



CITY OF HAMILTON

City Manager's Office

TO: Mayor and Members General Issues Committee	WARD(S) AFFECTED: CITY WIDE
COMMITTEE DATE: June 5, 2013	
SUBJECT/REPORT NO: Immigrant Attraction Action Plan (CM13005) (City Wide)	
SUBMITTED BY: Chris Murray City Manager	PREPARED BY: Sarah Wayland ext. 4882
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

That the report "Immigrant Attraction to Hamilton: A Development Phase Work Plan (Immigrant Attraction Action Plan, Volume 3)" (Appendix A) be endorsed.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Action Plan outlines various elements of an initial plan to attract and support economic class immigrants, immigrant entrepreneurs and international students to the City of Hamilton. It outlines the steps needed to help build connections to Hamilton for would-be immigrants and effectively communicates the assets and opportunities available in our city.

The research findings and proposed next steps have been released as three successive reports. "Immigrant Attraction to Hamilton: Backgrounder" (Volume 1, November 2012) covered the business case for attracting immigrants and initiatives and best practices

from other cities. “Immigrant Attraction to Hamilton: Local Assets” (Volume 2, January 2013) summarized local information gathering results, including an overview of immigration and diversity in Hamilton. “Immigrant Attraction to Hamilton: A Development Phase Work Plan” (Volume 3, March 2013) contains a twelve-month developmental phase work plan that contains nine Priority Actions and preliminary cost estimates of different program elements (attached as Appendix A to Report CM13005).

Staff within the City Manager’s Office, Community Services Department and Planning and Economic Development Department have been actively supporting this initiative since its conception in 2012. The Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council (HIPC) has endorsed this initiative (attached as Appendix B to Report CM13005) and HIPC staff will provide support and expertise where feasible.

In the wider community, the project team conducted interviews with private sector employers, ethnic community leaders, the education sector (school boards and postsecondary), staff from the provincial and federal governments, and relevant scholars and program managers. A draft version of the Immigrant Attraction Action Plan was endorsed by the Senior Management Team in January 2013. In April 2013, a senior-level meeting was held to discuss the role of key local institutions and foundations in immigrant attraction to Hamilton.

Alternatives for Consideration –Not Applicable

FINANCIAL / STAFFING / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (for Recommendation(s) only)

Financial:

There are no financial implications related to the recommendation in this report. The City does have existing funding that will support some aspects of the implementation of the Immigrant Attraction Action Plan.

The City’s existing initiative regarding immigration is the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council which is funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada with considerable in-kind support from the Community Services Department. Funding for a key component of the City of Hamilton’s Immigrant Attraction Action Plan is provided by the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI). A grant of \$110,000 was accepted for the period March 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014 (Report CM13004). This is the third grant received from MCI directed at the City of Hamilton’s immigration portal.

Staffing:

The budget from the MCI grant provides for contract staff and third party consultants to complete the work required under the portal contract. Staff from various departments including Planning and Economic Development and the Community Services Department will support the work, and the coordination will occur by staff in the City Manager’s Office.

Legal:
None.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (Chronology of events)

Hamilton is a city that was built by immigrants and has a rich history of welcoming, settling and integrating newcomers to our community. Its success in the future will continue to rely on the skills and entrepreneurial talents of newcomers from all over the world.

As the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council (HIPC) noted in developing the Hamilton Immigration Strategy (endorsed by City Council June 2010), the challenge of Hamilton's future growth and competitive advantage is that it needs magnets to attract not only investments but also people. The Immigration Strategy also requires that community partners, including the municipal government, initiate action on this front.

To this end, and with the support of the HIPC and Community Services Department, the Economic Development Division and the City Manager's Office have undertaken an initiative to outline a preliminary set of feasible tasks intended to attract and support economic class immigrants, immigrant entrepreneurs and international students to the City of Hamilton. This Immigrant Attraction Action Plan outlines various elements of an initial and economically modest local, domestic recruitment strategy.

