeFest Sponsors	A reception held to 'kick off' Grapefest and to acknowledge and thank the sponsors and volunteers supporting the event.  Three Mayors and Rolf Binder Barossa's Sister Cities Committee Member

39th Annual GrapeFest, A Texas Wine Experience

Delegates were able to spend time experience the Grapefest' Event on Main Street. The 39th annual GrapeFest saw more than 200,000 wine lovers gather in Grapevine, Texas to celebrate all things vino.

Grapevine's historic Main Street was closed to traffic for the four-day event, which included wine tasting, charcuterie and candle-making workshops, live music, festival food, live entertainment, market stalls and GrapeStomp competitions

Barossa's presence showcased regional collaboration and diversity, with wines poured by: **Two Hands Wines, Yalumba, Pewsey Vale, Elderton, Hewitson, Stage Door Wine Co., Kalleske Wines** and **Lambert Estate** (represented by Vanesa Lambert).

**Sister City Friendship Dinner at The REC's Stewart Hall**

Delegates enjoyed a networking dinner with key city staff, Elected Members, volunteers and families. The evening also gave opportunities to network with Grapevine Sister City Committee Members and delegates from Mexico and Scotland. Entertainment was provided by Grapevine Colleyville Heritage High School – dance group, the Panteras.



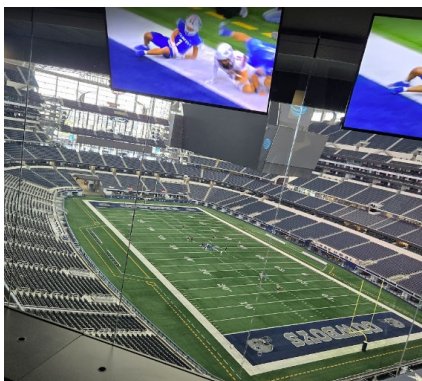
Day 4 - Friday, 12 September 2025	
Activity	Notes
Colleyville Heritage High School tour and pep rally	Both Nuriootpa High School Study Tour students, their teachers and the Barossa delegates joined in the excitement of a Traditional Texas High School Pep Rally. Followed by a guided tour of school district facilities to include: Technology, Education & Career Center (TECC), Agricultural Facilities, Multipurpose Activity Centre, (MAC) and Mustang-Panther Stadium and more.   The School has donated and sent American Football playing gear to the Adelaide American Football League.    

Lunch with Grapevine-Colleyville Independent School District Superintendent, Brad Schnautz, and teachers	Nuriootpa High school students and teachers, along with the Council delegation had lunch at Cracker Barrel with the Grapevine-Colleyville Independent School District Superintendent, Brad Schnautz, and teachers - Stephanie Speaks - Director of Career and Technical Education & Charity McConnell - Coordinator of Career and Technical Education. 
Guided tour of Kubota Tractor Headquarters - facilities and lab	Kubota is proud to support the National Farmers Federation of America. The tour included presentations on the organisation, its community and educational support programs and commitment to innovation and environmental sustainability.  
Mustang Panther Stadium Panthers Football game	Nuriootpa High school students and teachers, along with the Council delegation attended a High School Football game. The entertainment was provided by the schools themselves, from music, band, dancers, cheerleaders, batons etc.  

Day 5 - Saturday, 13 September 2025	
Activity	Notes
Grape Stomp	Mayor Lange and CEO, Martin McCarthy participated in the 2025 Mayoral GrapeStomp competition for the 3 Sister Cities. The competition, featuring costumes from each country, was a great opportunity to build festival goers interest in Australia and more specifically the Barossa, with our Aussie Cricketers being a major hit with the crowds. Mayor Lange & CEO, Martin McCarthy Amber Perry working with our wineries - Internation Wine Tent
The Grape Gatsby Soiree Event	"Grapefest Grape Gatsby" was the theme of the 39th Annual GrapeFest wine festival in Grapevine. The theme celebrated the 100th anniversary of The Great Gatsby with a Roaring Twenties atmosphere, including art deco designs and a "Grape Gatsby" Champagne Terrace. The event featured wine tastings, live music, food, and family-friendly activities. Nuri High School Study Tour lads & host family

Day 6 - Sunday, 14 September 2025	
Venue	Notes
Grapevine Vintage Railroad to the Fort Worth Stockyards	All the Barossa delegation climbed aboard the Grapevine Vintage Railroad, authentic 1920s-era luxury coaches that carry the spirit of a bygone age and experienced a ride through the heart of Grapevine, Texas. As the train chugged along the Historic Cotton Belt Route, landing in Fort Worth Stockyards featuring Western heritage museums, live music, rodeos, cattle drives, shopping and dining.
	
	 Mayor Lange with the entertainers on the train
	 

Day 7 - Monday, 15 September 2025	
Venue	Notes
Hosted 'free time' by Jan & Dennis Luers and Duff O'Dell	The Grapevine Sister City Committee Members, Jan and Dennis Luers and Council Member, Duff O'Dell, kindly took the Council delegates 'out and about' seeing road infrastructure, hotels, the Lakes and visits to a few shops.    Esparza's Restaurant  Mayor Lange and Louise Hickinbotham
Farewell Dinner	The Council delegates were farewelled by City Officials, Council Members, Sister City Committee Members with thank you and acknowledgement speeches.  PW McCallam, Amber Perry, Mayor Tate and Mayor Lange 

Day 8 - Tuesday, 16 September 2025 Flight Departure at Dallas Fort Worth Airport at 7.30pm	
Venue	Notes
Meow Wolf Grapevine - The Real Unreal	Meow Wolf Grapevine's The Real Unreal is an immersive, explorable art and entertainment wonderland located in the heart of the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex. 
AT&T Stadium – Dallas Cowboys Tour	The Nuriootpa High School Study Tour and Council delegates were treated to a special 'behind the scenes' tour of AT & T Stadium, home of the Dallas Cowboys.  
Dinner and Games at Chicken N Pickle – Fond Farewells	 

STUDY TOUR

(*from their socials)

Day 1

We are beyond 'grapeful' for the warm welcome from host families and for the Barossa Council's Sister City partnership with the City of Grapevine Texas Government.

