

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – OCTOBER 25, 2011

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS - HURON-WENDAT NATION, WENDAKE, QUEBEC AND CITY OF VAUGHAN

Recommendation

The Director of Economic Development recommends:

1. That this report be received;
2. That a formal “Twinning/Sister” City relationship with Wendake, Quebec would not fit within the Cultural and Social International Partnership Policy.

Contribution to Sustainability

Sustainability means that we make decisions and take actions that ensure a healthy environment, vibrant communities and economic vitality for current and future generations. Advancing and participating in international partnerships promotes greater understanding and respect of the diversity, cultural and economic resources of each city through the planning and implementation of programs that foster mutual understanding, respect and goodwill.

Economic Impact

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

Communications Plan

Not applicable.

Purpose

Committee of the Whole approved the resolution submitted by Regional Councillor Di Biase, dated September 13, 2011 requesting that the Economic Development Department advise and report with respect to a Sister City Relationship with the Huron-Wendat Nation, Wendake, Quebec as it relates to the present City policy on Cultural and Social International Partnerships. The current framework on Cultural and Social International Partnerships was adopted by Council on May 24, 2011.

Background – Analysis and Options

Huron-Wendat Nation, Wendake, Quebec

Wendake is the name for the Huron-Wendat reserve located in Quebec City, PQ. The population of Wendake is approximately 1,500 and encompasses a land area of approximately 350 acres. To put in perspective, this is approximately the size of the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre.

As described in the official Wendake Tourist Guide, the “Huron-Wendats of today are proud artisan and merchants. From their skilled hand come snowshoes, moccasins, jewellery, baskets and canoes.”

The Huron-Wendat Nation originally occupied a vast territory south of Georgian Bay and Lake Huron, in what is now Ontario, the Huron-Wendat had developed a trading empire that covered most of Ontario, more than half of Quebec, and a good portion of the United States. For the first Europeans, they were known as “Hurons” and lived in the “Huronie”. However, they referred to themselves as “Wendat” and their territory “Wendake”.

Furthermore, the Huron-Wendat Nation's occupation across central Ontario, including the Skandatut site in Vaughan is evidenced by many village and ossuary sites, sacred places and significant landforms used by their ancestors.

City of Vaughan Partnerships

As a basis to evaluate the proposed partnership with Wendake, Quebec, staff used principal objectives outlined in the report titled "Cultural and Social International Partnerships" which was adopted by Council, on May 24, 2011. The report provides a list of requirements that establishes an equitable and transparent process to guide Staff, Council and the public in establishing and maintaining international partnerships that have a cultural and social affiliation.

The six requirements were built on the understanding that the "Twinning" is international in nature and has been introduced by the citizens of both communities. In addition, the underlying goal of the social and cultural relationship would further the international understanding at all levels of the community on a continuing long-term basis. Within the twinning program, cities and our citizens exchange people, ideas and culture in a variety of educational, municipal, professional, technical and youth projects.

Therefore, at the foundation of every successful sister city partnership that Vaughan may enter into lies a strong local program with volunteers who are willing to commit time, talent and resources to develop a long-term relationship with their counterparts abroad.

Twinning Requirements

To be considered as "Twin" or "Sister" city, the approved framework identified that each cultural and social international city relationship request must meet the following requirements;

1. A proposal to establish a cultural and social international partnership relationship shall be submitted to the City Clerk's Office.
2. Be sponsored by a community association/group or an individual member of the community;
3. A list of individuals and/or community groups both in the City of Vaughan and in the prospective city who have a sincere desire to actively support and commit to a long-term relationship must be submitted as evidence for a strong relationship which would endure changes in elected government officials;
4. Demonstrate support and commitment from the cultural and social international partnership city in terms of community interest and active participation;
5. A community profile of the prospective city must be submitted and strong consideration will be given to compatibility of the cities in such areas as population and where there is a strong presence of local support association/group;
6. The community association/group must present a four-year plan of action that demonstrates the ability to support various visits, receptions, delegations and other similar functions such as a relationship entails with minimal financial contributions from the City of Vaughan.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020

Preserve our Heritage and Support, Diversity, Arts & Culture
Plan and Manage Growth & Economic Vitality

Regional Implications

Not applicable

Conclusion

Social and cultural international partnerships can be one of the many valuable mechanisms used to enhance Vaughan's international relations. As Wendake, PQ is not an international city, does not have a large local citizen-based support group and has not fulfilled the six requirements as outlined, staff at this time does not support the notion that the City establish a "Twinning/Sister" City relationship with Wendake, Quebec as a formal partnership

However, it is important to emphasize that relationships between cities, communities and businesses can flourish without formal status while exchanging ideas, opinions and information that will benefit all citizens.

Attachments

Not Applicable

Report prepared by:

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Respectfully submitted,

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Director of Economic Development