The Immigrant Attraction Action Plan outlines the steps needed to help build connections to Hamilton for would-be immigrants and effectively communicates the assets and opportunities available in our city. This initiative of the City is viewed as highly complementary to the work of the HIPC in that coordinated and accessible settlement services help create welcoming communities that can attract immigrants. Further, the Immigrant Attraction Action Plan seeks to rebalance our local immigrant streams to build up those in the economic class which has been under-represented in recent years. Details of the preliminary work on the Action Plan and how it complements the work of the HIPC can be found in the Report *Update on Immigration Initiatives within the City of Hamilton* (CS12037/CMO12018/PED12223) submitted to GIC on November 21, 2012.

The Project

The pre-development phase of the Immigrant Attraction Action Plan (September 2012 through January 2013) entailed a needs assessment, feasibility study, and identification of gaps in service. Research included interviews with private sector employers, the education sector, Economic Development Division, the provincial government, and relevant scholars and program managers. It also included a scan of current Canadian immigration policy and a search for immigrant attraction initiatives being undertaken in other cities in the United States and Canada.

The research findings and proposed next steps have been released as three successive reports:

Volume 1. Immigrant Attraction to Hamilton: Backgrounder (November 2012)

The first report is a summary overview of findings (provided as part of Report CS12037/CMO12018/PED12223) which includes the business case for attracting immigrants and initiatives and best practices from other cities. The objective of this report is to provide context, generate interest, and create a common knowledge base for decision-makers who have the capacity to affect a local immigrant attraction strategy.

Volume 2. Immigrant Attraction to Hamilton: Local Assets (January 2013)

The second report summarizes local information gathering results, including an overview of immigration and diversity in Hamilton. It recommends five themes that should form part of the approach to Action Plan implementation: highlighting Hamilton's existing international connections, branding Hamilton within an explicit global perspective, targeting particular populations, a community partnership approach, and developing retaining strategies. Volume 2 also contains an overview of Canada's immigration streams and a brief policy analysis for municipalities. This report was distributed in January 2013.

Volume 3. Immigrant Attraction to Hamilton: A Development Phase Work Plan (March 2013)

The third report contains a twelve-month developmental phase work plan that contains nine Priority Actions and preliminary cost estimates of different program elements (attached as Appendix A to Report CM13005). It is not expected that all of these tasks could be completed in one year: meetings with potential community partners will enable the project team to further prioritize within the action areas already identified. One definite focus is to revitalize the City's immigration portal as per the terms of the grant received from the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (Report CM13004).

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Staff within the City Manager's Office, Community Services Department and Planning and Economic Development Department have been actively supporting this initiative since its conception in 2012. The Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council also was consulted and has endorsed this initiative as described in the letter of support from the Chair of the HIPC (attached as Appendix B to Report CM13005), and it is expected that HIPC staff will continue to provide support and expertise where feasible.

In the wider community, the project team conducted interviews with private sector employers, ethnic community leaders, the education sector (school boards and postsecondary), the provincial and federal governments, and relevant scholars and program managers. In every interview, the project team asked for input into and feedback on the immigrant attraction initiative. The findings outlined in the three reports were informed by these interviews.

As the project team continues into the next phase of the initiative, a community partnership approach will be a critical component of the process. Significant consultation will occur with community partners in education and business in the development of the information to be placed on the portal. As well, several local immigrant communities will have direct input into developing project materials.

In April 2013, a senior-level meeting was held to discuss the role of key local institutions and foundations in immigrant attraction to Hamilton. The meeting was attended by leaders of McMaster University, Mohawk College, Hamilton Community Foundation, and Maytree Foundation.

ANALYSIS / RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

(include Performance Measurement/Benchmarking Data, if applicable)

An increasing number of cities and towns across North America are purposefully laying out a welcome mat for immigrants and inviting immigrant entrepreneurs and investors to reboot their economies for the 21st century. In doing so, these municipalities not only mitigate the impact of a static or declining population but also spark commerce and business creation and add to a community's cultural and social richness. Indeed, the most vibrant cities around the world today are characterized by large immigrant populations.

National immigration policy is beyond the mandate and control of the City of Hamilton. However, examples from other municipally based jurisdictions suggest that local efforts can affect the nature of immigration to our city. Local players are key stakeholders in

understanding and being able to define a clearer and more informed outlook on how immigration might impact our city.