Day 2

Before lunch we spent the morning at **Grapevine High School**. We kicked off with breakfast alongside the school leadership team, then jumped into some incredible agriculture classes. We learned about making mums for homecoming, tried our hand at metal work for ag, and even did a scavenger hunt where we sampled all sorts of American snacks and drinks.

Meeting the barn animals and exploring the ag facilities was a huge highlight. The passion here for agriculture is contagious. A personal highlight for Miss Hoffmann during the school visit was meeting the class pet Gary the chinchilla!

We also got to see basketball practice and experience the school cafeteria, which was such a different vibe to back home in Australia.

We were blown away by the entrepreneurial businesses run by Grapevine High students. We were even lucky enough to buy some drip from their merchandise store The Outpost which is run entirely by students. So cool!

In the afternoon we headed out on a tour of Grapevine's historic and community sites including the Peace Plaza, Treaty of Peace Circle, the Observation Tower, Dove Park Pickleball Courts, Casey's Clubhouse all-abilities playground and the Historic Nash Farm.

A MASSIVE shoutout to the ag teachers and staff at Grapevine High. Y'all are legends! Your passion and energy for your students is amazing and we feel so lucky to be welcomed into your world.

Day 3

Yesterday began with a significant and emotional moment as Miyu, alongside Barossa Mayor Bim Lange, proudly laid a wreath at the 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony. The Grapevine memorial is a place of reflection honouring those lost and the bravery of first responders. It was such a powerful and special moment to be part of.

From there we explored the Sister City Friendship Hall, toured T.V. Munson Viticulture and Entomology Centre, grabbed lunch at Macalester's, and even found our new favourite stop, Buc-ee's!

Dinner brought the best surprise with the Colleyville dance team welcoming us in followed by a tour of the REC and Senior Centre with Chris Smith and Trenton Kelley. Decked out in Texas outfits, our students sowed the seeds of friendship with host siblings, plenty of laughs, and of course the Nutbush!

Our host siblings summed it up:

- ❤ Reese: "My highlight was going to the 9/11 memorial and honouring those who lost their lives."
- 💛 Liv: "My favourite part was being able to spend time with the Aussies and build good relationships :)"

From teaching the dance team to taking centre stage - our Study Tour legends brought Aussie spirit to the pep rally with the Nutbush

Day 4

Today our Study Tour legends took part in GrapeFest Grape Stomp and took on their leaders, Team Old

Skool (Mr Lane & Miss Hoffmann). The competition was fierce, but Old Skool managed to take out the win over the reigning champs Riley & Nick — by just a smidge! In the second heat, our crew battled it out with their Grapevine host siblings. The O2 team of Olivia's took the crown, winning by just 2oz (59.147ml)! A seriously solid effort from everyone.

We're loving every minute of GrapeFest and are looking forward to a big day tomorrow at the Stock Yards, taking the heritage train, and finishing it all off with the rodeo!

Day 5

After a dashing dinner in the roaring 20s the night before last, our crew spent all day yesterday exploring the **Fort Worth Stockyards Stables!** Of course, we couldn't resist stopping in the shops for a few souvenirs along the way.

We kicked things off by taking the heritage vintage railway train from Grapevine to Fort Worth — which was a hoot! Along the way we learned about the famous Texas Longhorn and even got to see a Longhorn cattle drive.

Joke of the day: Why do they put a bell on the first bull? Because the horn don't work! Thanks to Mexican Independence Day, we were lucky enough to soak up the vibrant Mexican culture of Texas and even enjoy a traditional Mexican rodeo!

Of course, we cannot thank our Barossa Council enough for their Sister City relationship with Grapevine, Texas. Grapevine also shares a Sister City relationship with Mexico, which made the celebrations even more special.

What a day it was. Now we're looking forward to the last couple of adventures before we head home.

Day 6

Yesterday we spent time at "the Purple Tractor" and the Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources area of Tarleton State University. We loved learning about Texas agriculture and checking out their processing facility, livestock barns, dairy, equine centre, greenhouse and more!

Fun fact: Tarleton's College of Agriculture & Natural Resources has over 2,500 students and offers hands-on programs like Meat & Food Science and Ranch Management. The Purple Tractor itself is a student-run teaching lab where fresh meats, produce, and nursery plants are sold — pretty agmazing!

Lunch was a student-made BBQ brisket feast which was delicious and banana pudding! Afterward we popped into a thrift store where Mr Lane found some gems and we grabbed Tarleton merch. Bonus highlight: we even saw a squirrel! A special shoutout to our host teachers, Mr Durr and Mrs Moore, who are proud Tarleton alumni and of course agmazing.

That evening we joined the Grapevine-Colleyville FFA chapter meeting to thank our host families, then rounded out the night with some kickball (the Aussies were too busy kicking butt to get pics). Our last day was amazing and a little bittersweet

We kicked things off with what has now become a new staple... Starbucks before wandering the beautiful Botanic Gardens. Then it was time for some fun at Meow Woof (the coolest interactive art piece ever!), followed by a spot of shopping where we even had our hats shaped.

From there we made our way to Arlington for a VIP tour of AT&T Stadium. While we didn't get to meet any of the DCC or Branden Aubrey, we had an incredible time soaking in such an impressive place! The afternoon wrapped up with some Chicken N Pickle and a few tears as we said goodbye to our agmazing host families.

Thank you to our host families for welcoming us in with open arms, and to the Barossa Council for the Sister City relationship with Grapevine, Texas that made this all possible.

We're not sad it's over, we're happy it happened. What an honour to represent our community, build life-long friendships, and share this unforgettable experience. We can't wait for y'all to visit us in the Barossa!

