

# Milwaukee – Zadar

## A Sister City Proposal



# Why a Sister City? Why Zadar?

- Some nine months ago, at the urging of Dr. Jelena Polic, Croatian Consul General located in Chicago, the Federation of Croatian Societies began to explore 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.
- Zadar was the choice due to many similarities with Milwaukee, in particular, its location on water, and the economic, social and recreational importance of water to each community and their economies.

# Why a Sister City? Why Zadar?

- Our focus will be to identify Milwaukee area and state business partners, university and other educational partners, as well as related organizations, with an interest in exploring Zadar and others parts of Croatia as future business, investment and educational partners. Truly – mutual benefit for both communities.
- Zadar will do the same with the key players found in its city and region.
- A commitment to the goals of Sister City International and a modern, 21<sup>ST</sup> Century partnership moving beyond just a cultural exchange:
  - develop and provide 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;
  - allow communities to creatively learn, work and solve problems together through cultural, educational, municipal, business, professional and technical exchanges and projects.

# Federation of Croatian Societies

## Who We Are – What We Do

- The applicant organization is the Federation of Croatian Societies, Inc. of Milwaukee County -- the umbrella organization for all Croatian groups based here in the Milwaukee area.
- The Federation is a 501-c-3 organization that owns Croatian Park, 9100 S. 76<sup>th</sup> Street in Franklin, WI, a 30 acre piece of land purchased by Croatian immigrants in 1956.
- 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 company picnics and similar events.

# Federation of Croatian Societies

## Who We Are – What We Do

Members of the Federation include:

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



# Federation of Croatian Societies of Milwaukee

## Who We Are – What We Do

- Federation meets on a monthly basis, with some 40 member organization delegates.
- Delegates represent hundreds of individual members of the various member organizations with a variety of professional backgrounds, 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 15,000 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.



# Laying the Groundwork for a Sister City

- Since January, Federation Board members have been working with the Croatian Consulate in Chicago to research, identify and establish a Croatian city to partner with. The Croatian Consul General confirmed directly with city leaders in Zadar a strong interest with the Sister City relationship.
- Federation and Consul General met with Milwaukee Mayor Barrett and Milwaukee Common Council President Murphy in March to propose and review the project. We also met with and reviewed project with Chairman Davis. Federation has been in contact with the Mayor's office in Zadar.
- Federation briefed all of its member organizations and received a unanimous vote of support to move ahead.
- Federation Board members initiated conversations with both city and state business organizations; other civic, educational and state organizations identified for future contact and briefings.
- Consul General meet with the state Lt. Governor and staff members of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation to lay the groundwork for future trade missions.

# Our Commitment to Sister City Goals

- The Federation of Croatian Societies will do its part to make this partnership work between both Milwaukee and Zadar, including:
  - being part of any official delegation to Zadar.
  - using Federation facilities 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 functions as needed.
  - assist with any financial support needed or required.
- Federation is committed to spearheading the establishment of an official delegation to travel to Zadar to sign the agreement and to plan the future visit of a Zadar delegation to Milwaukee. This will be accomplished by Board members with the proper contacts and experience.



# Financial Base of Federation and Members

- Financially, the Federation of Croatian Societies is in solid shape, with the same being true of the leading organizations in 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.
- Of interest, in the very near future, the Federation will kick off a major fundraising effort to upgrade the Park in terms of its infrastructure.
- In addition, the Federation and its member organizations have the ability and willingness to host events to raise a portion of 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 ensure a workable and sustainable Sister City relationship between Milwaukee and Zadar.

# Zadar

- Located in Dalmatia, on the beautiful 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.
- 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 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.
- Reputation as the sunniest city in Europe and the 4<sup>th</sup> richest European city in terms of water.



# Zadar



# Zadar



# Zadar

- 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 it to other major Croatian cities and many other European destinations.
- 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. Yes, water is a major key.



# Zadar - Historical Background

- 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 in 43 BC. From the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> 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, including Petar Kresimir IV and Zvonimir. However, from the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> Century till the 18<sup>th</sup> 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 19<sup>th</sup> and early parts of the 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries, Zadar was under either French, Italian or Austrian administration.



# Zadar - Historical Background

- 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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.



