



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

It is with mixed emotions that I write this letter to announce my departure as the Executive Director for International and Immigrant Affairs - Welcoming Atlanta after nearly a decade of service with the City. It has been an incredible journey, one that I would have never imagined when I first entered the doors of City Hall, and one that I will forever be grateful for.

It has truly been an honor and a privilege to serve in various roles alongside three administrations. I have seen firsthand not only the growth and development of the Office of International and Immigrant Affairs to what it is today, but the various changes across the city, state, and region around the importance of subnational diplomacy and immigrant affairs.

None of this would have been possible without your support, dedication, hard work and that of our City departments, City Council, Consular Corps, community-based organization, educational institutions, economic development organizations, and partners across the world. No matter how small the action may have seemed, everyone contributed to establishing Atlanta as a global hub for business, diplomacy, sports, education, culture, and innovation. I am immensely proud of the progress we have made and the impact we have had on Atlanta and its residents. I look forward to watching its continued success from afar.

I would like to extend a special thank you to the City's senior leadership, especially Mayor Dickens, for his trust and commitment in advancing our office's mission. His unwavering support has been instrumental in our success, and a key component in advancing subnational diplomacy across the United States, as well as the expansion of community resource events as place-based community engagements.

I am incredibly grateful to my inspirational team, who have shown unparalleled dedication to this work. Their passion, hard work, and commitment to serving our immigrant communities and fostering international partnerships have been nothing short of inspiring. I am grateful for the opportunity to have worked alongside such visionary leaders.

After much consideration and reflection, I have made the difficult but ultimately necessary decision to step down from my current role to prioritize my family and take care of my son. While I am sad to be leaving my current position, I have full confidence that the Mayor's Office of International and Immigrant Affairs - Welcoming Atlanta will continue to thrive under the exceptional leadership of Interim Executive Director, Paulina Guzman.

Thank you for all the memories, the support, and the inspiration over the past decade. I will cherish the relationships and the experiences that we have shared, and I hope that our paths will cross again in the future.

With warm regards and best wishes for the future,

Vanessa Ibarra