



# Sandy City Council Office

10000 South Centennial  
Parkway Suite 231  
Sandy, UT 84070  
O | 801-568-7141  
Sandy.Utah.Gov

## MEMORANDUM

November 19, 2024

To: City Council Members

CC: Monica Zoltanski, Mayor  
Dustin Fratto, Council Executive Director

From: Ryan Mecham, Council Member District 1

Subject: First Reading: Entering into a new Sister City Agreement with Bucha, Ukraine

---

Sandy City presently has two formal Sister City Partnerships, both beginning in 2002. Our partnerships with Riesa, Germany and Piedras Negras, Mexico allow Sandy to participate in cultural and student exchanges, and promote economic cooperation, tourism, and humanitarian efforts. In this proposal, I'm asking the Council and Mayor to consider establishing an additional, similar, sister city relationship with Bucha, Ukraine.

Bucha is a city in Ukraine's Kyjev Oblast (Province). Bucha and Sandy share comparable, foundational, characteristics, such as size and relative proximity to large metro areas. Just as Sandy is close to our capital of Salt Lake City, Bucha is a suburban community 25 km West of the Capital of Kyjev. Sandy's relationship with Bucha and the Kyjev Oblast first began In 2022, when, with the help of the David Jack Family, Sandy City welcomed and hosted a team of Ukrainian firefighters from Kyjev. While visiting Sandy, the Ukrainian team participated in the World Firefighter Combat Challenge. Tragically, these firefighters' homes were bombed by Russian forces during their time in Sandy.<sup>1</sup> Four firefighters live in the greater Kyiv area, including Aleksandr Baran, Volodymyr Dudka, and Oksana Chehmestrenko.

The Russian Invasion of Ukraine, which has resulted in over 30,000 confirmed civilian casualties and has displaced millions of Ukrainians<sup>2</sup>, includes the 2022 Battle of Bucha. During the invasion, Bucha was captured by Russian forces. However, weeks later, on March 31, 2022, the City was liberated by Ukrainian forces. Soon after Bucha's liberation, rebuilding efforts began. To assist with the millions who have been displaced, Utahn Dell Loy Hansen has built three housing developments for Ukrainian

---

<sup>1</sup> Taggart, S. M. (2023). Sandy resident given Global Citizen Award. *The City Journals: Sandy's Own Community Newspaper*. Retrieved from <https://www.sandyjournal.com/2023/05/08/434634/sandy-resident-given-global-citizen-award>

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. (2024). *Two-Year Update - Protection of civilians: Impact of hostilities on civilians since 24 February 2022*. United Nations, Human Rights. United Nations. Retrieved from <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/country-reports/two-year-update-protection-civilians-impact-hostilities-civilians-24>

refugees: “Cudo Village” in Kolonshchyna, “Hansen Apartments” in Sofiivska Borschahivka, and “Hansen Village” in Tarasivka. Each of these developments is within 90 minutes of Bucha.

Bucha is also part of the U.S. Agency for International Development’s (USAID) HOVERLA program, which aims to strengthen local governments in Ukraine. It was created before the war and now includes efforts towards reconstruction and future planning. The sister city initiative provides significant benefits in terms of knowledge transfer and exchange of ideas, including strategic development and economic growth. It could also include best practices in municipal outreach and citizen engagement, budget discussions, and emergency management.

As in 2022, we again have the opportunity to join hands with the Ukrainian people in Bucha, this time in a formal capacity. I propose that the Council discuss, review, and adopt the attached agreement to develop economic, cultural and tourism cooperation, and to strengthen friendly relations with the City of Bucha in the Kyjev Oblast of Ukraine.