



windsor essex
local immigration partnership



Moving Forward...

A Supplement to “A Community Plan to Promote the Settlement and Integration of Immigrants in Windsor and Essex County”

September 2010

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in cooperation with a Working Group of the Windsor Essex Local Immigration Council.

Background

In November 2008, the City of Windsor signed an agreement with Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and received funding to work with the Windsor Essex settlement community towards the following three outcomes:

1. The Establishment of a Partnership Council,
2. The Development of a Local Settlement Strategy, and
3. The Creation of an Action Plan to Implement the Windsor Settlement Strategy.

The document entitled “A Community Plan to Promote the Settlement and Integration of Immigrants in Windsor and Essex County” developed by the Local Immigration Partnership (LIP), distributed in February 2010, represents the considerable achievements of the community in fulfilling its first two commitments to CIC.

Moving Forward contains a detailed Action Plan to support the implementation of the local settlement strategy; including plans to enhance both service and system integration over time and undertake a robust evaluation of local project efforts. The goals of the plan are to advance successful settlement of new immigrants to the community through an increasingly integrated service delivery model. The content takes into consideration that CIC is moving towards a new structure for settlement program funding and best practices as described in the “Report of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration”¹ tabled in March 2010.

Specifically, *Moving Forward* contains:

- A detailed Action Plan outlining key tasks/activities to be undertaken by the Council, including timeframes and responsibility centres,
- An approach to sustain collaborative community planning and support implementation of the Action Plan,
- A plan to enhance service and minimize duplication, and
- A strategy to develop performance measures, collect and report data and evaluate project success.

¹ Report of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration; Best Practices in Settlement Services, March 2010. (www2.parl.gc.ca/content/hoc/Committee/403/.../Reports/.../cimmrp02-e.pdf)

It was developed by a Working Group of the LIP comprised of ten members of the Council including representatives from each of the seven agencies providing settlement services within Windsor Essex (refer to the Appendices for a full membership list). To maximize input and participation by key agencies, member agencies put forward the names of up to two individuals who could attend meetings. The Working Group met for four days during the months of July and August, 2010. After each scheduled meeting a draft of the materials developed was circulated and subsequent meetings provided an opportunity to review and fine-tune their work.

Governance – Sustaining Our Efforts

Choosing the Right Governance Model

As the Working Group began its discussions, it became clear that ‘moving forward’ with the development of an action plan to ensure the implementation of the settlement strategy signaled that significant changes were taking place within the life cycle of the LIP. Working Group members identified the fact that the LIP was at a turning point, transitioning from what began as a research project to a more permanent fixture in the settlement community landscape; one responsible for ongoing, collaborative community planning and one accountable to not only its constituents, but its funders for achieving results.

This evolution and journey to a more mature and accountable planning body, naturally led to discussions about how to support and sustain the LIP Council in order that it could successfully implement current and future plans. It was agreed that existing Terms of Reference need to be amended to reflect this transition and a new chair selected. This led to discussions about governance models and the need to enhance the current Terms of Reference to outline roles and responsibilities and accountabilities more clearly so that they acknowledge and better reflect the changes taking place within the LIP. Further, it was acknowledged that the LIP needs to put in motion plans for the transfer of leadership to a new Chair before January 2011.

Enhancing the Current Model

A variety of governance models were discussed. It was agreed that each had its merits based on the different issues involved, staffing models, etc. The Working Group sought to build on components of the current model that are working well, while enhancing the accountability framework. In the end, the proposed governance model incorporates elements of what is currently working within the LIP and elements of successful models working in other sectors. The recommended model embraces the characteristics of good governance, namely; transparency, accountability, fiscal responsibility and effectiveness.

