

News from Building Integrated Communities Partners

Sanford Signs Sister City Agreement with Atizapán de Zaragoza, Mexico



Photo courtesy of the City of Sanford

On October 5, **Mayor Chet Mann**, members of the Sanford City Council, five municipal delegates from [Atizapán de Zaragoza, Mexico](#), and the Sister Cities Association of Sanford met at the Sanford Municipal Center for the official signing of a Sister City agreement between the two cities.

Joining the municipal delegates in Sanford were 15 artists from Atizapán de Zaragoza. The artists, who perform with [Compañía de Danza Folklórica Citlalmina](#) and [Compañía Infantil y Juvenil de Danza Folklórica de Atizapán de Zaragoza](#), spent the first part of the day performing at El Refugio's annual Festival Latino.

During the signing ceremony, Treasury Secretary Fernando Reina acted on behalf of Atizapán Mayor Ruth Olvera, who was unable to travel due to a health emergency. Olvera signed and sealed the official Sister City agreement in Mexico and Mayor Mann signed the same agreement in Sanford.

Mayor Mann also signed a Sister City proclamation declaring Sanford and Atizapán de Zaragoza's relationship. Delegates for Sanford were Mayor Pro Tem Rebecca Wyhof Salmon, and Council members J.D. Williams, Sam Gaskins, and Byron Buckels. Atizapán delegates were Secretary Reina, Councilman Daniel Altamirano, Olvera's chief of staff Jaime Espínola, Trustee

Alejandra Zepeda, and Advisor Julio Yáñez. Sister Cities Association of Sanford president Jan Hayes also signed the proclamation.

North Carolina Secretary of State Elaine Marshall, Senator Jim Burgin, and Consul General of Mexico Claudia Velasco Osorio gave remarks at the signing. Deacon Bob Bridwell and Deacon Emilio Mejia of St. Stephen Catholic Church provided a blessing.

To read the full article, visit <http://www.sanfordnc.net/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=184>

Note from Building Integrated Communities:

The City of Sanford and Lee County collaborated with UNC's Building Integrated Communities program from 2014-2017 to expand leadership opportunities and enhance communication with immigrant residents. Oscar Roberto, BIC committee member who was later appointed to the Lee County Planning Board, provided language interpretation for the event. BIC committee member Deacon Bob Bridwell provided a blessing. To learn more about BIC in Sanford and Lee County, visit [BIC in Sanford and Lee County](#)