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SANTA FE SISTER CITIES COMMITTEE

September 14, 2016

City Councilor's Meeting Room

4:00 – 5:00pm

955-6707

Goals of Santa Fe's Sister Cities Committee

- More effectively market Sister Cities and what they do
- Develop educational programs in schools
- Strengthen relationships w/ existing Sister Cities
- Involve greater community in work/activities of Sister Cities
- Re-enforce and build existing relationships through trade and tourism efforts

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes – June 15, 2016
4. Report of Staff
5. Report of Chair – Carol Robertson Lopez
 - a. 2016 International Folk Art Market update
 - b. 2016 Zhang JaiJie Country Music Week update
 - c. Discussion of Sister Cities Committee sponsorship of 2015 Fiesta Fela
 - d. Review and discussion of a proposal to establish a Sister City relationship between Ramat HaNegev, Israel and Santa Fe
6. Action Items:
 - a. Request for approval of Sister Cities Guidelines
 - b. Request for staff to work with City Parks Department regarding a Sister City Tree planting commemoration in City Parks
 - c. Request for approval of up to \$500 in Sister Cities funds to be allocated for the sponsorship of 2015 Fiesta Fela
 - d. Approval to recommend the establishment of a Sister Cities relationship between Ramat HaNegev, Israel and Santa Fe
7. Committee Reports
8. Other Items
9. Adjourn

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7. Committee Reports

Item	Action	Page Number
Call to Order	The Chair called the Santa Fe Sister Cities Committee meeting to order at 4:00 pm. A quorum was declared by roll call.	Page 2
Roll Call	Roll call reflects a quorum	Page 2
Approval of Agenda	Amendment: Mr. Rubenstein to report on Cuba under Committee Reports. Mr. Rubenstein moved to approve the agenda as amended, second by Mr. Fernandez, motion carried by unanimous voice vote.	Page 2
Approval of Minutes, May 11, 2016 Correction: Page 4, #6, 1 st paragraph, three references to Spain should be Mexico	Dr. Case moved to approve the minutes of May 11, 2016 as amended, second by Mr. Rubenstein, motion carried by unanimous voice vote.	Page 2-3
Report of Staff	Informational	Page 3
Report of the Chair	Informational	Page 3-4
Committee Updates	Informational	Page 4-5
Agenda Items for July Meeting	<i>Next agenda, Sister Cities would like to recommend having a Sister City Commemoration Fund to plan and purchase trees in which they would be planted in a Santa Fe park recognizing our sister cities. At a later date the wording for the plaque itself can be discussed. The Chair can work with the Santa Fe Botanical Gardens for tree species recommendations. The request is to have staff work with Parks and Recreation on logistics.</i> <i>Review of Sister City Guidelines under Action Items for next month meeting for formal action.</i> <i>Anniversary dates: The Chair noted that we have missed our 25th anniversary of sister cities. It is recommended to review these dates at next meeting.</i>	Page 5
Adjourn and Signature Page	There being no further business to come before the Sister Cities Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 5:25 pm	Page 5

SANTA FE SISTER CITIES COMMITTEE

JUNE 15, 2016

Community Gallery, Santa Fe, NM

4:00 p.m. – 5:25 p.m.

GOALS OF SANTA FE SISTER CITIES COMMITTEE

- More effectively market who Sister Cities is and what they do
 - Develop educational programs in schools
 - Strengthen relationships with existing Sister Cities
 - Involve greater community in work/activities of Sister Cities
- Re-enforce and build existing relationships through trade and tourism efforts.

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Carol Robertson-Lopez called the Santa Fe Sister Cities Committee meeting to order at 4:00 pm. A quorum was declared by roll call.

Present:

Carol Robertson-Lopez, Chair

Dr. Jeff Case

Bernard Rubenstein

Rudy Fernandez

Clara Padilla Andrews

Kim Song

Ling Tong

Not Present/Excused:

Carl Moore

Gilbert Delgado

Arthur Olivas

Others Present:

Julie Bystrom, Staff Project Manager

Fran Lucero, Stenographer

2. Approval of Agenda

Request: Mr. Rubenstein to report on Cuba opportunity under Committee Reports.