Key Elements of the Model

The following list reflects the key elements of the proposed governance model:

Structural and Functional Elements:

- Strong Council leadership and well articulated roles and responsibilities of Council Executive and other members (voting and non voting)
- Resources to coordinate work, plan activities, support implementation of the work plan, assist in development of funding proposals, support continued integration and evaluation efforts, etc.
- Resources for administrative support (i.e. record keeping, financial management)
- Physical space for human resource(s)
- Establish three Working Groups (one for each of the three Strategic Objectives); members carry out planning, implementation and support evaluation of approved activities
- Chairs will be members of the Executive Committee, responsible for providing leadership to the sub-group, reporting their progress to the Council and subsequently sharing Council feedback with the Working Group
- Working Groups may contain membership from outside of the LIP (i.e. expertise needed to achieve the stated objectives)

Accountability & Funding Elements:

- LIP Council is the decision making body
- Funds would flow from funder(s) to an agency that is mutually accountable for meeting the contractual obligations
- Shared accountability for the contract between ‘the banker’ who signs the contract on behalf of the Council and issues and monitors funds and reports to the funder (currently the City) and the LIP Council
- Potentially, other LIP member agencies could assume this role in the future
- If funds are acquired to secure staff, one other Council member agency would act as employer issuing pay cheques, etc. thus taking on legal responsibility for the staff
- Staff would be bound by working protocols of the designated employer
- Resource/staff activities would be directed by the five member Executive Committee (comprised of Chair, Vice-Chair and Chairs of the three Working Groups)

At least two other local planning bodies have successfully adopted and implemented a governance model similar to the recommended model. These include the local Homeless Coalition of Windsor – Essex and the local Pathway to Potential (Poverty) Roundtable.

Selection and Role of the Chair and Vice Chair

The following list reflects recommendations pertaining to how a Council Chair and Vice-Chair would be selected.

Selection:

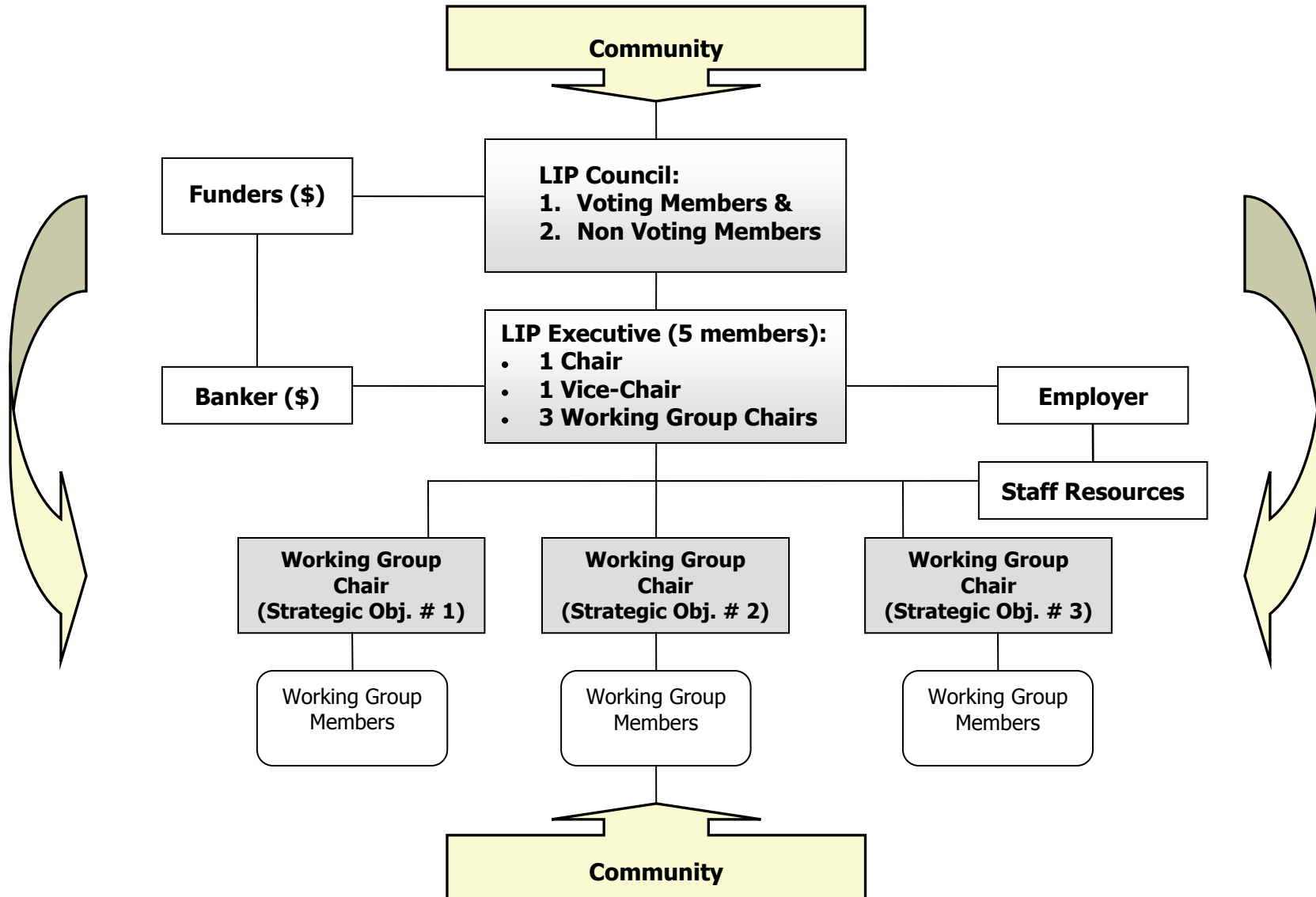
- Both the Chair and Vice-Chair must be a member of the LIP Council and from an organization with voting status,
- Nominations for Executive Committee positions would come from within the Council for an ***individual*** from an organization with voting status,
- Persons being nominated must agree to have their name put forward,
- Rules of order dictate selection and voting protocols, and
- The Chair must continue to work as an employee of an organization with voting status throughout their term.

