



City of Hamilton Report for Information

To: Mayor and Members
General Issues Committee

Date: April 9, 2025

Report No: PED25075

Subject/Title: Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council,
Community Plan 2025-2028

Ward(s) Affected: City Wide

Recommendations

- 1) That Report PED25075 respecting the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council, Community Plan 2025-2028 **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Key Facts

- Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council Community Plan 2025-2028 outlines a three-year collective pathway towards making Hamilton a welcoming community where newcomers have a positive settlement experience and feel a sense of belonging;
- Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council is funded by a three-year Refugees and Citizenship Canada grant agreement totalling \$1,190,941 and managed by City of Hamilton;
- More than 5,000 new permanent residents have settled in Hamilton each year in recent years, and the City is also home to thousands of temporary residents (study permit holders and temporary foreign workers); and,
- As outlined in the most recent Government of Canada Immigration Levels Plan, Hamilton could see its average annual number of 5,485 new permanent residents 2022-2024 drop to 4,124 per year in 2025-2027, a decrease of 25%.

Financial Considerations

Not Applicable.

Background

Hamilton experiences a steady flow of immigration, including permanent residents, international students, temporary foreign workers, and refugee claimants. Over the past decade, the city has welcomed more than 38,000 permanent residents, highlighting the pivotal role immigration will play in shaping its future. Newcomers not only contribute to the growth of Hamilton's population, but also strengthen its local economy and enrich the City's social and cultural landscape. A well-structured community plan is important to make sure that we all work together to support the city's success by fostering a seamless, welcoming pathway for newcomers to settle and develop a sense of belonging in Hamilton.

Since 2009, the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council has positioned itself at the centre of efforts to create a welcoming Hamilton community for newcomers. As the community table for newcomer services and support, the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council has been working to ensure that Hamilton becomes a city where immigrants can build new lives, contributing to the city's growth and success. Through its "collective impact" framework, the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council has engaged a range of partners and stakeholders (including newcomers) to identify intended outcomes for the city and to facilitate collective action to achieve those goals.

The Immigration Partnership is a multi-layered community table comprised of a Council, Committees, and Ad Hoc Working Groups supported by a secretariat of three staff. The current Partnership Council is comprised of 32 civic leaders reflecting key sectors in the community, including education, business, and social services. More than half of the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council's members have personal, lived experience of immigration.

The Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council is funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada and housed in the Economic Development Division. The Immigration Partnership was funded by a five-year grant agreement from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada ending March 31, 2025, and totalling \$1,769,000. Beginning April 1, 2025, the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council is funded by a three-year federal grant agreement totalling \$1,190,941. This funding supports three full-time staff plus event and project expenses that support the work of the Community Plan.

COMMUNITY PLAN 2025-2028

Over the years, the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council has completed multiple strategic planning cycles and regularly evaluates its processes and outcomes. With its current strategic plan nearing its end, the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council's leadership committed to establishing a clear and actionable path forward. A working

group was struck to guide this process, consisting of the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council Chair, Vice Chair, several council members, and staff working with the Centre for Community Based Research.

The 2025-2028 Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council Community Plan outlines a three-year collective pathway towards making Hamilton a welcoming community where newcomers have a positive settlement experience and feel a sense of belonging. The Plan begins with operating principles that articulate the Plan's core values that guide how the Community Plan is implemented:

1. Working collectively to realize the impact that we envision;
2. Centring the lived experiences of newcomers, especially those most in need;
3. Leveraging newcomer leadership; and,
4. Working from an anti-racism and anti-oppression lens.

The Plan continues with three primary strategies -- Welcome, Settle, Belong -- and focus areas that outline activities to be carried out by the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council staff and Immigration Partnership partners. These strategies are designed to lead to specific and measurable outcomes – including outcomes directly linked to the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council activities as well as those indirect outcomes where the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council efforts have contributed to broader community change. See Appendix A to PED25075 this Report.

