

CORRESPONDENCE

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Martin Gordon
Sent: Sunday, September 14, 2025 9:51 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc: Gordo, Victor; Masuda, Gene; Steve Madison; Hampton, Tyron; Lyon, Jason; Rivas, Jessica; rcole@cityofpadadena.net; Jones, Justin
Subject: Guanajuato PA Public Comment Sept. 15th

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Good evening Mayor Gordo and Council. I greet you from Sister Cities International Conference in Osaka, Japan.

It is time for the council to join the PSCC President, executive committee, & board to endorsed Guanajuato proposed affiliation recommendations and articulate its support for the proposed affiliation of Guanajuato as a Pasadena sister city. It should further acknowledge and formally embrace El Presidente Samantha Smiths historic visit to Pasadena and immediately respond to her invitation to visit Guanajuato during the Cerventine festival, day of the dead and special events for our delegation.

As a former Vice Chair of Pasadena Sister Cities and a member of the Guanajuato delegation who visited the city I am embarrassed by the lack of response and adherence to the basics of the political protocols of decency and respect to a potential sister city political dignitary.

My disappointment is exacerbated by the fact that our delegation was welcomed as dignitaries and treated with the utmost respect and kindness during our visit to Guanajuato.

I request on behalf of the people of Pasadena that you immediately place the Guanajuato PA recommendation on the council agenda and vote on it! El Presidente, the people of Guanajuato & Pasadena deserve a response.

I am currently at the Sister Cities international Japan conference Summit.

I am meeting with the ED and the Board who support our Guanajuato PA Affiliation as in line with our mission:

To promote peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation-one individual, one community at a time.

We work with our members to play an essential part in creating a more peaceful world through people-to-people exchanges and initiatives. The value of face-to-face meetings and personal relationships across borders doesn't just change the lives of individuals, but helps communities all over the world to thrive.

There is no more important time in history than now to solidify a sister city relationship with MEXICO. The Guanajuato PA report and ongoing work make it clear that we have met every requirement for moving the recommendation forward for a council vote.

Mayor Victor Gordo & Council, please lead Pasadena into Sister city History.

I request an immediate written response to this request from the Mayor on behalf of the council. Anything less would add insult to injury! I plan to return to Guanajuato in Oct/Nov. at the invitation of the president and will need your response in hand.

We look forward to your reply.

In solidarity with our community local and international:

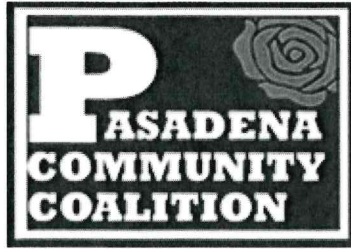
promoting peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation-one individual, one community at a time.

Martin A. Gordon Chair

Pasadena Community Coalition

55 E. Villa Street

Pasadena, Ca



Dictated but not read.

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Bob Niemack
Sent: Sunday, September 14, 2025 6:41 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse; Gordo, Victor; Hampton, Tyron; Madison, Steve; Cole, Rick; Masuda, Gene; Rivas, Jessica; Lyon, Jason; Jones, Justin; cityclerk; Jomsky, Mark
Subject: In support of the PSCC Guanajuato Proposed Affiliation

Dear Mayor Gordo and Pasadena City Council -

I am writing in support of the efforts to recognize the City of Guanajuato as a Sister City of Pasadena. I have visited the city as a tourist, prior to any discussion of this relationship, and I found the city charming and welcoming, with a rich cultural and architectural history. The more I learn about Guanajuato, the more unique parallels I discover between the two cities. Recently, when I read the very comprehensive report written by Guanajuato PA Ad-Hoc committee, I found myself in full agreement that Guanajuato is a good fit for Pasadena as a Sister City.

I am a former board member of the Pasadena Sister Cities Committee, where I was Chair of the Germany Committee. In that role, I hosted exchange students from Ludwigshafen, Germany, and visited Ludwigshafen on the 75th Anniversary of the relationship between Ludwigshafen and Pasadena. Through my travels and these exchanges, I have discovered the richness and depth of the cross cultural connections made possible with this type of City to City relationship.

I also was part of the welcoming group when the Guanajuato Delegation came to Pasadena last December, and enjoyed meeting the wide range of representatives who are hoping to make cultural and educational connections with our city of Pasadena. It's a gr

I hope that Pasadena and Guanajuato can establish a formal Sister City relationship ASAP.

