



memorandum

DATE: May 26, 2023

TO: Mayor and Members of Council
cc. SLT-E

FROM: Raphael Costa, Director, Economic Development
cc. Nick Spensieri, City Manager
cc. Michael Genova, Chief, Communications and Economic Development
cc. Office of Communications and Economic Development

RE: **Philippines Mission 2023 – Day 1**

On Council direction, Economic Development is leading an economic and cultural mission to its partner, Baguio City, Philippines. The Council mission to the Philippines focuses on activities to achieve the following goals:

1. Enter a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with officials from Baguio to initiate negotiations for a renewed partnership; and
2. Consult with Philippine organizations while on the mission that can support a renewed partnership to position Baguio, Philippines as a gateway to the ASEAN region.

Staff are providing daily updates on activities.

Key Messages

- Vaughan has a thriving and engaged Filipino community with more than 9,000 residents, many actively involved with the Filipino Canadian Association of Vaughan (FCAV).
- The City of Vaughan has had a formal partnership with Baguio City, Philippines since 1997.
- The Philippines is a strong candidate as a gateway to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) economic territory: Baguio City can be a gateway economy partner with Vaughan.
- On Day 1 Regional Councillor Rosati led meetings with:
 - the Embassy of Canada to the Philippines
 - the City of Manila
 - the Commission of Higher Education

Day 1 Meetings

Regional Councillor Rosati led a meeting with Ambassador David Hartman, Senior Canadian Trade Commissioners, and the FCAV. There is an increasing level of interest from Canada in the Philippines as the stepping stone for Canada into the ASEAN region.

Lessons learned:

- Four Canadian ministers, including Foreign Minister Melanie Joly, have visited the Philippines in the past 12 months. Economic Development focused on the exchange of talent is a key objective of these visits.
- Further details of Canada's ten-year Indo-Pacific Strategy, including specifics around \$2.3B of funding over the first five years, are expected in late June. Funding is expected to include: talent development investments; business development support; and support for green technology in the face of climate challenges in Southeast Asia.
- The Embassy in Manila has hosted delegations in the past year from Alberta, Nova Scotia, and Saskatchewan. Ontario has not engaged the Philippines with a mission.
- Manila is home to the fourth largest Canadian Embassy world-wide.

Next Steps:

- Vaughan staff will gain access to the inventory of 118 post-secondary partnerships between Canadian and Filipino schools to explore opportunities for talent exchanges.
- Ambassador Hartman is expecting to visit the Toronto region in October with a focus on talent development in the health industry. Staff will introduce him to the Vaughan Healthcare Centre Precinct (VHCP) leadership to discuss health talent development.
- Staff will explore an opportunity for Ambassador Hartman to request that Council engage the Provincial Economic Development and Trade officials about the opportunities in the Philippines.
- Staff will work with emigration support officials in the Embassy on talent in: healthcare, construction, and supply chain/logistics.

The Delegation met with representatives from the City of Manila. The lead Manila-representative was Councillor Numero Lim. Councillor Lim leads Economic Development and International Partnerships. Through him, Manila expressed an interest in a partnership with the City of Vaughan.

Lessons Learned:

- The City of Manila has activated its iconic clock tower as a public art gallery with rotating exhibitions by local artists. All art on display was for sale.
- The delegation toured the City's Emergency Operations Centre. The state-of-the-art facility featured disaster mitigation technology including virology and weather monitoring.
- The current Mayor, Honey Lacuna, is ambitiously pursuing international partnerships.
- Manila is sending a delegation to the Toronto Region in July, 2023.

Next Steps:

- As part of the post-Philippine-mission report in September, staff will outline for Council's consideration, the opportunity to initiate an Economic and/or Cultural partnership with Manila.

The Commission for Higher Education (CHED) in the Philippines hosted the delegation in the afternoon. A series of medium- and long-term opportunities for talent attraction and exchanges exist.

Lessons Learned:

- The Philippines trains nurses that work in countries around the world. Yet, an obstacle in recognizing international accreditation remains in Canada.
- To help solve their nursing shortage, the Philippines are developing micro-credentials in healthcare administration and healthcare assistance. Transferring menial health tasks and administration to those with these accreditations will allow nurses to focus on patient care.
- CHED is developing an international nursing accreditation.

Next Steps:

- Staff have offered to connect Ambassador Hartman to the VHCP partners and the local Ontario Health Team (OHT) in the fall to gain international insight on behalf of CHED on the needs of international health employers.
- CHED may be invited to a future Government Relations committee meeting to discuss advocacy with the Province of Ontario to ease the burden for Filipino nurses who want to practice in the Province.

Look Ahead

On May 26th, the delegation will meet with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines and travel to Baguio City.

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (CanCham) was established in 1989.

Membership is open to Canadian, Philippine, and other third-country corporations and individuals that have Canada-Philippines business interests. The membership includes large multinational corporations, small and medium business enterprises, and persons involved in a whole range of business activities including international trade, investment, and labour mobility.

Corporate and Strategic Communications will provide social media content as appropriate.

For more information, please contact Raphael Costa at Raphael.Costa@vaughan.ca.