Immigration is a critical, indispensable driver for our city's urban revitalization and economic growth. Both national and international research reinforces the fact that immigrants are a major lifeline that will allow cities such as Hamilton to prosper in the new global economy. In outlining pro-active, specific, and cost-effective actions that can boost Hamilton's attractiveness to potential immigrants, the implementation of the Immigrant Attraction Action Plan is an essential component to ensure the success of the City's Economic Development Strategy.

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2012 – 2015 STRATEGIC PLAN:

Strategic Priority #1

A Prosperous & Healthy Community

WE enhance our image, economy and well-being by demonstrating that Hamilton is a great place to live, work, play and learn.

Strategic Objective

- 1.1 Continue to grow the non-residential tax base.
- 1.3 Promote economic opportunities with a focus on Hamilton's downtown core, all downtown areas and waterfronts.
- 1.5 Support the development and implementation of neighbourhood and City wide strategies that will improve the health and well-being of residents.
- 1.6 Enhance Overall Sustainability (financial, economic, social and environmental).

Strategic Priority #2

Valued & Sustainable Services

WE deliver high quality services that meet citizen needs and expectations, in a cost effective and responsible manner.

Strategic Objective

- 2.1 Implement processes to improve services, leverage technology and validate cost effectiveness and efficiencies across the Corporation.
- 2.2 Improve the City's approach to engaging and informing citizens and stakeholders.
- 2.3 Enhance customer service satisfaction.

Strategic Priority #3

Leadership & Governance

WE work together to ensure we are a government that is respectful towards each other and that the community has confidence and trust in.

Strategic Objective

3.1 Engage in a range of inter-governmental relations (IGR) work that will advance partnerships and projects that benefit the City of Hamilton.

APPENDICES / SCHEDULES

Appendix A to Report CM13005: Immigrant Attraction to Hamilton: A Development Phase Work Plan, Volume 3

Appendix B to Report CM13005: Letter of support from Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council HIPC



IMMIGRANT ATTRACTION TO **HAMILTON:**

A DEVELOPMENT PHASE WORK PLAN
Immigrant Attraction Action Plan, **Volume 3**



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Introduction



This report presents an action plan to attract immigrants to the City of Hamilton. It is the third and final volume in a series of reports that assess the feasibility of establishing an incremental, targeted and multi-pronged immigrant attraction plan. The previous reports presented the contributions that immigrants can make to our city, the rationale for a proactive immigrant attraction plan, a survey of comparable initiatives in other cities in both Canada and the U.S., and an assessment of current activities and assets in Hamilton that could contribute to such an initiative.

In presenting the results of a preliminary needs assessment, feasibility and gap analyses, the previous reports concluded that a multifaceted immigrant attraction program is not only feasible but vitally needed. It is a timely and important opportunity for the City of Hamilton. As such, the reports represent the pre-development phase of the process.

The third report outlines the next phase - the developmental phase - which focuses on a proposed set of tasks for the next twelve months, leading to the implementation phase that will begin in 2014.

Objectives



The most important measure of any initiative is its results. Finely written policy statements or strategies are meaningless unless the end product is measurable improvement. Just as the success of a private business is evaluated by the bottom line – that is, by the increase in sales and profit – the only realistic basis for embarking on and evaluating an immigrant attraction initiative is its actual impact on contributing to and improving the local economy and the lives of all Hamiltonians.

In other words, as a precondition for developing the ingredients of an attraction strategy, what are the end results we want to achieve?

