

DATE: May 29, 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 4**

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 4 Regional Councillor Rosati led meetings with:
 - Tourism Staff from Baguio City to brainstorm employee exchange programs
 - Baguio City Council to deliver the revised Letter of Intent. NB: the Mayor was called away on urgent business. Staff will move forward with outlining the renewed partnership
- Day 4 saw the delegation review several cultural assets and events including:
 - The annual flag decommissioning ceremony
 - A Baguio City Senior Leadership and Council joint meeting to review private proposals
 - A Council joint session
 - A ceremonial dinner for the City of Vaughan

Day 4 Meetings

On May 28th, the delegation discussed potential Tourism programs to be identified in the modernized partnership with Baguio City.

Baguio City has an existing Employee Exchange Program with Sister Cities. This program provides opportunities for staff growth by introducing best practices.

Economic Development (ED) believes there is an opportunity for a tourism staff exchange. ED will explore this opportunity as a pilot. Tourism staff in ED, for example, could co-organize a B2B exchange with staff exchange necessary in planning.

The Delegation delivered the revised letter of partnership to Baguio. Staff will work to present a revised partnership to Council.

Note that the Mayor of Baguio was called away on urgent matters. Staff will advance negotiations based on the 1997 agreement.

The Delegation observed various meetings and ceremonies

Look Ahead

On May 30th, the delegation will meet with the University of Baguio to explore exchanges with NiagaraU.

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

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