Anticipated Roles:

- Supports the LIP agenda (i.e. strategic directions),
- Shares responsibility for providing direction to staff resources along with other members of the Executive Committee,
- Represents LIP to the media,
- Establishes meeting agendas in consultation with the Executive Committee,
- Troubleshoots issues,
- Acts as an advocate for LIP activities, and
- May be compensated for expenses when travelling on behalf of and representing the LIP.

The graphic that follows depicts the recommended governance structure; one that is open and accountable to its funders, LIP Council member agencies and importantly, the citizens of Windsor Essex. The group fully anticipates that this model will and should continue to evolve as the Council itself does.

Proposed Governance Model



Our Action Plan

Using the adapted governance model as a framework for discussion, the first step in the action planning process involved ensuring members of the Working Group fully understood each of the strategic objectives and accompanying goals outlined in the local settlement strategy.

After these discussions took place, a process of ‘opportunity planning’ was used to prioritize the goals within each strategy. Working Group members compared goals to each other to determine which had the highest probability of delivering the intended results of the objective and further rated existing performance or the amount of activity already underway on each goal. Rankings for both ‘value/importance’ and ‘existing performance’, for each goal were averaged and mapped to help identify goals that presented the greatest opportunities for achieving the three key objectives. As the process unfolded, the interdependency and inter-relationships between the individual goals became clearer. As such, working on one goal, often meant that elements of others would also be addressed.

Priorities for 2010 – 2012

The goals highlighted in yellow below reflect the recommended priorities for 2011-2012.

