



Hamilton

INFORMATION REPORT

**CITY WIDE
IMPLICATIONS**

To:	Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee		
From:	Joe-Anne Priel General Manager Community Services Department	Telephone: Facsimile: E-mail:	905 546-4839 905 540-5608 Joe-Anne.Priel@hamilton.ca
Date:	June 2, 2009		
Re:	Immigration Strategy (CS09030(a)) (City Wide)		

Council Direction:

Not applicable.

Information:

Local Immigration Partnership Council – Background:

The Community Services Department and key community partners¹ submitted a proposal to Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) for funding the development of a Local Immigration Partnership Council (LIPC) and a local immigration strategy. 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 this initiative, the LIPC was formed and met for the first time in January 2009². The role of the Council is to develop a comprehensive community based immigration strategy and implementation plan for Hamilton over the course of 12 months. CIC had also indicated that a second call for proposals would be issued to support the actual implementation of strategies developed in Phase 1.

Staff were advised by the local CIC office that the proposal had been favourably received and they have been negotiating the terms of a proposed Contribution

¹ Centre de santé Communautaire, Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion, Immigration Strategy Advisory Committee, Jobs Prosperity Collaborative, Settlement and Immigration Services Organization, St. Joseph Immigrant Women's Centre.

² The Local Immigration Partnership Council is comprised of the following 16 members: Dr. Diana Ahmed, Primary Care Physician, North Hamilton Community Health Centre; Manuel Bastos, Business Manager, Labourers Union Local 837; Judith Bishop, Trustee, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board; Ali Cheaib (Co-chair), Faculty, Mohawk College of Applied Arts & Technology; Jim Commerford, President & CEO, YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford; Mike des Jardins, Program Manager, Youth Engagement & Action in Hamilton; Nancy DiGregorio, Superintendent of Education, Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board; Gisèle Dupuis, Chef régional, Collège Boréal; Howard Elliott, Managing Editor, The Hamilton Spectator; Morteza Jafarpour, Executive Director, Settlement and Integration Services Organization; Yasmeen Khattab, McMaster University student; Richard Koroscil (Co-chair), President & CEO Hamilton International Airport; Frank Passaro, Branch Manager, Scotiabank; Dr. Gary Warner, McMaster University (retired); Madina Wasuge, Executive Director, Hamilton's Centre for Civic Inclusion, Joe-Anne Priel, General Manager, Community Services Department, City of Hamilton.

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Agreement in the amount of \$360,715, since February 2009. On April 15, 2009, the Community Services Department sought Council's support for this initiative and authorization to enter into an agreement with CIC (refer to Report CS09030).

CIC Funding on Hold:

CIC has since informed the Community Services Department and LIPC members that the federal government is reviewing its program budgets and that initiatives such as funding for Local Immigration Partnerships are currently on hold. While the status of funding for LIPCs is uncertain at this time, the local CIC office has indicated a willingness to continue with this initiative once they have received authorization from their regional headquarters. The Mayor's office has advocated on behalf of this initiative with local Members of Parliament as well as Members of Provincial Parliament, as have members of the LIPC and their networks.

While this news is disappointing, immigration and the development of an immigration strategy continue to be very important issues for this community. The Community Services Department has been working with the LIPC to assess the current situation, identify potential alternatives and determine how to move forward as outlined in the proposal in the absence of federal funding at this time. Staff remains guardedly optimistic that Federal funding may still be forthcoming to support the work of local partnership councils.

Current Status of Initiative:

The LIPC continues to meet monthly since its inception in January 2009. Members have strongly articulated the need to move forward with the development of an immigration strategy as part of proactively planning for Hamilton's present diversity and creating a welcoming community for both the current residents and those choosing to relocate here in the future. The LIPC is currently working on finalizing its terms of reference and vision for the immigration strategy³, confirming the process/methodology for developing the strategy, and identifying next steps.

While the LIPC members realize that it is not possible to proceed at this time with the full vision that was proposed in the submission to CIC, they are committed to actively seeking alternative ways to support the research, communications, and community engagement components of the strategy development through in-kind or other types of contributions. The Community Services Department and other partners of the LIPC will also pursue other funding opportunities through senior levels of government, foundations and other funders. CIC staff continues to attend the LIPC meetings and remain committed to providing updates on the current funding situation as information becomes available.

Recognizing the importance of continuing to move forward with this initiative and in order to remain 'true' to the community engagement principles outlined in the proposal, the Community Services Department will proceed to hire 2.0 FTEs (temporary staff) for

³ Draft vision for an Immigration Strategy – "Hamilton is an inclusive community where the talents and experience that immigrants and refugees bring, are valued because they are integral to making Hamilton the best place to raise a child"

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a period not exceeding 12-months, in order to provide the necessary 'infrastructure' to support the LIPC's efforts to move forward with strategy development and its efforts to secure other funding sources for its work. Funding to support the temporary departmental staffing increase would be off-set first through the year end Departmental surplus and the remainder through income the Department has earned from its achievements in the Employment Assistance Program.. The departmental commitment to support these temporary staff positions would cease should CIC funding be forthcoming in the upcoming months.

Additional updates will be provided to the Mayor and Council as new information is received.

Joe-Anne Priel
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Community Services Department