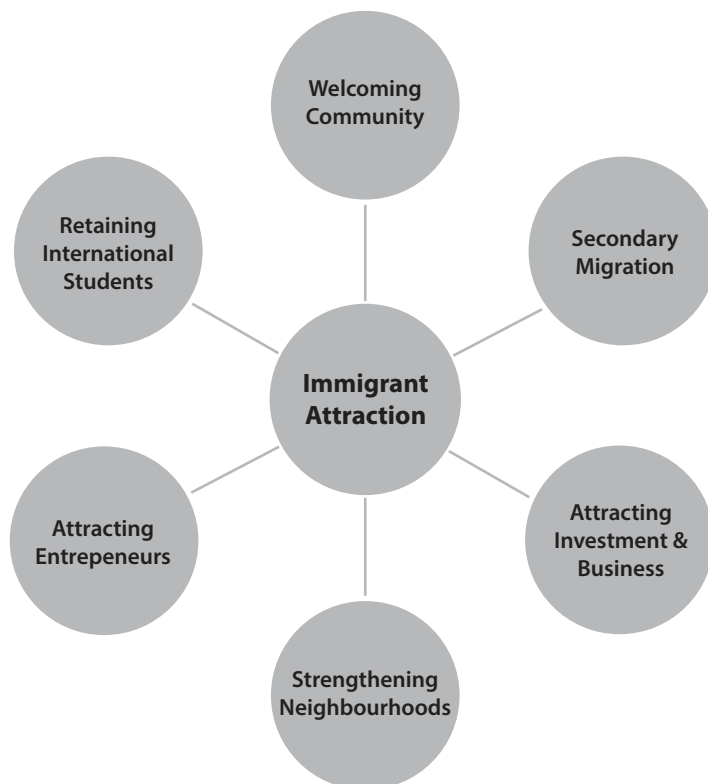
An immigrant attraction program should achieve the following objectives:

1. There is an increase in international businesses and investment that creates local jobs.
2. Hamilton attracts and retains more talent, including international entrepreneurs and international students, to sustain the successful achievement of the City's economic development strategy.
3. Working through a community partnership model consisting of government, business, community and settlement-providing organizations, partners embark on a concerted effort to make Hamilton more welcoming to immigrants and the international community.

Implementing the Action Plan: the Global Hamilton Office



Based on our review of existing practice in other cities, an immigrant attraction program will only be successful if it is directly tied into a number of other related program activities that are joined together under an overarching theme. We therefore propose that the development of an immigrant attraction action plan be built on the six major strands of interdependent activity as identified in the following figure:



Moreover, a number of additional operating principles emerged from the two previous reports for implementing a successful immigrant attraction program:

- Highlight existing international connections
- Brand a city's identity with an explicit Global perspective
- Target particular populations
- Take a community engagement and partnership approach
- Build retaining/enabling strategies



Based on these guidelines, a developmental phase work plan is proposed in this report. It is not practical to suggest that a full-fledged program could be up and operating within a few months. The City of Hamilton has neither the financial nor human resources readily accessible for such a purpose. More importantly, however, it would not be appropriate. Community engagement and collaborative partnerships can only be achieved with considerable care and attention. Attaining community and institutional buy-in and ownership takes time to establish. Shifting organizational resources and priorities is a labourious task.

While no single organization in Hamilton has either the mandate or the capacity to undertake all of the interrelated activities needed to attract and retain immigrants, this action plan proposes that the City of Hamilton lead this initiative by establishing a coordinating body called the Global Hamilton Office.

A Twelve-Month Developmental Phase Action Plan

To achieve the above identified outcomes and expected results, one must undertake specific tasks to establish the structural, program and financial foundations necessary for moving into the implementation phase. Some of these tasks are already in process by various parts of the municipal government and by other local institutions. In recognizing the fiscal pressures on the municipal government, and recognizing that budgets and work plans for the 2013 fiscal year have largely already been set, there are significant constraints on being able to immediately implement a comprehensive immigrant attraction program or a fully-staffed Global Hamilton Office. In sum, the current fiscal environment necessitates collaborative partnerships.

However, collaborative partnerships are an underlying program principle for other, more positive reasons, including the long term sustainability of an initiative such as this.

Part of the task of moving activities into a global, “internationalizing” framework is to encourage the integration and mainstreaming of this thinking into the ongoing operations and existing services of a number of different agencies in Hamilton.



For these reasons, a twelve-month intensive development phase is required to develop the partnerships, develop funding opportunities, develop program elements, coordinate information dissemination systems (including the current Immigration Portal), test pilot some initiatives, identify responsibilities, and lay the groundwork for an ongoing sustainable program of action.