Strategic Objective # 1: Improve Access to & Coordination of Immigrant Integration Services	
1.	Promote 211 Windsor Essex as a source of reliable, accurate and up to date local information for newcomers, service providers and all community partners.
2.	Plan a coordinated approach for newcomers to receive information and case management regarding all services, including faith-based and cultural networks, which can assist with the settlement process.
3.	Match settlement capacity to client needs through the use of a continuous quality improvement model of service.
4.	Enhance access to language services for immigrants living in Essex County.
5.	Apprise the Local Health Integration Network of the challenges related to accessing health care services by immigrants and urge the MOH to address these challenges.
6.	Advocate with Essex County regional and municipal governments' regarding the importance of a public transportation system and county wide telecommunication as a means to enhance access to services and employment opportunities for immigrants.
7.	Enhance the community's capacity to provide qualified and affordable translation and interpretation services.
8.	Continue to liaise with local and provincial Francophone planning groups to enhance services and employment opportunities for Francophone newcomers.
Strategic Objective # 2: Improve Labour Market Outcomes for Immigrants	
1.	Urge all funders to provide child minding and transportation supports to allow all newcomers to access and benefit from settlement and language programs.
2.	Develop specific strategies to promote the benefits of hiring immigrants to small and medium size employers.
3.	Develop a series of educational workshops to provide labour market information to community partners.
4.	Coordinate mentoring and bridging programs to promote ease of use by employers and immigrants.
5.	Integrate immigrants into the Windsor Essex labour force by leveraging knowledge, skills and experience.
Strategic Objective # 3: Strengthen Local Awareness and Capacity to Integrate Immigrants	
1.	Promote community participation and civic engagement among immigrants in Windsor and Essex County.
2.	Develop and coordinate a public awareness campaign, which promotes multiculturalism and the benefits of settlement and integration in Windsor and Essex

Timing

With the goals prioritized, the group proceeded to explore the varied activities that could be undertaken to achieve them. While developing the timelines, members acknowledged that selecting a new Chair, a Vice-Chair, establishing the proposed Working Groups/Standing Committees, and then mobilizing teams of individuals to carry out the action plan goals would take a considerable amount of time, energy and other resources to accomplish. With the Action Plan due to CIC in October 2010, it was projected that amending the Terms of Reference, establishing the new Executive Committee and activating the respective Working Groups would likely extend to January 2011. Thus, work on the action plan was projected to commence in February 2011.

It should be understood that the start and completion dates reflect estimates only and are dependent upon a variety of factors including but not limited to:

- the impacts of restructuring of CIC programs on settlement agencies,
- the date by which CIC approves the Action Plan submission,
- the date by which the new structure is implemented with Chairs of each of the Working Groups in place,
- the extent to which staff resources are available to support implementation of the action plan,
- the extent to which targeted funding is available to support specific actions / outcomes, etc.

In recognition of the need for resources to support the implementation of the action plan and plans to enhance both service and system integration, a funding proposal to retain staff resources would accompany the CIC submission.

The Planning Context

It was generally agreed that all activities would be comprised of three phases, funds and resources permitting. The first phase would be that of planning; including collecting information on best practices, sourcing allies, networking with other committees and LIPs who may be engaged in similar activities, collecting resource material, etc. Depending on the nature of the activity, this phase may include applying best practice and seeking funding through partnerships with other agencies and/or developing and submitting funding proposals for unique projects.

The second phase would be implementation of the agreed upon actions. Working Groups and their members would be responsible for carrying out implementation efforts. Membership of the Working Groups will require recruitment of individuals from participating agencies who are represented on the Council and those who are not and include some front line expertise.

The third phase would be comprised of an evaluation of the processes and outcomes. Working groups will be held responsible for ensuring that each goal includes 'measurable' outcomes and that the targeted outcomes are well articulated to support the evaluation phase.

The following represents the consensus of the Working Group with respect to the recommended activities, timelines and responsibility centres. Notes containing additional details of the discussions were captured and recorded to support Working Group member discussions once the work begins. These supplementary 'explanatory' notes are contained in the Appendices.

Strategic Objective # 1: Improve Access to and Coordination of Services			
Goals	Activities	Est. Timeline	Responsibility
1. Plan a coordinated approach for newcomers to receive information and case management regarding all services, including faith-based and cultural networks, which can assist with the settlement process.	Develop and implement a letter of understanding for all newcomer serving agencies that outlines their commitment to working together to achieve a coordinated approach to sharing service information and case management.	Feb. – June 2011	LIP Working Group (and E.D.'s of Newcomer Serving Agencies)
	Develop one common referral form and system to be used by newcomer agencies.	July – Dec. 2011	LIP Working Group (including front line settlement workers)
	Pilot use and amend as necessary.	Jan. – June 2012	
	Finalize referral, train staff and implement use by all agencies.	July – Sept. 2012	
2. Match settlement service capacity to client needs through the use of a continuous quality improvement model of service.	Using a prioritized summary of key settlement issues identified in the WE LIP Report:		
	Review and document community capacity to meet identified needs/gaps by examining each need and developing a list of potential solutions. Determine preferred solution(s) for each issue.	Feb. 2011 – Mar. 2012	LIP Working Group (with membership including experts as required for each topic)
	Put forward recommended solution(s) for each issue to the LIP Council as developed.	May 2011 – May 2012	
	Accept, reject or adapt recommendations put forward by the Working Group, develop implementation schedule and commence implementation.	May 2011 - ongoing	