***As the philosopher Winnie the Pooh once said:
"How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard."***

They've met so many wonderful people, soaking up new experiences, and yesterday they leapt into the incredible AT&T Stadium a true dream come true for our students and teachers.

A huge thank you to the Barossa Council for their ongoing support and for building such a strong sister city relationship with Grapevine, Texas.



Thank you to the Barossa Community who made all this possible and for the following sponsors:



Thank you!

BAROSSA YOUNG AMBASSADOR

What an incredible opportunity!

I cannot thank everyone involved enough for allowing me the opportunity to visit our Sister City in Grapevine, Texas

I was able to head over to Grapevine for their annual 'Grapefest', a celebration of all things wine and community.

A jam packed 4 days of learning, tasting and connecting.

The opportunity to be involved in this experience holds a very special place in my heart. Not only have I made international connections I have deepened those connections within my own community. For this I am forever grateful. I hope to continue to learn more and expand my horizon into our diverse culture.

A big thank you to the City of Grapevine and many, many others. Because of their endless work I was able to see behind the scenes action of Grapefest, make connections and experience none other than Texan Hospitality.

I hope to bring all these experiences back to better myself, my career and all things Barossa.

I can't wait to get back home and start new conversations with new and old friends and help continue to promote our wonderful home The Barossa Valley in all its cultural heritage and fantastic wine!

Thank you to The Barossa Council, City of Grapevine and everyone else far and wide who made this possible.

Thank you for your tireless work and everyone at The Barossa Council and everyone involved with the Barossa Young Ambassadors Program and Barossa Vintage Festival - thank you.

A trip of a lifetime!



GRAPEVINE VISIT – KEY TAKEAWAYS

Summary

During the September 2025 visit to Grapevine, Texas, Council's delegates developed key relationships with City of Grapevine Council officials, staff, business leaders and representatives from Rotary, volunteer groups, the education sector and the Tourism industry, to provide for further conversations and collaborations in the pursuit of education, tourism, trade, and cultural outcomes.

The overarching takeaway from the visit for both Council, Sister Cities Advisory Committee representatives and the Study Tour is that visitor experience and hospitality is key. The entire tourism and economic strategy within the City of Grapevine centres around creating an authentic experience (food, wine, tourism accommodation, main street and civic architecture, history, art, cultural activities, recreation, heritage sites, signage, events and transport) for both visitors and the community around the concept of 'Vintage Texas' along with a deep commitment to hospitality – the city's strategy is based on food, drink, somewhere to stay and something to do.

The City is also deeply committed to fostering friendships, mutual regard, and understanding among the citizens of both their community and internationally communities like ours, West Lothian, Scotland, Parras de la Fuente, Mexico and Krems an der Donau, Austria via formal sister city relationship. This friendship extends to the sharing of insight into economic development and governance strategy and the opening of avenues for growth in trade and investment for mutual benefit. Although Krems, Austria did not have delegates on the ground this year, we hope we will have opportunities in the future.

The success and longevity of Sister City relationships within the City of Grapevine is assured through sound and well-resourced governance arrangements including dedicated program management by City Staff, formal oversight committees composed of elected officials, community leaders and volunteers, revenue raising arrangements and vibrant networks and relationships with key education, industry, business and community representatives and groups. Seeing the operation of the sister city program in Grapevine firsthand validated The Barossa Council's benefit to our community through the Section 41 Sister Cities Advisory Committee, collaboration with Nuriootpa High School and the Barossa Young Ambassador Program.

In addition to the above insights, several key themes emerged in the delegation's broader observations during the visit as presented below.

City Identity

- A clear, agreed and consistent understanding of your city or region's identity is critical. Grapevine has established its core identity around Vintage Texas. This identity is reinforced across public infrastructure, commercial and residential architecture, tourist attractions and activities, public art.
- The city has enshrined its commitment to its identity (which is connected to livability, heritage, culture, economic prosperity, tourism appeal, brand and community connection) via city ordinance (by-law) which is discussed in more detail below.
- This identity is further reinforced in tourism strategies, public infrastructure plans, economic development plans and heritage and culture strategies and there is a tangible collective feeling that local government, businesses and residents are all in this together and equally committed to celebrating their place and ensuring its prosperity.
- There is an opportunity for The Barossa Council and our community to consider this concept; its value to our region when reviewing our future Plans, Policies and Guidelines around Council civic infrastructure and other commercial development along with broader diversification of the economic environment, such as outdoor dining, eco-tourism & enhanced events.

Tourism and Visitor Economy

- Tourism and visitor experience shaping should be based on an understanding of the natural and built assets that make us special – what icons are within our ranks, what incredible buildings and structures do we have, where do our richest stories and historical experiences lay, where can you get a taste of the environment?
- If we are targeting the US market, which involves a significant period of travel, there is also a need to design curated experiences that capitalise on the offerings of South Australia more broadly rather than just the Barossa to create a holistic experience (ie Beach hills, wildlife, wine, outback) and one that makes the extended travel period worth both the time and financial investment. Premium wine experiences can be sourced across a range of international regions at a lower cost and in a more time effective manner which means we need to offer something that those regions can't. A clear understanding of the limited leave entitlements for US travelers', normally limited to approximately two-week vacation periods, is also a critical success factor in the market approach and product development.
- Family friendly is a core principle in sustaining visitation and livability. The City of Grapevine has specifically targeted families and has a range of family friendly hotels (including Great Wolf a water park themed hotel aimed at children) along with family friendly activities and attractions throughout the city.
- Public transport networks are critical to bringing workers in to sustain high levels of employment within tourism and hospitality industries which are traditionally lower paying and impacted by housing affordability. The City of Grapevine has invested heavily in bringing a commuter rail network to the city to service its tourism and hospitality workforce. Consideration should be given to the identification of solutions to public transport constraints currently inherent within the Barossa and its subsequent impact on visitor experience.
- Feedback was received that indicated that consideration needs to be given to our visitor's preferences and expectations – The Barossa needs to think like an American to inform hotel and accommodation design if we are intending to increase visitation from the US.
- A key strategy capitalised on by the City of Grapevine has been a targeted and sustained campaign over many years to cater to, attract and retain the convention industry. This is potential growth and investment area for the Barossa with current supply gaps in South Australia's convention and conference facilities in tourist regions. It has fostered an approach to sound design but also aggressive investment infrastructure that supports the convention market. It achieves a sound balance and community buy-in to ensuring investment in modern, designed, and is positive to such growth and investment and ultimately achieve economic outcomes.
- Based on the above observations and opportunities The Barossa Council and its tourism and economic development partners may seek to give consideration to both funding and seeking State Government financial support to fast-track tourism product development and investment, we need to be open for business and balanced with design, is a clear message from our colleagues in Grapevine and therefore to generate better economic and community returns and to assist in the attraction of regional events, investment and regional activation.
- Consideration should also be given to the activation of the Barossa's night tourism/night- time economy – for example the encouragement of tasting rooms in township Main Streets, live music festivals and activations and events that draw in overnight visitors.