Welcome, Settle, and Belong are not linear processes for newcomers to Canada, nor are they necessarily distinct. The graphic depiction of the Community Plan tries to convey the inter-connected nature of these pillars, also incorporating elements that are distinctive to Hamilton, showcasing the prominence of people, and emphasizing the desired collective outcomes. It is hoped that everyone can identify potential actions in support of the Plan.

The Community Plan took into account the 2021-2025 Economic Development Action Plan and aligns with Hamilton Workforce Strategy, specifically actions under Objective 4.2 to Increase awareness through promotion of local initiatives that influence workforce attraction and development and labour market planning and Objective 5.1 to Advocate for addressing core labour force wraparound supports for Hamilton's diverse communities.

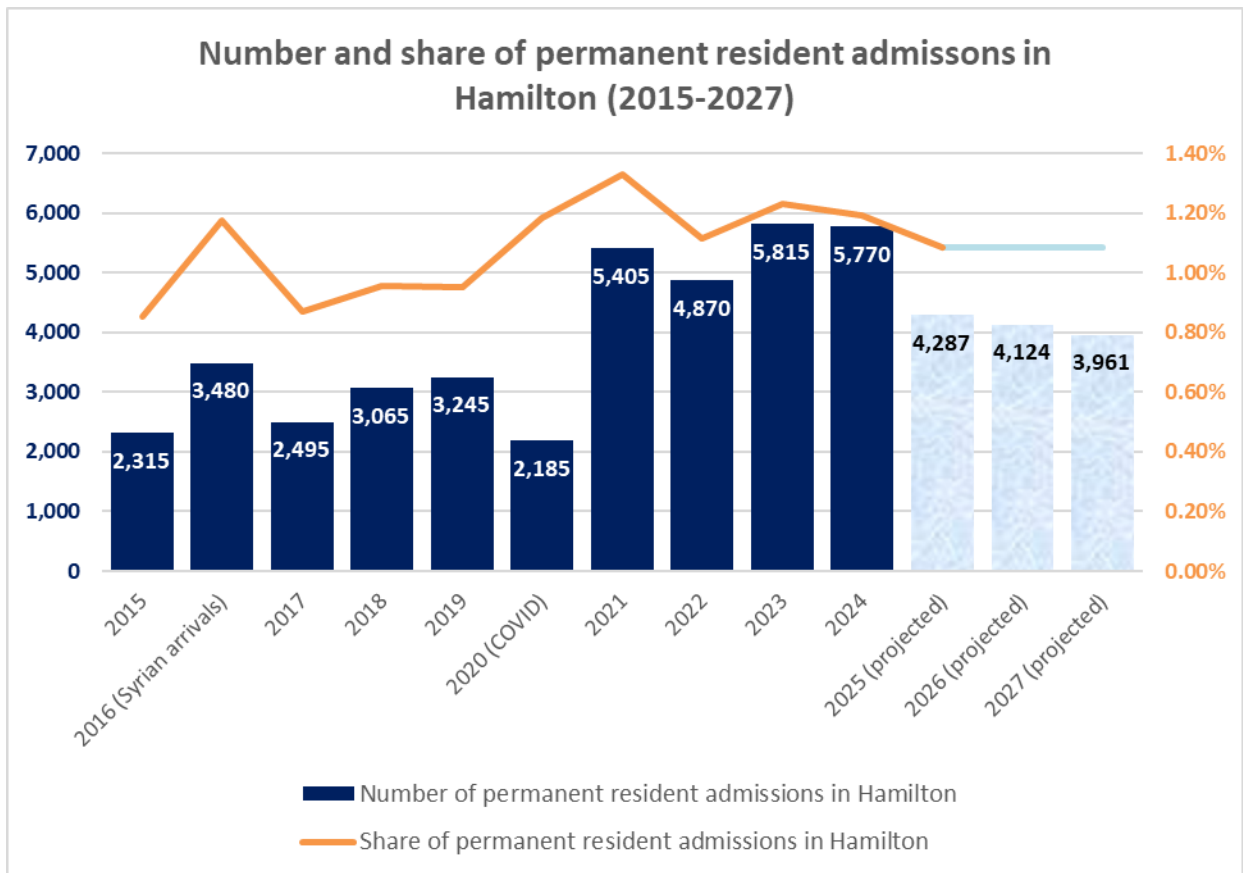
IMMIGRATION TRENDS

Canada is somewhat unique in releasing an “immigration levels plan” to set future immigration targets. For the first time in many years, the federal government seeks to reduce immigration levels. (see [the Government of Canada announced its immigration level plans for 2025-2027](#)) The 2025-2027 Plan, which includes annual targets for international students and temporary foreign workers for the first time, contains these