Strategic Objective # 1: Improve Access to and Coordination of Services			
Goals	Activities	Est. Timeline	Responsibility
3. Enhance access to language services for immigrants living in Essex County.	<p>Review the environmental scan of language services in Essex County when available (see outcomes of work conducted on languages services in Goal # 2).</p> <p>Initiate consultations with LHIN and CIC – develop presentation and meet to discuss language services and relationship to accessing health services overall.</p> <p>Identify opportunities to support current advocacy efforts to establish inter-rural transportation as a critical support to enable newcomers to access language services.</p> <p>Build community capacity by pooling existing resources and creating a common training curriculum that ensures consistent quality of language services across Windsor Essex and promotes collaboration.</p>	<p>Feb. – July 2011</p> <p>Feb. 2011 – ongoing</p> <p>Mar. 2011 – ongoing</p> <p>Sept. – Dec. 2011</p>	LIP Working Group
4. Continue to liaise with local and provincial Francophone planning groups to enhance services and employment opportunities for Francophone newcomers.	Francophone planning groups continue to participate as active members of the LIP Council.	ongoing	All LIP Council Members
5. Apprise the LHIN of the challenges related to accessing health care services by immigrants and urge the MOH to address these challenges.	This goal will be addressed through activities undertaken in Goal # 3.		

Strategic Objective # 1: Improve Access to and Coordination of Services	
Goals	Activities
6. Enhance the community's capacity to provide qualified and affordable translation and interpretation services.	This goal will be addressed through activities undertaken in Goal # 3.
7. Advocate with Essex County regional and municipal governments regarding the importance of a public transportation system as a means to enhance access to services and employment opportunities for immigrants residing in Essex County.	This goal will be addressed through activities undertaken in Goal # 3.
8. Promote 211 Windsor Essex as the first source of information for reliable, accurate and up-to-date local information for newcomers, service providers and all community partners.	This goal will be partially addressed through activities undertaken in Goal # 1 through the development of a common 'system-wide' referral form. Additional activities may be undertaken beyond 2012.

Strategic Objective # 2: Improve Labour Market Outcomes			
Goals	Activities	Est. Timeline	Responsibility
1. Develop specific strategies to promote the benefits of hiring immigrants to small and medium size employers.	Research best practice, select an approach and align with local economic strategies.	Feb. - April 2011	LIP Working Group
	Develop a list of benefits and a multi-faceted promotional strategy with measurable targets (i.e. individual employers, community, employer to employer, targeted sectors).	May - Oct. 2011	
	Source possible partnerships and funding opportunities.	Nov. - Dec. 2011	
	Implement the strategies.	Jan. 2012 - ongoing	
2. Integrate immigrants into the Windsor Essex labour force by leveraging knowledge, skills and experience, outlined as a priority in the Integrated Local Labour Market Plan.	Develop an inventory of agencies/organizations collecting data on immigrant knowledge, skills and experience.	Feb. – Oct. 2011	LIP Working Group
	Determine appropriate local link to existing strategies (i.e. partner to augment data base with local data, support activities) or develop independent funding proposal.	Nov. – Dec. 2011	
	Extract local data (catalogue of skills, experience and knowledge).	TBD	
	Identify how data can be used to support LIP and other agency goals.		