Arts and Culture

- The infusion of art that is aligned to the commercial brand and regional identity into public spaces, city buildings and community infrastructure is a key opportunity to celebrate heritage and diversity, honour historical achievements, practices and events, to create a sense of place and enhance the experience of visitors immersing themselves in the local culture.
- The City of Grapevine has a deep commitment to public art dating back many years. During the period when cities across the US were seeing a rapid influx in mobile phone tower infrastructure, the City of Grapevine saw an opportunity to secure funds for public art through tower lease fees. As a result, the City approved the quarantining of all mobile phone tower lease fees for public art and established a committee to oversee the expenditure of funds. This strategy has seen public art embedded throughout the city including historic main street, recreation centres, civic buildings, open spaces and sporting precincts.
- Couple with Grapevine's investment in tourism and associated economy their work in balancing art and culture and preservation or design of modern buildings is a significant take away, the message being they are open for business in so many ways. It goes well from our take aways that investment in our events, sorting and now Barossa Creative Industries Centre is a strong pathway and foundation for appropriate growth.
- Consideration should be given to the model implemented by the City of Grapevine in the shaping of a strategy that ensures that public art can contribute to the achievement of the outcomes outlined above whilst also drawing upon a sustainable funding source.

Heritage and History

- The City of Grapevine's identity is steeped in history and heritage. To protect, preserve and enhance its districts and landmarks of architectural, archaeological, cultural and historical importance the City approved a Grapevine Historic Preservation Ordinance in 1991. The purpose of the ordinance (Council By-Law) was to:
 - Protect and enhance the districts and landmarks which represent distinctive elements of Grapevine's historic architectural and cultural heritage;
 - Foster civic pride in accomplishments of the past;
 - Protect and enhance Grapevine's attractiveness to visitors and the support and stimulus to the economy thereby provided;
 - Insure the orderly, efficient and appropriate growth and development of Grapevine;
 - Promote economic stability and prosperity of the community by encouraging the most appropriate use of such significant property in Grapevine; and
 - Stabilise and improve property values.
- The Ordinance was further revised in 2013 to address identified risks to the heritage objectives of the city and is supported by detailed design guidelines. The direct impact of the introduction of the Ordinance has been the achievement of a balance between the preservation of the richness of the unique 'feel' of the city and appropriate infrastructure development and economic investment that enhances livability and visitor experience.
- Another key strategy evident in Grapevine to support heritage and historical preservation, is the implementation of quality interpretive signage at key attractions, thoughtful place naming (reference to historical figures and events), and township signage and way finding with tangible links to regional and individual village identity and commercial brand.
- Given the Barossa has a shared commitment to heritage and historical preservation whilst also enhancing livability and visitor experience, there is an opportunity to review Council's planning and building policy settings and guidelines, asset and infrastructure design guidelines and its

strategy and approach to public signage (township signage; key attractions and landmarks interpretive signage; and civic location and community facility signage) to ensure ongoing alignment with the Community and Council's vision for the region's commercial brand and grass roots identity.

- When designing Council's public signage strategy, consideration should also be given to sharing the stories of our first nations people in an integrated approach to interpretive signage design.

Events & Volunteerism

- The City of Grapevine's vibrancy and event sustainability is reliant on a deep commitment to volunteerism. According to the City of Grapevine, high levels of volunteerism are generated through creating a sense of pride in the city and a commitment to place.
- Volunteer engagement is also mobilised and strengthened via the use of appropriate incentives and rewards including honorariums, financial contributions to volunteer groups and clubs (ie groups and committees across schools, sporting clubs, charitable organisations, civic services etc) and complimentary participation in ticketed events.
- Active pursuit and securing of sponsorship opportunities is critical in elevating event offerings and supplementing City of Grapevine funds. Festivals and events can be broken down into component parts to provide layered sponsorship offerings for designated areas, activities and physical infrastructure for visual marketing. A sales orientation is required to leverage sponsorship opportunities and to develop long lasting sponsorship relationships.
- The City of Grapevine has a vibrant event calendar and offers a combination of free community events and large-scale ticketed events which are more commercial in nature. This diversity of event resourcing models allows for scalability and financial sustainability, particularly where the input costs are higher and require more coordination of volunteer effort, event infrastructure and planning and higher levels of risk management.