Mr. Rubenstein moved to approve the agenda as amended, second by Mr. Fernandez, motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

3. Approval of Minutes – May 11, 2016

Corrections: Page 4, #6, 1st paragraph – three references to Spain should be Mexico.

Spelling of Incheon should be Icheon.

Dr. Case moved to approve the minutes of May 11, 2016 as amended, second by Mr. Rubenstein, motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

4. Report of Staff

- Airport project is in progress. More information to follow.
- Request has been sent to Mayor Gonzales asking for a letter for Ms. Andrews to take to San Miguel de Allende, Mexico.

5. Report of the Chair

a. Review and Discussion of Sister Cities Guidelines

The guidelines reviewed are in line with the National Sister Cities Guidelines. The members were in agreement that they reflect correctly the goals of the Santa Fe Sister Cities Committee.

This item will be listed under Action Items for next month meeting for formal action.

b. Discussion of Sister Cities Sub-Committees

Ms. Bystrom noted that this topic was to discuss how to broaden the visibility of this committee. The Chair will be working with Ms. Padilla-Andrews on this item. The discussion of having an event is an important venue to pursue to create more visibility.

c. 2016 International Folk Art Market

Kim Song stated that she has already signed up to help with the delegation from Icheon; this is her 12th year participating. Icheon Co-op is attending this year and Ms. Song will be of assistance to them.

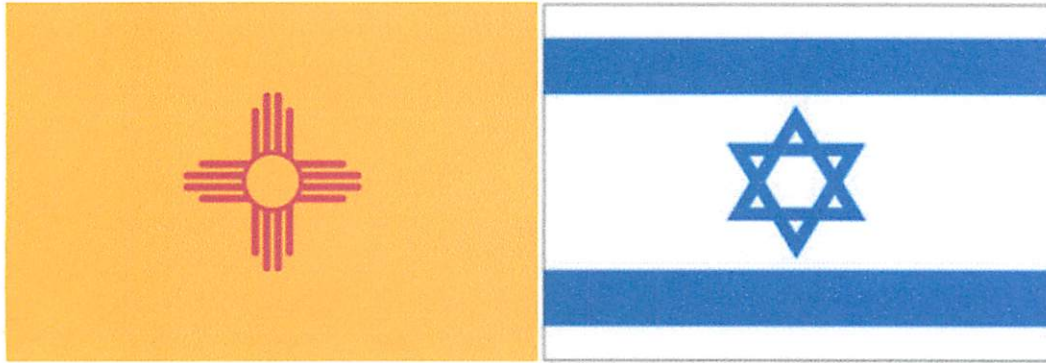
The Chair would like 100% involvement from the members. The Chair would like committee members to meet at the market on Sunday, July 10th at 10:00 am to welcome the President of Sister Cities International who will also be in attendance. Two of our sister cities have their own markets; Bukhara and Icheon and representatives from these countries are attending.

d. Discussion of Sister Cities "Travel Bug" presentations

Dr. Case noted that there is a session on photography which will be held this Saturday for anyone interested in attending. There are many opportunities to have all Santa Fe Sister Cities at Travel Bug. As a follow-up the Chair would like to enter into communications with them on explaining our program and exchanging information and possible collaboration.

e. Discussion of Sister Cities Commemoration: Tree Planting and Plaques

Mr. Rubenstein provided information on a tree he discovered while travelling with a plaque reflecting a 50 year sister city relationship. The Chair and the members felt that this is a favorable project to pursue as a committee. This could be accomplished when the Mayor or committee members travel to other countries



Establishing a Sister Cities Relationship Between Santa Fe, New Mexico and Ramat HaNegev, Israel

Respectfully submitted by the Santa Fe/Ramat HaNegev Sister Cities exploratory
working group. Contributors include:

- **Zachary Benjamin**, Executive Director, Jewish Federation of New Mexico
- **Eran Doron**, City Manager, Ramat HaNegev Regional Council
- **Betsy Ehrenberg**, Founder, Bridges to Santa Fe and Member, Council of Business Advisors, Santa Fe Business Incubator
- **Marcia Torobin**, Founder, Santa Fe Jewish Film Festival

Proposal: To establish a Sister Cities relationship between Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Ramat HaNegev, Israel.

