

Ottawa Immigration Strategy

Planning Together for Prosperity, Vibrancy and Inclusion

June 2011



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ottawa local immigration partnership | partenariat local pour l'immigration ottawa

Copies of the Ottawa Immigration Strategy can
be downloaded from the OLIP website:
www.olip-plio.ca

Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership (OLIP)

219 Argyle Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario, K2P 2H4

Tel: (613) 232-9634
Fax: (613) 232-3660

Email: info@olip-plio.ca
www.olip-plio.ca

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Citizenship and
Immigration Canada

Citoyenneté et
Immigration Canada

Acknowledgement

The OLIP Council is grateful for the foresight of the governments of Canada and Ontario and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, which led to the creation of the Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs). The LIPs are a timely innovation in social and economic development in our community and are instrumental in our collective and proactive plan to attract, settle and integrate immigrants.

We also recognize the intellectual capital behind the Ottawa Immigration Strategy, which comes from a large number of professionals and practitioners from multiple sectors in our community. These include governments (particularly the City of Ottawa), employers, and service providers in the settlement, social, health and education fields. We are grateful for the commitment, time, and expertise of all the organizations and individuals who participated in the OLIP consultations and planning meetings that led to the creation of the community-wide, collaborative strategy that is described in this report; Appendix C includes a list of contributing organizations and individuals.

Finally, the OLIP Council appreciates the generous financial contribution of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, which made the OLIP Secretariat function possible. Without this, the Ottawa Immigration Strategy would not have been developed.

OLIP Project Team

Dick Stewart

OLIP Council Chair

Jephtée Elysée

OLIP Council Vice-Chair

Caroline Andrew

OLIP Steering Committee Chair

Clara Freire

Organizational Development and Performance Department, City of Ottawa

Carl Nicholson

Executive Director, Catholic Immigration Centre

Hindia Mohamoud

OLIP Project Director

Jill Murphy

OLIP Outreach and Research Coordinator

Zoë Mallett

OLIP Administrative Assistant

Meyer Burstein

OLIP Strategy Development Coordinator

Bill Shields

OLIP Facilitator and Governance Consultant

OLIP Council Membership List

Chair: Dick Stewart

Vice Chair: Jephthée Elysée

- > **Caroline Andrew**
Director, Centre on Governance,
University of Ottawa
Ottawa Welcoming Communities Initiative
- > **Marcia Aronson**
Private Citizen
- > **François Benoît**
Director of Education
Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de
l'Ontario
- > **Nelly Beylouni-Zamat**
Manager, Diversity and Accessibility
Services
Ottawa Public Library
- > **Ronald Bisson**
Principal, Ronald Bisson and Associates
Private Citizen
- > **Monique Brûlé**
Chef, Services communautaires et
aux bibliothèques
Conseil des écoles catholiques de langue
français du Centre-Est
- > **Aaron Burry**
General Manager
Community and Social Services Department
City of Ottawa
- > **Naini Cloutier**
Director, Community Services
Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre
- > **Jeffrey Dale**
Private Citizen
- > **St-Phard Desir**
Coordinator
Réseau de Soutien à l'Immigration Francophone
de l'Est de l'Ontario
- > **Jephthée Elysée**
Programs Manager
Conseil Économique et Social d'Ottawa-Carleton
- > **Jane Fjeld**
Acting Executive Director
Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa
- > **Suzanne Gagnon**
Private Citizen
- > **Donna Gray**
Director
Organizational Development and Performance
Department City of Ottawa
- > **Armand Kayolo**
Community Development Coordinator- Division
Overbrook
Overbrook-Forbes Community Resource Centre
- > **Kenny Leon**
Ottawa Chamber of Commerce
Manager, Communications

