



City of Tacoma

City Council Action Memorandum

TO: Hyun Kim, Interim City Manager
FROM: Mayor Victoria Woodards and Chief Policy Analyst Bucoda Warren
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: A resolution designating Split, Croatia as a Sister City of the City of Tacoma and removing Hvar, Croatia as Sister City as adopted by Resolution 39121. – Requested for December 9, 2025
DATE: November 19, 2025

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

A resolution designating Split, Croatia as a Sister City of the City of Tacoma and removing Hvar, Croatia as Sister City as adopted by Resolution 39121.

COUNCIL SPONSORS:

Mayor Victoria Woodards

BACKGROUND:

In order to be considered for a Friendship or Sister City designation, a committee must be formed with members from both communities and a relationship must first be established. Once a relationship has been established and has started to build momentum, the committee can apply to the Sister Cities Council for formal consideration of a relationship. Once approved by the Sister Cities Council the application is then forwarded to the Mayor's Office who reviews the materials for completeness and submits the recommendation to the City Council for consideration.

This request for a Sister City designation is a unique one that is requesting a change in a previously approved Sister City designation. Tacoma's initial foray into Croatia's Dalmatian Coast in search of a Sister City began in 2015. Because many Croatian Americans in Tacoma came from Dalmatia and the island of Hvar, Tacoma Sister Cities started a search for a partner first in Hvar City and next, in Stari Grad on the island of Hvar. The City Council through Resolution 39121 established a Sister City Relationship between Tacoma and Hvar. However, after a few initial meetings, the Mayor's Office in Hvar became unresponsive, and it was determined the relationship would not continue. The Croatia Sister City committee determined that they would identify a new Sister City to transition the relationship to.

A later delegation met with the Mayor of Stari Grad, Croatia but a new Sister City relationship was not established. Finally, the committee found an excellent match with Split, a city much more like Tacoma in size and attributes than previous Croatian cities. A Letter of Intent was signed by the Mayors of Split and Tacoma in October 2023 to begin the relationship and moving towards formal adoption.

Split and Tacoma are both Port cities. Tacoma's port focuses on Asian cargo trade, Split's port is concentrated on Adriatic and Mediterranean transportation primarily via Ferries. Tourism plays a larger role in Split's economy. Sports, Education, Cultural exchanges are desirable between our communities. The strongest link between our communities are the people of Tacoma, many with deep roots in Dalmatia and other parts of Croatia.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:

The Croatian Sister City Committee has submitted their application and have been approved by the Tacoma Sister Cities Council. Following this approval the application has been submitted to the City Council for consideration and formal adoption of the Sister City Relationship. The outreach by the Sister City committee as a part of their application includes years of communications and formal formation of a committee of members from both Tacoma and Split that will maintain and build the Sister City relationship. Their application includes further details on interests for exchange and relationship building.

2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Equity and Accessibility:

Sister City relationships are established by Tacoma Sister Cities and supported by residents interested in maintaining the relationship. Often these are residents who may have come from the Sister City and want to establish a connection for those living in Tacoma with their home city and/or Country. These relationships and people to people exchanges create opportunities for cultural exchange and learning about other cultures for all residents of Tacoma through public events and volunteer opportunities.

Civic Engagement: *Equity Index Score:* Moderate Opportunity

Increase the number of residents who participate civically through volunteering and voting.

Explain how your legislation will affect the selected indicator(s).

Expanding people to people relationships through Sister Cities provides additional opportunities for the public to get involved and support cultural exchanges, learning, and engagement with City programs.

ALTERNATIVES:

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
1.Do not adopt		Split will not receive a formal designation as our Sister City

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:

The Mayor's Office continues to manage the Sister City program and support the exchanges with all Sister Cities. By designating Split as a Sister City staff will add this relationship to the working portfolio of the program. The Sister Cities Council and/or committee may also be invited to present to a Council committee or City Council in the future to update them on standing relationships.

STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:

We recommend adoption of this resolution to designate Split as a Sister City of the City of Tacoma, and formally remove Hvar as a Sister City.



FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no direct fiscal impact to adopting this resolution, however there may be future travel and/or operational costs associated with events and/or delegation visits which would be managed under the Mayor and Council budget.

What Funding is being used to support the expense?

EXISTING DEPARTMENT BUDGET FOR MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL, 598910.

Are the expenditures and revenues planned and budgeted in this biennium's current budget?

YES

Program participation and coordination is provided by existing Mayor's Office staff with support from Government Relations.

Are there financial costs or other impacts of not implementing the legislation?

No

Will the legislation have an ongoing/recurring fiscal impact?

No

WHILE THERE IS NO DIRECT FISCAL IMPACT RECURRING FROM THIS RESOLUTION THERE MAY BE FUTURE FINANCIAL IMPACTS TO TRAVEL AND HOSTING DELEGATIONS WHICH ARE A PART OF THE EXISTING BUDGET.

Will the legislation change the City's FTE/personnel counts?

No

Program is managed under current FTEs

Attachments:

- 2023 Letter of Intent
- 2025 MOU in English
- 2025 MOU in Hrvatski
- Split Siter City Committee Application