



FEDERATION OF CROATIAN SOCIETIES, INC. OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY, WISCONSIN, USA
HRVATSKA SREDIŠNJICA OPĆINE MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN USA

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VISIT US ON OUR WEBSITE WWW.MILWAUKEECROATIANS.ORG
P.O. BOX 1548, WEST MILWAUKEE, WI 53234-1548

The Honorable Joe Davis, Sr.
Chairman, Sister Cities Committee
City Clerk's Office
City Hall, Room 205
200 East Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Chairman Davis:

On behalf of the Federation of Croatian Societies, Inc., I am pleased to be forwarding you our letter of intent for the City of Milwaukee to establish a Sister City relationship with Zadar, Croatia. We have had preliminary discussions with both Mayor Barrett and Common Council President Michael Murphy, as well as the Croatian Consul General in Chicago and key elected officials in Zadar, Croatia, and feel confident that such an international partnership will go far in promoting cultural, educational and economic exchanges for all concerned.

The Federation of Croatian Societies and indeed, the Milwaukee-area Croatian community, is ready and willing to make this newest effort at people-to-people diplomacy a reality and pledges its support and commitment to this effort. This would be the first such partnership for Milwaukee on the European continent and are eager to showcase the City of Zadar to our hometown. As you will note in the formal application, there are quite a few similarities between the two cities, beginning first with the importance of water to both communities.

I hope you find our application both complete and compelling and look forward to working with you as chairman, and the entire Sister City Committee, in moving this project forward to a successful completion. I look forward to working with and appearing before the committee in the near future.

Sincerely,

John Braovac, President
Federation of Croatian Societies, Inc.

MEMBERS:

Sacred Heart Croatian Church • St. Augustine Croatian Church • American-Croatian Radio Club • Milwaukee Croatian Tamburitzans
Croatian Eagles Soccer Club • United American Croats • Movement for Croatian Independence • Croatian Fraternal Union Lodges 392 & 1959

Application For A Sister City Relationship*

City Clerk's Office
City Hall, Room 205
200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202

PH: (414) 286-2221 WEB: www.milwaukee.gov/sistercities



APPLICANT ORGANIZATION

Name Federation of CROATIAN Societies, Inc.
Mailing Address P.O. Box 1548, West MILWAUKEE 53234-1548
Website www.MILWAUKEECROATIANS.org

PERSON IN CHARGE OF ORGANIZATION

Name John D. BRAOVAC Phone 414-803-1460
Mailing Address 1335 S. 124, Brookfield, WI 53005 Email JohnBRAOVAC@hotmail.com

PROPOSED SISTER CITY

Name ZADAR Country CROATIA Population 75,082

EXISTING OR PRIOR U.S. SISTER CITY RELATIONSHIPS

Existing None Prior None

Please attach the following information:

Information about the proposed sister city:

- A • Demographics
- B • Geographic description
- C • Historical background
- D • Governmental structure
- E • Educational system
- F • Areas of mutual interest and involvement between Milwaukee and the proposed sister city in the areas of culture and business
- G • Details of communication and consultation with the sister city regarding the proposed relationship
- H • Information regarding the local organizational structure in the proposed sister city that will support the relationship

Information about the applicant organization:

- I • Organizational status (e.g. 501c-3). List Board of Directors and attach bylaws
- J • Number of members and their professional and business background
- K • Goals of the organization regarding the proposed sister city relationship
- L • Current activities of the organization in relation to the proposed sister city
- M • Methods the organization will use to meet the goals of the proposed sister city relationship
- N • Financial base of the organization and funds available to support the sister city relationship
- O • Evidence of local community support for the sister city relationship, including additional financial support and interest in exchange programs

**Note: Prior to filing an application, a letter of intent to establish a sister city relationship should be submitted to the Sister Cities Committee.*

A - Demographics of Zadar, Croatia

Population

According to the Census of 2011, Croatia, as a country, had 4,290,612 inhabitants, a population decrease of 3.3 from the 2001 study. Zadar, in contrast, had 75,062 residents in the City and in Zadar County, 170,017 in total population. Both the City and County experienced a slight population increase over the past 10 years. Zadar is Croatia's fifth largest city.

