



Memorandum of Understanding
City of Vaughan—City of Ramla Cultural Partnership 2019

November 24, 2019

Whereas, the City of Vaughan continues to be enriched by its active, engaged and thriving Jewish and Israeli communities. Each day, these individuals contribute to Vaughan as successful entrepreneurs, dedicated public servants and compassionate citizens, committed to making a positive and lasting difference; and

Whereas, this population represents more than a quarter of the entire Jewish and Israeli population – and the highest percentage of Hebrew speakers – in the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area; and

Whereas, the Vaughan community comes together to mark Jewish Heritage Month. Vaughan proudly flies the flag of Israel at City Hall during a special flag-raising ceremony to recognize Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel Independence Day. Celebrations like the City's annual menorah lighting ceremonies to mark Chanukah have become much-anticipated traditions enjoyed by all people; and

Whereas, Vaughan Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua is leading a 2019 business mission to Israel in partnership with the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce; and

Whereas, the mandate of this 2019 business mission is to strengthen Vaughan's connections with Jewish and Israeli communities – and in particular – with the people and community leaders of the City of Ramla, Israel; and

Whereas, since 1993, Vaughan and Ramla have maintained an important and enduring international partnership; and

Whereas, in May 2019, Vaughan City Council approved the new *Cultural and Economic Partnerships Policy* to advance Vaughan's commitment to international partnerships with global cities like Ramla; and

Whereas, in June 2019, Mayor Bevilacqua wrote to Ramla Mayor Michael Vidal about Vaughan's new policy, forwarded a copy of the policy and detailed a clear desire to maintain the Vaughan-Ramla relationship.

It is therefore recommended that Vaughan and Ramla initiate the process to:

- **Reaffirm, champion and modernize the Vaughan-Ramla relationship under Vaughan's new Cultural and Economic Partnerships Policy; and,**
- **Develop a comprehensive four-year action plan that advances cultural opportunities between the two cities with a robust framework to maintain this renewed partnership; and**
- **Ensure that this action plan has clearly stated identified goals and objectives; and**
- **That annual public reporting on the deliverables outlined in the action plan takes place to both the City Councils of Vaughan and Ramla, respectively.**

Respectfully signed on November 24, 2019, in the City of Ramla,

Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua,
City of Vaughan

Michael Vidal,
City of Ramla