Strategic Objective # 2: Improve Labour Market Outcomes			
Goals	Activities	Est. Timeline	Responsibility
3. Engage in and promote participation in educational workshops that provide existing and emerging labour market information to community partners.	Partner with Workforce Windsor Essex and others to distribute available data and promote participation in workshops.	Ongoing	LIP Working Group
4. Coordinate mentoring and bridging programs to promote ease of use by employers and immigrants.	This goal will be addressed through activities undertaken in Goals # 1 and 2 and through the work to be completed to enhance service and system integration.		
5. Urge all funders to provide child minding and transportation supports to allow all newcomers to access and benefit from settlement and language programs.	Capitalize on opportunities (i.e. funding proposals, consultations) to communicate need for child minding and transportation supports.	Ongoing	All LIP Council Members

Strategic Objective # 3: Strengthen Local Awareness and Capacity to Integrate Immigrants			
Goals	Activities	Est. Timeline	Responsibility
1. Promote community participation and civic engagement among immigrants in Windsor and Essex County.	Develop an inventory of what is currently happening in Windsor-Essex and research best practices.	Feb. - June 2011	LIP Working Group
	Collect input from newcomers to ascertain their interests re civic engagement and community participation (i.e. forum, focus groups).	Feb. - June 2011	
	Connect/link local agencies to review findings and develop a plan to: i) link newcomers to existing activities ii) develop new opportunities	Sept. 2011 - April 2012	
	Implement activities contained in the developed plan.	June 2012 - ongoing	
2. Develop and coordinate a public awareness campaign which promotes multiculturalism and the benefits of settlement and integration in Windsor and Essex County.	This goal will be addressed in part through activities completed in Strategic Objective # 2, Goal # 1, to the extent that at least one strategy to promote hiring will be targeted to the broader community.		

Enhancing Service & Minimizing Duplication

Understanding Integration

A key goal of the CIC in restructuring settlement program funding is to streamline funding and support the extent to which agencies collaborate in planning for and delivering settlement services². As such, integrated service delivery has been noted as a best practice. However, the terms “integrated service” and “system integration” are not well understood at the delivery level, thus inhibiting the extent to which they can be achieved.

“Service integration” generally involves a culture change that is best achieved incrementally, following a roadmap with well-defined milestones and measurable results. Its primary goal is to make it easier for clients to access services by providing a single point or at the very least, fewer points of entry. In addition, access to services is expected to increase because by working closely and communicating with different agencies, staff members become more knowledgeable about resources available for shared clients. Combining resources, such as staff and facilities, is also expected to minimize duplication and may allow participating agencies to stretch their funding further. Finally, by referring clients to other agencies for additional services, integration allows each agency to specialize in particular strengths. Notably, both client and agency benefits are substantial.

An “integrated system” is characterized by features such as common intake and 'seamless' service delivery where clients may receive a range of services from different programs without repeated registration procedures, waiting periods, or other administrative barriers.

The Working Group began their work in this area by exploring the meaning of the term integration. It was agreed that enhancing service would require an increase in “service integration” and that minimizing duplication would also require an increase in “system integration.”

Often the terms coordination, collaboration, service and “system integration” are used interchangeably and with varying connotations and meanings. As a first step in moving towards more collaboration, the LIP proposes to further explore the meaning of these terms through a workshop developed for participating member agencies. A better

² Report of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration; Best Practices in Settlement Services, March 2010.

understanding of the terms and how integrating both service delivery and the system that supports it would improve successful settlement and adaptation.

Service Integration

The following activities are proposed to be undertaken to enhance “service integration.”

1. Map all available settlement services according to CICs newly developed streams, identifying both unique and common elements of the delivered services and links between them. Some of this work will be completed as part of Strategy # 2: Goal # 1.
2. Develop a compendium of ‘best practice’ for each of the service streams.
3. Using data from the detailed Community Plan and any new data available, identify local demand for each service.
4. Develop a working definition of ‘duplication’ with input from both CIC and Council members. Identify areas of service duplication to be addressed.
5. Organize opportunities/forums for settlement agencies identified as providing duplicate services to come together and discuss opportunities to reduce duplication and re-invest resources to address service gaps. These forums should be delivered by individuals with considerable facilitation expertise, thereby ensuring processes that promote relationship building and collaboration are used to promote discussion.