Rationale: According to its website, the Santa Fe Sister Cities program “creates relationships based on cultural, educational, information and trade exchanges, creating lifelong friendships that provide prosperity and peace through person-to-person ‘citizen diplomacy.’” Israel is currently New Mexico’s second largest trade partner after Mexico. New Mexico and Israel maintain strong, mutually beneficial relationships in the entrepreneurship, technology, water resource management, and creative arts sectors. Currently, Rehovot, Israel, and Albuquerque enjoy a Sister Cities relationship, but no such relationship exists between New Mexico’s capital, Santa Fe, and any community in Israel. As Santa Fe and Ramat HaNegev, Israel, share similar water resource management needs, science and technology innovation, burgeoning creative arts communities, and Jewish populations of almost identical size (6,000), these two municipalities would benefit from the establishment of a Sister Cities relationship. Additionally, through this partnership, the civic leadership of Ramat HaNegev hopes to promote:

- Exchange and Development of Educational / Cultural programs and activities among youngsters and adults.
- Desert (dry land) academic research related to "desert sciences" such as:
 - Water Sciences
 - Desert Meteorology and Solar Energy
 - Sustainability
 - Architecture supporting Desert Regional Planning and Human Habitats.
- Development of Environmental and Air Quality projects.
- State-of-the-art desert agriculture research and development.
- Tourism and economic development through positioning both Santa Fe and Ramat HaNegev as desired destinations, offering travelers world-class contemporary amenities in an authentic, beautiful, culturally-rich and historically significant setting.

Profile of Ramat HaNegev

Ramat HaNegev is the largest Regional Council in Israel by land area. It encompasses a large percentage of Israel’s Southern Region, bordering Egypt to the West, Jordan to the East, and the Negev Desert to the south. Ramat HaNegev and its communities are just a 90-minute drive from Tel Aviv’s Ben Gurion International Airport, which receives daily nonstop service from the Americas, Europe, and points throughout Asia.

Population: 8,000

Language: Hebrew, with English as a common business/second language

Education and cultural institutions: Ben Gurion University of the Negev; Ramat Negev Desert Agricultural Research Center; UNESCO World Heritage Sites at Advat, Haluza, and Nitzana

Ramat HaNegev employs a number of programs to maximize the effectiveness of their education systems, from the elementary level through higher education. These include:

- Sustainable education: The concept of sustainability is part of the overall goal and desire to provide the children with meaningful hands-on experiential activities outside the classroom. They have open classrooms, made of wood, which serve as places for various activities and instruction related to the environment and sustainability, geography and heritage, as well as being a place of assembly, rest and play.

They continue to develop methods of instruction designed for use outside the classroom. Students can learn either in the school yard or virtually in a “distance learning” environment.

- “Looking for Mozart in the Desert”: A musical program at our primary schools, for 3rd-4th grades. An introduction of musical instruments, playing music together and identification of young talent.
- Science programs with the Blaustein Desert Research Institute and with the Birding Center of Ramat HaNegev.
- Excellence Scholarship Fund Program: Scholarships for both children excelling at their regular school curriculum and also to some of the 900 children participating in classes/courses/workshops which are given at their Community Center, in its after school enrichment programs and activities.
- Davis Scholarship Fund for Higher Education: 800 students already received grants for higher education programs from this scholarship fund - a total of over \$1,000,000. In addition to these programs, Ramat HaNegev students enjoy an 82% success rate in their high school Matriculation Exams.

Economic resources and conditions: Agriculture and the development and distribution of water conservation technology are Ramat HaNegev’s two primary economic drivers. Ramat HaNegev both develops water conservation methods and also exports water to neighboring Jordan. Ramat HaNegev is home to two major research centers: Ben Gurion University of the Negev and the Ramat HaNegev Desert Agricultural Research Center. Tourism is also a major economic driver, as the Ramat HaNegev Regional Council is home to three World Heritage Sites.

