



POLISH AMERICAN CONGRESS
WISCONSIN DIVISION
SERVING AMERICAN POLONIA SINCE 1944



Dear Members of the City of Milwaukee's Sister Cities Committee,

On behalf of the Polish-American Congress – Wisconsin Division ("PAC"), I would like to present for your consideration our initiative to connect Milwaukee and Lublin, Poland, through the sister cities relationship. Pursuant to Chapter 335 of the City of Milwaukee Ordinances, PAC voted to become the main sponsor of the initiative.

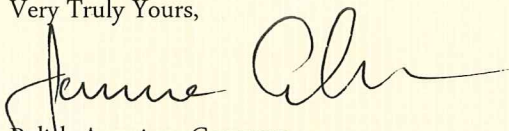
The President of Lublin, Krzysztof Żuk, endorsed the initiative and expressed Lublin's readiness to establish sister cities relations with the City of Milwaukee. Following my personal visit to Lublin and a meeting with the President's Chancellery, President Żuk wrote letters addressed to Mayor Barrett and the PAC in which he noted that that such collaboration between Lublin and Milwaukee not only might bring our cities closer, but could also contribute to the growth of friendly Polish and American relations. To that end, he invited Mayor Barrett and PAC to visit Lublin to discuss foundations that might be laid to link our cities.

Considering that Milwaukee has the fifth-largest Polish population in the U.S. (over 45,000), the idea of connecting with a city in Poland through a meaningful intergovernmental relationship creates a promising prospect for developing cultural exchanges and building potential business connections that would benefit not only the Polish community in Milwaukee but also the City in general. Given that many synergies between Milwaukee and Lublin already exist, our two cities seem like a natural fit.

As the main sponsor, the PAC will maintain this relationship and seek to develop it through exploring opportunities to strengthen cooperation between the two cities. To this end, we intend to seek out partners among our academic counterparts, cultural exchange organizations, business chambers, religious organizations and governmental programs.

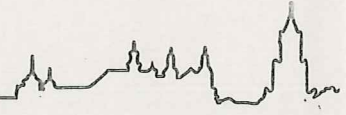
We respectfully ask for your vote to approve our sister cities initiative.

Very Truly Yours,


Polish-American Congress
Wisconsin Division



Krzysztof Żuk
PREZYDENT MIASTA LUBLIN



Lublin, 3 June 2016

Mr Tom Barrett
Mayor of the City of Milwaukee

Dear Mr Mayor,

On behalf of myself and the City of Lublin, I would hereby like to present our compliments and assurances of my highest consideration.

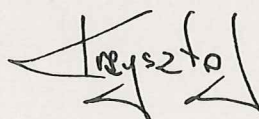
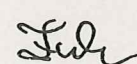
I am writing to you to express Lublin's readiness to establish sister city relations with the City of Milwaukee, as I believe that both cities have much in common and could engage in a meaningful cooperation. It was through recent visit of Ms Joanna Gibelev, Assistant City Attorney in the City of Milwaukee that I learned that twinning initiative enjoys your and Polish American Congress – Wisconsin Division full backing.

Bearing in mind the profile of the City of Lublin, a dynamic academic and cultural centre, the city of the flagship festivals like the Sztukmistrze Carnival – festival of new circus, busking and carnivalesque art or the Night of Culture – an annual event when people attend plays, concerts, exhibitions film screenings, or street happenings, I am convinced that aforementioned could be the basis for our closer relations.

I strongly believe that collaboration between Lublin and Milwaukee might bring closer not only our cities, but will also contribute to the growth of friendly Polish and American relations. To that end, I invite yourself, Mr Mayor, to come to Lublin at your earliest convenience to discuss any other foundations that might be laid to link our cities.

Trusting to meet with your favourable consideration I allow myself to forward you the details of the person who will be representing me in contacts with you: Mr Daniel Gorbaczuk from the Chancellery of the Mayor, tel.: +48 81 466 1922, e-mail: daniel.gorbaczuk@lublin.eu

Yours sincerely,



Krzysztof Żuk
PREZYDENT MIASTA LUBLIN



Lublin, 3 czerwca 2016 roku

Kongres Polonii Amerykańskiej
Oddział w Wisconsin

Szanowni Państwo,

w imieniu swoim oraz Miasta Lublin, chciałbym niniejszym złożyć Państwu wyrazy najwyższego szacunku i poważania.

Zwracam się do Państwa aby potwierdzić chęć Miasta Lublin w nawiązaniu przyjacielskich stosunków w ramach partnerstwa miast z Miastem Milwaukee, z uwagi na to iż uważam że oba podmioty mają wiele wspólnego i mogą angażować się w konstruktywną współpracę. W efekcie niedawnej wizyty Pani Joanny Gibelev, z biura prawnego miasta Milwaukee, dowiedziałem się, iż inicjatywa partnerstwa cieszy się zarówno wsparciem Prezydenta Miasta Milwaukee, jak i Kongresu Polonii Amerykańskiej – oddziału w Wisconsin.