Sincerely,

Bob Niemack
Born, raised, educated, and living in Pasadena since 1949

Bob Niemack

[Linkedin](#)



1903 Oakwood St.
Pasadena, CA 91104

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Vicente Gonzalez
Sent: Monday, September 15, 2025 1:19 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse; cityclerk
Subject: Public comment

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Honorable Mayor Gordo, Vice Mayor Rivas and Council Members,

My name is Vicente Gonzalez,

I am a PUSD Graduate from Marshall fundamental, and member of Pasadena Sister Cities Committee and from the Guanajuato PA Ad-Hoc committee.

In late 2023 we joined Pasadena Sister cities committee in efforts to bring a Mexico sister cities affiliation, our proposed Affiliation group was formed by Teachers, students, parents, and staff from PCC and PUSD, community members with ample knowledge of the Mexican culture, history and geography, Community leaders and PHD Doctors in Education.

After concluding the research phase we announced the formation of the Guanajuato Proposed Affiliation Ad-Hoc committee, we are very happy that all the research has proven to be right as there have been cultural exchanges from both sides and the relationship between the Guanajuato community and the Pasadena Community continues to grow stronger.

We are returning to Guanajuato from October 31st to November 7th on an official invitation by the Mayor of Guanajuato and we hope that our Elected officials consider joining as well.

Unfortunately our Guanajuato PA Ad-Hoc committee progress has been delayed with no explanation, even after following all the Pasadena Sister Cities Guidelines in the Affiliation policy.

Please support our community in this people to people relationship of Guanajuato-Pasadena that brings tremendous value to our City by accepting the recommendations noted on the Guanajuato PA Ad-Hoc report and placing the Pasadena Sister cities Committee -Guanajuato PA Ad-Hoc committee recommendations on City Council calendar,

Thank you in advance for your kind consideration,

Vicente Gonzalez

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Raul Ibanez
Sent: Monday, September 15, 2025 5:00 PM
To: Hampton, Tyron; Madison, Steve; Cole, Rick; Masuda, Gene; Rivas, Jessica; Lyon, Jason; Jones, Justin; cityclerk; Jomsky, Mark; Gordo, Victor; PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Request for Council Support – Pasadena Sister Cities Guanajuato Proposed Affiliation

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Dear Mayor & Councilmembers,

I am writing to respectfully request the Council's support for the Pasadena Sister Cities Guanajuato Proposed Affiliation Ad Hoc Committee.

Since joining the group in late 2023, I have assisted with meetings, research, and presentations to strengthen ties with Guanajuato's local government and community, in alignment with Sister Cities International guidelines. During this time, I have also served as a liaison to Pasadena City College and am pleased to share that the college is fully supportive of the Guanajuato initiative.

Later this year, I plan to join a cultural exchange trip to Guanajuato for their Día de los Muertos festival, taking place October 31–November 7. I encourage Council participation at any capacity in this meaningful exchange. The Guanajuato government has expressed its deep gratitude for the warm reception extended during their visit last winter with Mayor Gordo, PCC Superintendent/President Dr. Gómez, PUSD leadership, and community leaders. Mayor Samantha Smith of Guanajuato has since extended a formal invitation to the Pasadena community to join in this year's celebration.

This is a truly exciting and historic moment, as Pasadena moves toward establishing its first sister city partnership with a Latin American city. Thank you for your leadership, and I look forward to your support.

With appreciation,

--

Raúl Ibáñez

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Phillis Griffin <
Sent: Monday, September 15, 2025 5:26 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Public Comment, September 15, 2025 Pasadena City Council Meeting

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Subject: Public Comment

For more than three decades, I have volunteered as a citizen diplomat. I've traveled to over 20 countries, through official delegations and cultural-education exchanges. These experiences reinforced my conviction that international exchange is essential to our humanity. It builds understanding, mutual respect, and peace.

As a member of the Guanajuato Proposed Affiliation Ad-Hoc Committee, I affirm along with several council members and members of the Latino community—that every requirement of the Sister Cities Affiliation Policy (SCAP) has been met and repeatedly approved by the PSCC Executive Board but Executive Board has failed to calendar the approval of the Guanajuato PA Ad-Hoc Committee before the city council as promised. I know this to be true because I was in the meeting when Lena Kennedy herself gave her approval. Yet now she denies it, implying the committee is out of order, while Mayor Gordo uses her words as cover to continue delaying.