Governance and Structure

The imperative for municipal leadership in Global Hamilton does not simply relate to the initiative's planning and leadership functions. The City can also play a central role in branding and marketing efforts, in recruiting global firms, securing investors, revitalizing neighbourhoods, promoting Hamilton as a second landing destination, and connecting immigrant business leaders to the local economic development leadership.

While it is important to quickly assert ownership of the initiative, in the developmental phase this office may be more of a conceptual, virtual office than a single physical location.

In the developmental stage (Year One), it is recommended that the Global Hamilton Office remain in the City Manager's Office. However, preparation should be made for it to move within the City to the Economic Development Division in the implementation phase.

Activities:

In recognizing the budgetary and hiring constraints of the City, this Office, not only over the next twelve months but also in the long term will need to be much more of a facilitator, coordinator and connector of resources than a service delivery office. This will shape the further detailing of the roles and responsibilities of the ongoing structural arrangements. In addition, staff seconded to or designated to this Office must be comfortable working with City Council, international corporate leadership, business owners, City Department heads, and more. Tasks will include:

- Establishing agreement with partners to establish a consistent marketing and promotion program to rebrand and re-label immigration as an economic benefit and opportunity



- Explore governance models for immigration-related initiatives within the City, namely the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council (HIPC) and the Immigrant Attraction initiative
- Establish coordination of information dissemination vehicles including ownership of the Hamilton Immigration Portal and the Welcome to Hamilton website with HIPC and the Global Hamilton Office
- Establish a blue-ribbon, broad-based advisory group to provide general input, allocate responsibilities for specific program strands, assist in identifying resources, and provide continuous monitoring

The interrelated program strands of the Global Hamilton Office will grow to their full potential only by obtaining the direct participation from and connection to other municipal departments and external partners.

The following outcomes will indicate that the above activities have been achieved:

- Recommendations are made regarding a new governance model for immigration-related initiatives within the City
- A single office is established, and a senior manager is assigned one-quarter time to oversee the initiative
- The Immigration Portal is updated, is more accessible and is more widely used and is linked into other relevant information systems and websites
- Specific measurable results are developed that are linked to economic growth and job creation, as well as within each program strand.
- Formal working partnerships are established – both internally and externally
- Structure, work plan and budget for the Global Hamilton Office is developed and approved for the 2014 fiscal year
- Reports are provided to the appropriate Committees of Council
- Terms of reference and membership of the Advisory Group is established, members recruited and initial meetings held



Budget

This initiative cannot make progress in the absence of some dedicated resources. While every attempt has been made in the following Developmental Phase Work Plan to support, supplement and reinforce existing mandates and activity in Hamilton, an additional \$160,000 is required to spearhead and carry the initiative forward. The proposed budget is as follows:

Community engagement recruitment and attraction: \$25,000

- 5 pilot communities at \$5,000 each
- Covers community meetings, development of community profiles for attraction purposes, and development and printing of marketing materials (see page 14)

Marketing: \$25,000

- To supplement planned marketing work by Economic Development Division -- to ensure that materials are immigrant-friendly and translated into several different languages, including video shorts

Staffing contracts: \$100,000

- Continuation of existing arrangement, with 2 official co-leads
- Possible in-kind support from HIPC (HIPC has 2.5 FTE at present.)

Office supports: \$10,000

- Office equipment and supplies, travel
- Some could be in-kind

Next steps will be contingent on developments in the first year, particularly the development of collaborative partnerships. These steps will become apparent as we pilot, test and develop different strands of the work. In addition to developing the organizational and institutional level of support and participation required in implementing the various program strands, there is also the need to continue to build political and community awareness, momentum and support for this initiative.



Priority Actions

It is recommended that the following Priority Actions be undertaken as part of the developmental phase over the next twelve months.

1. Develop a rebranded Global Hamilton marketing strategy to improve the city's image
2. Create a plan for international student retention
3. Initiate a Welcoming Hamilton campaign that makes the city more welcoming
4. Develop a secondary migration program to Hamilton targeting economic immigrants and immigrant entrepreneurs
5. Connect local immigrant and ethnic communities to local economic development leadership in Hamilton
6. Establish linkages with the City's Strengthening Neighbourhoods Strategy
7. Monitor and support improvements to the City's "Open for Business" strategy particularly with respect to immigrant entrepreneurs
8. Strengthen liaison with relevant provincial and federal departments
9. Build Hamilton's Global Connections

The following Work Plan provides more detail on each of these tasks, including the suggested lead agency or agencies, the activities to be undertaken, and the outcome indicators.

