

Lawrence Heights Settlement and Employment Strategy & Action Plan



April 2011

Introduction

Helping immigrants settle and integrate into Canadian society is an important process and requires the collaboration of all sectors in our communities. To promote this essential collaboration, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) has funded Local Immigration Partnerships in communities across Ontario.

The Local Immigration Partnership

The Local Immigration Partnerships (LIP) seeks to strengthen the role of communities in serving and integrating immigrants by bringing local stakeholders such as residents, the City, the provincial government, schools, community agencies, and grassroots groups to the planning table. LIP provides a collaborative framework for, and facilitates the development and implementation of, sustainable local solutions for the successful integration of immigrants in the province. LIP puts immigration on the local planning agenda, and helps communities reap the social and economic benefits of successful immigrant integration.

LIP is a community planning exercise that provides opportunities for both newcomers and the community receiving them, to work together to identify barriers, develop policies, and implement programs that will facilitate immigrant settlement and integration. Lawrence Heights LIP began on October 1st, 2009. The Planning Phase has led to the establishment of a Partnership Council, known as LIP Council, and the development of a Settlement & Employment Strategy and accompanying Action Plan.

Objectives

The LIP objectives are to:

- » support community planning on the topic of immigrant settlement and integration;
- » increase awareness about issues faced by immigrants in the community;
- » encourage inclusive community engagement opportunities;
- » support the coordination efforts of community service providers in the community;
- » further build the capacity and support the sustainability of the community network.

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The Lawrence Heights Community

TCHC or Toronto Community Housing Corporation is the largest social housing provider in Canada. It owns and operates the public housing units in Lawrence Heights.

Lawrence-Allen Revitalisation Plan (LARP) is a 20-years plan for the Lawrence-Allen area and the Lawrence Heights neighbourhood at its core. The plan envisions a mixed-income, mixed-use neighbourhood well integrated with the broader city.

The Revitalization of the Lawrence Heights community was announced by TCHC in 2007. The process aims to replace housing; improve the layout of the neighbourhood; and engage and support the community for the future.

The City's plan for Revitalization is accompanied by a Social Development Plan, which supports development in the local labour market, social services, community development, and programming during the Revitalization process and beyond.



Lawrence Heights is a community in the northwest of Toronto. It is bounded by Highway 401 to the north, Bathurst Street to the east, Briar Hill Avenue to the south, and the CN railway to the west (just west of Caledonia Road). It is approximately 9.5 square kilometres in area. The neighbourhood struggles with poor access to services, isolation, and lower socio-economic indicators when compared to the City of Toronto. In 2006, 35,945 people lived in the priority neighbourhood. In 2005, Lawrence Heights residents had an average after-tax household income of \$56,440, compared to the City of Toronto's average, \$63,870. The incidence of low income after-tax in Lawrence Heights is 20.9%, compared to Toronto at 19.4%.

According to the 2006 Canada Census Lawrence Heights has a very large immigrant population with over 51% residents being foreign-born. More than 16% of those immigrants arrived in Canada between 2001 and 2006. The top origins of those recent immigrants are Southeast Asia (i.e. Philippines) (35%); Eastern Europe (17%); Western Central Asia and the Middle East (10%); South America (8%) and Africa (8%).