immediate targets: permanent resident admissions are set to decrease by 21%, new international student arrivals by 10%, and new temporary workers by 16% from 2024 to 2025. Over 40% of permanent resident admissions in 2025 will be international students and temporary foreign workers. In addition, the Plan aims to reduce the share of temporary residents (international students and temporary foreign workers) to 5% of the population by 2026, with a greater focus on transitioning them to permanent residency.

Canada’s population growth is driven by immigration. This growth had already slowed by the end of 2024, likely reflecting some of these new changes to immigration, especially the caps placed on international student study permits. ([The Daily — Canada's population estimates, fourth quarter 2024](#))

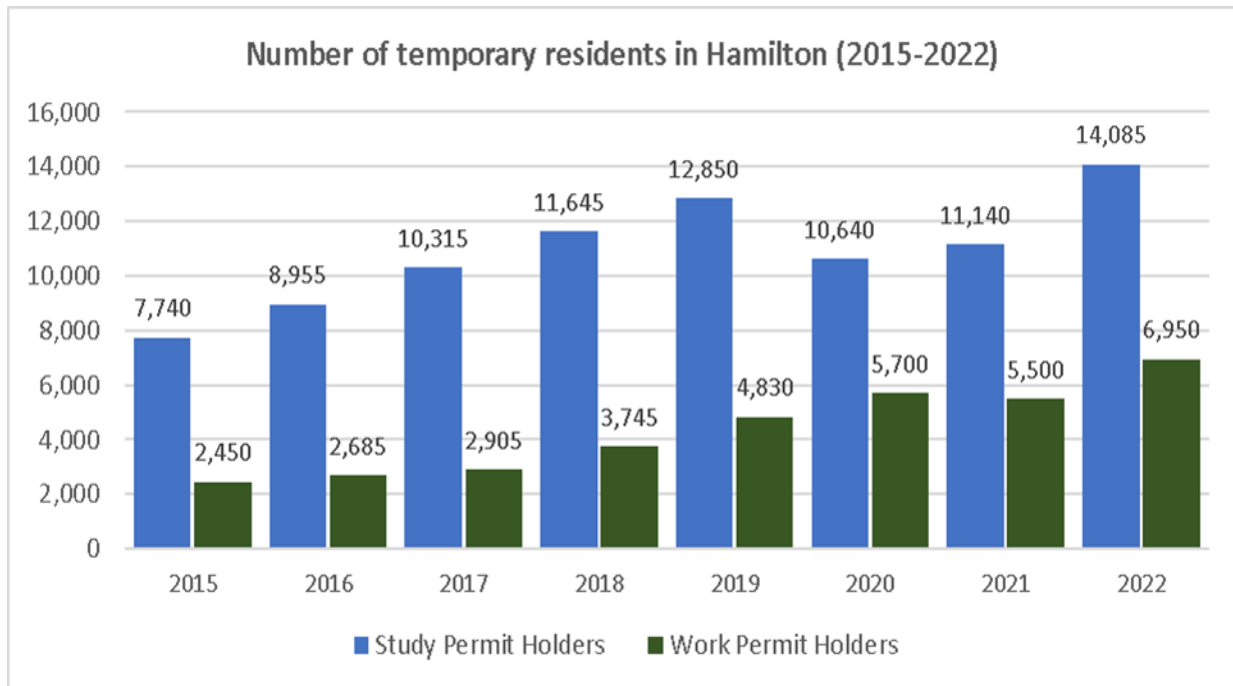
What will these reduced targets and slower growth mean for Hamilton? Over the past decade, Hamilton has been receiving around 1.1% of new permanent residents in Canada. If this trend continues, based on the new immigration levels plan, Hamilton could expect to have about 4,300 new permanent residents in 2025, 4,100 in 2026, and 4,000 in 2027. Hamilton would see its average annual number of 5,485 new permanent residents 2022-2024 drop to 4,124 per year in 2025-2027, a decrease of 25%.