As noted above, Zadar has avoided negative trends in all the most basic demographic indicators, experiencing development and growth. Interestingly, only the City of Zadar and Kozino Village experienced continuous population growth. The remainder of the County, including all the islands included in Zadar County, saw steady population declines from 1953 – 2011.

Age and Sex Structure

One very noticeable feature of the population is that it is skewed older. For the 10 years between the Census of 2011 and 2001, the number of residents under 30 years of age decreased by 1,510, while the population of those over 60 years of age increased by 3,538.

The average age of the population in Zadar in 2001 was 38.1 years, while in 2011, that had increased to 40.8 years. Interestingly, the data indicates that the population of Zadar is still younger than the average population of Croatia as a whole. This issue remains a national demographic problem.

Overall in Zadar, residents under 30 years of age make up only 6 % of the population, while those over 60 years of age are 60% of the total.

In terms of gender, women dominate with 52% of the population, identical to the national gender structure. That number is unchanged between the two Census.

B - Zadar, Croatia Geographic Description

Located on the Adriatic Sea, Zadar County comprises 8.2% of the Republic of Croatia – some 7,270 sq. km. Of that total, the mainland and island areas equal 3,638 sq. km., while the sea area under Zadar County jurisdiction includes 3,632 sq. km.

The population density of the area is 44 inhabitants per sq. km. While the City of Zadar is the largest city in the County, there are five other major towns (Biograd, Benkovac, Nin, Obrovac and Pag) in the county and 28 village municipalities.

Due to its central location, in the heart of the Croatian Adriatic coast, Zadar is one of the major urban centers in northern Dalmatia, as well as the administrative, economic, cultural and political center of this region.

The City of Zadar is easily accessible by land, sea and air. It boasts an excellent transportation infrastructure – by sea, with its beautiful harbor, an international airport and a modern highway system linking Zadar to other major Croatian cities and many other European destinations. Whatever way you come to Zadar, the natural beauty of its landscape will leave you breathless.

The harbor and new tourist port for cruise ships are located along the peninsula of the old town. The small, but modern international airport is 9 km (5.5 miles) from the center of the city. Via the modern highway system just completed, you are only hours away from any major Croatian city.

Zadar features a highly indented coastline, numerous islands and unspoiled nature attracts many boaters – both power yachts and sailboats. The archipelago consists of 24 large islands and some 300 small islands and reefs. On the various islands, there are 3 nature parks and 5 national parks, making this area one of Croatia's top tourist attractions.

C – Historical Background of Zadar

As with many cities and ports along the Adriatic Sea, Zadar has its roots in ancient times. Zadar was first mentioned in a Greek inscription speaking about the people (the Jadasine) as the leading enemies of the Greek colonists in the Adriatic. It was taken over by the Romans, becoming a colony during the Second Triumvirate. It did not have a significant role among the Roman administration in Dalmatia, although from the beginning of the 7th Century till 1918, it was the capital of Dalmatia.

In the early centuries of Croatian history, Zadar was well linked with the various Croatian Kings. The deeds of gift were given to its monestaries by the Kings Petar Kresimir IV and Zvonimir. However, from the end of the 11th Century till the 18th Century, Zadar was in turmoil. For most of this time, it fell under the control of the Venetians, interspersed with uprisings by the citizens.

During the 19th and early parts of the 20th Centuries, Zadar was under either French or Austrian administration. Although it remained a political and cultural center of the Croats in Dalmatia, the image of the town itself was formed by the Italian civil servants serving French or Austrian leaders and by Italianized aristocracy and Italy-oriented middle class.

Through it all however, in large part due to the fact that the people never gave up their Croatian language and culture, it made it through the 20th Century as a Croatian city.

Zadar survived yet another invasion in 1991, when it was attacked by Serbian para-military forces, assisted by the Yugoslav army. It was not until 1995, that the Croatian army finally liberated the city.

Today, Zadar is a modern economic, political and cultural center for the region, a city which during the last decade has developed its tourist, agricultural and fishing industries to a higher degree.

D - Zadar – Governmental Structure

Zadar, similar to the Federal government in Croatia, is a democracy. Its local city government has two key aspects – Mayor, as the executive branch and the City Council, as the legislative branch.