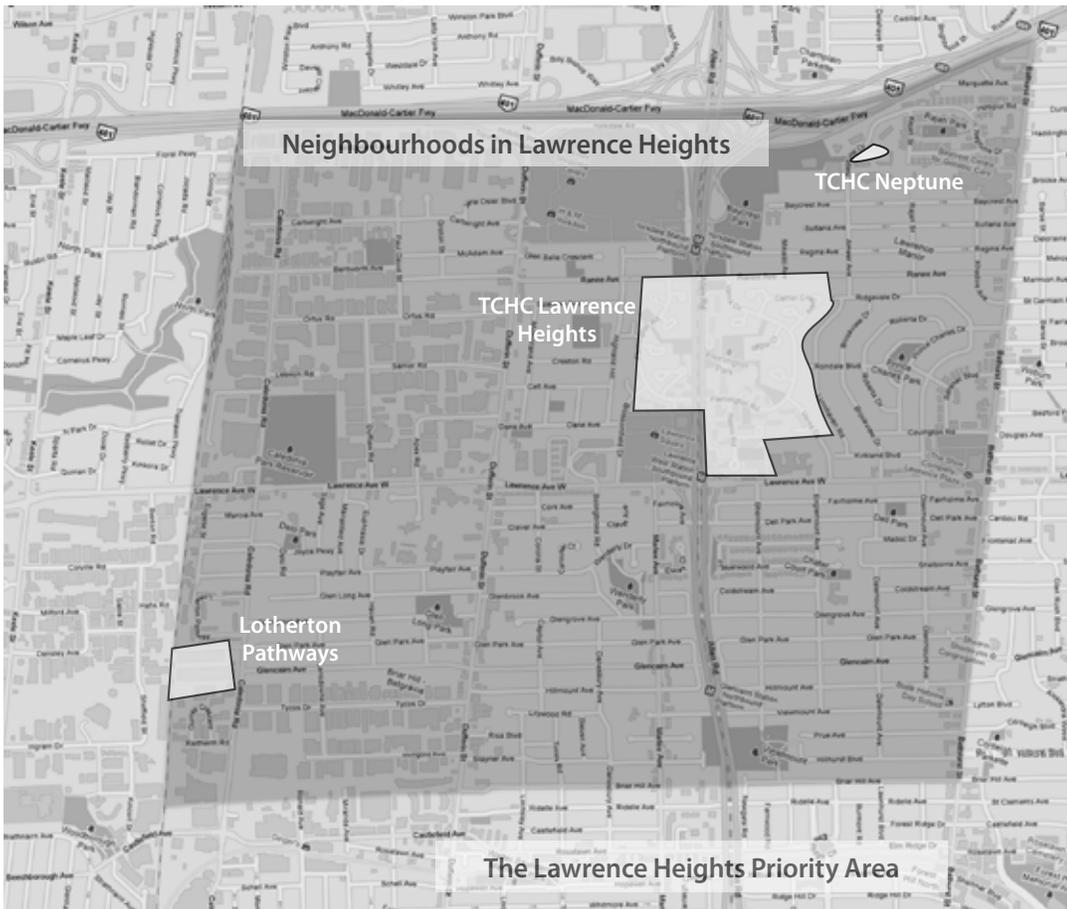
In 2004, the United Way, in a joint initiative with the City of Toronto, formed the Strong Neighbourhood Task Force, with the goal of building an action plan for revitalizing To-

ronto neighbourhoods. In 2005, the task force released a report, *Strong Neighbourhoods: a Call to Action*, analyzing Toronto's 140 neighbourhoods. The objective was to identify those neighbourhoods where public investment in local services has not kept pace with demographic shifts, population increases, and growing social needs. The analysis measured services, facilities, challenges, and the vitality of each neighbourhood.

Through the task force analysis, Lawrence Heights was identified as a priority area with poor access to services, facing significant challenges, and in need of social and physical infrastructure investment. The Local Immigration Partnership seeks to participate in that investment process.

In addition, the Lawrence Allen area and the Lawrence Heights neighbourhood are also currently undergoing a Revitalization process known as the Lawrence-Allen Revitalisation Plan or LARP. Land owned by the City of Toronto and public housing units managed by the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) are slated for renewal. Revitalization has four goals: (1) to replace housing; (2) to improve the layout of the neighbourhood; (3) to engage and support the community for the future; and (4) to create a financially responsible plan for revitalization.

LIP and the Lawrence Heights Inter-Organization Network (LHION)



JVS Toronto is the lead agency for the Lawrence Heights LIP. They have signed a contribution agreement with Citizenship and Immigrant Canada (CIC), which states that JVS Toronto has final accountability to CIC for all funding and deliverables. JVS Toronto has partnered with the Lawrence Heights Inter-Organizational Network (LHION), to better serve the community.

LHION is a coalition of emerging groups, service providers and other representative organizations delivering programs and services targeted in three areas of the priority neighbourhood: the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) communities of Lawrence Heights and Neptune, as well as a third neighbourhood, Lotherton Pathways.

LHION works together with the City, community partners, and residents, using an anti-racism, anti-oppression framework, to coordinate efforts towards building healthy and sustainable communities. LHION is guided by the Steering Committee, and has eight workgroups:

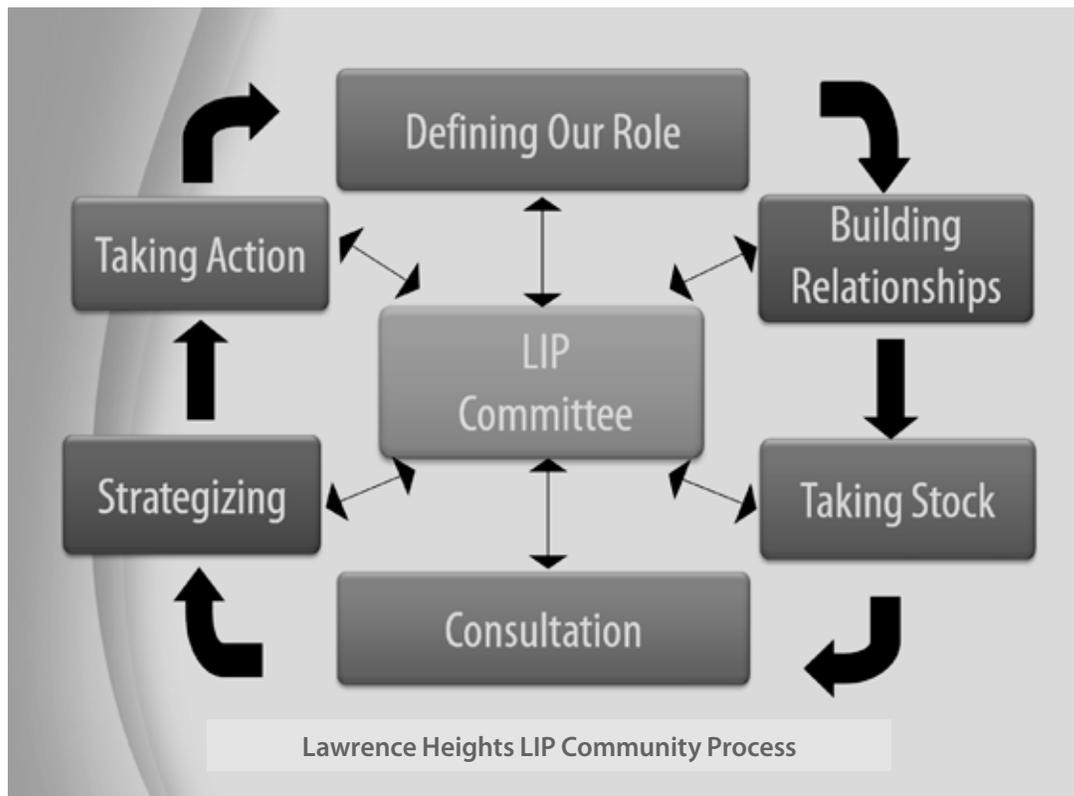
- 1) Employment and Training;
- 2) Revitalization;
- 3) Education;
- 4) Food Justice;
- 5) Community Safety;
- 6) Adult Literacy;
- 7) Lotherton; and
- 8) Youth Outreach Workers (LHION, 2011).

The LIP Partnership Council is currently acting as a ninth workgroup of LHION.

Grassroots Groups include neighbourhood groups; self-help groups; local political campaign efforts; cooperatives; ethno-cultural, educational, recreational, and issue-oriented groups; most networks; many local chapters of service clubs; and many religious groups based on the activities of the congregation's members.

The Lawrence Heights Inter-Organization Network (LHION) is a coalition of emerging groups, service providers and other representative organizations delivering programs and services in Lawrence Heights.

LIP and Community Development



Friday Night Cafés refers to community events that take place from time to time, on Friday Night, in the Lawrence Heights TCHC community. Community events are typically hosted by community agencies of LHION workgroups.

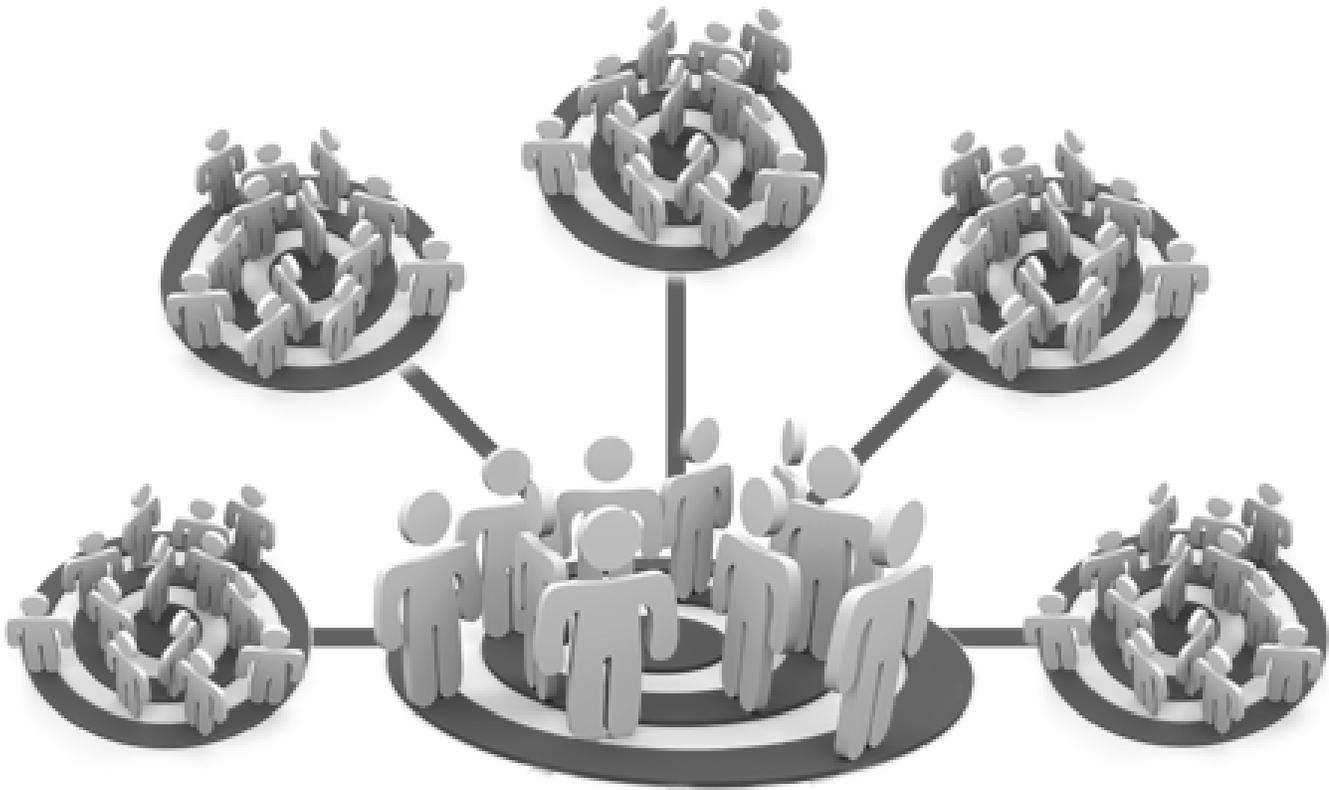
Community development is a social process that increases and enhances community resources. It is an opportunity for community stakeholders to gain control over externally imposed conditions so that the local population can respond collectively to events and issues that affect them. It is about collective problem-solving, self-help, and empowerment.

