

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – JUNE 16, 2008

SORA STUDENT VISIT – OCTOBER 4-11, 2008

Recommendation

Regional Councillor Ferri, in consultation with the City Manager and Manager of Economic Development, recommends:

1. THAT this report be received for information.

Economic Impact

The Economic & Technology Development Department's 2008 Operating Budget will cover accommodations and reception costs, as per the City's partnership policies. Corporate sponsorships will be raised, by the undersigned, to offset any additional expenditures.

Communications Plan

Not applicable

Purpose

To advise Members of Council of the Sora Student visit to the City of Vaughan.

Background

The City of Sora, Italy has been a sister city to Vaughan since 1992. Since the inception of the twinning relationship with Sora, there have been a number of economic, and socio-cultural exchanges. Although the primary focus of our International Partnership Program is to increase the business exchanges between Vaughan and its partnership cities, and ultimately open new business opportunities for local businesses, one initial activity is the establishment and maintenance of community linkages.

In 2001, the City of Vaughan had invited students from the Sora/Pescosolido area of Italy for a student exchange visit. The exchange was cancelled due to the catastrophic events of 9/11. During the City's mission to Italy in July 2007, discussions were held with Sora municipal officials about a program of activities to advance its relationship with Sora and the broader Province of Frosinone. Included in this discussion was a student exchange for up to 30 students in the intermediate grades to take place in Fall 2008.

Thus, the City of Vaughan will be receiving a delegation of 26 12/13-year old students and three chaperones for the period of October 4-11, 2008. The purpose of their visit is to learn about Vaughan and Canada through a series of social, geographic and historical activities and visits. In addition, to class visits with local schools, the students will be visiting the Provincial Legislature and Vaughan sites, such as the McMichael Canadian Art Collection and the Kortright Centre. Attached is a draft itinerary.

With the participation and assistance from the Sora Club, Lazio Federation and Ciociaro Cultural Club, the City will be developing a program that also incorporates interactions with local Italian-Canadians. The students will be hosted by local families during their visit. The students will be responsible for flight and tour / admission expenses.

It is anticipated that the Mayor and a few Council members from Sora will be accompanying the student delegation. This is to be confirmed within the next few weeks. As per the City's policy,

the ETDD's 2008 Operating Budget will cover the cost of the officials' accommodations and reception hosting.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council. Specifically, the report conforms with Vaughan Vision 2020 Goals: Plan & Manage Growth and Economic Vitality and Preserve our Heritage and Support Diversity, Arts and Culture.

Regional Implications

Not applicable

Conclusion

Council has affirmed its commitment to its International Partnerships Program. Furthermore, the City of Vaughan values the contributions that young people make to this community. By initiating programs that involve youth in entrepreneurship, arts and culture, and even the civic process, Vaughan has shown leadership and inclusivity in ensuring that young people are heard. This student visit, as well as future exchanges, are opportunities for promoting of greater understanding of our cultures, diversity and commonalities.

Attachments

1. Draft Itinerary

Respectfully submitted,

Mario Ferri
Regional Councillor

ATTACHMENT #1

SORA STUDENT EXCHANGE 2008

DRAFT ITINERARY

Date	Activity
Day 1 – Saturday, October 4	Arrival at Pearson International Airport Informal reception at Civic Centre Transfer to home stays
Day 2 – Sunday, October 5	Morning Mass Visit to LaRocca Park & Activities with Sora Social Club et al Visit to Canada's Wonderland
Day 3 – Monday, October 6	Visit to Vellore Community Centre Tour of Civic Centre Greetings from Members of Council, Council Chambers Art at the McMichael Visit to Sports Village & Vaughan Mills Official Reception with Council & Sora Council
Day 4 – Tuesday, October 7 NIAGARA FALLS DAY	Visit to Niagara Falls Visit and walk around the Falls Ride on the Maid of the Mist Cable Car over Whirlpool Rapids Walk around Niagara-on-the-Lake Visit to Fort George – walking tour
Day 5 – Wednesday, October 8	School Visits– St. Davids CES or St. Jean de Brebeuf Orientation at schools – assembly
Day 6 – Thursday, October 9	School Visit in AM – St. Davids CES or St. Jean de Brebeuf Student dialogue – pen pals, exchanges Mini Track Meet Afternoon – Visit to Reptilia Visit to Kortright Centre for Conservation
Day 7 – Friday, October 10	Tour of Queen's Park Tour of CHIN Radio & Little Italy CN Tower Hockey Hall of Fame
Day 9 – Saturday, October 11	Day at leisure Return to Italy