

**Sister-City Initiative EXHIBIT** (Mark Lipman [editor@vagabondbooks.net](mailto:editor@vagabondbooks.net))

This is a follow up letter for the agenda item I submitted last week, "Sister-City Initiative," just to give you a little background information on why I'm submitting this for consideration:

I am currently actively involved with several national and international poet networks, including 100 Thousand Poets for Change and the World Poetry Movement. Through these networks, I have built strong relations with poets and people of influence around the world, and because of these relationship, it opens the door for creating such an initiative to build stronger bonds between our community of Venice and many others.

Two cities that I am looking closely at for launching a Sister-City Initiative are:

Venice, Italy and St. Louis, MO.

For Venice, Italy ... obviously this is the natural selection for an International Sister-City. However, beyond that through my poetic activities I have been able to establish a relationship with the newly elected mayor of Venice, Italy, Luigi Brugnaro, whose father Ferruccio (poet) has been a friend for many years.

Due to this fortuitous circumstance, many of the obstacles to achieving such an initiative are cleared away and therefore this could be our best opportunity as a community create such an international relationship between the two Venices.

For St. Louis, I have just returned from the St. Louis Brick City Poetry Festival, where i was a guest of St. Louis Poet Laureate Michael Castro. After several discussions on the subject, we have come to a mutual agreement that creating a Sister-City Initiative between our two cities is not only desirable, but moreover politically very feasible as interest already exists between parties in both cities who are able to help make this happen.

Additionally, as I am also a long standing friend of our current (Los Angeles) Poet Laureate, Luis J. Rodriguez, we have established support within L.A. City Hall to help smooth the way for such a process to succeed.

I hope this will clarify any questions you may have regarding the feasibility of the initiative which I proposed. If you have further points you need me to cover, feel free to contact me at your convenience.