

SISTER CITY PROGRAM OF LOS ANGELES

Prepared by Office of Chief Legislative Analyst
(Revised July 21, 2006)

Selecting a Sister City

In selecting a sister city for Los Angeles, various criteria of suitability are used such as: similarities with Los Angeles (e.g. is there a harbor, are there economic and cultural exchange possibilities), the presence of a sizable community in Los Angeles of persons whose origin is in the proposed sister city, whether there is a dedicated group of persons willing to raise funds and work on the sister city program on a volunteer basis. Most importantly, it is necessary to determine that the proposed sister city already does not have a sister city relationship with any other city in the United States. Sister Cities International, the national organization which coordinates sister cities programs, has a policy to not recognize, with rare exception, more than one sister city relationship between a foreign city and a city in the U.S. The City of Los Angeles also adheres to this policy.

City of Los Angeles Sister City Adoption Procedures

Sister cities are established by City Council resolution. The programs for each sister city are operated by citizen committees whose appointments are confirmed by the City Council.

The Mayor's Council for Sister Cities is an advisory group established by the Mayor to coordinate the activities of all of the City's sister city committees. This group was formally incorporated in 1992 as Sister Cities of Los Angeles, Inc. The Executive Chair can be contacted through the Mayor's office.

The City of Los Angeles sister city adoption procedures were established by a City Council Resolution (Timberlake-Gibson) adopted on October 1, 1964 (C.F. 103,908 Sup.1). There is no City ordinance, Municipal Code or City Charter provision regarding sister cities. The procedures set forth in the Resolution were based on recommendations of Sister Cities International, an organization which helps to coordinate the establishment of sister city relationships. The City's procedures can be summarized in the following steps. Two of the steps are not contained in the original Resolution but have been added over time and are referred to in either City Clerk or Mayoral documents.

1. The Mayor (by letter), City Council (by letter or Motion) or other group or agency (by letter) proposes creation of sister city relationship with a particular city.
2. The proposal is considered by the City Council's Intergovernmental Relations Committee.
3. The Intergovernmental Relations Committee asks the Council to approve the establishment of a steering committee (for each city) whose job it will be to study the proposal and recommend whether or not to adopt a particular city.
4. When the Council authorizes establishment of a steering committee the Mayor and Councilmembers suggest names of persons for appointment to the steering committee.
5. The Intergovernmental Relations Committee, based on these suggestions, recommends a panel of members for the steering committee.
6. The City Council approves these recommendations and establishes the steering committee.
7. The steering committee reviews the relationships between Los Angeles and the potential sister city. Sister Cities International and the U.S. Information Agency are consulted for review, advice and to avoid possible duplication in cases where a sister city relationship already exists with another American city.

8. The steering committee reports its findings and recommendations to the Intergovernmental Relations Committee.

9. A permanent sister city committee is established in the city wishing to be adopted by Los Angeles (Mayor's letter, 8-1-83).

10. Official acknowledgment is received from the Mayor or governing body of the prospective sister city agreeing to a sister city relationship with Los Angeles. (City Clerk's letter, 7-18-83, C.F. 83-1187)

11. The Intergovernmental Relations Committee recommends to the City Council adoption of the sister city.

12. The City Council adopts a resolution formally agreeing to the sister city relationship and a permanent committee is established in Los Angeles for the sister city. The permanent committee is established in the same manner as the steering committee. The permanent committee develops programs / projects of mutual benefit for Los Angeles and the sister city.

Funding

The City of Los Angeles provides no funding for its sister cities program, except for the annual dues (about \$1,865) to Sister Cities International. All sister city programs are run by volunteer citizens' groups which do their own fund raising.

Status of the Los Angeles Sister City Program

The City of Los Angeles currently has 23 sister cities -- more than any other city in the U.S.

Athens, Greece (February 10, 1984)
Auckland, New Zealand (1971)
Beirut, Lebanon (June 20, 2006)
Berlin, Germany (June 27, 1967)
Bordeaux, France (May 26, 1964)
Eilat, Israel (June 18, 1959)
Giza, Egypt (November 21, 1989)
Guangzhou, China (December 6, 1981)
Jakarta, Indonesia (December 28, 1990)
Kaunas, Lithuania (June 20, 1991)
Lusaka, Zambia (May 7, 1968)
Makati, Philippines (January 28, 1992)
Mexico City, Mexico (December 11, 1969)
Mumbai, India (June 1, 1972)
Nagoya, Japan (March 31, 1959)
Pusan, Korea (April 5, 1971)
Salvador, Brazil (April 26, 1962)
San Salvador, El Salvador (January 26, 2005)
Split, Croatia (June 9, 1993)
St. Petersburg, Russia (December 8, 1989)
Taipei Municipality, Taiwan (May 18, 1979)
Teheran, Iran (May 26, 1972) (Suspended)
Vancouver, Canada (June 23, 1986)

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