

**Gaelic Athletic Association
of Toronto**

February 26, 2006

Ontario Trillium Foundation
45 Charles Street East, 5th Floor
Toronto, ON M4Y 1S2

To Whom It May Concern:

O'Connor Irish Heritage House - Trillium Grant Application

I am writing on behalf of the Toronto Gaelic Athletic Association ("Toronto GAA") to confirm our support for the above organization in its application for Trillium Funding.

The Toronto GAA is the largest Irish sporting or cultural association in Toronto, with over 250 active playing adult members, and several hundred retired players and supporters. The aims of the Toronto GAA are the promotion of traditional Irish games (Gaelic Football and Hurling) as well as the promotion of all other aspects of Traditional Irish culture.

In addition to the adult membership referred to above we have worked closely with various Toronto School Boards in recent years to promote our games in partnership with their respective Physical Education programs. As a result of this partnership, we have introduced our games to literally hundreds of children who would not traditionally have been aware of these sports.

The reasons for our supporting the efforts of the O'Connor Irish Heritage House project are many, but can be summarized as follows:

1. Toronto's Irish & Irish-Canadian community does not currently have a proper home, and a premises such as O'Connor House would fill this void, and provide associations such as our own a meeting place for social and administrative purposes, as well as providing a great forum for our interaction with other members of the Irish community, thus giving us an opportunity to network and further promote our games, particularly among the children and grand children of Irish immigrants.
2. Although the playing fields that adjoin the O'Connor House are too small for adult Gaelic games, they are very suitable for underage games. We see great potential for this property to become a home for our underage development program, which as noted above, is primarily school based. In particular we already have strong ties with the Toronto Catholic District School Board and feel this venue could become the focal point of our development efforts within their schools, as well as the other Boards. It would be a great boost to our Youth program to have one centralized home.

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3. The aims and objectives of the O'Connor House team are not just confined to physically restoring this House, but also include the promotion of Irish Heritage and Culture, for instance language, music and dance. This is consistent with one of the stated aims of our Association and hence we fully support this.
4. We believe the restoration of this fine old building to 'active service' would be a great cultural and aesthetic boost to our city as a whole, and not just to the Irish community.

We understand that the O'Connor House project has almost 200 Founding members from various strands of the Toronto Irish community. In view of this broad based support, and our familiarity with the individuals behind the project, we are of the opinion that the O'Connor House team has the capacity to see this project through to fruition.

If you need to discuss this with me further I can be reached at the phone number or email address below.

Yours truly,



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