



Hamilton

INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members General Issues Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	June 20, 2018
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council–Annual Report (PED18138/HSC18035) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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Council Direction:

N/A

Information:

Immigration Trends in Hamilton

Canada’s present and future labour force and population growth will largely come from immigration, and Cities need immigration to grow their economies and connections to international markets. Immigrants benefit the communities in which they settle, including strong business start-up rates, filling labour market vacancies and cultural vibrancy. In their first years in Canada, immigrants sometimes rely on services such as language instruction and employment counselling to assist with their transition, and these services can be essential for helping newcomers find success.

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OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

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Approximately one-fourth of Hamilton’s population was born in another Country. Among these 130,000 immigrants, over half arrived in Canada prior to 1991, close to 40% arrived between 1991 and 2011, and about 10% are deemed to be “recent immigrants,” having arrived since 2011. Following the trend common in most Ontario communities, Hamilton’s rate of recent immigrants is declining. It is also below the Provincial average: in 2016, 2.5% of Hamilton’s residents were recent immigrants compared to 3.6% of Ontario residents who were recent immigrants. Immigration to Hamilton continues to be significant but is not as robust when compared to most Greater Toronto Area communities.

Immigrants are increasingly dispersed across Hamilton. Three large areas of Hamilton are home to the highest concentrations of immigrants: Riverdale West and Centennial neighbourhoods around Eastgate Mall, Central Downtown including the Strathcona neighbourhood north of York Boulevard, and Meadowlands in Ancaster and south Mountain neighbourhoods between the Linc and Rymal Road towards Upper Gage.

Immigrants to Hamilton often have pre-existing ties to the City in the form of family, friends, or acceptance to a post-secondary education institution. Other factors also attract and retain immigrants, including economic opportunities, affordability, the availability of services and welcoming community.

Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council

Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council (HIPC) was established in January 2009 as a planning and advisory body dedicated to forging community partnerships to coordinate and enhance the delivery of local settlement services and support the integration of newcomers. The partnership is funded by the federal government through Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). HIPC’s vision is “Hamilton that welcomes newcomers, celebrates diversity and is a place for everyone to call home”.

In this role of catalyst, convenor and collaborator, HIPC leads community-based planning to address the needs of immigrants. The multi-sector stakeholder Council of HIPC includes community leaders from settlement services, government, education, research, business, employment, housing, health and the Francophone community. HIPC consistently enjoys a high-level of attendance, participation and in-kind support from members.

Highlights of Key Accomplishments in 2017-2018

Strategic Plan and Governance Model

In April 2017, HIPC launched its Strategic Plan for 2017-2020, representing a culmination of extensive engagement and input by community members and stakeholders committed to improving the lives of newcomers in Hamilton.

HIPC’s vision is: Hamilton welcomes newcomers, celebrates diversity and is a place for everyone to call home.

HIPC’s three strategic objectives during this period are:

1. Newcomers are supported through strong community partnerships;
2. Hamilton is a responsive, welcoming and inclusive community capacity; and,
3. HIPC is a leader in immigration research and knowledge sharing.

As part of this process, HIPC made changes to its governance model, creating permanent seats on HIPC for the Chairs of the City of Hamilton’s Advisory Committee for Immigrants and Refugees. HIPC also added a proviso to its terms of reference that at least three members of the Council have lived a “newcomer experience”.

Hamilton For All Campaign

In partnership with Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion (HCCI), HIPC launched the “Hamilton For All” (HFA) poster campaign on November 28, 2017. #HamiltonForAll was the top trending Twitter conversation that day. Posters were featured on 22 city bus shelters and HSR buses for two months in early 2018. The posters display diverse faces of Hamilton and direct readers to the campaign website (www.HamiltonForAll.ca).

The HFA campaign has been widely featured in local media outlets, promoted at various events, and presented to multiple student assemblies. Seven community ambassadors shared their stories and answered questions about their own experiences. HFA speaks to our community’s legacy and deep commitment to welcoming immigrants and demonstrates an appreciation for the important value that newcomers bring to our economic, social, cultural and civic life.

Communications

HIPC’s website traction and social media presence continues to grow and attract followers. HIPC’s Twitter account (@HIPCHamilton) has more than 1,100 followers, and the HIPC website (www.hamiltonimmigration.ca) had more than 20,000 page views last year. HIPC activities and events featured in seven local print news articles.

HIPC partnered with Global Hamilton and Workforce Planning Hamilton on the “Hamilton @ Work” series in The Hamilton Spectator. Each of the ten articles profiled an immigrant to Hamilton who is working, owns a business, or is otherwise contributing to our City. The same team also partnered to create an updated version of the Quick Guide to Business Resources in Hamilton (March 2018).

Detailed activities and accomplishments of HIPC in the 2017/2018 fiscal year are attached as Appendix “A” to Report PED18138/HSC18035.

Key Priorities for 2018-2019

Immigration to Hamilton continues across all immigration categories (economic class, family class, and refugees). As newcomers seek to settle in their new Country, they above all look for economic opportunities, availability of services and welcoming communities.

Hamilton has a long history of welcoming immigrants, but our City has been challenged by its high incidence of hate crimes. There is also evidence of growing polarization of views across Canada on immigration and diversity, some of which is being fuelled by the current political climate outside of Canada.

To this end, HIPC has identified a number of priorities for the coming year. Each priority addresses some aspect of local need and is intended to improve knowledge, opportunities, connection to services, and inclusion.

These initiatives include:

Newcomer Day

Hamilton's first Newcomer Day is scheduled for July 27, 2018 at City Hall from noon to 6 pm. The indoor-outdoor event will feature a citizenship ceremony, entertainment, food, activities, a resource fair of relevant local services and workshops on various topics of interest such as employment search, housing rights, and registering to vote.

Employment and Mentorship

Employment is a top priority for most newcomers and families, yet finding work continues to be a challenge for many. Newcomers often lack the social and professional networks that can help connect them to employment opportunities. With the launch of two local mentorship initiatives for newcomers this year, HIPC is championing these types of connections and promoting the benefits of becoming an employer mentor. Through its own responsibilities as a major employer and as a significant influencer of public opinion, the Municipal government has a distinct leadership and managerial role to play in making Hamilton a more welcoming community.

Public Education about Immigration

HIPC promotes accurate and evidence-based information about immigration in a public context. In the coming year, HIPC will work through print and social media, fact sheets based on Census data, and a "myth busting series" in The Hamilton Spectator.

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Informal Sector Mapping

Many if not most newcomers rely heavily on the informal sector (places of worship, ethnic associations, sports clubs, etc.) for information about resources and services they need. HIPC is working with partners to learn more about and “map” these services with a view towards ensuring the provision of accurate information. HIPC will be using community engagement approaches to work with faith communities and other informal networks to identify and connect with newcomers, to encourage a two-way flow of information and understanding, and to increase the sense of inclusion in these populations.

Realignment of Reporting Relationship

Council, at its meeting of April 25, 2018, approved Item 12.1 of Healthy and Safe Communities Committee, Report 18-004, (Report HSC18018) to transfer the resources of HIPC to the Economic Development Division of the Planning and Economic Development Department, combining it with the resources of Global Hamilton. The idea of moving the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council work under the auspices of Global Hamilton had been discussed for several years. This realignment will provide opportunity for efficiencies to be gained from better integrating these two initiatives, and incorporating other aspects of the City’s global economic portfolio, under the Global Hamilton umbrella. Improved integration will help ensure that Hamilton benefits from the social, political, cultural and economic contributions of newcomers.

Appendices and Schedules Attached

Appendix “A”-HIPC Annual Report, 2017-2018

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