Grapevine's Annual Festivals & Events

Grapevine was recognised by the International Festival & Event Association. Their three main annual events are:

- **GrapeFest** (the largest Wine Festival in the Southwest)
 - **Main Street Fest** (family-friendly festival that is three fun-filled days of live music, craft beverage experiences, delicious eats, shopping, a unique KidZone, tons of fun in the Carnival & Midway, the Grapevine Art Project)
 - **Christmas Capital of Texas** (one of the highlights of Grapevine Christmas)
- Consideration should also be given to strengthening relationships with community groups and volunteer organisations to partner on event activation and delivery and to defining roles and responsibilities for regional event management between Barossa Australia and The Barossa Council to ensure the optimal use of resources and strategic oversight of major regional events.

Trade and Investment

- Public/private partnerships are an integral strategy in bringing in investment to enhance publicly funded infrastructure and initiatives. The City of Grapevine has several examples of successful public private partnerships including Grapevine Mills, which incorporates a train station, hotel and entertainment venue.
- A key economic enabler that the City of Grapevine has leveraged off to build a strong tourism and visitor industry is its proximity to Dallas Fort Worth International Airport. The city actively

supported the establishment of the DFW airport within its boundaries, contributing land for that purpose in the 1970s thus ensuring easy access for large volumes of visitors and creating a source of stable employment for many of its residents.

- Texas is the fifth largest wine-producing state in the U.S. and with more than 470 wineries in the State, the wine industry contributes more than \$1.83 billion of economic impact. Against this backdrop Grapevine has served as a trendsetter in wine culture and a leader in the Texas wine industry with award-winning festivals celebrating the fruit of the vine as well as wineries and winemakers for more than 25 years. Grapevine has also been recognised as the headquarters of the Texas wine tasting experience, having invested in the establishment of a vibrant and growing urban wine trail which features daily wine tastings and special events throughout the year.
- The city also strategically positioned itself to cater for the meeting and convention industry with significant hotel accommodation offerings and a diverse range of small, medium, and large meeting spaces and convention centres which attract thousands of business and leisure visitors each year.
- In addition to its cultural, heritage and historical attractions, the city has built a diverse economic portfolio driving sustainability across its many sectors.
- There are many parallels in the economic profile for the Barossa and consideration could be given to opportunities to pursue conversations with the State Government regarding an airport facility (commercial passenger services and freight) within close proximity to the Barossa Valley.
- The active wine tasting, sales and festival offerings within Grapevine and its positioning as the Texas wine industry headquarters also offers the Barossa a valuable entry point to the US market. The opportunity to promote Barossa wines and establish trade connections has also been further strengthened via the City of Grapevine's commitment to featuring Barossa wines at its annual GrapeFest event.
- There is also an opportunity to explore whether there is a current South Australian regional convention centre industry supply gap and to validate whether this presents an avenue to expand the Barossa's tourism product in meeting any identified unmet demand.

Civic and Governance

- The City of Grapevine in many ways has faced and continues to face similar challenges, the most pertinent being:
 - They too are running out of land for growth and face similar future urban planning challenges.
 - Ageing workforce.
 - Growing competition for resources.
 - Expanding expectations for services and infrastructure and asset management
 - Climate impacts.
 - Efficiency and productivity.
- Many synergies and opportunities for cross team collaboration on how they are solving long term planning matters is evident and can be explored through technology solutions to get teams together online.
- They work closely with schools and education groups to grow the pool of those interested in serving their local community, there are take aways that can support The Barossa Council.
- Equally the system of Local Government we operate in is more mature in specific areas that they have interest in three are key in conversation our asset management processes and our processes of reform and organisational culture and use of modern emotional intelligence systems to support continuous improvement and generally our drive for continuous improvement.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

Expense Type	Council Cost
Flights - Adelaide to Sydney, Sydney to Dallas Fort Worth Return	\$26,994.69
US Travel Visa	\$98.16
Adelaide Airport Long Term Parking	\$191.82
Incidentals – Council Branded Clothing Items & Hat	\$524.61
TOTAL	\$27,809.28

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND THANKS

Strengthening Global Connections: Barossa Delegation Thanks City of Grapevine

The Barossa Council delegation extends its heartfelt gratitude and sincere appreciation to the City of Grapevine, its staff, key stakeholders, businesses, volunteers and the wider community for the outstanding hospitality and warmth shown during our September 2025 visit.

The meticulous planning, seamless coordination and gracious reception made the visit both comfortable and highly productive. The attention to detail and thoughtful organisation ensured delegates could focus on strengthening relationships, exploring shared opportunities and promoting the Barossa region on the international stage.

Special thanks are extended to everyone involved in developing and delivering the itinerary and supporting the promotion of Barossa and its wines at GrapeFest 2025. From precise scheduling and efficient logistics to the friendly and welcoming atmosphere at every event, the professionalism and commitment of our hosts were evident throughout.

The delegation also appreciated the camaraderie and shared enthusiasm of our new friend (Peter) from West Lothian, Scotland, and friends from Parras de la Fuente, Mexico, whose warmth and friendship added to the success of the visit.

The kindness, generosity and collaborative spirit shown by all created an environment that fostered meaningful connections and strengthened the enduring bond between our cities.

The experience has left a lasting impression and further enhanced the reputation of the Barossa as a region committed to cultural exchange, friendship and global collaboration.

The Barossa Council looks forward to continuing this valued relationship with Grapevine and to welcoming future visitors to our region, where we hope to reciprocate the same warmth and generosity that was so graciously extended to us.



Student Feedback Grapevine, Texas – Nuriootpa High School Study Tour 9 – 16 September 2025  	
	
Questions	Student Response Summary
Looking back at your application, do you feel the Study Tour met the goals you had before you left?	Yes, because my goal was: - To learn about their culture and meet new people. - To create connections with others from the other side of the world, finding out more about their agricultural practices. I did this when attending the school and university having conversations with students and teachers, bringing ideas back home to possibly tie into either school or home agricultural practices. - The people we met, the friendships we made were incredible. - To explore practices to understand any help me for my future career in the culinary industry. - To be able to compare Texan agricultural programs to ours in the Barossa and school, especially with the Future Farmers of America. - To gain more knowledge on travel and know more about the US. <i>"100% more than I expected. It blew my socks off"</i>
What were the most important activities you took part in during the trip, and what did you learn from them?	- Visiting their school, as students, we got to learn what their school is like including their school spirit and attitude towards learning and extra-curricular activities. - To see their agriculture program and there was a lot of interesting differences. - Visiting Tarleton State University: touring their Agriculture facilities as well as Grapevine High School. - The structure, Agriculture system and courses that they have in place comparing them to how we learn. - The subjects and practical aspects that they go through. - Getting to experience that schools around the world aren't all the same as here in Australia.