- > **Jack McCarthy**
Executive Director
Somerset West Community Health Centre
- > **Elaine Medline**
Special Projects and Communications
Coordinator
Champlain Local Health Integration Network
- > **Hamdi Mohamed**
Executive Director
Ottawa Community Immigrant Services
Organization
- > **Carl Nicholson**
Executive Director
Catholic Immigration Centre
- > **Nicole Olivier**
Program Coordinator
La Cité collégiale
- > **Walter Piovesan**
Superintendent of Instruction
Ottawa-Carleton District School Board
- > **Richard Plummer**
Director of Inclusion
United Way/Centraide Ottawa
- > **Nicole Rhéaume**
Community Development Manager
Ottawa Community Housing
- > **Neil Roy**
Detective
Ottawa Police Service
- > **Dick Stewart**
Private Citizen
- > **Mengis Tsegaye**
Executive Director
LASI World Skills
- > **Cathy Turnbull**
Vice President
Employment, Enterprise and Newcomer Services
YMCA-YWCA National Capital Region
- > **Adnan Türegün**
Executive Director
Centre for International Migration and
Settlement Studies
Carleton University
- > **Shailja Verma**
Manager
Continuing and Community Education
Ottawa Catholic School Board
- > **Mark Zarecki**
Executive Director
Jewish Family Services



Jim Watson
Mayor / Maire

**Office of the Mayor
City of Ottawa**

110 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 1J1
Tel.: (613) 580-2496
Fax: (613) 580-2509
E-mail: Jim.Watson@ottawa.ca

**Bureau du Maire
Ville d'Ottawa**

110, avenue Laurier Ouest
Ottawa (Ontario) K1P 1J1
Tél.: (613) 580-2496
Télééc.: (613) 580-2509
Courriel : Jim.Watson@ottawa.ca

June 3, 2011

The OLIP Council
C/O Catholic Immigration Centre
219 Argyle Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario
K2P 2H4

Dear members of the OLIP Council:

As you prepare to launch the *Ottawa Immigration Strategy*, I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate you on your accomplishments in bringing together such a broad coalition of sectors of our community to proactively plan for the attraction, settlement and integration of immigrants.

As the Mayor of Ottawa, I am particularly proud of the role of the municipal government as a co-founder of the Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership (OLIP), and key leader in the strategy development process. Immigration is key to Ottawa's economic prosperity, as well as to our social and cultural vibrancy. As such, it is important that we all work together to make Ottawa a model national capital that is welcoming to immigrants. To succeed in this endeavour, the collaborative leadership and collective planning, facilitated by the OLIP Council, is indispensable.

In particular, I am extremely proud of the efforts of City staff from multiple departments who have contributed to and supported the development of the OLIP Immigration Strategy. Staff as, members of the Leadership Council, Executive and Steering Committees, have participated to bring City input to each of the OLIP sector tables. It has been a true testament to our commitment to this initiative and to the goal of full inclusion for all Ottawa residents.

I wish you a successful launch on June 20th, and a well deserved celebration of the inexhaustible community expertise, commitment, and energy that went into the development of the Ottawa Immigration Strategy. Unfortunately, a previous engagement takes me out of town so I will not be able to join you in this celebration. Deputy Mayor, Councillor Steve Desroches will be there on my behalf to commemorate the Launch of the Ottawa Immigration Strategy, an important community milestone.

Sincerely,

Jim Watson,
Mayor
City of Ottawa

PREFACE

Dear Ottawa community member,

The Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership (OLIP) began operations in October 2009 with a four-fold mandate to: (1) establish a multi-sectoral partnership of stakeholders to facilitate immigrants' successful integration; (2) help build an understanding of the landscape of settlement services and of the challenges faced by stakeholders, including immigrants, service providers and employers; (3) facilitate a community planning process that would produce a Local Immigration Strategy to improve Ottawa's capacity to attract, settle and integrate immigrants into our community's social, economic, cultural, and civic life; and (4) establish local governance and planning mechanisms to support the implementation of the new Strategy and sustain progress toward our shared goals through continued learning and adjustment. As described in chapter 1 of this report, OLIP finds its roots in the Canada Ontario Immigration Agreement, which was signed in 2005, and carves a new role for municipal governments and local actors in planning for the attraction and integration of immigrants.

Now, on behalf of all OLIP Council partners, we are pleased to present the fruits of our past 18 months of work. This is the Ottawa Immigration Strategy. We describe our collective vision, outline the community planning process that led to its creation and highlight the collaborative leadership that will support its implementation.