It is not expected that all of the tasks outlined in this report can be completed in one year. A first step will be to meet with potential community partners to further identify the focus and extent of their own interests in moving this agenda forward. A prioritization can then occur within the project team. Identifying potential sources of funding is already underway, and this could also impact program priorities.

Developmental Phase Work Plan



Develop a Rebranded Global Hamilton

Marketing Strategy

Building on the current development of a communications strategy by the Economic Development Division, a rebranding of Hamilton as a global city will require the inclusion in marketing materials of:

- Profiles of successful immigrant entrepreneurs
- City plans and vision, e.g., Waterfront
- Demonstrated welcoming environment of Hamilton
- Cosmopolitan social, culinary, cultural, recreational life
- Local Profile of the city's diversity
- Global connections of Hamilton through its existing industries and businesses and people
- Hamilton as a centre of innovation supported by a world class university and research facilities

Resources and Responsibility:

Economic Development Division

Activities:

- Collaborate and coordinate with local partners such as the Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Hamilton, local media, etc. to ensure agreement on concept
- Material developed, designed and produced
- Materials produced in different forms e.g. thumb drives, "lure" brochures, videos in different languages
- Upload of materials on to the Immigration Portal and related sites
- The redesigned City website links to the materials and activities of the Global Hamilton Office

Indicators:

- Agreement and support for the rebranding image is gained by key local stakeholders
- Materials are designed with common images
- Materials are produced and disseminated
- Revamped and operational Immigration Portal and City of Hamilton website, including page for Global Hamilton



Create a Plan for International Student Retention

Connections need to be established with all local postsecondary educational institutions to market Hamilton to international students not only as a place to study but as a final destination after they graduate. A number of intervention points need to be considered, from the moment they are recruited, during their orientation once they arrive, throughout their time on campus, and as they prepare to leave.

Resources and Responsibility:

City Manager's Office, Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Hamilton, Workforce Planning Hamilton, and all local postsecondary educational institutions

Activities:

- Initiate contact at the most senior levels for the purposes of establishing a formal working relationship and protocols between the City and institutions of higher learning to develop a comprehensive attraction and retention program for international students
- Expand existing programs to promote current and future employment opportunities in Hamilton to the city's undergraduate population
- Develop information in different formats and dissemination points including the Immigration Portal
- Determine the resources and location of services to facilitate the applications for work permits and permanent residency by international students and connecting them to local jobs

Indicators:

- Formal agreement is reached at the most senior levels between the City and the educational institutions to collaborate
- Programs to promote local employment opportunities are expanded to postgraduate and international students



Initiate a Welcoming Hamilton Campaign

In supporting the current work of the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council (HIPC) and other local partners working to create a more welcoming community, the intent of this campaign is to change the local paradigm of looking at immigration only through a community services/needs lens. Rather, immigrants are economic, cultural and social assets to Hamilton, bringing with them a variety of experiences and skills that enrich our city.

Resources and Responsibility:

HIPC, Economic Development, media, private sector

Activities:

- Initiate a “welcome home” mass marketing campaign utilizing communications tools such as billboards, websites, press releases, etc. that promotes the contributions – historically, currently and in the future – of immigrants, and immigrant entrepreneurs in particular to our city
- As part of this public awareness campaign, the value of diversity in the global economy and the importance of Hamilton’s diversity for economic growth are promoted
- Press releases and media articles are prepared and successful local immigrant entrepreneur profiles are compiled
- Material disseminated and hosted on various websites including the Immigration Portal

Indicators:

- Materials are designed and a marketing campaign budget is prepared (in conjunction with Economic Development Division)
- Corporate campaign sponsors are identified



Develop a Secondary Migration Attraction Program

This activity builds on the recent pilot initiative of the Economic Development Division's promotion of Hamilton as an investment opportunity through various media outlets in the GTA.

