SUBJECT: Funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada to create an Immigration Strategy (ECS09030) (City Wide)

RECOMMENDATION:

(a) That the City of Hamilton accept $360,715 in funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada for the purpose of creating and/or enhancing a Local Immigration Partnership Council and the development of an immigration strategy.

(b) That the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized and directed to execute all necessary documents between the City of Hamilton and the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, with respect to the Local Immigration Partnerships funding, in a form satisfactory to the General Manager, Community Services and the City Solicitor.

(c) That the staff complement of the Community Services Department, required to support the local Immigration Partnership Council and the development of a local immigration strategy, be temporarily increased by 2.7 FTEs, which are to be funded 100% by Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

Vicki Woodcox
Acting General Manager,
Community Services Department
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

On February 6, 2008, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI) issued a call for proposals to municipalities to apply for funding to strengthen the role of local communities in serving and integrating immigrants through Local Immigration Partnerships. These Local Immigration Partnership Councils will provide a collaborative framework for, and facilitate the development and implementation of, sustainable local solutions for successfully attracting, integrating and retaining immigrants to Hamilton.

The City of Hamilton, in collaboration with six community partners, submitted an application, including a detailed plan and budget, and letters of support from the community, as requested in the call for proposals. The City of Hamilton has been awarded $360,715 in funding over 12 months to establish a Local Immigration Partnership Council, and through this Council create a comprehensive immigration strategy. The Community Services Department will lead this initiative and work with internal and external service providers and stakeholders; including recent immigrants to Hamilton, to develop solutions that work for the intended audiences and the community as a whole.

BACKGROUND:

In November 2005, the provincial and federal governments signed the first Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement (COIA). A key feature of the agreement was the recognition that municipalities and local communities have an important role to play in the integration of immigrants to Ontario. Beginning in 2005, CIC committed to investing $920 million in new funding for settlement and language training programs and services with the goal of supporting the successful social and economic integration of immigrants in Ontario.

On February 6, 2008, CIC in partnership with the MCI issued a call for proposals (for 12 month projects) to strengthen the role of local communities in serving and integrating immigrants through Local Immigration Partnerships.

By issuing the call for proposals, CIC demonstrated its intention to achieve the following objectives:

1. Improved access to, and coordination of, effective services that facilitate immigrant settlement and integration.

2. Improved access to the labour market for immigrants.

3. Strengthened local and regional awareness and capacity to integrate immigrants.

4. Establishment of/or enhancement of local partnerships and participation of multiple stakeholders in planning and coordinating the delivery of integration services (including settlement, language training and labour market integration).
Since the announcement of the COIA in 2005, key stakeholders in Hamilton's Immigrant Community have strongly signaled, to the Mayor and the Community Services Department, the need for the City of Hamilton to provide leadership to the community in responding to issues of newcomers to Hamilton. In 2007, Council approved $129,600 one-time funding to support the development of an immigration strategy (Committee of the Whole Final Budget Report 07-010). This funding enabled the Community Services Department to work with the community members to complete the groundwork necessary to position the City and its partners to apply for the forthcoming funding available under COIA.

The Community Services Department and key community partners including Hamilton's Centre for Civic Inclusion (HCCI), the Jobs Prosperity Collaborative, Immigration Strategy Advisory Committee, St. Joseph Immigrant Women's Centre, Settlement and Integration Services Organization (SISO), and the Centre de santé Communautaire Hamilton/Niagara, submitted a proposal on May 6, 2008. CIC staff informally advised the Department in late 2008 that the proposal was favourably received. Staff has been negotiating the terms of the proposed Contribution Agreement, since February 5, 2009, with CIC who anticipate its approval in April 2009.

It should be noted that CIC has indicated that a subsequent call for proposals (Phase II) will be issued in the future to ‘build on the outcomes’ of the work achieved; specifically, to support the implementation of the immigration strategies created through the current process.

**ANALYSIS/RATIONALE:**

1. **Demonstrated Need for the Project**

   Hamilton has always been an important centre for settlement and integration and is one of the top communities in Canada in terms of our diversity and the number of recent immigrants that choose to settle here. The 2006 Census indicates that 25.4 percent of Hamilton’s population are immigrants. While the greatest number of immigrants living in Hamilton originated in Europe, between 2001 and 2006 the majority have come from Asia and the Middle East, Europe and Africa.

   The table below summarizes the immigrant population in Hamilton compared to Ontario and Canada. Immigrant population includes individuals that have resided in Canada for a number of years as well as those that have arrived more recently.