# Demographics of Zadar

- Zadar has 75,062 residents in the City and 170,017 in Zadar County. Both the City and County experienced a slight population increase over the past 10 years.
- Zadar is Croatia's fifth largest city.
- 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.



# Demographics of Zadar

- Average age of the population in Zadar is 40.8 years. Interestingly, the data indicates that the population of Zadar is still younger than the average population of Croatia as a whole.
- 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.

# Zadar – Governmental Structure

- Zadar, similar to the central government in Croatia, is a democracy. Its local city government has two entities – Mayor, as the executive branch and the City Council, as the legislative branch.
- 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. All sessions of the Council are public, including providing a live stream on the Internet. All decisions of the Council are made by majority vote.
- City Council utilizes a committee structure, similar to how the City of Milwaukee Council operates.
- As regards the Executive branch, there are 14 administrative departments, including public works, transportation, planning, documents, utilities, social and health care, etc.
- City cooperates with other public institutions in the area, including the university, tourism and the Chamber of Commerce.

# Zadar – Educational System

- Similar to what you see here in the U.S., educational opportunities for children in Zadar start at kindergarten and on through elementary school 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.
- Numerous possibilities exist for postgraduate studies, both in Zadar and other universities in Croatia. The City of Zadar is proud of its University, the oldest in Croatia, a school undergoing serious investment and advancements these past few years.
- 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.

# Details of Communication with Zadar

- As noted earlier, initial contacts were made by the Croatian Consul General, both verbal and e-mail conversations with the Mayor of Zadar and his staff. Their response has been both positive and enthusiastic.
- Mayor has appointed his city administrator, Ms. Anita Grzan Martinovic to coordinate efforts and provide the needed information and logistics.
- Zadar is of the hope that if the Milwaukee Common Council approves the Sister City application, that Milwaukee be first in sending a delegation, hopefully in the spring. They, in turn, would follow with an official delegation to Milwaukee.
- All Federation communication with Ms. Martinovic has been via e-mail.

# Zadar – Local Organization that will Support Relationship

- As confirmed by the Croatian Consul General and the City of Zadar, an appropriate NGO will manage and foster the Sister City relationship with Milwaukee. As mentioned earlier, the Mayor has already appointed a person to spearhead that effort.
- There are two NGOs under consideration and the City is just finalizing criteria to get the best match – should be in very near future.
- Zadar City officials will play host to any delegation coming from Milwaukee and will be part of the delegation that eventually visits Milwaukee.

# Areas of Mutual Concern

- Culture – Milwaukee, truly a city of immigrants, witnessed several major influxes of new immigrants identifying themselves as Croatian since the mid-1800s. As was true with many other immigrants, these Croatians came seeking freedom, employment and the opportunity to build a new and better life for themselves and their families.
- A strong Croatian community has flourished in the Milwaukee area for years. Did you know:
  - First Croatian church in 1917.
  - Croatian Eagles soccer club founded in 1922 – oldest in North America.
  - Federation founded in 1934.
  - Milwaukee area boasts two Croatian Catholic Churches (Sacred Heart in Milwaukee and St. Augustine in West Allis).



# Areas of Mutual Concern

- A modern Sister City relationship moves far beyond simply cultural and civic exchanges. What are the trade and commerce similarities between these two cities? Indeed, there are areas of mutual interest that on the surface, seem like a natural connection.
- Water, water, water. Both cities are located on major bodies of water and it's that proximity and use of water that helps drive commerce, tourism and fishing.
- Milwaukee is a leader in water research and fresh water efforts including:
  - The Milwaukee Water Council;
  - Innovating City of the Global Compact Cities program;
  - World Water Technology Hub, with more than 130 water tech companies calling Milwaukee home.



# Areas of Mutual Concern

- Zadar, home of “Croatia Water”, has responsibility for providing fresh water to the many islands in the vicinity.
- It is this connection, the need and use for fresh water, that truly highlights the opportunities and possibilities of commerce and cooperation between these two cities and communities.
- Other similar areas include food and beverage manufacturing, mining, tourism (especially nautical tourism – Islands!), commercial fishing (tuna) and agriculture.
- Thank you very much for this opportunity to make this presentation and application. On behalf of the Federation of Croatian Societies, we very much look forward to making this proposal a reality.