Specifically, LIP's process is a community planning exercise. It is a strategy-building process that addresses the needs of the community in regards to immigrant settlement and employment, using community input and involvement. Following this process, the Lawrence Heights LIP has delivered a community-based immigrant settlement and employment strategy, documented here. It has also delivered an accompanying action plan that serves as a roadmap for ongoing community planning and resource enhancement.

Public Consultations

As a part of its public consultations, LIP talked to different groups of newcomers about their experiences settling in Lawrence Heights. LIP also spoke to grassroots groups, community service providers and businesses throughout the planning process. Generally, the consultations focused on learning about the challenges faced by newcomers and the supports they relied on to overcome those challenges.

LIP and Community Development



Community Gatherings

LIP staged a community discussion (known locally as a Friday Night Café) in Lawrence Heights where residents discussed the topics of employment; health and food; language; socio-economic issues; information, and orientation, from the perspective of newcomer settlement. The forum also offered the opportunity for participants to identify other themes they felt were important.

LIP also participated, supported, and attended many other community gatherings in an effort to listen to, and learn about, the different perspectives of residents when it comes to building a more welcoming community.

Newcomer Employment Survey

Taking the opportunity to build on existing research in the community, LIP surveyed 130 working-age newcomers living in Lawrence Heights, to learn about their experiences accessing training, education and work.

Focus Groups

Five focus groups were conducted with newcomers, offering the opportunity for more detailed discussion about challenges and supports. Language-specific groups were conducted in Spanish and Tagalog to encourage participation across cultural barriers. One group was conducted with newcomers who received their post-secondary education abroad, described by LIP as ‘internationally-trained individuals’, in order to delve deeper into the challenges that newcomers face with economic integration in the Canadian labour market.

LIP and Community Development



Interviews with Agencies

Individuals working in agencies and organizations that provide a variety of health and social services were interviewed. The interviews sampled the views of 16 individuals who work directly with newcomer clients and others living in the Lawrence Heights catchment. These conversations with ‘front line workers’ explored the challenges that their clients face. The interviews also explored the challenges that front line workers face in serving newcomers, and the resources they use to strengthen their supports.

Workshops with Grassroots Groups

Grassroots groups are an important pillar of community development. Therefore, LIP held workshop sessions with seven resident-led groups to learn about their needs and priorities in serving the community at-large.

Business Surveys

Businesses have a large role to play in building a welcoming community. LIP reached out to a broad range of businesses in the Lawrence Heights neighbourhood to learn about their operations, hiring and interest in participating in corporate citizenship

Reports on each of these consultations can be found on the LHION website:
www.lhion.org

LIP Settlement and Employment Strategy



A strategy is an overall approach and plan to a particular end. The LIP has used a community planning process to develop the immigrant settlement and employment strategy for Lawrence Heights. A strategy provides clarity about desired goals and allows for a decision-making process that identifies how best to achieve them. Instead of 'goals', the LIP strategy identifies 'strategic directions' to accommodate the need to re-adjust goals through an ongoing process of taking stock and identifying stakeholders and possible actions.

The strategic directions identified in the LIP strategy fall under four thematic areas:

- 1 Employment and Training*
- 2 English Language*
- 3 Health & Wellbeing*
- 4 Community Connections.*

For each strategic direction, actions have been identified that will lead the LIP Council towards achieving its goals. The strategic directions and actions under each theme are not mutually exclusive.

