



Mayor's Office of  
International Affairs

# Taipei City, Republic of China (Taiwan)

Atlanta's Sister City

## TAIPEI CITY: SHARING BEST PRACTICES GLOBALLY TO HELP PARTNERS FIGHTING COVID-19

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ATLANTA - In response to the infectious nature of COVID-19, Taipei has prioritized cooperating with the central government, embracing creative approaches, and leading by example for other cities and countries. This sister city of Atlanta believes that successful epidemic prevention relies on global collaboration and has remained committed to leveraging partnerships and exchanging information with cities across the globe to capitalize on our collective knowledge.

Taipei became Atlanta's 7th sister city on November 5, 1979. Mayor Teng-hui Lee, who later took office as the first democratically elected President of the Republic of China (Taiwan), and Mayor Maynard Jackson, Atlanta's first African-American mayor, formally established the sister city relationship. In 1993, when Mayor Jackson was serving his third term, the City announced the creation of an Atlanta Trade Representative office in Taipei, signaling increased cooperation between the two sister cities.

As a result of increased economic relations and cultural ties, the Republic of China (Taiwan) government established the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Atlanta in 2006. Most recently, Taipei joined the virtual summit "Sister City Diplomacy & COVID-19: Looking Ahead to the New Normal", an event organized by the City of Atlanta Mayor's Office of International Affairs together with more than ten of Atlanta's sister cities. The initiative was an effort to stay connected with sister city partners during an unprecedented moment in our society and to share the impact and challenges of navigating the coronavirus pandemic.

In order to ensure cities and countries around the world had access to critical information needed to reopen safely, Taipei City Government translated all their SOP (standard operating procedures) documents into English. Even with travel restrictions, the administration has continued to stay in touch with Taipei's sister cities through email outreach and video calls in order to share best practices and learn from partners overseas.

"Given the uncertainty that accompanies the pandemic, it is important to stay connected to the rest of the world and collaborate to defend against COVID-19", Ambassador Tom Chou, Commissioner of the Mayor's Office for External Affairs, states. Taipei City made sure to translate its Taipei City Government COVID-19 Epidemic Prevention SOP website to English, displaying its initiatives and resources against the virus.

When it comes to the economic strategies, the City's ultimate goal is to keep private enterprises from shutting down. Taipei introduced policy measures such as rent support, interest rate cuts, subsidies, tax cuts, and extensions on tax reduction applications. Additionally, the City Government cut rents for commercial districts and underground stalls by half and established quarantine hotels so the businesses could continue operations while there were fewer tourists.

Taipei also benefited from its national health insurance network, which is rated as one of the world's top three health systems. The high quality and the affordability (apprx 5 USD per doctor's visit) allows citizens to seek medical assistance without financial concerns. Even during increased use of its 20,000 hospitals and clinics, the city has maintained short waiting times and a 90% satisfaction rate for outpatient services.

"Taipei has shown the world how to effectively prevent the spread of the coronavirus and keep our communities safe. We are committed to maintaining a safe and prosperous society where the people of our city can continue to thrive," Ambassador Chou summarized. ♦