Hamilton's best opportunity for attracting new residents may well be through both secondary migration movements and attracting Hamiltonians who have moved away. Hamilton can appeal to immigrant groups in the GTA and in other cities seeking lower housing costs and for entrepreneurs, lower start up costs.

Resources and Responsibility:

Economic Development

Activities:

- Continue and refine the pilot marketing strategy in the GTA and expand to the ethnic media and other networks
- Develop and produce follow up print and electronic information kits, including on the Immigration Portal

Indicators:

- Number of Immigration Portal hits, call-back inquiries and information kits distributed
- Continued tracking of origins of house buyers by the Real Estate sector



Connect Ethnic Business Communities to Local Economic Development Leadership

Organizational relationships need to be developed as a major component of an immigrant attraction program. Relationships are valuable for marketing the city through its existing ethnic communities as well as by these communities being able to help identify and seek international markets for local business.

Resources and Responsibility:

Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, Ethnic Associations, HIPC, Community Information Hamilton, Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion

Activities:

- Build a comprehensive directory and database of organizations, contacts within the ethnic/immigrant business communities in Hamilton.
- Assess the need for multi-lingual materials promoting Hamilton to existing and potential immigrant entrepreneurs
- Build and maintain working relationships by initiating quarterly forums and roundtables with ethnic business leaders
- Determine the feasibility of establishing an Exporters Council for all Hamilton businesses exporting globally

Indicators:

- Database compiled, language requirements determined
- Ethnic business roundtable and quarterly forums held



Establish Linkages to the Strengthening Neighbourhoods Strategy

Immigration can be important in helping to stabilize residential neighbourhoods and revitalise commercial corridors. Immigrant entrepreneurs often expand into underserved markets, seeking out enterprises with low start-up costs and low economies of scale, and provide goods where demand is unstable or uncertain.

The barriers faced by newcomers in trying to enter the job market can be significant. Economic development tools including incubators and self employment business training and support services need to be designed not only for the general population but must also recognise the language and cultural barriers faced by immigrant entrepreneurs.

Resources and Responsibility:

Economic Development, Neighbourhood Development Planning Team, Social Development Division, HCCI

Activities:

- Compile demographic profiles and directories of immigrant and ethnic associations and businesses in each of the priority neighbourhoods
- Develop and deliver “Start your own Business” and “How to Write a Business Plan” courses in each neighbourhood and/or consider the same specifically for immigrants covering neighbourhoods and communities of interest
- Undertake business feasibility studies for establishing small business incubators and community development centres in each neighbourhood
- Engage five pilot communities of interest (e.g., Italian, Muslim, Jewish) to solicit community input, develop community profiles and develop these into materials to market their own Hamilton-based communities abroad

Indicators:

- Profiles and directories compiled, printed and distributed
- Local self-employment training programs delivered
- Incubator feasibility studies completed



Support an Expanded City of Hamilton

“Open for Business” Strategy

The City’s “Open for Business” strategy needs to be expanded and promoted both within the municipal government and externally. With immigrants tending to seek more personalised services, it is important to reinforce and promote the concept of a true “one stop shop” in which one business consultant walks a prospective business owner through all the municipal processes and requirements from start to end and maintains an ongoing relationship.

Resources and Responsibility:

Planning, Economic Development

Activities:

- Assessment of staff and processes in place regarding multilingual capacity and the capacity to function in a cross cultural business environment
- Assessment of services to meet entrepreneurial needs at all levels in the business continuum from micro to large scale
- Linking business and economic information to services such as connectivity with the regional market, businesses by sector, availability of top class business and professional services, multimodal transportation system, etc.
- More frequent use of City Hall for business and entrepreneur-focused events

Indicators:

- Reviews undertaken
- Interpretation services available and marketed locally to immigrant communities
- Provision of a fuller range of materials and information
- Client uptake by ethnic/immigrant origin
- Number of events held at City Hall and number of participants



Strengthen Liaison with Relevant Federal and Provincial Departments

With Canadian immigration policies and regulations undergoing significant changes towards an increasing emphasis on employer needs, on temporary workers and the attaining of permanent residence as a two step process, it is increasingly important at the local level to keep abreast of these developments.