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1 Source: Statistics Canada. 2007. Immigrant Status and Place of Birth (38), Sex (3) and Age Groups (10) for the Population of Canada, Provinces, Territories, Census Divisions and Census Subdivisions, 2006 Census

2 Source: Immigrant status and period of immigration and place of birth for the immigrants and non-permanent residents of Canada, Provinces, Territories, Census Metropolitan Areas and Census Agglomerations, 2006 Census, 20% sample data
A variety of reports on the importance of immigration to Canada’s economic growth continue to be published by economists, social policy institutes, various levels of government, and others. As with the rest of Canada, Hamilton’s future growth and prosperity will be primarily driven by immigrants and newcomers. How that growth occurs, how immigrants and new Canadians are received into the community, and how these individuals and families integrate and adapt, will have a direct influence on the success or failure of Hamilton’s future growth and prosperity.

Many immigrants come to Canada with the expectation of freedom and opportunity, but upon arrival face significant challenges, including poverty, discrimination and joblessness. The unemployment rate (as reported by Statistics Canada 2006 Census) for recent immigrants (those who immigrated between 2001 and 2006) in the City of Hamilton was two times higher than the rate for the population as a whole. This is comparable to national figures where the unemployment rate in Canada as a whole is 6.4% and the rate for recent immigrants is 12%. Recent immigrants are having greater difficulty securing employment locally and nationally compared to the total population of Canada.

The incidence of poverty for the total population in Hamilton is 18%. For recent immigrants the incidence of poverty is an alarming 51%. In other words, more than one half of recent immigrants in the City of Hamilton live in poverty. This is unacceptable and unnecessary given that many recent immigrants arrive in Canada with skills and education. These statistics also signal a loss of growth potential to the City’s economy.

The issues of unemployment and poverty do not exist in isolation for immigrants and impact physical and mental health, education, access to services, civic engagement, discrimination and racism. A problem of this magnitude requires the energy, creativity
and support of the whole community including, but not limited to, the profit and not-for-profit sectors, education, health, municipal and senior levels of government.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Select Groups</th>
<th>Incidence of Low-Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recent Immigrants</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census

2. **Proposal Development**

The Community Services Department along with its partner organizations Settlement and Immigration Services Organization (SISO), St. Joseph Immigrant Women’s Centre, the Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion, the Centre de santé Communautaire, the Jobs Prosperity Collaborative, and the Immigration Strategy Advisory Committee, worked collaboratively to create a proposal for a ‘made-in-Hamilton immigration strategy’ that will result in many benefits for immigrants living in Hamilton as well as for the economic, social and cultural health of our community. The strategy will position Hamilton to:

- Support the attraction and development of new skills needed for growth and innovation thus realizing Hamilton’s future growth objectives while mitigating the impact of declining and aging populations;

- Enable immigrants to achieve employment commensurate with their experience and education and hence higher incomes thus reducing poverty levels within Hamilton’s immigrant population;

- Build the environment for today’s immigrant youth to be the successful Canadians of the future;

- Bring technical skills, linguistic diversity, international experiences, and innovative ideas along with capital investment and entrepreneurial skills, improve export opportunities given connections immigrants have outside Canada; and,

- Enhance Hamilton’s cultural diversity and cultural capital, two critical ingredients for creativity and growth.

3. **Creation of the Local Immigration Partnership Council**

In an effort to capitalize on the momentum created through the preparation and submission of the funding proposal, and recognizing the importance of moving ahead with the creation of a local Immigration Partnership Council, the Community Services Department, in partnership with several community partners, formed a recruitment and selection committee in August 2009. The Committee’s mandate
was to recruit interested individuals from ten community sectors including immigrants/refugees, business, labour, not-for-profit, health, education, government, funders, communications/media, and youth.

The recruitment and selection process took place September through December 2008 with successful candidates being notified by the Mayor during the week of December 15. The Immigration Partnership Council’s inaugural meeting was held on January 26, 2009 (refer to Appendix A to Report CS09030 for a membership list). As per the proposal, the Immigration Partnership Council will provide strategic leadership to facilitate the development of an immigration strategy over the course of 12 months.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 City of Hamilton

Members of the community have signalled that they are looking to Council and the City of Hamilton to provide leadership with respect to the development of the local immigration strategy. As the project sponsor, the City of Hamilton will be accountable to CIC for both project outcomes and management of the project budget. The General Manager of Community Services Department is a co-convener and member of the Partnership Council and will ensure that the Department will provide project management, staffing, and administration for the project.

The City will ensure that the necessary partnerships and linkages critical to the success of the initiative will occur throughout the development of the strategy including alignment with the City’s strategic vision, Economic Development Strategy and Immigration Portal, as well as other collaborative initiatives, including the Hamilton Poverty Reduction Roundtable and the Jobs Prosperity Collaborative. Discussions have taken place with the City of Hamilton’s Planning and Economic Development Department, the Access and Equity Office, the Hamilton Roundtable on Poverty Reduction, the Jobs Prosperity Collaborative, and other Ontario municipalities who either currently have or are underway in the development of immigration strategies (City of Windsor, Regional Municipality of Peel, City of Ottawa, City of London and the Regional Municipality of Waterloo).