The City of Toronto's Social Development, Finance & Administration Division (SDFA) supports the city's social inclusion and community safety agenda; fosters strong communities; and promotes community engagement. SDFA is responsible for the Lawrence Heights Social Development Plan (SDP) as part of the Revitalization project.

The Private Sector is the part of the economy which is both run for profit and not controlled by the government. By contract, enterprises that are part of the government are part of the public sector, and private non-profit organizations are part of the voluntary sector or not-for-profit sector.

Employment & Training



Employment is the biggest priority for nearly all immigrants. Economic immigrants, particularly, are looking for good jobs that match their education, skills, and experience. Poor employment outcomes can be related to three barriers: (1) obtaining equivalencies for foreign education or certification; (2) obtaining recognition of foreign work experience; and (3) obtaining references for work. Credential recognition is a primary concern for nearly all economic immigrants. Unemployment, underemployment and difficulties obtaining professional work are causing depression, boredom, isolation and cynicism. Volunteering, although valued by immigrants, was not always a good fit for their profession or was not financially sustainable.

In Lawrence Heights, with the Revitalization process underway, there is also a concerted effort to provide local employment opportunities for residents. The City's Social Development Plan – Employment Plan is facilitating the planning and coordination of this process. There is also an expressed need in Lawrence Heights for jobs for youth.

An Internationally-trained Individual (ITI) is any immigrant who has completed post-secondary education and/or training, either professional or in the skilled trades, outside of Canada.

Strategic Direction 1.1: Improve services and programs for immigrants trying to obtain and maintain gainful employment, and advance professionally.

Actions Needed:

- 1.1.1 Provide internationally-trained immigrants (ITIs) with better access to industry/sector specific labour market information (i.e. labour trends, growing sectors, regulations, and occupations in high or low demand).
- 1.1.2 Work to expand mentorship programs and provide opportunities for ITIs to network and develop professional contacts.
- 1.1.3 Bring resources to Lawrence Heights that support immigrant entrepreneurs or immigrants who want to start small businesses.
- 1.1.4 Provide youth in Lawrence Heights with more exposure to potential career paths through various means (e.g. career exploration workshops, job shadowing, internships, etc...).
- 1.1.5 Identify and understand job creation opportunities that will arise from Revitalization and work to prepare residents for employment opportunities.
- 1.1.6 Work towards increasing the availability of childcare and transportation support (TTC tokens) for clients accessing employment services and programs.

Strategic Direction 1.2: Enhance coordination, capacity, and collaboration of agencies, service providers, and other groups delivering employment services and programs.

Actions Needed:

- 1.2.1 Support the capacity of the Lawrence Heights Inter-Organizational Network (LHION) Employment and Training workgroup to continue as a forum for employment service providers to coordinate, collaborate, and dialogue with each other.
- 1.2.2 Work in collaboration with Toronto Employment and Social Services (TESS) and City of Toronto Social Development to ensure that the Lawrence Heights Employment Plan addresses the vocational needs of immigrants.
- 1.2.3 Work in partnership with TESS and other key actors to collect data about talent, skills, experience, and the potential of the immigrant labour force living in Lawrence Heights.
- 1.3.5 Research promising practices in incentivizing employers to hire specific segments of the labour force (i.e. youth, newcomers, new graduates, women, etc...).

Toronto Employment and Social Services (TESS) provides employment services to all Toronto residents. They also provide financial benefits and supports such as Ontario Works (OW) and the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP).

Lawrence Heights Employment Plan is a key component of the Social Development Plan. The document considers the planning and coordination of employment service provision for Lawrence Heights residents.

The Labour Force is the people in the labour market who are the suppliers of labour. It includes all those people who are employed or unemployed but seeking employment.

Bridge Training Programs are courses that help ITIs establish themselves in their profession by offering opportunities to become licensed, gain on the job experience and connect with mentors. They are run by employers, colleges and universities, occupational regulatory bodies, and community organizations.

Yorkdale Adult Learning Centre and School is a credit granting adult day school operating in the Lawrence Heights Community.

Strategic Direction 1.3: Engage employers in order to improve employment outcomes for immigrants.

Actions Needed:

- 1.3.1 Raise awareness about not-for-profit employment agencies and the free services they can provide to employers.
- 1.3.2 Explore the challenges employers face related to hiring and retaining immigrants and work to make employment services more responsive to their needs.
- 1.3.3 Raise awareness about the talent and potential of the immigrant labour force living in Lawrence Heights to employers.
- 1.3.4 Identify employer “champions” or best practices in immigrant mentoring, training, and/or hiring.
- 1.3.5 Research promising practices in incentivizing employers to hire specific segments of the labour force (i.e. youth, newcomers, new graduates, women, etc...).

Strategic Direction 1.4: Support the education and training needs of ITIs and other immigrant jobseekers in Lawrence Heights.