The Ministry of Economic Development and Innovation (MEDI) has identified economic priorities (which are very similar to those of Hamilton), it has trade offices abroad, and it organizes trade missions overseas.

The Invest Canada-Community Initiatives (ICCI) program of Industry Canada provides funding to support Canadian communities in collaborative efforts to attract, retain and expand foreign direct investment. Funding opportunities are normally available on an annual basis.

Hamilton has a funding agreement with the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration under the Immigration Portal program to develop and host much of the information emanating from a number of the initiatives described in this Action Plan.

Resources and Responsibility:

City Manager's Office, Economic Development

Activities:

- Prepare and submit funding application to the 2013 ICCI program
- Advocate for more relevant support from MEDI
- Monitor changes to immigration policies and procedures particularly as they pertain to immigrant entrepreneurs and the requirements of obtaining permanent residency for international students

Indicators:

- External funding obtained
- Participation in provincially organised overseas trade mission



Build Hamilton's Global Connections

Building on Hamilton's existing diversity can help us to attract foreign companies and investment. An existing work plan commitment of the Economic Development Division is to develop a comprehensive City of Hamilton investment strategy into the city. This should be accelerated. Hamilton also needs to incorporate in its marketing materials its economic priorities and niches to attract entrepreneurs and knowledge workers in those particular sectors.

Resources and Responsibility:

Economic Development, City Manager's Office, Culture Division, Chamber of Commerce, McMaster University

Activities:

- Prepare Foreign Investment strategy for City Council approval
- Determine the feasibility of establishing a formal network of support for local firms trading globally
- Building on the Pan-Am Games experience, consider an ongoing program for attracting international economic, cultural and sporting events
- Establish a formal contact point and protocol for supporting and receiving foreign trade delegations
- Participate in regional trade missions organised in the GTA
- Identify those sectors and/or occupations where Hamilton is most likely to face skills shortages in Economic Development's priority areas

Indicators:

- Council approval of foreign investment strategy
- Hosting international events strategy established
- Foreign trade delegation protocols in place
- Collaborative linkages established with regional municipal economic development agencies
- Analysis of labour supply shortages undertaken and results redesigned for uploading on to Immigration Portal



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March 2013

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Hamilton Immigration
Partnership Council

April 3, 2013

Dear Mr. Mayor and Members of City Council,

As Chair of the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council (HIPC) I would like to inform you that the HIPC fully supports the Immigrant Attraction Action Plan that is currently being developed within the City Manager's Office, with support from the Economic Development Division and the Community Services Department.

The evidence of an immigrant-driven revival of many of North America's largest cities is clear and compelling. In fact, many medium-sized and less successful cities actively recruit immigrants as a key element to their economic survival and wellbeing. Hamilton, like many other cities, is facing the burden of an aging population and workforce that will be unable to meet future labour demands. In an increasingly competitive environment among cities, provinces and countries, a pro-active plan needs to be considered in order for Hamilton to attract and retain the "best and the brightest."

The Immigrant Attraction Action Plan seeks to advance Hamilton's economy by

- Increasing international businesses and investment that create local jobs,
- Attracting and retaining international talent, including entrepreneurs and students, to sustain the successful achievement of the City's economic development strategy, and
- Embarking on a concerted effort to make Hamilton more welcoming to immigrants and the international community.

This initiative of the City is viewed as highly complementary to the work of the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council in that coordinated and accessible settlement services are integral to creating a welcoming community that attracts and retains immigrants.

The HIPC has been facilitating the establishment of partnerships within the community to coordinate and enhance the delivery of services to newcomers for over four years. Through this collaborative framework the HIPC has developed and is implementing an Immigration Strategy to address the settlement needs of newcomers for their successful integration into the community.

As such, the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council will actively support the implementation of the Immigrant Attraction Action Plan through provision of information, materials, contacts, advice and resources where available. The HIPC looks forward to working collaboratively with the City Manager's Office and to further identifying ways in which the HIPC can assist in the advancement of this initiative.

The HIPC respectfully recommends that the Mayor and City Council also lend their support to this work that is essential the future prosperity of our city.

Sincerely,



Jim Commerford
Chair, Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council