

## **PAN Letter re Sibling Cities**

Dear Mayor DuBois, Vice Mayor Burt, and Council Members,

Palo Alto Neighborhoods enjoyed hearing about Sibling Cities USA from its founder Palo Altan Vicki Veenker. We whole-heartedly support Mayor Dubois and council members Lydia Kou and Greer Stone in their colleagues' memo. It is exciting that Palo Alto and Bloomington, Indiana have joined to launch the pilot program.

PAN would like to assist Mayor DuBois and the steering committee in encouraging Palo Altans to participate in this program of shared community engagement, exploration of economic collaboration, cultural exchange, and perspectives on civic issues and city management, with the lofty goal of bridging divides on the role of government, race and the economy, while sharing and exploring our commonalities as well as our differences.

Additionally, PAN is happy to assist in setting up relationships with counterpart neighborhood grassroots organizers in Bloomington.

We understand that Neighbors Abroad will be adding this effort to the work they already do in the international sister cities arena without additional cost to the city, which is most generous. Plus we encourage the steering committee to leverage organizations such as Rotary, Kiwanis, etc. These organizations already have significant national infrastructure in place and will save our having to "reinvent all the wheels" in this exciting new effort.

We heartily approve of this outreach to build trust and to collaborate on best practices for residents' participation in city government and look forward to participating in a program to foster national unity.

Thank you,

Becky Sanders

Sheri Furman

Co-Chairs

Palo Alto Neighborhoods