



Agenda Item No. \_\_\_\_\_

File Code No. 130.03

# CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

## COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

**AGENDA DATE:** August 24, 2010  
**TO:** Mayor and Council Members  
**FROM:** Santa Barbara Sister Cities Board  
**SUBJECT:** New Sister City With Patras, Greece

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That Council adopt, by reading of title only, A Resolution of the Council of the City of Santa Barbara Providing for the Establishment of a Sister City Relationship with the City of Patras, Greece.

### **DISCUSSION:**

On June 24, 2010, the Santa Barbara Sister Cities Board met in a Special Meeting to receive a request from Theony Condos, Chair of the Patras Advocate Group for the Santa Barbara-Patras, Greece Sister City. This group stated that both Santa Barbara and Patras citizens have an interest in establishing a Sister City relationship uniting our two cities in a bond of friendship and culture.

The Board approved their request at the June 24, 2010, meeting.

There will be no City costs associated with Sister City status to Patras, Greece.

**ATTACHMENT:** Letter and Proposal from Patras, Greece  
**PREPARED BY:** Linda Gunther, Administrator's Office Supervisor  
**SUBMITTED BY:** Nina Johnson, Assistant to the City Administrator  
**APPROVED BY:** City Administrator's Office

The Honorable Mayor and Members of the Santa Barbara City Council  
Attn: Linda Gunther, Administrator's Office Supervisor  
735 Anacapa St  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
August 2, 2010

Dear Mayor Schneider and Members of the Santa Barbara City Council,

The Greek community of Santa Barbara, well known in this area through its sponsorship of the annual Greek Festival, proposes to establish a Sister Cities relationship with Patras, Greece, as being a city compatible with Santa Barbara in terms of its culture, higher education and research institutions, and geographical situation.

Patras is the third largest city of Greece with a population of 180,000, roughly the same as that of the Greater Santa Barbara area. It is a center of the political, economic, administrative and cultural life of Western Greece. Patras' title as Greece's "Gate to the West" is justified by its role as international commercial center and busy port, by its excellent car-ferry links with the Ionian Islands--including Ithaca, the homeland of Odysseus-- and with the major Adriatic ports of Italy, and also by its function as a nodal point for the entry of goods, people, ideas and cultural influences from the European West. Patras is within easy reach of other important archaeological sites, including Ancient Olympia, where the Olympic Games began, while the recent discovery of Patras' ancient acropolis and the construction of the new archaeological museum, in addition to the ancient Roman theater and Venetian citadel above the city, have increased the archaeological importance of the city itself.

Like Santa Barbara, Patras' geographical situation, at the foot of Mount Panachaikon overlooking the Ionian Sea, combines sea and mountains; the area has a Mediterranean climate, with relatively cool yet humid summers and mild winters. An important common geophysical characteristic of the region is its great seismicity, which has been recorded since ancient times. Patras shares another cultural similarity with Santa Barbara: its long tradition of hospitality to visitors.

The indigenous cultural scene revolves around the performing and plastic arts and modern urban literature. Patras was chosen by the European Commission to be the European Capital of Culture for the year 2006. The current cultural activity of the city includes the Patras International Festival, the Patras Carnival and the Poetry Symposium. The International Festival of Patras takes place every summer, with a program consisting mostly of plays--both ancient drama and modern theatre--as well as various music concerts. There is one full-time theatre group in the city, the Patras Municipal Regional Theatre, as well as several amateur groups. The Patras Carnival, held every year from February to March, is one of the biggest tourist attractions. With its parade of mammoth satirical floats and extravagant balls, the Carnival is considered one of the most famous in the world after Rio de Janeiro and Venice. The Patras Poetry Symposium has been organized each year for the past 25 years by a special committee at the University of Patras.

In addition, Patras has a visual arts workshop, a school of icon painting, a carnival float workshop, a Municipal Gallery as well as private art galleries. The city hosts several conservatories and schools of music, including one devoted exclusively to Byzantine music, and several orchestras and choirs. Patras has also a very strong indie rock scene with critically acclaimed bands.

Patras is home to the largest cathedral in the Balkans, the cathedral of the Apostle Andrew, the patron saint of the city. The city is the seat of a Greek Orthodox archbishopric; there is an active Roman Catholic community and a historical Anglican church.

Having two Universities (the University of Patras and the Open University) and a Technological Institution and their connected research institutes, the city is an important scientific center, with a field of excellence in technical education. Like UCSB, the University of Patras enrolls about 25,000 students, and is located a small distance from the city. Patras also enrolls about 12,000 students in its two-year technical school (comparable to a community college in the U.S.).