Source: Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada, January 31, 2025.

Note: The projections in 2025, 2026 and 2027 are based on Hamilton’s average share of permanent resident admissions from 2015 to 2023, calculated at 1.09%.

It is expected that temporary resident numbers in Hamilton over the next three years will decrease as well, in keeping with nationwide reductions. Hamilton’s number of international students and temporary foreign workers grew from 2015 to 2022, the most recent year for which data is available. There were over 14,000 study permit holders and nearly 7,000 work permit holders in Hamilton in 2022 – twice as many as in 2015.



Source: Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada, Research and Data Branch Temporary Residents October 31, 2023 Data. Accessed from Community Data Program, Immigration Data Portal.

Note: The above chart shows “stock” numbers, which refer to the total number of temporary residents present in Hamilton on December 31 of each year. This number does not include those whose permits expired before the end of the year.

UPCOMING PROJECTS AND EVENTS

Newcomer Day – May 30, 2025

Sponsored by Royal Bank of Canada, the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council’s signature event returns to Hamilton City Hall with a live, in-person event featuring a citizenship ceremony, information fair, and family-friendly activities. Stage entertainment, marketplace and food vendors will showcase the varied skills and talents of Hamilton’s newcomers.

Immigrant Survey – May-June 2025

Hamilton's second immigrant survey will seek responses from more than 1000 persons born outside Canada who now live, work or study locally – including permanent residents, Canadian citizens, refugees, temporary residents, refugee claimants, and international students aged 16 and over. Results will be shared to help improve services and living experiences.

Welcoming Week – September 2025

The Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council will coordinate Welcoming Week activities across the city, coordinating an information and services fair and releasing a schedule of various welcoming activities.

Analysis

Accompanying the forecast reduction in immigration, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada has reduced funding for settlement services, affecting numerous local service organizations and the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council partners. The implications of the funding cuts will become more evident as the year progresses. They are especially concerning as Hamilton continues to be strong attractor of secondary migration, that is, migration of newcomers from other parts of the province and country, especially from the Toronto area.

Although not a direct service provider, the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council also faces funding constraints in the new grant agreement. In this context, the existence of a local community plan is an excellent vehicle for building awareness, increasing collaboration, and determining feasible steps for creating a welcoming community where newcomers have a positive settlement experience and feel a sense of belonging.

Alternatives

Not Applicable.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

1. Sustainable Economic & Ecological Development; and,
2. Safe & Thriving Neighbourhoods

Previous Reports Submitted

Not Applicable

Consultation

The new Community Plan was shaped by several rounds of consultation of the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council partners and members of the public. The Centre for

Community Based Research facilitated a community planning forum in March 2024 with more than 100 attendees. This community forum identified the priorities for the new 2025-2028 Community Plan. A subsequent forum with 95 attendees was held in November 2024 to provide further feedback on the draft Community Plan.

The Partnership Council discussed the Community Plan several times, including a special council meeting in October 2024. The Community Plan was subsequently approved by the Partnership Council on December 11, 2024. A full community launch event was hosted on February 26, 2025.

The Community Plan, therefore, reflects a broad-based collective vision for Hamilton and outlines the actions to be taken by both the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council staff and the many partners.

Appendices and Schedules Attached

Appendix A: Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council Community Plan 2025-2028

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Planning and Economic Development