

MILWAUKEE-KRAGUJEVAC SISTER CITIES 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Presented by:

**Milwaukee -Kragujevac Sister Cities
Committee**

for consideration by the

**City of Milwaukee Sister Cities
Committee**

April 4, 2025



BACKGROUND

- The Serbian community has been part of Milwaukee's rich history since the latter part of the 19th century.
- In 1958, the new cathedral church of St. Sava was built in the Serbo-Byzantine style at 51st Street and Oklahoma Avenue.
- Along with the iconic Serb Hall, the St. Sava Orthodox School, and numerous other organizations, the parish continues to honor and embrace the Holy Orthodox Faith, Serbian culture and traditions.
- In 2022 the Church Board and members of the community expressed great interest and support in establishing the sister city relationship between Milwaukee and Kragujevac.
- The Milwaukee-Kragujevac Sister Cities Committee (MKSCC) was formed in early 2023 and began work on establishing the sister city relationship by submitting the Letter of Intent to the City of Milwaukee Sister Cities Committee on May 26, 2023.

WHY KRAGUJEVAC?

Commonalities Between Milwaukee & Kragujevac:

- Both Milwaukee and Kragujevac share rich history, strong industrial base, as well as a thriving cultural and educational environments.

Opportunities for Collaboration:

- Given the similarities between the two cities, the collaboration model was envisioned on three pillars that are **economic**, **cultural**, and **educational**.



Kragujevac Delegation Visit and Sister City Agreement Signing

- The Serbian Kragujevac delegation arrived just ahead of the signing ceremony and **attended several stakeholder meetings** ahead of the ceremony.
- The delegation consisted of **Nikola Dašić** (Mayor), **Danka Andonovski** (Minister for Investments), **Dejan Ružić** (Head of the Administration for Development and Investments), **Prof. Dr. Nenad Filipović** (Rector, University of Kragujevac), **Marica Dašić** (COO at AMM Manufacturing - MIND Group d.o.o), **Darko Djorić** (CEO of MIND Group d.o.o.), and **Zoran Lazarević** (Photographer).
- The Sister City **Agreement was signed** by Milwaukee Mayor Cavalier Johnson and Kragujevac Mayor Nikola Dašić on Friday, January 26, 2024, at the Milwaukee City Hall.
- Following the ceremony, the MKSCC and the Kragujevac delegation continued to attend **meetings with key business, government, and civic entities** across Milwaukee.
- In addition, MKSCC hosted a **celebration dinner** with local, state, and community leaders at the American Serb Hall.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND FIRST YEAR'S GOALS

Goal:

- Host and facilitate the Kragujevac delegation visit

Priority Areas:

- Economic development
- Educational collaboration

Key Outcomes:

- Productive meetings with Milwaukee businesses and educational institutions.
- Established an environment that fosters future collaboration
- Tangible steps for future goals and collaboration.

KEY BUSINESS & INSTITUTIONAL VISITS

1. University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

- Discussed student exchanges and research collaboration

2. Medical College of Wisconsin

- Explored cooperation with Kragujevac Faculty of Medicine

3. Harley-Davidson

- Invitation to establish a branch in MIND Park, Kragujevac.

4. Johnson Controls

- Potential for technological collaboration



KEY BUSINESS & INSTITUTIONAL VISITS



5. GE Healthcare

- Introduced healthcare investment opportunities

6. Port of Milwaukee

- Explored trade and logistics partnerships

7. MMSD Veolia

- Discussed environmental protection initiatives

8. Ingeteam Inc.

- Potential EV charger manufacturing collaboration

KEY BUSINESS & INSTITUTIONAL VISITS

9. Data Holdings

- Knowledge exchange on data storage and security

10. Near West Side Partners

- Urban renewal model presentation



ONGOING INITIATIVES



Harley-Davidson Dealership at MIND Park

- MIND Park in Kragujevac offers strategic advantages and growth potential for Harley-Davidson.
- Centrally located in Serbia, close to major road networks.
- Easy access to both domestic markets and neighboring countries (Bosnia, Croatia, Montenegro, and adjacent EU countries).
- Ideal for reaching a wide customer base across the Balkans.
- An application for a dealership has been submitted to Harley-Davidson.

ONGOING INITIATIVES

Harley-Davidson Dealership at MIND Park

- Growing motorcycling culture in Serbia and the Balkans.
- Increasing demand for premium, high-quality motorcycles.
- Harley-Davidson has a unique opportunity to capture this untapped market.
- MIND Park fosters innovation, community, and collaboration.
- Aligns with Harley-Davidson's values of freedom, adventure, and lifestyle.
- Creates a unique destination for riders and customers in the region.



ONGOING INITIATIVES

- Cooperation and Visiting Scholar Program exchange with University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee and University of Kragujevac based on the signed Memorandum of Understanding in 2024.
- Cooperation between Mr. Vladimir Bjelić, a speech-language pathologist, and Prof. Dr. Filipović on establishing an exchange of ideas, methods, and even toys to help children with special needs in Kragujevac.
- Discussion with the Ministry of Education and Science about a sponsored student exchange between Milwaukee and Kragujevac.
- Continued engagement with various government, cultural, and educational institutions in Kragujevac.

FUTURE VISION AND GOALS

- Facilitate the Sister Cities agreement signing ceremony by Milwaukee's delegation in Kragujevac, Serbia.
 - We sincerely hope that the Milwaukee counterparts of this sister cities relationship will demonstrate good faith and commitment by traveling to Serbia to sign the agreement.
- The commitment to fostering economic development also remains a top priority.
- We recognize that we are the Milwaukee-based organization facilitating this relationship and as such we intend to always put our hometown Milwaukee first.
 - The guiding question in our efforts will always be: How does this benefit Milwaukee?
- MKSCC is committed to the goals outlined in its inception, which are to strengthen the partnership between Milwaukee and Kragujevac through initiatives that foster international understanding, cultural appreciation, and mutual growth.

DISCUSSION AND QUESTIONS



THANK YOU!

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