



MAY 8 2014

# Summer Solstice Celebration

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE  
SANTA BARBARA

May 5, 2014

Mayor Helene Schneider, Councilmembers  
Dale Francisco, Gregg Hart, Frank Hotchkiss, Cathy Murillo, Richard Rouse,  
and Bendy White,

Dear Madame Mayor and esteemed Councilmembers:

Now in our 40<sup>th</sup> year, Solstice has continued to grow in spite of dwindling funds for free community events. We have grown, primarily through our own efforts and funding, from a one-day event to a three-day event. As you might expect, these extra days have substantially increased our costs. We have over 75 people now who receive some kind of compensation for our event. These include artists, teachers, performers, and festival workers—all of whom are extremely important to our highly visible local cultural life and the Santa Barbara brand.

During the last six recession years, the support from the City has been significantly reduced and now represents approximately 9.7% of our annual budget. In prior years it had been closer to 20% as we received both a line item of \$45,914.00 as well as a County Arts Commission Grant of \$15,000, which brought us to about \$61,000. With the cuts to funding, our line item has been reduced and we have been prohibited from applying for the Arts Commission grant leaving us with a nearly 50% reduction in funding. In addition, the amount of money that we pay to the City for our event has increased to over \$8000 not including what we pay in parking fees and which doesn't include the numerous deposits which total about \$5,000. When our event arrives we are out of pocket \$13,000 to the City. The deposits are returned but as you know many of them take months to get to us. This has created an extreme cash flow issue for us which has been steadily impacting us to the point where we have been unable to meet our staff salaries for months after our event while waiting for these deposits to be returned to us.

We are a fiscally responsible organization very closely tied to the community and the City. Our goal in increasing our presence (i.e. from a one to three day festival) was in direct response to the Visitor and Conference Bureau's - "one more day" strategy to increase the City's DOT, as well as revitalizing

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[Solsticeparade.com](http://Solsticeparade.com)

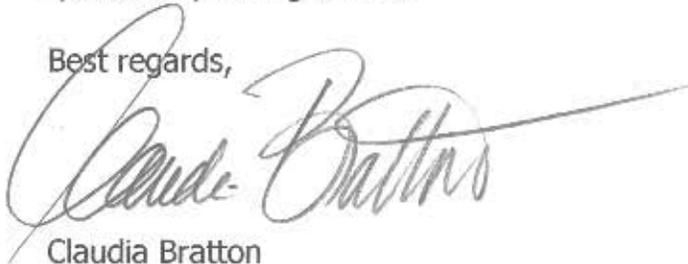
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Santa Barbara's downtown arts and entertainment district, particularly during the summer months when tourism is at its peak. But, we can't do it without more support from the City. In the past the funding provided by the City and Arts Commission grant gave us funds for the startup costs, underwrote administration and funds for the artists. That is no longer the situation.

We would like to have our City line item increased to \$80,000, which will bring it closer to the funding provided other major civic events such as Old Spanish Days and the Santa Barbara Film Festival. This funding is vital to our ability to sustain this organization and event in the years to come.

I would be most happy to discuss this with you. Please call me to answer any questions you might have.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Claudia Bratton". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name.

Claudia Bratton  
Executive Director