Actions Needed:

- 1.4.1 Advocate for increased funding that will improve the availability and accessibility of bridge training programs and help ITIs fulfill upgrading and professional development requirements needed for the local labour market.
- 1.4.2 Strengthen the relationship between the Yorkdale Adult Centre and School and settlement and employment service providers in Lawrence Heights to better connect immigrants to training and vocational classes available in the neighbourhood.
- 1.4.3 Advocate for the centralization and streamlining of foreign credential recognition services for ITIs by government at the provincial level.
- 1.4.4 Work to expand opportunities for paid internships, co-ops, and work placement so that ITIs can gain “Canadian work experience”.
- 1.4.5 Strengthen partnership between settlement and employment service providers in order to address the needs of immigrants with little or no education, training, and/or work experience

English Language



Youth under the age of 18 are not eligible for LINC, ESL, or ESL Literacy classes. There is an assumption that immigrant youth receive adequate English language learning in regular school.

LINC or Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada is a free language training program funded federally by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). LINC is offered by a third-party such as a community agency or other institution. Participants must be newcomers over the age of 18; landed immigrants, convention refugees or holders of ministerial permits. Refugee claimants and Canadian citizens are ineligible for LINC.

Obtaining functional language skills is a top priority for nearly all immigrants. Immigrants need better assessment of language skills, and better organization of classes so that curriculum can be targeted to specific skill levels and employment needs. There is also a need for additional training in occupation-specific language and to include lessons around Canadian idioms, customs and other idiosyncrasies of Canadian culture and language.

Strategic Direction 2.1: Remove barriers to English learning opportunities for immigrants in Lawrence Heights.

Actions Needed:

- 2.1.1 Advocate for broader client eligibility requirements of government-funded LINC, ESL, and ESL Literacy English classes so that they do not exclude residents based on immigration status.
- 2.1.2 Work to increase childcare and transportation support for all English classes.
- 2.1.3 Advocate for family-based English classes for parents/caregivers that allow their children to remain with them during the lessons.
- 2.1.4 Work to increase the number of online English learning opportunities such as LINC Home Study, and online conversation circle chat-rooms for Lawrence Heights residents.
- 2.1.5 Provide English classes for youth under the age of 18 years, after school and during the summer.

Strategic Direction 2.2: Improve the coordination and access of English language learning opportunities for immigrants

Actions Needed:

- 2.2.1 Bring together English learning service providers and residents to coordinate, collaborate and discuss service planning and delivery for Lawrence Heights.
- 2.2.2 Run volunteer-based literacy groups, reading groups, and conversation circles that allow residents to practice English in informal settings, particularly for seniors, youth, and families.
- 2.2.3 Provide life skills workshops (e.g. financial literacy, topics in health) and integrate practical English lessons into the content of the course.

Strategic Direction 2.3: Help newcomers overcome English language barriers to attaining gainful employment and upward mobility in the labour market

Actions Needed:

- 2.3.1 Increase the number of job-specific language learning programs (e.g. ELT, OSLT, and SLT), making them more geographically accessible in Lawrence Heights, and targeting professions in-demand in the immigrant labour force.
- 2.3.2 Develop and run conversation circles for specific professions (e.g. conversation circle for internationally-trained nurses).

ESL or English as a Second Language is a free language training program funded provincially by the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI). Typically ESL programming is offered by the Toronto District School Board (TDBS) and generally is open to all newcomers.

ESL Literacy is a program, funded provincially by the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI), for individuals who are learning English as a Second Language and who are not functionally literate in their own language for a variety of reasons.

ELT or Enhanced Language Training / OSLT or Occupation Specific Language Training provides free job-specific language training in English but also the workplace culture skills required to communicate effectively in the Canadian workplace. There are also opportunities for mentoring, job placements and other ways to help newcomers find work. This program is funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). Participants must have a background in a specific occupation and a higher level of English competency.

Conversation Circles are informal conversation groups where new immigrants come together to practice their English in informal settings. Many are volunteer-based.

Health & Wellbeing



SLT or Specialized Language Training is a pilot project offering immigrants the opportunity to strengthen their language skills so that they gain employment that reflects their qualifications or allow them to function more effectively in the job they already have. The program is funded by the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI).

A Non-Status Immigrant refers to people who have made their home in Canada but lack legal immigration status including failed refugee claimants, immigrants who have experienced sponsorship breakdown, and individuals whose temporary worker, student or visitor visas have expired.

Immigrant health and wellbeing is an emerging and complex issue. Some studies have found that global migration is a significant factor that affects the health of communities. Other studies suggest that immigrants are healthier, at least in the short run, than the Canadian population - the so-called healthy immigrant effect - due to Canada's rigorous health requirements in order to qualify for immigration. However, this effect tends to diminish over time as immigrants settle into Canadian society and face socio-economic challenges.

Once immigrants are settled, they tend to access and use health services significantly less than the Canadian population. Lack of awareness and access to health programs play a role in the under-utilization of health services. There is also the question of whether health services are culturally competent and consider diverse ethno-cultural and religious beliefs, values, and interests.