In order to encourage agricultural livelihood, the Ramat HaNegev Regional Council established the Ramat Negev Desert Agricultural Research Center for research and development of advanced agriculture, based on brackish water irrigation from underground aquifers pumped up from regional wells, in addition to water from the national carrier.

The Agricultural Research center was established near the community of Ashalim, about 30 km. south of Beer Sheva. The purpose of the R&D is the development of agro-technical methods of growth, irrigation, fertilization and cultivation of crops, adapting them to the unique ecological conditions of the area. This is achieved by initiating surveys, theoretical research and many practical experiments.

The contribution of the Ramat Negev R&D is expressed in the tools and knowledge it provides for expanding possibilities of agricultural crops, irrigation using brackish water, advantages of improved quality, development of new varieties suitable to the region, achieving top quality yields, increasing the water allotment for agriculture, and turning the agricultural farm into a profitable farm. The Ramat Negev R&D also contributes to the development of aquaculture in the region.

Research is carried out by local and international scientists from several recognized scientific institutions, under the guidance of the Ministry of Agriculture.

Ramat Negev R&D has established an international center for advanced agricultural studies. The purpose of the program: theoretical and practical advanced agricultural training for students from various countries all over the world, in which the agriculture is underdeveloped. The center works in full cooperation with the academic institutions from which the students arrive and this leads to fruitful relationships between the countries.

With its vast land and 353 days a year of clear sunny skies, Ramat HaNegev attracts international companies such as GE, Alstom and Bright Source, to invest in their region.

With three major projects for generating electricity from solar energy, Ramat HaNegev is becoming Israel's renewable energy hub.

In 2009, the Israeli government decided that by 2020, 10% of its electricity consumption would be produced using renewable energy. This decision is part of an earlier government decision to reduce power consumption in excess of 20% by 2020. Under this plan, the government decided to initiate the Ashalim Project. This initiative is conducted through the Ministry of Energy and the Accountant General of the Ministry of Finance, who issued BOT (Build, Operate, Transfer) tenders for three electricity production projects powered by three different technologies utilizing solar energy. They are:

P.V. project: The Negev Sun Company won the tender for a P.V. technology venture that will provide 35 megawatts at an investment of NIS400 million (US \$100 million). The project has been finalized and approved financially.

Negev project (Plot A): This is a collaboration between the Housing and Construction Authority and the Israeli Shikun & Binui Company. The project will be constructed on 3,000 dunams (1 Hectare=10 dunams), at an investment of NIS3.7 Billion (\$925 million), and is expected to generate 120 megawatts from thermo-solar technology using the parabolic trough method. Ground preparation for the project was completed and construction is now in progress. Approximately 1,300 people are involved in construction.

"Megalim" project: This project spans 3,000 dunams (1 Hectare=10 Dunams) and is expected to generate approximately 120 megawatts of solar energy, using the thermo-solar tower method. The scope of investment in construction is NIS800 million (\$200 million). The developers are the French Alstom Company and the Bright Source Company.

Political Stability: The Ramat HaNegev Regional Council is politically stable and well-established. Mayor Shmulik Rifman has held office for over 20 years, having recently been elected to his fifth five-year term. Like all 53 Israeli Regional Councils, Ramat HaNegev is led by its mayor, as well as a city manager and communications director. A full staff manages the areas of economic development and infrastructure.

Number of other Sister city relationships: Ramat HaNegev does not currently have additional Sister City relationships. Ramat HaNegev is a Friendship City with Denver, Colorado. It has also established bilateral partnerships with the Jewish Federations of New Mexico, Colorado, Las Vegas, and Palm Springs.

