



Legislation Details (With Text)

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Staff Report for City Council appropriation for up to \$210,000 Towards Upcoming 150th Anniversary Celebrations and Potential City Council Trip to Visit Sister City Ponta Delgada, Portugal

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff presents for the City Council's consideration and potential action the following information and attached resolution. If adopted, the resolution would authorize an appropriation of up to \$210,000 to fund celebrations and activities associated with the upcoming sesquicentennial (150th year) anniversary of the City. Of that amount of funding, approximately \$170,000 would be dedicated towards events and activities in San Leandro and the other \$40,000 would be allocated to fund a potential trip by the City Council to Ponta Delgada, Portugal, which is a sister city of San Leandro.

BACKGROUND

The City of San Leandro was incorporated in 1872. As a result, the 2022 calendar year will commemorate 150 years of San Leandro's incorporation, otherwise known as its sesquicentennial. In an effort to celebrate this notable milestone, Mayor Cutter requested the support of her colleagues on the City Council, City staff, as well as business and community members to plan and execute various related events and deliverables. A Sesquicentennial steering committee has also been formed to guide these efforts. The steering committee's role includes planning, outreach, fundraising, and support for all planned activities throughout the year, and could potentially include unique community events to be held in each Council district. In coordination with all stakeholders, it is envisioned that the steering committee will help plan the six city council district events, a birthday party event around the anniversary date in the second half of 2022, special activities in collaboration with the Historical Society, and a notable presence at the Cherry Festival.

The requested appropriation of up to \$170,000 is intended to serve as a source of funds to execute the above-described efforts, some of which would likely require the support of third-party vendors or consultants. Since the details of this program are still under development and were unknown at the time of the development and approval of the current fiscal year budget, no funds were included in the adopted FY 2021-2022 budget and thus would need to be drawn down from unencumbered reserves.

Overview of Potential Sister City Visit

Per a recommendation from the City Council Rules Committee, the proposed resolution that is included in the agenda packet for this item would also authorize an appropriation of up to \$40,000 to off-set the costs of a potential trip by the City Council to Ponta Delgada, Portugal that would be associated with the sesquicentennial programs referenced above.

As background, the City of San Leandro has several long-standing Sister City and Friendship City partnerships, including with Ponta Delgada, Portugal. Ponta Delgada is located within the Azores, an island region in the mid-Atlantic. Per the City Council Handbook, Sister City relationships are meant to transcend political or social concerns and lead to ongoing community involvement with the residents of each Sister City. The San Leandro Town Affiliation Committee selected Ponta Delgada as an official Sister City in March 1970. According to available administrative records, cultural exchanges have taken place over the years between the two cities. Examples include:

- In 1989, Mayor Dave Karp and a group of San Leandro residents traveled to Ponta Delgada and the President of the Azores visited San Leandro that same year.
- In May 2000, Mayor Shelia Young, City Councilmember Gordon Galvan and City Attorney Steve Meyers visited Ponta Delgada;
- In August 2001, Mayor Aruda of Ponta Delgada, accompanied by the President of the Ponta Delgada Council, visited San Leandro. A public reception and re-dedication of the Portuguese Immigrant monument at Root Park and other activities were held in their honor; and
- In 2008, Mayor Tony Santos traveled to Ponta Delgada for a 5-day visit during the Great Feast of the Holy Spirit.
- In 2021, Mayor Cutter and Council Member Pete Ballew participated in a live video conference with the Mayor of Ponta Delgada

Analysis

The San Leandro City Council Handbook identifies the steps to be taken when a City Councilmember initiates a request to visit a Sister City:

- 1) The request should be submitted in writing to the City Council, including the proposed itinerary, how the travel and expenses will be funded, and other assistance that the City will be asked to provide (i.e. gifts to be presented by the Councilmember);
- 2) The Human Relations Committee will make a recommendation to the City Council, including a recommended budget for the visit. [Since this committee no longer exists, the request was brought to the City Council Rules Committee on October 27th as the most analogous successor committee. A corresponding breakdown of anticipated costs is provided later in this report];
- 3) The Mayor will send appropriate correspondence to the Sister City. [This correspondence

was sent on September 20, 2021 and staff from the City of Ponta Delgada responded on October 11, 2021 with a letter from Mayor Maria José Lemos Duarte; a copy of the letter is attached to this report]

Fiscal Analysis

Based on research using available online resources as well as information provided on the Ponta Delgada travel website provided by Mayor Duarte's office, staff estimates the costs associated with such a trip could include:

- Up to \$2,000 for round trip airfare per traveler from San Francisco International Airport (SFO) to Ponta Delgada (João Paulo II Airport) for travel during the summer months of June to August, which is said to be the optimal time to visit the region based on seasonal weather patterns;
- Up to \$200 per night for 3-star or 4-star hotel accommodations;
- \$50 to \$100 per day for meals;
- \$30 per day for local transportation;
- \$50 to \$100 per day on additional incidentals such as sightseeing and/or event attendance fees.

It is therefore estimated that such a trip could cost approximately \$3,000 to \$4,000 per traveler for an approximately 4-night, 5-day stay in Ponta Delgada. The \$40,000 estimated cost is intended to serve as a maximum cost of the trip that could fund up to seven members of the Council and approximately two staff members providing ancillary support, along with any other incidental expenses or unanticipated changes in travel expense estimates that could arise in planning the trip. In the event all seven members are unable to join the trip, then the costs would be commensurately reduced.

As part of its discussion of the request, a spectrum of opinions was expressed by the Rules Committee members. Although all three members of the committee were supportive of the trip in concept, Mayor Cutter expressed a desire for council members to fund up a substantive portion of the trip's expenses using their own personal funds (e.g. up to one-half), whereas the other two members of the committee (Vice Mayor Aguilar and Council Member Simon) felt that it was appropriate for the City to entirely fund the cost of the trip.

Since the adopted current fiscal year budget contains no appropriations directly identified for such a trip, any funding for such a trip would need to be appropriated from undesignated general fund reserves.

Fiscal Impacts

If adopted by the City Council, the attached resolution would authorize a new appropriation of up to \$210,000 in expenditures, using undesignated General Fund reserves

ATTACHMENT(S)

- Letter from Mayor of Ponta Delgada

PREPARED BY: Eric Engelbart, City Manager's Office