



INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Mayor and Members General Issues Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	May 18, 2022
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council – Annual Update (PED22111) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Sarah Wayland (905) 546-2424 Ext. 7565 Mohammad Araf (905) 546-2424 Ext. 4359
SUBMITTED BY:	Norm Schleeahn Director, Economic Development
SIGNATURE:	

COUNCIL DIRECTION

N/A

INFORMATION

This report provides an annual update on the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council (HIPC), covering structure and strategic direction, immigration trends, select recent projects, and highlights for the coming year.

STRUCTURE AND STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Established in January 2009 under the direction of the City of Hamilton, the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council (HIPC) is funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and housed in the Economic Development Division. The current Partnership Council is comprised of 30 civic leaders reflecting key sectors in the community, including education, business, and social services. A complete list of HIPC members is found in Appendix “A” to Report PED22111, HIPC’s Annual Report 2021-2022.

At present, HIPC is funded by a five-year grant agreement from IRCC ending March 31, 2025 and totalling \$1,769,000. This funding supports three full-time staff plus event and project expenses that support the work of HIPC’s strategic plan (theory of change)

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

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

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

2021-2025. Approved in December 2020, this strategic plan was developed over an eighteen-month period by a HIPC working group facilitated by Social Impact Advisors. The focus and approach were validated through wider community conversations.

HIPC's collective impact statement is two-fold, focusing on creating successful settlement experiences and sense of belong for newcomers. As a collaborative community table, HIPC is in a unique position to focus on the collective impact of efforts to improve local settlement outcomes. HIPC partners are encouraged to see how their own work and that of their organizations can move Hamilton towards these outcomes.

Quarterly Council meetings support HIPC's strategic direction, supported by committees that oversee and engage in work focused on three strategic priority areas:

- **Economic Stability** – enhancing the ability of newcomers to acquire skills, find appropriate employment, and build assets
- **Social Inclusion** – readying Hamilton to be a welcoming community that values newcomer voices and contributions; and,
- **Community Engagement** – building capacity among newcomers to navigate our City, access services, and participate as equal members of society.

In addition, an Evaluation Committee oversees the implementation of HIPC's evaluation framework and is a point of contact for any research projects.

HIPC has adopted three operational principles to guide its work:

1. The basic needs of newcomers are foundational to achieving newcomer settlement and sense of belonging. HIPC's work connects influencers and resources in our community to improve equitable access to, for example, affordable housing, food, employment, and healthcare;
2. Supporting and advocating for positive outcomes for newcomers in our community must include leadership from those who have been newcomers to Canada themselves. Lived experience and community networks are essential; and,
3. HIPC commits to taking practical positive actions that are informed and evaluated by an anti-racism anti-oppression (ARAO) approach. ARAO principles should be embedded in all HIPC work.

HIPC's mandate and projects are integrated into the City of Hamilton's 2021-2025 Economic Development Action Plan (EDAP). Approving and implementing the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Strategy is listed as the first item under EDAP's "Facilitating a Skilled and Adaptable Workforce" priority. HIPC is well-positioned to support opportunities for newcomer workforce engagement and enhancing equity, diversity, and inclusion.

THE VALUE OF LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIPS

As a municipally embedded community table, HIPC brings together organizations and individuals who otherwise may never come into contact with each other, much less create working relationships. Through its role as a connector and convenor as well as a producer and disseminator of relevant local research and data, HIPC is a vital component of Hamilton's ability to welcome diverse newcomers.

Connecting and Convening

The Council and committees convene organizations and individuals across sectors to plan and work on projects focused on improving settlement outcomes and a sense of belonging among newcomers. In addition, HIPC forms temporary tables to respond to emerging needs. For example, in response to expected significant arrivals of Afghan refugees, in September 2021 HIPC convened Hamilton Afghan Re/settlement Taskforce bringing together settlement services, housing, the local Afghan community, and City staff to meet monthly to coordinate the reception of Afghans, share information, and identify gaps. One outcome was the creation of a video presentation by HIPC to share with Hamilton-bound Afghans quarantining in Toronto hotels. The video features a message from the Mayor Fred Eisenberger, information about Hamilton, and services available for newcomers, all subtitled in Farsi.

Public Education and Knowledge Transfer

To increase awareness of immigration among the general public as well as knowledge of local needs and immigration trends, HIPC commissions research and creates relevant reports. The HIPC team also monitors immigration data and policies and acts a local resource for the City of Hamilton, other organizations, and media. For example, our newsletter coverage of increased permanent resident landings in Hamilton led to an article in The Hamilton Spectator on November 29, 2021. Over the past year, knowledge transfer has included presentations by HIPC on topics of national and local immigration; experiences of discrimination; and equity, diversity and inclusion. HIPC brings a newcomer lens to various local tables such as No Hate in the Hammer and Skills Development Flagship.

In alignment with the work above, HIPC actively creates content on several platforms to keep the newcomer and greater Hamilton community engaged and informed on local immigration news, research, events, programming and more. This includes the HIPC website at www.hamiltonimmigration.ca which contains an overview of HIPC's work and acts as a repository of all HIPC research and Reports. It also includes our ImmPress email newsletter which reaches 500+ highly engaged community members every other week and HIPC's highly active Twitter and Instagram accounts at @HIPChamilton. These platforms reach an audience of 3000+ newcomers, community partners and residents.

IMMIGRATION IS INCREASING

HIPC's work takes place within a context of increased immigration, to Hamilton and to Canada. Data from Census 2021 shows Canada's population has increased by 5.2% - or 1.8m people - from 2016 to 2021, with immigrants comprising 80% of Canada's population growth. Over the same period, Hamilton's population has increased by 6%, and data shows that both direct migration and secondary migration to Hamilton are increasing.