Similarities with Santa Fe: Santa Fe and Ramat HaNegev share an arid climate, an economic focus on research, development, and business incubation, as well as water conservation and resource management needs. Santa Fe is home to one of the country's most vibrant arts communities, and Ramat HaNegev, similarly, is the capital of the art and education communities of Israel's Southern District. Additionally, Santa Fe is home to one of the largest Jewish populations by percentage (9%) of any city in the United States. This results in an actual number of Jewish residents (about 6,000) that equals the Jewish population of Ramat HaNegev. Both Santa Fe and Ramat HaNegev are also home to vibrant Arab, Muslim, and Catholic populations.

The Sister Cities relationship between Santa Fe and Ramat HaNegev will consist of two primary focus areas: economic development and cultural exchange.

Economic Development

Santa Fe's interest in attracting international technology companies to the city is mirrored by many other communities in the U.S. and around the world. The challenge for Santa Fe is how best to distinguish itself from other cities whose goals and aspirations are competing for the same audience. Ramat HaNegev, Israel, is home to a burgeoning technology sector business accelerator. Santa Fe is home to the Santa Fe Business Incubator, Santa Fe Institute, Santa Fe Community College BioFuels Center, Bridges to Santa Fe, Creative Santa Fe and many entrepreneurial service providers.. These institutions and others will be the focal points of the economic development work that will take place between the two communities as part of a Sister Cities relationship.

The committee proposes implementation of Bridges to Santa Fe's **Impact Santa Fe** program to promote economic development in technology and other sectors between Santa Fe and Ramat HaNegev, Israel. The program—structured as a competition, which would be held once every other year—is designed to attract international high-tech companies to submit their initiatives to an evaluating group in Santa Fe with the winner being introduced to the many business support

programs in Santa Fe and matched to an existing Santa Fe business with complementary missions; *Impact Santa Fe* would support both companies to their second stage. As required, Bridges to Santa Fe will arrange corporate connections to appropriate facilities and housing in Santa Fe as well as investment and high-tech communities in both Santa Fe and Ramat HaNegev.

Specifics

Impact Santa Fe, working under the auspices of the Sister Cities relationship between Ramat HaNegev and Santa Fe, will be an invitational for high-impact, innovative and scalable ventures from Ramat HaNegev whose founders aim to expand their businesses globally from a U.S. base, hopefully in Santa Fe.

Objectives

- Attract entrepreneurial talent and innovative, high impact, sustainable and scalable ventures from Israel to Santa Fe and encourage them to use the city as their U.S. launch pad.
- Promote Santa Fe and New Mexico as a leading destination and hub for impactful innovation and smart growth entrepreneurship.
- Provide a one-stop platform for entrepreneurs to set up and expand their business in Santa Fe and gain access to Israeli financial, intellectual and social capital.
- Connect startups with Israeli corporations, investors, entrepreneur clubs, co-work spaces, incubators, universities (including Ben Gurion University of the Negev and the Ramat Negev Desert Agricultural Research Center), and other allied organizations.
- Create a buzz and further the momentum in the startup ecosystem in Santa Fe and Israel.
- Collaborate with other startup hubs around the U.S. and Israel.

This model is similar to what Hong Kong has done globally for the last two years and which has proven quite successful in attracting high-tech companies from around the world to that city.

Benefits

The successful implementation of this program will yield the following direct benefits to Santa Fe:

- Will help put Santa Fe and New Mexico on the international map as a potential business destination for Israeli start-ups
- Create a buzz in Israel and in New Mexico about the development of a high tech ecosystem in Santa Fe
- Ultimately provide new work opportunities (jobs) for Santa Fe's young people who want to remain in the area as Israeli companies establish a presence the city
- Bring business people from across the nation to Santa Fe to hear about the technologies being developed in Santa Fe in partnership with our counterparts in Ramat HaNegev.

Costs

Bridges to Santa Fe will organize and manage this program and the professional resources necessary for successful implementation. Identified collaboration partners and supportive patrons have the option to support and underwrite this program as tax-deductible donations.

Bridges will coordinate financial oversight and patrons who will bear the cost of the program and cash prizes plus provide appropriate connections and alliances for business operations and support in Santa Fe.