Staff will ensure that there is continued alignment between the planning and development of an Immigration Strategy and the City’s Immigration Portal (see Report ECS08015).

4.2 Local Immigration Partnership Council

The Local Immigration Partnership Council will provide strategic leadership to the development of a collaborative immigration strategy for Hamilton over the
course of 12 months. The Council will also be responsible for the
development of a subsequent proposal for Phase II of the Call for Proposals
to be issued by CIC.

5. **Budget**

The City of Hamilton provided a budget outlining expected expenditures for
this initiative. A total of $351,059 was requested for the project, which was
originally to take place in 2008/09. The budget in the Contribution Agreement
has been negotiated and revised to reflect 2009/10 costs. The City will
receive $360,715 from CIC. Partnership Council members have agreed to
provide approximately $64,000 in kind contributions to supplement the budget
approved by CIC.

**ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION:**

The City of Hamilton could choose not to accept the 100% federal funding and develop
an immigration strategy by re-prioritising existing Community Services Department work
funded by the net levy.

The City of Hamilton could choose to not move forward with the development of an
immigration strategy.

Neither of these alternatives are recommended by staff.

**FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:**

**Financial Implications:**

Funding will be provided by the Federal Government through Citizenship and
Immigration Canada. An operating budget of $360,715, which is 100% funded by CIC,
will be allocated over the course of 12 months in accordance with a Contribution
Agreement to be signed by CIC and the City of Hamilton, in a form satisfactory to the
City Solicitor. Under the Agreement, CIC will reimburse eligible expenditures that are
reasonable and directly related to the project. The Agreement stipulates that the City of
Hamilton receive funding subject to an annual appropriation from Parliament for the
purpose in which the contribution is contemplated, and that CIC may cancel or reduce
the contribution if CIC funding levels are changed by Parliament. Partnership Council
members will also contribute approximately $64,000 in kind to support the project.

**Staffing Implications:**

As the project sponsor responsible for project management, administration, and the
project outcomes (deliverables) the Community Services Department will require a
temporary increase in complement of 2.7 FTEs (Program Manager, Program Analyst,
and Program Secretary) for the 12 month period of the initiative. These positions will be
100% funded by the federal government, in accordance with the Contribution Agreement.

This twelve-month initiative will be managed through the office of the General Manager of the Community Services Department.

Legal Implications:

Legal Services has reviewed the Contribution Agreement and accompanying Schedules with the following caution. Should the Federal government suspend, reduce or eliminate for this initiative, the contractual arrangements made by the City of Hamilton (hiring employees, office space and furnishings, etc.) will continue to exist without the accompanying resources.

POLICIES AFFECTING PROPOSAL:

The City of Hamilton Local Immigration Partnerships initiative will follow all City policies and procedures as well as the federal standards identified in the Contribution Agreement Standards.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION:

- Settlement and Immigration Services Organization
- St. Joseph Immigrant Women’s Centre
- Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion
- Centre de santé Communautaire
- Jobs Prosperity Collaborative
- Immigration Strategy Advisory Committee
- Hamilton Roundtable on Poverty Reduction
- Cities of Windsor, Ottawa, London and the Regional Municipalities of Waterloo and Peel
- Corporate Services Department, Legal Services Division and Finance & Administration and Access and Equity Sections
- Planning and Economic Development Department, Economic Development and Real Estate Section

The proposed Contribution Agreement has been reviewed by Community Services, Legal Services and Finance and Administration.

CITY STRATEGIC COMMITMENT:

By evaluating the “Triple Bottom Line”, (community, environment and economic implications) we can make choices that create value across all three bottom lines, moving us closer to our vision for a sustainable community, and Provincial interests.
Community Well-Being is enhanced. ☑ Yes □ No
An immigration strategy is part of planning for future growth, but it is also about creating a welcoming and sustainable community. A community that embraces diversity is a stronger and healthier community to live and work in. It is also consistent with the City’s Vision “to be the best city in Canada to raise a child, promote innovation, engage citizens and provide diverse economic opportunities”.

Environmental Well-Being is enhanced. □ Yes ☑ No

Economic Well-Being is enhanced. ☑ Yes □ No
Hamilton’s share of immigrants is declining relative to many other communities at a time when current labour market trends highlight a growing need for immigrant skills. A skilled, innovative and diverse workforce is critical to sustain population and labour market growth.

Does the option you are recommending create value across all three bottom lines? □ Yes ☑ No

Do the options you are recommending make Hamilton a City of choice for high performance public servants? ☑ Yes □ No
Creating an immigration strategy that incorporates the principles of a welcoming and inclusive community will make the city of Hamilton a destination of choice for many.