Federal immigration plans will continue to shape population and labour force growth in Canada and in Hamilton. On February 14, 2022, the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) Sean Fraser tabled the 2022-2024 Immigration Levels Plan. The total permanent resident admissions over the next three years will include more than 1.3m people. The immigration levels plan continues to be focused on economic growth and filling labour gaps, while also supporting family reunification and providing safety to those in need of protection.

Canada admitted over 401,000 permanent residents in 2021, a record high number, with 5,455 destined for or already resident in Hamilton. Due to ongoing pandemic-related challenges, about 70% of permanent resident admissions in 2021 were of persons already residing in Canada as temporary residents (mostly international students and temporary foreign workers), compared to 30% in the prior years. Most of Hamilton's new permanent residents, then, likely had been living in Hamilton already when they received permanent resident status.

Immigration to Canada is also affected by recent world events that create refugee flows, most recently from Afghanistan and Ukraine. The Government of Canada has committed to bringing 40,000 Afghan refugees to Canada over the next two years as well as admitting unlimited number of Ukrainian temporary residents. Canada has already received over 10,000 Afghan refugees since August 2021 and 14,000 Ukrainians since January 2022. Hamilton has received almost 400 Afghans, and many Ukrainians are expected to arrive in the City in 2022.

Given the above, it is expected that the EDAP stretch target to "Increase immigration to Hamilton by 25% by 2025" will be achieved, perhaps before the end of this year.

SELECT RECENT PROJECTS

HIPC's work plan includes a wide range of projects and accomplishments, some of which are listed here. Please see also Appendix "A" to Report PED22111, HIPC's Annual Report 2021-2022.

Launch of new Strategic Plan, Council, and Committees

A new recruitment and selection process for members resulted in a larger, more diverse Council with several new organizations around the table. At present, more than 60% of

Council members have personal lived experience of immigration, including our incoming HIPC chair Rashed Afif.

Discrimination Survey

In partnership with seven Southwestern Ontario Local Immigration Partnerships and the Network for Economic and Social Trends (NEST) at Western University, HIPC commissioned a representative survey (N = 784) to examine the extent and context of discrimination experienced by immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous Peoples in Hamilton. The Report's findings were shared with key stakeholders and featured in The Hamilton Spectator, CBC Hamilton, and other media. HIPC continues to promote the survey results and work towards reducing discrimination.

Directory of Services for Newcomers

Hosted on HIPC's website, the directory builds on the Red Book database and features local services and supports available to newcomers. The work on this directory was led by a HIPC Working Group, comprised of representatives from Hamilton Public Library, Wesley, YMCA, YWCA, Immigrants Working Centre, Refuge Centre for Newcomer Health, and The Hamilton Spectator who met six times over the past year. More than 50 newcomers participated in a survey and focus groups to provide input into the content, structure and promotion of the directory.

Stories of Migration and Belonging

Working with the City of Hamilton's Museums and Heritage Management Department to celebrate the 175th anniversary of the City of Hamilton, HIPC created an online exhibit focused on past and present stories of immigration in Hamilton, featuring video interviews with six immigrants.

COVID-19 Education

HIPC engaged in a wide range of activities to raise awareness and promote equitable access to vaccines, including holding a multilingual session (Spanish, Somali & Swahili) with Dr Khalid Azzam during Newcomer Week and a session exclusively in Arabic with local pharmacist Rami Safi. HIPC facilitated five presentations, advocated for pop-up clinics, shared information on social media and newsletter. We also partnered with McMaster Professor Bruce Newbold on a random sample survey on attitudes towards immigrants before and during COVID.

Guide for Newcomer Research

Regular requests to HIPC from researchers led to this collaboration with McMaster Research Shop to provide important ethical, methodological, language and cultural considerations for conducting research with the newcomer population in Hamilton. From getting started to communicating research findings to the public, this Report helps ensure research is inclusive, meaningful and supportive of the individuals and communities involved. Separate checklists for researchers, newcomers, and service providers are featured.

2022 WORK PLAN

This year is shaping up to be a busy one, with a return to in-person activities and with the war in Ukraine generating millions of displaced persons, an unknown number of whom will seek to rebuild their lives in Hamilton.

Welcoming and Supporting Ukrainians

The Government of Canada has created an unprecedented pathway to receive Ukrainians fleeing their country as temporary residents, and the HIPC team has been working with City of Hamilton and community partners to ready Hamilton for these arrivals. A dedicated information page has been added to HIPC's website, <https://hamiltonimmigration.ca/ukrainian-arrivals>

Hamilton Newcomer Week

Building on the success of virtual Newcomer Week in 2022, HIPC will bring together community organizers, partners and newcomers for several online sessions as well as a downtown walking tour the week of May 24 to 27, 2022.

Hamilton Employers Hire Immigrants Campaign

Finding suitable employment is one of the biggest challenges facing newcomers in Hamilton and one of the most important indicators as a welcoming community. This campaign launched in March 2022 to educate local employers about the benefits of employing newcomers/immigrants and to provide them with resources and connections that enable them to take action. HIPC has created a new website, wehireimmigrants.ca to house this campaign and is working with local employers to create videos sharing best practices and experiences of employing newcomer talent.

Migration and Mobility in Hamilton

HIPC is working with McMaster University's Economics Department to analyse the recent Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB) to understand the direct and secondary migration trends, as well as employment outcomes and incomes of the immigrant population in Hamilton.

Socio-Demographic Profile of Immigrants in Hamilton

Building on Census 2021 immigration data scheduled for release in October, HIPC will create a Report providing a socio-demographic profile of immigrants in Hamilton, including the number of immigrants and recent immigrants, place of origin, ethnicity, education, employment, and more.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix "A" to Report PED22111 - HIPC Annual Report 2021-2022