Atid EDI Ltd., a Jerusalem-based business development firm, is prepared to monitor this program on the international and Israel side and, if Santa Fe agrees to move ahead, Atid EDI will introduce and promote this program internationally but primarily in Israel. The Santa Fe-Ramat HaNegev Sister Cities Committee, along with the Ramat HaNegev Office of the Mayor, will recruit companies to participate in the contest, assist them in the preparation of their submissions, prepare the finalists for their presentations and generally represent the interests of Santa Fe in making this program a success.

Cultural Exchange

Ramat HaNegev, like Santa Fe, is home to an extraordinary arts community, with fifteen galleries and studios operating within its borders. Additionally, it is home to Ben Gurion University of the Negev at Sde Boker, one of the world's leading centers of water conservation and desert ecosystem research. All of these characteristics and institutions are potential sources of cultural exchange between the two communities.

Film Festival and Film Industry Exchange

New Mexico is home to a burgeoning film industry, offering some of the most picturesque locations and most reasonable production costs in the Western hemisphere. This extends to Santa Fe, where the Santa Fe Film Office helps draw production teams from Hollywood and around the world to New Mexico's capital city and environs.

Santa Fe is also home to the Santa Fe Jewish Film Festival, a vibrant, year-round showcase of films from around the world featuring Jewish themes and subject matter. The Santa Fe Jewish Film Festival brings to Northern New Mexico films that inform and foster an understanding of culture, religion, history and/or identity. The festival's selections are an eclectic mix of award-winning documentaries, narrative first-run features, Israeli cinema and more, and represent some of the very best films playing the Jewish Film Festival circuit. Interviews with the film's producer/director, facilitated discussions, and talks by experts create an added dimension, transforming simply "going to the movies" into a "movie going experience". The festival season starts in the fall and runs through the summer with over 15 films screened each season.

Started in 2010 under the auspices of *HaMakom* (one of Santa Fe's five Jewish centers and synagogues), and dedicated in loving memory of *Lynn Kraidin*, one of the original organizers, the Festival was a success from the beginning. By the second season, the audience had more than doubled, several of the screenings were moved to a larger theater to accommodate demand and all of the films played to sold out audiences. In recognition of the community support and to

further expand its reach, the Festival was reorganized. The festival's current fiscal sponsor is the Jewish Federation of New Mexico, which has a statewide presence, and Center for Contemporary Arts is the Festival's official home. HaMakom continues to be recognized as the original Founding Sponsor.

Ramat HaNegev's civic leadership has expressed interest in creating relationships between its municipality and Santa Fe's film industry, in part to foster cultural connections between Santa Fe and Israeli artists, but also as a means to learn how to develop its own film sector.

Under the auspices of the Sister Cities program, the Santa Fe Jewish Film Festival could stage a Santa Fe-branded mini-fest in Ramat HaNegev on a regular basis, perhaps every other year. In turn, Ramat HaNegev could sponsor the screening of Israeli films in the Santa Fe area, which would promote deeper understanding of Middle East culture in Santa Fe while introducing Santa Fe to the residents of Ramat HaNegev via its Jewish Film festival.

Additionally, the Santa Fe Film Office provides resources to encourage film production in Santa Fe. The Santa Fe-Ramat HaNegev Sister Cities partnership would propose an educational exchange, through which aspiring industry leaders and filmmakers from Ramat HaNegev would travel to Santa Fe for film industry workshops. Participants would learn how to establish and sustain a film industry in a community that, like Santa Fe, is geographically removed from large commercial centers.

Education

Ramat HaNegev is home to the Sde Boker campus of Ben Gurion University of the Negev. The university enters into exchange programs through which students at participating universities receive course credit from their home institutions for work completed at Ben Gurion University. In turn, Ben Gurion University students receive credit for work completed at partner universities. The Santa Fe-Ramat HaNegev Sister Cities partnership will work to establish such partnerships between Ben Gurion University and institutions of higher learning in the Santa Fe area, including St. John's College, Santa Fe University of Art and Design, Santa Fe Art Institute, and Santa Fe School of Trades, Technologies, Sustainability and Professional Studies.