The City Council has 31 members, including the President and two Vice-Presidents of the Council. By law, the City Council must meet at least once in a three month period, but the norm is to meet when issues and the need arises. All sessions of the Council are public, including providing a live stream on the Internet, allowing all citizens to watch and hear what is on the agenda. All decisions of the Council are made by majority vote.

As far as the structure of the City Council, a committee structure is in place, similar to how the City of Milwaukee Council operates.

In regard to the structure within the executive branch, there are 14 administrative departments, again similar in nature to what the City of Milwaukee has – public works, transportation, planning, documents, utilities, social and health care, etc.

In addition, the City cooperates with other public institutions in the area, including the university, tourism and the Chamber of Commerce.

E – Zadar – Educational System

Quite similar to what you see here in the U.S., children in Zadar are offered the opportunity for an education starting at kindergarten through elementary school. Elementary school lasts for eight years. Next up is a four year high school curriculum.

Students wishing to advance their education are offered an array of options, including the Bologna system, allowing a student to study for three years and obtain a bachelor degree or study five years and reach a masters' degree.

Beyond that, there are many possibilities to continue ones education via postgraduate studies, both in Zadar and other major universities in Croatia. The City of Zadar is proud of its University, one of the oldest found in Croatia, a school undergoing serious investment and advancements these past few years. More importantly, due to the country's acceptance in the European Union, Zadar University participates in the European Union student exchange program, resulting in the school opening its doors to students from all over the world.

F – Areas of Mutual Concern between Milwaukee and Zadar

It is fairly easy to identify areas of mutual concern between Milwaukee and Zadar, especially when one begins in the area of culture. Milwaukee, truly a city of immigrants, witnessed several serious influxes of new immigrants identifying themselves as Croatian since the mid-1800s. As was true with many other immigrants from Europe, these Croatians came to Milwaukee seeking freedom, employment and the opportunity to build a new and better life for themselves and their families.

As a result, a strong Croatian community has flourished in the Milwaukee area and in Wisconsin for years. In fact, the Milwaukee area boasts two Croatian Catholic Churches (Sacred Heart in Milwaukee and St. Augustine in West Allis). As in Croatia, the church remains the bedrock of the community, a place not only for worship, but for building a sense of community and the social hub for many.

In addition, the U.S.'s oldest soccer club is the Croatian Eagles, established in 1922, with its home fields located in Croatian Park in Franklin, purchased in 1956 by leaders in the Milwaukee Croatian community.

In addition, there are other Croatian organizations dedicated to preserving and growing the cultural aspect of the Croatian people, groups dedicated to the music, songs and dances. The Milwaukee community also has a weekly radio hour dedicated to all things Croatian.

All of these organizations are part of the Federation of Croatian Societies of Milwaukee County or "Hrvatska Sredisnjica", dedicated to promoting the events of all of its member organizations and the owners/operators of Croatian Park in Franklin.

It is the Federation that is spearheading this effort to establish a Sister City relationship with Zadar, a move that will only advance and further our organization's primary goal – positively promote and advance the Croatian heritage here in Milwaukee.

However, our goal for the Sister City relationship moves far beyond simply cultural and civic exchanges. In an effort to promote a far more robust and meaningful relationship, we are actively looking at promoting trade and commerce between the two cities and the state/country. Indeed, there are areas of mutual interest that on the surface, seem like a natural connection. Water is chief among them. Both cities are located on major bodies of water and tourism, fishing and commerce are common links between both cities.

Beyond that however, Milwaukee is leader in water research and fresh water efforts. Zadar shares a similar concern, since it has responsibility for providing fresh water to many of the islands in the vicinity.

Other similar areas include food and beverage manufacturing, mining and agriculture.

G - Details of Communication with Zadar Regarding Sister City Proposal

The initial contacts with the City of Zadar were made by the Croatian Consul General in Chicago, Dr. Jelena Polic. She had both verbal and e-mail conversations with the Mayor of Zadar and his staff. They have responded both positively and enthusiastically to the idea and look forward to the final agreements.

Since that time, the Zadar Mayor has appointed his city administrator, Ms. Anita Grzan Martinovic to coordinate efforts and provide the needed information and logistics. In fact, Zadar would prefer that once the Milwaukee Common Council approves the Sister City application, that Milwaukee be first in sending a delegation, possibly this fall or in the spring. They, in turn, would follow with an official delegation to Milwaukee next year.