Strategic Direction 3.1: Support health services and promotion for immigrants, and make healthcare more accessible in Lawrence Heights

Actions Needed:

- 3.1.1 Develop partnerships between settlement agencies, grassroots groups and healthcare providers to build awareness about diverse ethno-cultural norms, expectations, beliefs and values surrounding physical and mental health.
- 3.1.2 Develop visual, plain language, and/or cross-cultural educational and communication tools about health promotion and healthcare services for Lawrence Heights residents.
- 3.1.3 Advocate for the elimination of the three month waiting period for newcomers to be eligible for the Ontario Health Insurance Program (OHIP).
- 3.1.4 Provide a community-based list of translators to healthcare professionals serving the residents of Lawrence Heights.
- 3.1.5 Conduct orientation sessions for newcomers on the Ontario healthcare system, outlining points of access, expectations, rights, and obligations.
- 3.1.6 Advocate for increased access to health care for non-status immigrants and refugee claimants.

Strategic Direction 3.2: Support the mental and emotional health of immigrants and work to eliminate stigma

Actions Needed:

- 3.2.1 Build the capacity of settlement workers to provide mental and emotional health information and referrals to their clients.
- 3.2.2 Hold community discussions (e.g. Friday Night Cafés) about issues that may affect mental and emotional health and promote programs and services available to residents.
- 3.2.3 Provide stress and anxiety reduction programming to help immigrants cope with the strain, shock, and sometimes trauma of settling and integrating in a new country.
- 3.2.4 Partner with residents and grassroots groups to develop culturally competent and community-based orientation and information material on mental and emotional health.

Strategic Direction 3.3: Promote nutrition and food security in the Lawrence Heights community

Actions Needed:

- 3.3.1 Partner with residents and grassroots groups to raise awareness in the community about cultural and religious diet norms and restrictions (e.g. Halal, Kosher, Vegetarian, etc...).
- 3.3.2 Enhance the accessibility and availability of good food boxes, community kitchens, and buying clubs for Lawrence Heights residents.
- 3.3.3 Support the maintenance and expansion of the Lawrence Heights community garden.
- 3.3.4 Support the maintenance and expansion of the Lawrence Heights Good Food Market.

A Good Food Box is an alternative food purchasing and distribution system that provides nutritious food at an affordable price. Individual families as a part of a community-based group, pay for orders of food boxes ahead of time.

The Good Food Market is a partnership between FoodShare and community organizations in Lawrence Heights to run small market stands that sell high-quality, affordable fruits and vegetables to residents.

Strategic Direction 3.4: Strengthen relationships and support opportunities for meaningful interactions between different community stakeholders

Actions Needed:

- 3.4.1 Promote more community events that encourage diversity and intercultural exchange (e.g. multi-cultural festival or food fair).
- 3.4.2 Support opportunities for residents and grassroots groups to interact and engage with Toronto Police Services.
- 3.4.3 Conduct orientation sessions for newcomers to the Justice System, outlining points of access, laws, rights and obligations.
- 3.4.4 Promote community events that provide opportunities for inter-generational exchanges between seniors, parents, and youth.

Community Connections



A Community Animator is an important component of most community development processes. An animator has a breadth of local knowledge and community connections that help facilitate interaction between agencies and residents. They act as both initiator, and on-going advocate for their community and ensure open communication between stakeholders.

The term ‘community’ is a commonly used word interpreted to mean groups of people engaging in social interaction, sharing common connections, and/or living in a shared location. As a broad area of focus, ‘community connections’ emphasizes the importance of social, developmental, and recreational services, programs, and supports the overall settlement and integration process for immigrants, their families, and larger social networks.

In order to thrive, communities need active grassroots groups, a common sense of identity, centrally located spaces to gather (i.e. community centres, libraries, etc...) and the ability to rally around shared goals and challenges. Fostering partnerships and balancing expertise/technical information with local grassroots knowledge is central to building strong community connections, and contributing to the overall quality of life – not just for immigrants, but for all residents living in Lawrence Heights.

Strategic Direction 4.1: Improve access to information, services, and programs for immigrants and other residents in Lawrence Heights

Actions Needed:

- 4.1.1 Develop and maintain a current and up-to-date database of community information, services, programs, and events that is accessible to all service providers, agencies, and community groups.
- 4.1.2 Emphasize the different circumstances and needs of economic immigrants, family class immigrants, refugees, and refugee claimants, and promote this consideration in the planning and delivery of services and programs for Lawrence Heights.
- 4.1.3 Develop partnerships with schools, libraries, medical clinics, and other community institutions to connect and inform hard-to-reach residents about community services.
- 4.1.4 Support grassroots organizations, faith-based groups, and other immigrant social networks to inform and direct residents to relevant community services and programs.
- 4.1.5 Support and develop the capacity of Community Animators to reach out and connect with residents.
- 4.1.6 Explore better systems of case management and case conferencing for settlement services, so clients can be better tracked through referral processes and follow-up can be better facilitated.