Arts

Santa Fe is one of the country's arts capitals, boasting over 200 galleries and 12 museums, according to the Santa Fe Gallery Association. Ramat HaNegev is also home to a burgeoning arts community, including fifteen galleries and independent artists' studios. These artistic genres range from painting and pottery to iron work, rattan furniture, and more. Ramat HaNegev is home to six different youth musical ensembles with 150 players and a dance studio with 140 Youth Dancers.

Additionally, Ramat HaNegev hosts the following annual arts programs:

- The Tel-Hai International Piano Workshop & Competition at the Sde Boker Community: Every Summer, about 75 talented young pianists from 20 different countries come to Ramat HaNegev to participate in this globally recognized master classes workshop and

competition. The workshop provides three weeks of classical music in the desert, drawing thousands of attendees to the students' performances.

- The "Sound in the Desert" Festival (*Zlilim BaMidbar* in Hebrew): This is an annual four-day celebration of Israeli music, including jazz, pop and more. Thousands of music lovers participate in and enjoy this event. Sound in the Desert has been held for the past 18 years.
- "Days of Poetry in the Desert" Festival: This four-day annual festival, held each January, draws the best and most well-known Israeli poets and authors, along with thousands of fans.
- The "Midburn Event": This is the Israeli Burning Man community, which gathers for five hot summer days in a temporary, purpose-built city in Ramat HaNegev. The Midburn platform encourages a communal life style, creativity, art and radical self-expression.

The Santa Fe-Ramat HaNegev Sister Cities partnership will work to establish a reciprocal artist-in-residence program through which, in alternating years, an artist from each community will be selected to lecture and show his/her artwork in the sister community. Every three-to-five years, on an alternating basis, each community might send a week-long arts mission to the other, consisting of 10-20 artists. They would engage in several days of education and interaction with the local community, learning the techniques and art history indigenous to Santa Fe and Ramat HaNegev, respectively. Each arts mission might culminate in a Santa Fe-Ramat HaNegev Arts Festival, during which the visiting delegation's art is publicly displayed and/or sold, along with that of the local artist population.

Conclusion:

The mission of Sister Cities International is to foster cultural understanding, friendship, and economic development between its participant municipalities and countries. The Santa Fe/Ramat HaNegev Sister Cities Exploratory Working Group believes that a relationship between Santa Fe and Ramat HaNegev would accomplish all of these aims.

Last month, a New Mexico-Israel Economic Forum was held in Albuquerque, which drew civic, academic, and business leaders from Santa Fe and throughout the state, as well as a delegation of economic and political experts from the Israeli consulate in Houston. It was widely covered by statewide media and received overwhelmingly positive feedback from attendees.

A clear mutual desire exists to strengthen the already warm ties between New Mexico and Israel, and we are certain that the creation of a Sister Cities relationship between Santa Fe and Ramat HaNegev will be a positive and productive next step toward that goal.

APPENDIX I. Statement of Support from Ramat HaNegev Regional Council.

August 17th, 2016

**Santa Fe Sister Cities Committee
The Santa Fe Arts Commission
City of Santa Fe
Santa Fe, NM 87504-0909**

Dear Members of the Sister Cities Committee,

This is our request for your consideration, to establish a "Sister City Relationships" between your distinguished City of Santa Fe and us , the Regional Council Ramat HaNegev, located in the " Negev Desert", in the Southern part of Israel.

We wish to collaborate and share with you future possible projects, which will be based on the knowledge and conceptions both our communities have, on how to develop desert regions vis-à-vis the aspects of Economy, Ecology and Community. We are confident that such a co-operation will build an enriching and fruitful relation, in various fields of interest, to the benefit of both our communities.

The attached pages of information, is a partial description of what we do and of what we want to achieve.

We will feel very fortunate to become your "sister city", as I believe that together, with a devoted visionary leadership, we can forge a close bond of friendship between our communities, to the benefit of both our people.

Sincerely,


**Eran Doron,
CEO & Head of Partnership Dept.**

CC: Mr. Shmulik Rifman, Mayor, Ramat HaNegev Regional Council

Encl