All communication that the Federation has had with Ms. Martinovic has been via e-mail.

H - Zadar – Local Organization that will Support Relationship

As confirmed by the Croatian Consul General based in Chicago, the City of Zadar and a local NGO will have the responsibility of managing and fostering the Sister City relationship with Milwaukee. As noted in an earlier document, the Mayor has already appointed a person to spearhead that effort.

Zadar City officials have decided to ask three local NGOs to play this key role, in very much the same way that the Federation of Croatian Societies has played such a role here in Milwaukee. The three Zadar NGOs are:

- Association of Trades and Crafts Zadar (Udruzenje obrtnika Zadar)
- Zadar City Sports' Community (Sportska zajednica Grada Zadar)
- Zadar Writers Association (Udgruga Zadarski Pisci).

City officials will play host to any delegation coming from Milwaukee and will be part of the delegation that eventually visits Milwaukee.

I – Organization Status, Board and By-Laws

The applicant organization is the Federation of Croatian Societies, Inc. of Milwaukee County, also known as Hrvatska Sredisnjica Opcine Milwaukee. The Federation of Croatian Societies is the umbrella organization for a number of Croatian groups based here in the Milwaukee area. The Federation is a 501-c-3 organization that owns Croatian Park, 9100 S. 76th Street in Franklin, WI, a 30 acre piece of land purchased by Croatian immigrants in 1956. This park is the permanent home of the Croatian Eagles Soccer Club, the oldest ethnic soccer club in the US, organized in 1922.

In addition, the Park is the major gathering center for our Milwaukee Croatian community, as well as other ethnic groups and corporations which use the park during the summer months for picnics, weddings and similar events.

Members of the Federation include:

- Croatian Eagles Soccer Club
- American-Croatian Radio Club
- Milwaukee Croatian Tamburitzans youth orchestra
- Granicari Adult Orchestra
- Bura Adult Orchestra
- Sacred Heart Croatian Church
- St. Augustine Croatian Church
- Various Croatian Fraternal Union Lodges
- United American Croatians

Attached to this Section I, please find the Federation's Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws. The Federation's current Board of Directors is as follows:

- President John Braovac
- Vice President Josip Veber
- Park President Joe Becker
- Secretary Daniel Hrdi
- 2nd Secretary Tom Goltz
- Treasurer Josef Pelicaric
- 2nd Treasurer Joe Schauer
- Auditor Mato Veber
- Auditor Joey Schauer
- Auditor Damir Braovac
- Publicity Paul Lucas

J – Federation Members and Background

The Federation of Croatian Societies is comprised of some 40 member organization delegates that meet on a monthly basis. These delegates represent hundreds of individual members of the various member organizations. As with any organization with such a diverse and broad members interest, the Federation includes any number of professionals from our Croatian community, including medical doctors, lawyers, engineers, sales professionals, senior directors and managers, machinists, TV production, insurance, finance, clergy, teachers, small business owners and numerous others. It is estimated there are some 10,000 individuals of Croatian descent living in the state of Wisconsin.

All of the member organizations of the Federation have their own Articles/By-Laws, finances and Board of Directors.

K – Goals of the Federation Regarding Sister City

About six months ago, the Croatian Consul General, located in Chicago, approached the Federation of Croatian Societies with the idea of establishing a Sister City relationship with a city in Croatia. Wisconsin is part of the Consul General's area of responsibility and part of her mission is to promote and enhance partnerships in all of the states under her jurisdiction. Knowing of the Federation and how it serves as the umbrella group for many Milwaukee-based Croatian organizations, she felt it was the best equipped to take on the task of the lead group behind a Sister City effort.

Early on, it was emphasized that this Sister City relationship would attempt to focus on much more than simply a cultural and educational experience exchange between the two cities, state of Wisconsin and country of Croatia. The Federation shares the same vision as Dr. Jelena Polic, Consul General of Croatia – a future relationship that is trade and investment driven, as well as the more standard formats of mutual cooperation.

Thus, our emphasis is to identify Milwaukee area and state business partners, university and other educational partners, city and state business organizations all with the goal of exploring the possibility of interest in Zadar and other parts of Croatia as future business, investment and educational partners. Of course, Zadar will do the same with the same type of players found in its city and region. Mutual benefit for both communities, designed to support cultural, tourist, entrepreneurial, educational and economic development between these two cities, state and countries.