	• Showing their American high school culture and how students are able to prepare for their career pathways. • Grapevine High school and Tarleton University. <i>"I learnt a lot about the Future Farmers of America program, student led programs and initiatives that we could learn from and adapt into our schools and universities here in Australia"</i>
How do you plan to share what you learned with other classmates, friends, family, or the community)?	• Sharing what I learnt with friends and family who own and work on farms. • Through photos and conversations, but I would love to take my family friends over to Texas and have them experience what I did. • Sharing a lot of what I learnt with friends and family; my photos and explained where we were, what we were doing and interesting facts we were taught. • A lot of people have asked me what Texas was like and if I would go back. I definitely would because everything is huge, well set out, the people are really friendly and school is full of interesting programs and people. • With pride and in a good way. • Talking to them and shearing photos and pictures along the way from the trip. • Share photos, tell stories, and encourage students to do it in the future. <i>"The practices we learnt, bringing some ideas back home, possibly introducing them into either school or outside life"</i>
What support did you find most helpful in the lead up and during the trip?	• Support within our team. • Fundraising. • Support from the teachers accompanying them. • Information on visa's, passports, equipment and supplies needed to be well prepared. • All the information about what was happening. • Talking about the trip and how it's going to go. • Teachers help with fundraising and organising. <i>"The excitement for all of us!"</i>
What was the best part of being part of the team?	• The team was made up of enthusiastic, organised, supportive people and that's what made it really easy to fundraise and travel all together. • How well we worked as a team. • Helping each other out. • That we all grew as a friend group. • Being able to share the experience with friends and luckily for me, my best friend. • Be able to talk to everyone and work as a group. • Getting to have the experience to go and see what the world is like overseas. • Getting the opportunity to take the experience. <i>"We'll always be able to look back and remember our trip and all the great memories we made"</i>
Which fundraising events did you enjoy or find the most successful?	• All of it was really good! • The support from local companies and Rotary. • The Mitre 10 BBQs and the events where we were helping local community groups. Being able to help where we could, making conversations and getting the knowledge of the study tour throughout the community. • The Barossa Motorcycles gift crate, raising money to put towards our trip. • The fundraising events that had everyone involved. • The Quiz night and raffle tickets • The touchdown event was good fun and raised a lot of money. • The Clearance Sale • BBQs and the other smaller events. <i>"I enjoyed meeting sponsors at the events and having a yarn about the trip"</i>

What was your favourite event or part of the itinerary?	• Visiting the School and attending the school football game. • Grapevine High School and Colleyville High School. Being able to have conversations with students our age talking about what they do in their free time, and what high school is like for them compared to us. • Attending the Pep Rally and the Friday night High School football game. • The 9/11 memorial service. • The Great Gatsby dinner as part of Grapefest. • The Tarlton University <i>"All of them!"</i>
What did you enjoy most about living with your host family?	• They were amazing. They were all so kind and caring, it was overall great. • At night times, sharing stories about the differences here in Australia to America. • Learning about their day-to-day life, and what their daily routines are like compared to ours here at home. • The conversations that we had together after each day • Got along so well, assigned to the perfect host family for us • The way they made us feel so welcome, made us feel safe, took care of me while sick, spent hours and hours talking to us about everything and explained so much about Texan culture. • They were friendly and easy to talk to. • That we gained so much knowledge from them and they were willing to do anything. <i>"Getting to see how they live and meeting new life-long friends"</i>
Is there anything else you want us to know about your experience?	• It was great, thank you! • The trip was amazing • As students, we got to experience America and their agriculture practices and the Texas culture in general. • It was a once in a lifetime trip. • I'm really lucky to have had the opportunity and I will recommend it to future students. • I didn't know what to expect or if the Texans would like us Aussies, but they couldn't have been nicer. • Texans are very proud and generous people who love their country and are more than happy to share it with us. <i>"Big Thank you to the Barossa Council and their sister city relationship that made this study tour possible, it's changed my perspective on American culture, and I can't wait to go back"</i>
Questions	Parent Response Summaries
Do you believe the Study Tour delivered on the outcomes? (e.g. personal growth, cultural understanding, educational value)?	• Yes most definitely, both the travel itself and building connection with the community, mostly those that have retired - developing skills talking with the older generation • Yes, it was a great experience. • Absolutely! It enhanced our child's perspective and understanding immensely. • Absolutely, it was an amazing experience and gave opportunities to network beyond school <i>"100%"</i>
From your perspective, what were the most valuable activities your child took part in?	• Travelling overseas, living with a host family and gaining an understanding of other cultures and ways of life. • Visiting the high school and university appeared to have the most profound impact, due to the direct comparison he could make with kids their own age. • Grapefest was also a huge eye-opener in comparison to our Barossa Vintage Festival. • Winery (grape stomp festival) stock yards, slaughterhouse and delegation functions • Making close connections with the host student & their family.