System Integration

The following activities are proposed to be undertaken to enhance “system integration.”

1. Develop and distribute a survey tool that quantifies settlement agencies assessments of the level of system integration across Windsor Essex, thus establishing a baseline of current levels of system integration.
2. Collate the responses and prepare an aggregate summary report of findings that would form the basis of discussion and exercises in a follow-up workshop. The aggregate survey data would highlight what agencies are currently doing that promotes system integration and identifies areas where opportunities for improvement exist.
3. Develop a plan to enhance system integration based on survey findings.

4. Re-distribute the survey annually to measure progress and adapt actions, as necessary.

Evaluating Our Progress

As noted earlier, work on the three key strategies will be comprised of three phases; planning, implementation and evaluation. The LIP recognizes the importance of developing an evaluation framework to guide its evaluation efforts. A multi-faceted approach to evaluation would include both a process evaluation (formative) and an outcome evaluation (summative). The general goals of the evaluation effort would be to provide useful feedback to funders, settlement agencies and the community on how specific activities/projects impact both community planning and individuals seeking settlement supports. This feedback would primarily be used to guide planning and future decision making both locally and at a broader level.

In order to support the evaluation process, measurable outcomes must be established in the planning phase. It is likely that Working Groups will need to seek evaluation expertise in order to support the development of measurable outcomes and assess their progress towards achieving them. The LIP would work in collaboration with its partner agencies to identify and source the required evaluation funds and project evaluation expertise.

The formative evaluation would be undertaken to understand what processes or steps were taken to achieve key goals. It may include but not be limited to collecting feedback from a small group of individuals (i.e. LIP members, front-line settlement staff) to gain insights into the planning and implementation processes used and their impacts. This would identify both the strengths and potential weaknesses of the processes used.

The summative evaluation would assess the degree to which specific outcomes were met; essentially measuring the extent to which the LIP achieved its respective goals. While providing feedback to the LIP on how they did, it would further identify whether or not the activities selected were effective in meeting the established goals and potentially identify additional opportunities or avenues to be explored.

The “Report of the Standing Committee on Best Practices in Settlement Services” identified that small delivery agencies often lack the resources necessary for the rigorous evaluation that is needed to engage in project evaluation because all of their resources are involved in direct service to clients. The same would hold true for the LIP, which is

comprised of volunteers from community agencies. As such, outside, third party resources would be required to both develop and implement the component.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1

Action Planning Working Group Membership

Agency	Representatives
College Boreal	Esdras Ngenzi and Nil Parent
Multicultural Council of Windsor Essex County	Lisa Kolody
New Canadians' Centre of Excellence Inc	Iole Iadipaolo
South Essex Community Council	Carolyn Warkentin
Windsor Women Working with Immigrant Women	Sudip Minhas and Karmie Dhillon
Women's Enterprise Skills Training	Rose Anguiano Hurst and Georgia Graham
Workforce WindsorEssex	Donna Marentette
United Way	Lorraine Goddard
YMCA of Windsor Essex	Jacquie Rumiell and Michelle Suchiu
The City of Windsor	Mary Ellen Bernard
10 Agencies	14 Individuals

Action Planning Explanatory Notes

Strategic Objective # 1: Improve Access to and Coordination of Services

1. Plan a coordinated approach for newcomers to receive information and case management regarding all services, including faith-based and cultural networks, which can assist with the settlement process.

It was generally agreed that Council members should focus their efforts on establishing, maintaining and enhancing trust based working relationships among agencies and their front line staff as a foundation for future planning. As such, it was agreed that breaking the task into manageable pieces (i.e. establishing SMART goals) would enhance the likelihood of success. It was agreed that all newcomer serving agencies were currently represented on the Council. A distinction was made between newcomer serving agencies (i.e. those agencies with serving newcomers as a focus of their mandate) and agencies that serve newcomers (i.e. Ontario Works – an employment program that provides income support). The original intention was that only newcomer serving agencies would be signatories to this letter of understanding, however, as the task unfolds, there may be some merit to expanding the signatories to the agreement.