In addition, we remain committed to the goals laid out on the Sister City International website – by developing and providing opportunities for city officials and citizens to experience and explore other cultures; create an atmosphere in which economic and community development can be implemented and strengthened; stimulate environments through which communities will creatively learn, work and solve problems together through reciprocal cultural, educational, municipal, business, professional and technical exchanges and projects.

L – Current Activities of the Federation Regarding Sister City

For the past several months, various Federation Board members have been working with the Croatian Consulate in Chicago to research, identify and establish a mutual interest with a Croatian city to partner with. Dr. Polic, Croatian Consul General in Chicago confirmed directly with city leaders in Zadar a strong interest in moving ahead with a Sister City relationship with Milwaukee.

In addition, the Federation and Consul General met with Milwaukee Mayor Barrett and Milwaukee Common Council President Michael Murphy to propose the venture and receive the blessing and support of these two key officials. In recent months, the Federation has been in contact with the Mayor's office in Zadar to work on the applications and future steps to formalize the relationship once approved by both city governments.

Internally, the Federation briefed all of its member organizations and received a unanimous vote of support to move ahead with this project.

In addition, various Federation Board members have initiated conversations with both city and state business organizations regarding this Sister City application, with a promise for a more detailed briefing once the applications are approved. Also, civic, educational and other state organizations have been identified for future contact and briefings.

Last, the Consul General has meet with the state Lt. Governor and staff members of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation to lay the groundwork for possible trade missions in the future.

M – Methods used to meet Sister City Goals

During this pre-application phase, the Federation of Croatian Societies of Milwaukee County will continue to provide support, to promote and to help foster the relationship between both Milwaukee and Zadar. This includes our willingness to be a resource to local businesses, educational groups and individuals interested in learning more about the city of Zadar, as well as the country of Croatia, its culture, traditions and history. We will continue to serve as a resource in terms of communicating with representatives of both the city and country governments. We have our Croatian Park and two churches available for meetings and such.

Once the application is approved, we will ramp up our briefings of key Milwaukee and state-based business groups, university and other educational groups and city/state government. The Federation is also committed to spearheading the establishment of an official delegation to travel to Zadar to sign the agreement with its city officials and to plan the future visit of a Zadar delegation to Milwaukee to do the same. This will be accomplished by Board members with the proper contacts and experience.

N – Financial Base of Federation and Members

The financial base of the Federation of Croatian Societies is solid, with the same being true of the leading organizations that are part of the Federation. The Federation itself holds no debt, but like most other 501-c-3 groups, is limited by cash flow requirements in continuing its support of the day-to-day operations and management of Croatian Park, support for the Croatian Eagles soccer club, cultural organizations and our two churches. The Federation itself will shortly kick off a major fundraising effort to upgrade the Park in terms of its infrastructure and to make it a far more attractive venue for rentals and Federation functions.

In addition, the Federation and its member organizations have the ability and willingness to host events to raise any funds needed to build and sustain this Sister City relationship. This includes sponsoring the travel of key community and Federation members to a signing ceremony in Zadar, as well as hosting events for a visit to Milwaukee by a delegation from Zadar.

The Milwaukee area Croatian community is a proud community, one that will work hard in offering its support to worthy projects, such as a workable and sustainable Sister City relationship between Milwaukee and Zadar.

O – Evidence of Local Community Support for Project

Since the request some 6- 8 months ago by the Croatian Consul General to explore the possibility of establishing a Sister City relationship for Milwaukee and a Croatian city, the Federation of Croatian Societies and its Board have been actively involved in all phases of the project. This has included briefings for key City of Milwaukee elected officials, correspondence with key elected officials in Zadar, Croatia, regular communication with the Croatian consulate in Chicago, initial contacts with key Milwaukee area business and educational entities and briefings on the project for all member organizations of the Federation itself.

Suffice to say, that the Milwaukee area Croatian community is excited about the potential relationship and is willing to help out as needed to make this project a reality. That support includes being part of any official delegation to Zadar, using our Federation facilities as a location to host any activities related to this relationship, having our cultural organizations perform for any related events, hosting dinners/receptions or any other cultural exchange function that is needed.

Our community also stands ready to assist in any additional financial support needed or required.