Patras' research institutes include the Computer Technology Institute, Industrial Systems Institute, Patras Science Park, Institute of Chemical Engineering and High Temperature Chemical Processes, and the Institute of Biomedical Technology, while the Eoliki wind park is one of the first wind parks in Greece.

The region retains some of its traditional winemaking and foodstuff industries and a small agricultural and fishing sector. The Achaia Clauss winery, founded in 1861, is a symbol of Greek wine-making; it continues to produce and export wines of excellent quality throughout the world.

Greece is a republic with a parliamentary form of government and a member of the European Union. Patras has an elected mayor and city council serving for 4-year terms, assuring the area's political and economic stability.

A member of our advocate group has met with the mayor of Patras, who is strongly supportive of establishing a Sister City relationship with Santa Barbara. There is also a letter from the mayor of Patras to the mayor of Santa Barbara, attached, that provides endorsement of this proposal. The letter also names Mr. Spyros Politis, a member of the Patras City Council as contact person for the proposed relationship

#### Plan of action

During the first year of operation of the Sister Cities relationship, the advocate group will

- Exhibit samples of local products from Patras at the Santa Barbara Greek Festival on July 31-August 1, 2010, so that the proposed relationship will gain publicity and support.
- Establish a Patras Sister City Organization, open to the public, with annual membership fee.
- Work toward signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Patras and UCSB, to encourage scientific exchange and cooperation in several mutually agreed-upon fields. (No costs are anticipated for this initiative.)

- Invite a small delegation from Patras during the Greek Festival and Fiesta celebration in 2011. (The mayor of Patras notes that European Union funds are available to support such visits).
- Arrange the visit of a small delegation from Santa Barbara to Patras. (Some funds will be available; however, most individuals participating in the visit will pay their own travel costs.)
- Patras will happily accommodate 3-4 individuals from Santa Barbara, with most expenses paid at arrival, during the 2011 Patras Carnival in February, 2011.

The potential for long-term benefits to Santa Barbara can occur in the following ways:

- Through scientific exchange and cooperation between the University of Patras and UCSB
- Through cooperation in the field of commerce (e.g., wine-making)
- Through cultural exchange (festivals, art exhibits, concerts)
- Through increased tourism

### Advocate Group

Our advocate group includes 14 members of the Santa Barbara Greek community drawn from the fields of education, culture, finance, and business, who are committed to work for a sustainable, mutually beneficial, Sister Cities relationship with Patras. We are also interested to participate actively in the Sister Cities Board through our representative.

The members of the advocate group are:

Apostolos Athanassakis	George Mamalakis
James Brown	Panagiotis Mitroulias, Vice Chair
Christopher Compogiannis	Gregory Pantages
Theony Condos, Chair	George Papazacharioudakis, Secretary
Constantinos Frangos	Carol Stathopoulos
Dean Gastouniotis	Mariella Stockmal, Treasurer
Georgia Gastouniotis	Vivi Tziouvaras

The advocate group has sufficient funds contributed by Greek community organizations to finance its first year of operation, including revision of the Sister Cities brochure and contribution to the annual anniversary event.

Patras has also formed an advocate group of 12 members, including the Mayor as a Chairman and members drawn from fields of mutual interest, such as education, business, and culture, who will work closely with our group for this Sister Cities relationship.

The members of the Patras advocate group are:

Konstantinos Antzoulatos, Chairman, Chamber of Commerce of Achaia  
 Stathis Chrysiopoulos, Chairman of the Patras Carnival  
 Andreas Fouras, Mayor of Patras, Chair  
 Amalia Goudevenou, Public Relations Coordinator, Secretary

Sokratis Kaplanis, President, Technological Educational Institute of Patras  
George Kepenos, Member of Hellenic Federation of Enterprises  
Stavros Koumbias, Rector, University of Patras  
Spyros Politis, Member of City Council, Vice Chair  
Alexis Skarmneas, Deputy Mayor for Culture  
Nicholaos Tzanakos, Deputy Mayor for Planning and Substitute Mayor  
Manos Varvarigos, Professor, University of Patras  
George Zafeiropoulos, Deputy Mayor for Administration and Finance, Treasurer

Mr. Spyros Politis is the contact person for the proposed relationship. He can be reached at [spyrospolitis@patras.gr](mailto:spyrospolitis@patras.gr).

We strongly believe that the establishment of a Sister Cities relationship between Santa Barbara and Patras will be a firm, long-term, and mutually beneficial relationship, and we look forward to your acceptance of our proposal, which was approved by the Sister Cities Board on July 21, 2010.

Sincerely Yours,

Theony Condos, Chair  
For the Advocate Group