It was acknowledged that future actions that would also support a more coordinated approach to case management and enhance quality could include, but not be limited to: development of common intake and assessment tools and processes, a case management model, a tracking system for referrals, a data base/software system and joint training opportunities for staff to increase cooperation at the front line.

2. Match settlement service capacity to client needs through the use of a continuous quality improvement model of service.

It was agreed that the ‘Summary of Key Settlement Issues’ contained in the WE LIP Report (page 2 of Executive Summary) would serve as the list of client needs (i.e. potential gaps in service). It was further acknowledged that some perceived gaps in availability may in reality be gaps in awareness, etc. Most gaps will fall into one of the following 3 categories: access, availability or awareness. The Working Group would meet to document community capacity (i.e. catalogue which agencies deliver which services, where and how much) as it pertains to the thirteen broadly identified needs (excludes specific challenges, which are addressed by other goals). Note that this map would also serve as the framework for the first step of enhancing service integration, which would begin with a comprehensive map of existing services.

The group would prioritize issues to be addressed and meet once monthly to apply a solution focused approach in tackling one issue per meeting. Based on the issue being addressed, different groups/agency representatives may be invited to join the discussion. As recommendations are developed they would be presented to the Council for approval

and direction. This would allow other Working Groups to move forward with some of their planning (i.e. language issues).

3. Enhance access to language services for immigrants living in Essex County.

The environmental scan would be completed by the same group examining capacity and solutions to language issues as per Goal # 2. Language services were agreed to include English and French language classes and translation and interpretation services. Barriers include issues with accessibility, cost, lack of awareness and social isolation. The key activities of the LIP would be advocacy. It was felt that a delegation of LIP Council members representative of the settlement sector should make a presentation to the LHIN to link the need for language services to their strategic objectives. Further, a collaborative effort to develop, deliver and participate in community-wide training would be focused on enhancing the skills of volunteers.

Strategic Objective # 2: Improve Labour Market Outcomes

1. Develop specific strategies to promote the benefits of hiring immigrants to small and medium size employers.

The group would begin by identifying who else has already developed or is developing strategies to promote hiring. The Toronto Regional Immigration Employment Council (TREIC) was identified as a potential contact. It was acknowledged that other local committees (i.e. Economic Development, Workforce Windsor Essex) may also have similar goals and the Working Group should investigate possible partnerships and opportunities for funding to achieve the goal. Discussion took place regarding the need for a multi-pronged approach to promotion, which would include different approaches for different target groups; including but not limited to: employer to employer, community as a whole, individual small business, etc. In the end, the scope of the promotional activity may be defined by the extent to which resources/funds are available.

2. Integrate immigrants into the Windsor Essex labour force by leveraging knowledge, skills and experience, outlined as a priority in the Integrated Local Labour Market Plan.

Considerable discussion took place to determine the meaning and scope of this goal. In the end, the group agreed that the focus of this goal should be to promote system integration versus the integration of individuals into the labour force. Thus, developing a robust profile of the knowledge, skills and work experiences of the local immigrant workforce would be useful high level information that could be used on many fronts. For example, Economic Development could use this information to attract new business, promoting the availability of a local talent pool that aligns with their identified skill requirements.

The group was aware of some work being done to capture information on immigrant skills and experience (asset mapping) in other jurisdictions that might be a first source of information (i.e. University of Windsor School of Business, Workforce Development, and Skills International – COSTI).

Strategic Objective # 3: Strengthen Local Awareness and Capacity to Integrate Immigrants

1. Promote community participation and civic engagement among immigrants in Windsor and Essex County.

Considerable discussion took place as to the definitions of the terms. Civic engagement includes educational activities re: complex government systems, how to navigate the system, participation on Advisory Boards, understanding the pathway to citizenship and Canadian values, etc. Community participation includes volunteering and participating in community activities (i.e. community gardens). MCC has a grant and is working on researching local volunteerism amongst newcomers. Agency training is scheduled to take place to enhance capacity to support volunteerism. Work that the United Way is doing on developing a database of newcomer skills could link skills, experience and knowledge with volunteer opportunities.



Citizenship and
Immigration Canada

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