Biorąc pod uwagę profil Miasta Lublin, prężnego ośrodka akademickiego i kulturalnego, miasta flagowych festiwali takich jak Karnawał Sztukmistrzów – który jest festiwalem nowego cyrku, czasem buskerstwa i karnawalizacji, lub Noc Kultury – cyklicznego wydarzenia kiedy publiczność podziwia koncerty, przedstawienia, wystawy pokazy filmów czy happeningi uliczne, wierzę że powyższe wydarzenia kulturalne mogą służyć za podstawę naszej bliższej relacji.

Jestem przekonany, że współpraca pomiędzy Lublinem a Milwaukee może zbliżyć nie tylko nasze miasta, ale również przyczynić się do zacieśnienia relacji pomiędzy Polakami i Amerykanami. Mając to na względzie, serdecznie zapraszam Państwa do Lublina w dogodnym terminie aby przedyskutować jakiegokolwiek inne elementy, które mogą leżeć u podstaw zbliżenia naszych miast.

Ufając, że powyższa prośba spotka się z Państwa przychylnością pozwalam sobie przekazać dane osoby reprezentującej mnie w kontaktach: Pan Daniel Gorbaczuk z Kancelarii Prezydenta, tel.: +48 81 466 1922, e-mail: daniel.gorbaczuk@lublin.eu.

Łączę wyrazy szacunku,



CONNECTING LUBLIN, POLAND AND MILWAUKEE, USA

Sister Cities International

by Joanna Gibelev, Member

Polish American Congress – Wisconsin Division

At the February 2016 Polish American Congress – Wisconsin Division meeting, members voted to approve a motion to become a main sponsor of the Sister Cities International initiative connecting the City of Milwaukee and the City of Lublin in Poland. As a new member, I presented the idea and was honored and pleased to receive the Congress' endorsement.

After my last trip to my hometown, Lublin, it occurred to me how much Lublin and Milwaukee have in common, and that the Sister Cities relationship would provide a great platform from which the two cities could develop a creative and meaningful relationship. Milwaukee has the fifth-largest Polish population in the U.S. (over 45,000). Besides sharing and promoting our rich Polish culture and heritage, we love to dance the polka at Polish Fest (the largest Polish ethnic festival in the U.S. held annually in downtown Milwaukee), indulge in *pączki* at least once a year, admire the beauty of the Basilica of St. Josaphat, and reminisce over a glass of *Tyskie* about our ancestors who settled here decades ago. I have lived in both cities and it seems to me that Lublin and Milwaukee are a natural fit, especially when it comes to embracing our multicultural and ethnically diverse societies through top-notch festivals, our shared love for brewing great beer, and our serving as homes for large student communities.

Lublin is the largest city in Poland to the east of Vistula River with a population of 350,000 of which nearly a third are university students. The city has five major universities and several private higher education schools, which, not surprisingly, have a major impact on the fabric of society. Lubliners are inherently youthful, entrepreneurial, inclusive, and welcoming of other cultures. Lublin is known for its many festivals, which attract visitors from throughout Europe all year round. The scale and finesse with which Lublin hosts these events has become a national blueprint for other Polish cities.

Lublin has a rich history dating back to the XII century. It was always a place of a peaceful and prosperous coexistence of various ethnicities. Multiculturalism is embedded in the very identity of Lublin, and its citizens, business community, academia, and local government maintain the spirit of the past through various cultural festivals and by tending to historical monuments commemorating its often painful history. Lubliners turn these festivals into opportunities to learn and educate others in a passionate and unorthodox fashion. Especially when it comes to the Jewish presence, Lublin is a place of particular significance. Before the Second World War, a third of its population was Jewish.



Lublin



Milwaukee

Today, through the compassionate effort of the city's government – as well as the efforts of local and international community groups – traces of the centuries-long peaceful coexistence among Jewish and Christian citizens are being systematically restored. Nowadays, visitors can count on a historically rich, multicultural experience: a time capsule that will take them back in time to understand and appreciate the daily lives and festivities of Jewish Lubliners. They can touch and admire the architecture, visit religious sites, learn about the culture and its contributions to the City, and experience that culture, as well as its cuisine, first-hand, as well as honor and remember their tragic end at Majdanek.

Over the past decade, Lublin has experienced significant growth in its economy, rapidly expanded high-speed rail connections and freeways, and opened an airport. The city also developed its Bubl-like bike rental service and upgraded its decades-old electric streetcar network. These are all services that Milwaukeeans have a strong interest in.

With this brief introduction, I hope that a seed of curious excitement has been planted in you and that you will stay tuned to learn more, in future updates, regarding the progress of the Sister Cities project connecting Lublin and Milwaukee!

(Editor's note: Joanna Gibelev is to be commended for her efforts. She demonstrates how a new PAC member can become immediately involved in the work of a state division. Joanna has not only spearheaded this Sister Cities International initiative linking Lublin and Milwaukee, but also drawn very positive support from her fellow PAC-Wisconsin Division members. Thank you, Joanna!)