



MADISON - BAHIR DAR SISTER CITY PROGRAM

Mission

The Madison-Bahir Dar sister city initiative will be guided by the spirit of friendship and cooperation between Madison and Bahir Dar, and will aim to advance the mutual interests, benefits, and aspirations of residents of both cities. The partnership between the two cities strengthens the more than a century old international relationship between the United States and Ethiopia, and the friendship between their people.

Governing and Organizational Structure

The Madison-Bahir Dar initiative will be governed by the founding committee members during the transitional period of the establishment of the sister city relation. During this transition period, the committee will function under the fiscal sponsorship of Safe Roads to Health (SRTH), a 501(c)3 organization. The founding committee members are working to establish a nonprofit organization “Friends of Bahir Dar - Madison” that will take the organizational function at such time when the sister city relationship between Madison and Bahir Dar is established.

Founding Committee Members:

1. Rahel Desalegne, Adjunct Professor, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI
2. Molla Teshome, MD - Consultant physician in Pulmonary / Critical Care Medicine at St Mary’s Hospital, Madison, WI
3. Dawit Zenebe (PhD) - Lead Analyst for the Investor Guidance Center, CUNA Mutual Group, Madison, WI

4. Ayenew Belay (Former Mayor), Bahir Dar, Ethiopia
5. Yimer Degu, Lecturer, Bahir Dar University, Bahir Dar, Ethiopia
6. Robel Kebede- Senior Chemist, Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene. Madison, WI
7. Abenezzer Sahle, Madison, WI
8. Bereket Lulseged, Madison, WI
9. Daniel Abebe (Dr. of Eng): Private Researcher, Madison, WI
10. Jonathan Path, Professor and John P Holton Chair in Health and the Environment, Director, Global Health Institute, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI

Specific Program Goals:

The proposed sister city agreement between Madison and Bahir Dar will work towards promoting the development of various programs in the areas including, but not limited to culture, education, public health, economic development, government, and sustainable environment.

Program Activities:

We outline the following activities to accomplish the specific program goals that the planned sister city agreement aims to achieve.

Culture: We will promote the development of programs that enable a greater understanding of the cultures of the people living in both cities. We will encourage cooperation between cultural organizations and cultural actors from the two cities. This includes, among other things, invitation of performers to each other cities for a cultural show.

Education: Madison is home to one of the top public research universities in the United States – University of Wisconsin - Madison. Bahir Dar also hosts a university that bears its name, and it is one of the largest and oldest universities in Ethiopia. We plan to develop a student exchange program that allows students to attend a semester abroad.

This creates opportunity to extend the Wisconsin Idea beyond the borders of the state to this East African city.

Public Health: This sister initiative will promote the exchange of sound health policies and best practices to build the capacity and effectiveness of prevention and treatment programs; including, but not limited to infectious disease control, maternal and infant health, and noncommunicable diseases.

Economic Development: This potential sister city agreement also focuses on the growth and development of business investment, trade, tourism, and public private partnerships. We will promote the collaboration, exchange of information, and joint ventures between the government agencies, local businesses, chambers of commerce, and entrepreneurs.

Government: We will also work towards achieving the collaboration and exchange of ideas between the two cities in areas of government operations; including, but not limited to urban planning, housing construction, infrastructure development, and public transport.

Sustainable Environment: Madison is home to several lakes. Bahir Dar also has the biggest lake in Ethiopia which is the source of the Blue Nile. We will promote programs that allow the exchange of best practices and environmental policies in lake conservation. We will also promote information sharing in the general areas of creating a sustainable environment, such as energy conservation and eliminating pollution. This information may include issues pertaining to transportation, water use, environmental protection, and building green economy.

Projected Annual Budget:

The projected annual budget covers expenses for activities aimed to achieve short term goals that are part of the overall program activities.

Madison - Bahir Dar Sister City Annual Budget (2019)				
No.	Item Description	Unit		
		Amount	Cost	Total Amount
1	Travel Cost for Bahir Dar City Admin. Official (Air Ticket and Ground Transportation)	1	2,000	2,000
2	Travel Cost for Bahir Dar University Academic Staff (Air Ticket and Ground Transportation)	1	2,000	2,000
3	Organization Cost (Web design and 501(c) application)		1,000	1,000
4	Miscellaneous		500	500
			Grand Total	5,500

Similarities between Madison and proposed Sister City:

Madison and Bahir Dar cities are both graced by the presence of fresh water lakes in their cities. Madison has four lakes while Bahir Dar owns only lake Tana. However, lake Tana’s surface area (1,200 sq.mi) is many times bigger than the largest lake in Madison, Lake Mendota (~16 sq.mi). Aquatic invasive species were very rare in lake Tana until recently. Water hyacinth is now expanding at an alarming rate becoming a threat to the lake. The experience of Madison city and Dane county in cleaning up nearby lakes will be a very important lesson that can be shared with Bahir Dar city in their cleaning up effort.

Madison and Bahir Dar are the capital cities of their States or regions - Wisconsin and Amhara, respectively. They are also home to big public universities that accommodate several thousand students. UW - Madison has an estimated 42, 000 students while

Bahir Dar University has around 58,000. The UW-Madison and Bahir Dar have been fostering partnership for several years, that will enhance the sister city friendship between Bahir Dar and Madison.

The City of Bahir Dar was historically pedestrian and biking friendly city. With rapid urbanization and vehicle centered growth in the past decade, the city has lost its pedestrian and biking friendly environment. During the past two years the University of Wisconsin-Madison Global Health Institute, and the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering have been working in partnership with Bahir Dar University and the City of Bahir Dar to promote safe biking in Bahir Dar. The “Bike-friendly” Bahir Dar project is piloting the first protected bike lanes on a 2 mile stretch of existing roadways connecting the city’s commercial center, the regional government administrative office, and the two main Bahir Dar University (BDU) campuses. This project was made possible by an incubator grant from UW Madison. As part of this project we had the privilege and the opportunity to host the Mayor of the City of Bahir Dar Mayor Ayenew and our project collaborator from the BDU School of Engineering faculty, Yimer Degu. The mayor and regional leaders are committed to develop Bahir Dar into a model city for urban development by embracing multi-modal transport that includes bicycle and pedestrian transport.

Describe local organization in proposed Sister City: Organization for Rehabilitation and Development in Amhara (ORDA). One of the core missions of ORDA is healthy community development and promoting the region's economic development and growth. As such ORDA is committed in supporting the sister city initiative between Madison and Bahir Dar.

<http://www.ordaethiopia.org/>

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