Strategic Direction 4.2: Encourage and support residents and grassroots groups to self-organize and participate in community services, programs, and activities

Actions Needed:

- 4.2.1 Provide organizational development workshops to build the capacity of grassroots groups to grow, develop, and network in the community.
- 4.2.2 Develop organizational development resources and tools, in print and/or online, for grassroots groups in Lawrence Heights.
- 4.2.3 Provide a forum for residents and grassroots groups to voice their concerns, provide feedback and participate in deliberative decision-making surrounding community services and programs.
- 4.2.4 Give residents and grassroots groups the opportunity to prioritize and program community space (i.e. community centre, library, schools, and parks) for resident-led programs and activities.
- 4.2.5 Include residents and grassroots groups in the development and organization of community events.
- 4.2.6 Seek a commitment from all agencies and service providers in Lawrence heights to report back to the community after resident consultations, and share the results of research, as well as next steps and way forward.

Strategic Direction 4.3: Provide more recreation and leisure programs for Lawrence Heights residents

Actions Needed:

- 4.3.1 Provide more recreational programs for adults such as dance classes, and gaming clubs (bridge, chess, etc...).
- 4.3.2 Provide recreation and leisure programming just for adult men and just for adult women.
- 4.3.3 Provide more continuous and uninterrupted programming for youth and children that runs throughout the summer and after school.

Strategic Direction 4.4: Improve services and supports for immigrant youth as well as the children of immigrants living in Lawrence Heights

Actions Needed:

- 4.4.1 Facilitate partnerships between grassroots groups, residents and educators to discuss and promote cultural competency in school activities and programs.
- 4.4.2 Provide a community-based list of translators to schools serving the residents of Lawrence Heights to help facilitate communication between educators and parents.
- 4.4.3 Partner with residents and grassroots groups to develop culturally competent and community-based orientation and information material on the Ontario school system, as well as information on how parents can get involved.
- 4.4.4 Offer classes that provide youth with the opportunity to learn their mother tongue or the mother tongue of their parents.
- 4.4.5 Provide more free tutoring services for youth as well as programs that help youth access post-secondary education.
- 4.4.6 Connect youth in Lawrence Heights with young adults from similar circumstances or ethno-cultural backgrounds to serve as mentors and role models.

Cultural competency in schools takes into considerations such things as culturally appropriate foods in schools, curriculum that reflects local ethno-cultural diversity, ESL communication strategies for parents, and programs that allow students to observe religious practices and customs.

Lawrence Heights LIP Members

At the time of publication, members of the Lawrence Heights LIP include:

East African Community Association of Lawrence Heights

Family Services Toronto

Toronto Employment and Social Services

North York Harvest Food Bank

City of Toronto Social Development, Finance and Administration

Lawrence Heights Family Support Group

Toronto Public Library

CUPE 4400 (TDSB Education Workers)

Community Action Team Lawrence Heights

City of Toronto Public Health

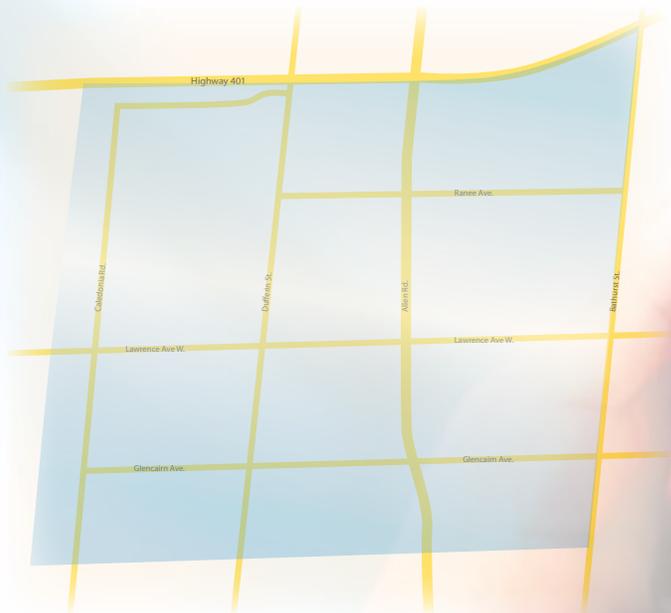
Humber Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning

The Career Foundation

North York Community House

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

BePART



The Lawrence Heights Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) is one of 17 multi-stakeholder, community-based planning tables in Toronto. LIP enhances the settlement success of newcomers through collaborative research, planning and engagement.

**Get involved in building
an even more welcoming
Lawrence Heights community:**

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(416) 787-1151 ext. 253

www.lhion.org

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LIP lead agency



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