How do you see your child using or sharing the skills and knowledge they gained (at school, at home, or in the wider community)?	• Open minded to the difference. • Students have a great positive voice for NHS. • Our child is part of both the viticultural and livestock industries so the knowledge he gained and comparisons he made in Texas concerning both of these industries he'll draw on in the future and will undoubtedly stay with him forever. • They have made sure to share with everyone what they accomplished and hopes others can take part. She is keen to go back to study/work. • Promoting the tour and future volunteer work. • More confident and keen to talk about their experience. • The opportunity has created discussion, networking & provided future goals as a result of the study tour. <i>"The whole process increased the student's confidence and positive presence in the community"</i>
What positive changes have you noticed in your child as a result of the trip?	• Confidence and maturity • Opening broader point of views • Greater worldliness and organisation skills • Realisation that there's a whole world out there, not just the Barossa Valley! • It's broadened his horizons and given him a huge motivation to see more. • Developed a firm appreciation of differing cultures and customs and realised there's multiple agricultural practices in Texas and America that although different to ours, work as effectively. • Solidified that they have chosen the right pathway for her. It has also kicked in her passion to travel even more. • Built relationships with people they made connections with while away. • Learnt the importance of clear communication. • I have a teenager who is now looking to return to Texas next year, to not only catch up with his host family, but is also looking at spending time there for a harvest season. The opportunity to have visited another country, make connections & have goals for the future have definitely been noted. <i>"Solidified that they have chosen the right pathway for her. It has also kicked in her passion to travel even more"</i>
How effective did you find the fundraising process for families?	• Worked well; forced the students out into the community and made them appreciate hard work and the value of working towards something. • Being associated with all the local volunteer groups helped; by assisting these groups a lot of the planning was done for the kids which was excellent. • It was very effective! The process was long and exhausting for the kids who were balancing fundraising, sport, schoolwork, vintage and employment but everyone pitched in where they could, when they could, including families, for a great outcome. • Good for students to work with various community groups and meet new people. <i>"Every family brought something different, and all worked as a team to support each other"</i>
Any additional feedback or reflections you would like to share?	• The truly was an amazing experience for these students, thanks to everyone involved for making this all come together. I'm sure this will be the top of their high school memories and highlights. • Our child had the trip of a lifetime! • The tour experience overall for our child was extraordinary! It broadened their horizons and literally changed his life as they knew it. They left a student and came back a cowboy brimming with stories, facts and a huge appreciation for American culture and how patriotic Texans are. • He found Texans to be very kind, generous, proud people who love to share their culture and way of life. Everything was on a huge scale, exactly how they like it! Councillor Leon Leal organizing the Texan hats for the kids was next level generous, we can't thank him enough, those hats will be undoubtedly cherished forever!!

	• It was a lot of time and work fundraising to get there for all involved, but so very rewarding! He is certainly going to recommend the tour to any students who may in the future consider wanting to broaden their horizons, as he clearly did! • Massive Thank you to all involved, we appreciate the extra workload it will have placed on everyone, the effort, commitment & support was massive. • Communication with families was excellent & also to students • Overall though it met all the goals it set out to achieve we feel everyone can be very proud on a very successful first Sister City Study Tour. <i>“Our child and ourselves can't thank the Barossa Council and the Sister City relationship with Grapevine, Texas enough for this whole experience”</i>
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DEBATE REPORT

5.2 FUTURE OF THE SISTER CITY AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE BAROSSA COUNCIL AND KUMENAN TOWN, JAPAN

**Author: Manager Governance and OMCEO
25/94702**

PURPOSE

To provide the Committee with an update on Council's Sister City arrangements and seek the support of the Committee to recommend Council's cessation the Sister City Agreement with Kumenan Town, Japan.

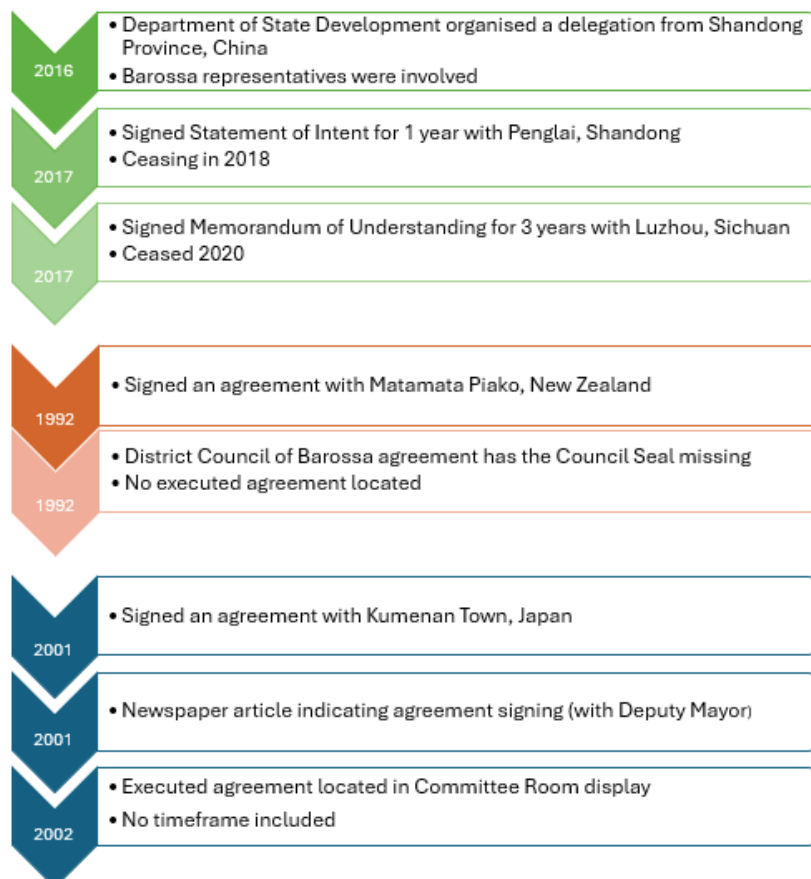
RECOMMENDATION

That the Sister Cities Advisory Committee support the ceasing of the Sister City agreement between The Barossa Council and Kumenan Twon, Japan and recommend that Council formalise the end of the arrangement.