Together, they undermine both the evidence and the will of the people. Their actions already speak louder than their words. The facts are undeniable: the requirements are complete, the Executive Board has approved, and the people of Pasadena support this initiative. The time for delay is over.

Despite repeated correspondence, there has been no acknowledgment and no action. This is not a breakdown in communication. It is willful neglect. It is a breach of fiduciary duty by Lena Kennedy, and the lack of response to the community from Mayor Victor Gordo.

The consequences have been profound. There is a public outcry regarding the misinformation of the Mayor's false statement about the Guanajuato Proposed Affiliation process that has complied with all the guidelines as outlined in the Sister Cities Affiliation Policy (SCAP) description. Additionally, more than 30 dedicated members of PSCC have departed in frustration, and have organized a separate program which is operating with full compliance. The program has now gained traction. This division has weakened Pasadena Sister Cities, diminished public confidence, and eroded the credibility of our affiliation process. In social justice terms, this is an inequitable and exclusionary outcome, one that denies both our local community and our international partners the opportunity for full participation.

The Latino community, along with civic leaders and organizations across Pasadena, stands firmly in support of this affiliation. Their position reflects equity, inclusion, and accountability. These are principles that must guide all civic partnerships.

The first week of January 2025 the Guanajuato Delegation visited Pasadena. Lena Kennedy essentially forced this committee to receive the delegation to Pasadena as ‘unofficial,’ making that point loud and clear. Yet after undermining the committee publicly, she and the Mayor quietly reversed themselves—whether out of embarrassment, shame, or recognition of their mistake—by eventually meeting with the mayor of Guanajuato.

The Guanajuato PA Ad-Hoc Committee members showcased the best of Pasadena. The highlight was a cultural exchange at Marshall Fundamental School. In attendance were the President of Pasadena City College, the Superintendent of Pasadena Unified School District, and nearly one hundred educators and students. The dialogue was rich. The collaboration was meaningful. The promise was undeniable. And a number of participants questioned why Mayor Gordo and Lena Kennedy were absent.

On a personal note, I was deeply moved to see a photograph of my niece, Madison Triplett—the 2015 Tournament of Roses Parade Queen—displayed at Marshall. That image reminded me of our mission. To nurture ambassadors for the future. To give young people the chance to flourish as global citizens.

Again, despite this readiness and overwhelming support, progress has been obstructed. That obstruction undermines the dignity of our city. It frustrates duly authorized objectives. It places Pasadena at risk of being seen as unjust and noncompliant. The corrective action is clear: a formal signing of the affiliation agreement by the mayors of Pasadena and Guanajuato.

It is also worth noting that Lena Kennedy recently announced that she will not seek another term. With her departure, Pasadena Sister Cities has the opportunity—and the responsibility—to restore governance, rebuild trust, and move forward with integrity.

As a nonprofit operating under the State of California, Pasadena Sister Cities (to my knowledge) has not been in compliance since its inception. We have no liability insurance whatsoever—a fact I have raised repeatedly. Beyond that, the student exchange program lacks proper parental permission forms, notarized medical authorizations, host families criteria, hold harmless agreement, and other critical legal and safety documents required to safeguard minors in international travel. This failure exposes our students, families, and the organization itself to serious legal and financial risk. While liability insurance is not mandated for every nonprofit depending on its structure, the complete absence of coverage, combined with missing documentation, places Pasadena Sister Cities in ongoing jeopardy.

This is not merely an organizational failure; it reflects a lack of oversight by our public officials. By failing to monitor compliance, PSCC has allowed this condition to persist unchecked, making the City complicit in decades of noncompliance. Such negligence jeopardizes not only Pasadena Sister Cities but also signals broader risks among other nonprofit organizations under the City’s purview.

The time for delay is over. It is time for Mayor Gordo and Councilmembers to stand with the people, take responsibility, and sign the agreement.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower said: "For the peoples of the world to live together in peace, they must first learn to know and understand each other." That vision must guide us now. That vision is foundational to the Pasadena City Council legacy.

I respectfully urge this Council to respond to the Pasadena community outcry by acknowledging the strong relationship that has been built between Guanajuato and Pasadena and place the Proposed Sister City Affiliation on the next agenda for approval and execution.

Thank you.

Reverend Philis Griffin
Board Member -
Pasadena Sister Cities Committee
Member -
Guanajuato PA Ad-Hoc Committee
Chair -
Pasadena-Finland Sister Cities Subcommittee
Coordinator -
Student Exchange Program