REPORT

Introduction

In undertaking research on The Barossa Council's Sister City arrangements, it is confirmed that the following relationships have taken place:



Background

Sister cities, or twin towns as it is also known in other countries, is an agreement to foster strong cultural and commercial ties between two cities or regions. These long term, formal agreements facilitate a wide range of opportunities for both cities to participate in international educational, community, cultural, technical and business exchanges.

Kumenan is a town located in Kume District, Okayama Prefecture, Japan with an estimated population of approximately 4483 and is known as the birthplace of Honen, the founder of the Jodo sect of Buddhism. The temple where he was born stands in Kumenan Town and is called Tanjoji. The temple has a massive and stunning ginkgo tree, a symbol for the town.

There are few flatlands, and most of the town consists of mountains, forests, and plateaus with the main industry in the area being agriculture. Crops include rice, fruit trees such as pears and grapes, leaf tobacco, and poultry farming.

Kumenan Town in Okayama in Japan entered into a Sister City relationship with The Barossa Council in 2002 by formally signing an agreement that did not stipulate a time period or end date of the agreement.

The relationship initially fostered a mutual understanding and friendship between citizens of the two Councils contributing to good relations between Australia and Japan. The relationship has seen student exchanges (Faith Lutheran College) in the early 2000's between the two towns, involving the sharing of cultures, education, sport, tourism, and economics.

Delegates, students and teachers from Kumenan, Japan visited the Barossa in 2006 and again in 2008.

Correspondence since then has been sparse and involved a Christmas greeting but nothing of substance until 2017, where we received a letter highlighting that it had been over 6 years with no contact and a suspension on the student exchange program.

According to a letter received from a representative from Kumenan Town late 2024 the homestay exchange program of the international sister-city relationship has been suspended since 2011 due in part to the decreasing number of students attending the three elementary schools and one junior high school in the town. Their wish is to have an international exchange project with cultures in the form of school textbooks/picture books between Barossa and Kumenan. No records show that this indeed took place.

Further to this, there has been no correspondence other than an annual Christmas Card greeting.

Discussion

The Barossa Council has now entered into another Sister City relationship with the City of Grapevine, Texas which was formalised in September 2023 and has seen a Section 41 Committee be established with members of the community, industry leaders and staff develop the relationship with a successful Study Tour and community benefits seeing the objectives of the agreement coming to fruition.

Acknowledging that fostering an international relationship and developing on ground benefits requires the Committee and in turn, the Council to commit to resourcing and planning, and as such, we are now seeking the Committee's view on ceasing the Sister City relationship with Kumenan Town, Japan, understanding that the relationship is no longer be producing outcomes for our community.

Summary and Conclusion

The Sister City Advisory Committee is asked to formally recommend to Council that the Sister City relationship with Kumenan Town, Japan be ceased.

ATTACHMENTS OR OTHER SUPPORTING REFERENCES

Attachment 1 Signed - Agreement for the Establishment of Sister City Relations between Barossa Council and Kumenan Town - 22 August 2002 [↓](#) 

Supporting references

Nil

COMMUNITY PLAN / CORPORATE PLAN / LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Corporate Plan

- CS10 Economic Development - Facilitating the economic well-being and quality of life of the local businesses and the community
- BS7 Governance - Provision of governance advice and support in the discharge of legislative responsibilities for policy development, delegations and authorisations, internal review of Council decisions, delegations and authorisations, Native Title claims

Legislative Requirements

Nil

RISK MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

These statements are qualitative in nature and designed to provide an indication of Council's general position when deciding to take or retain risk in pursuit of its objectives.

1. SERVICE DELIVERY

Refers to the delivery of services to the community, which includes the systems and physical assets that enable provision of these services, including structures (such as roads, buildings and facilities) as well as IT infrastructure, plant, vehicles & other equipment.

Nil

2. SUSTAINABILITY & ENVIRONMENT

Relates to measures to preserve, protect and minimise impact on the natural environment, including sacred and indigenous lands, flora, fauna, heritage, water, waste, hazardous materials and pollution.

Nil

3. FINANCIAL

Refers to planning and control of Council's budget to align with the sustainable achievement of the desired outcomes articulated in its Community Plan.

Nil

4. PEOPLE

Relates to recruitment, retention, wellbeing and safety of employees and volunteers and engagement and management of contractors as well as the wellbeing and safety of the community.

Nil

5. REPUTATION

Relates to policy, decisions, actions and circumstances that may cause Council to lose credibility with the community, ratepayers, key stakeholders, other levels of government and its own employees and contractors.

As the arrangement has not been active since 2017, there is no risk to reputation.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Engagement has been made with Barossa Australia, Regional Development Australia Barossa Gawler Light Adelaide Plains and Faith Lutheran College confirming no current communications or arrangements are being conducted. (Faith Lutheran College currently participate in Students Exchanges with Salesio Gakuin High School (Japan) and Charlotte-Paulsen-Gymnasium school (Hamburg, Germany)).



Agreement for the Establishment of Sister City Relations between
Barossa Council and Kumenan Town.

The municipalities of the Barossa Council in South Australia, and Kumenan Town in Okayama Prefecture, Japan, hereby agree upon the establishment of a sister city arrangement. The purpose of this agreement is to foster the deepening of mutual understanding and friendship between the citizens of the two municipalities and, in turn, to contribute to good relations between Australia and Japan and to the peace and prosperity of the world as a whole.

Based on this agreement, both municipalities will actively promote exchange in such fields as culture, education, sport, tourism, economics and the sharing of information. With a firm conviction towards development and friendly relations into the future, both Mayors sign this agreement as the representatives of their municipalities.

As proof of the conclusion of this agreement, two copies will be made in both English and in Japanese. Each party will then receive one copy of each to commemorate the occasion.

22nd August, 2002

Mayor of Barossa Council

Mayor of Kumenan


Brian Hurn


Kenichi Kawashima