In devising the new directions that comprise the Ottawa Immigration Strategy, expert teams worked together to incorporate the diverse perspectives of individual immigrants, service providers from the settlement, social, health, and education sectors, employers, government officials, and civic groups, including immigrant and ethno-cultural minority associations. The very composition of these teams was instrumental in the creation of the new Strategy. It led to the development of robust priorities that engage and benefit all sectors of our community and fostered greater trust between the stakeholders. You can read more about our methodology and planning process in chapter two of this report.

In chapter three, we outline the priorities set by the Ottawa Immigration Strategy, the challenges they aim to address and the shared goals that inform them. Depending on one's perspective, however, the Strategy may be described in a number of ways. As a community-wide plan, it is a collective vision, a roadmap of the coordinated and collaborative actions that will guide our journey. As a strategy, it is mindful of our capacities and carefully seizes on new opportunities to boldly and proactively tackle the challenges of exclusion, discrimination, and lack of voice that newcomers

face. As a future direction, the Strategy builds on Ottawa's history, traditions, unique qualities and strengths to address current and anticipated needs. As a social development tool, the Strategy is a comprehensive plan for improving economic development, enhancing service delivery and coordination, investing in innovation and knowledge transfer, strengthening civic participation and building bridges between groups, sectors and institutions.

The Ottawa Immigration Strategy was developed collectively and, as such, its implementation will require the coordinated action of stakeholders from multiple sectors, as well as the collaborative leadership of our institutions. The OLIP Council has put in place a community governance model that will stimulate and sustain our progress towards the OLIP vision. This model establishes a set of principles (or norms of behaviour), in addition to delineating objectives, structures, roles, and responsibilities. Protocols and processes for collective decision making are outlined and, importantly, the model includes forums for dialogue and shared learning. This community governance model will allow us to work and lead together.

With clear direction, engaged stakeholders and committed leadership, we – the Ottawa community – have paved the way for progress toward the OLIP vision. The achievement of this vision depends on our ability to engage champions in all sectors, to guide sustainable and coordinated actions and initiatives, to scale up successful programs and to share what we have learned.

As you read through the pages of this report, we invite you to reflect on your role as a member of the Ottawa community and the role you can play in the journey ahead. You can:

- > Seek to know more about immigration in Ottawa by reading the analytical reports developed to support OLIP's community planning process. You can find these on the OLIP website: www.olip-plio.ca;
- > Read the strategy relevant to your own sector and find out what your organization or institution is doing to facilitate immigrants' integration;
- > Inform your colleagues and partners about the new Ottawa Immigration Strategy;
- > Learn more about the OLIP governance model and ask us how you can participate;
- > Participate in the OLIP Council meetings, which are advertised at www.olip-plio.ca; and

- > Join us at City Hall on June 20th, 2011, at 8:30 a.m. to celebrate the commitment, expertise and efforts that led to the Ottawa Immigration Strategy.
- > We have enjoyed facilitating the development of the Ottawa Immigration Strategy over the past year and half, and we look forward to working with you to put the Strategy into action.

Sincerely yours,

Dick Stewart

Chair, OLIP Council

Jephtée Élysée

Vice-chair, OLIP Council

Caroline Andrew

Chair, OLIP Steering Committee

List of Acronyms

AMO	Association of Municipalities of Ontario
CAWI	Centre for All Women Initiative
CCLB	Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks
CHRC	Community Health and Resource Centre
CIC	Citizenship and Immigration Canada
CIHN	Champlain Immigrant Health Network
CIMSS	Centre for International Migration and Settlement Studies
CISOC	Cultural Interpretation Services for Our Communities
CLIC	Cours de langue pour les immigrants au Canada
CCEE	Community Council for Ethno-cultural Equity
CDF	Community Development Framework
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COIA	Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement
ED	Executive Director
EQAO	Education Equality and Accountability Office
ESL	English as a Second Language
FIN	Federal Internship for Newcomers
FSL	French as a Second Language
ICD	Integration Capacity Development
IT	Information Technology
HIO	Hire Immigrants Ottawa
HRSDC	Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
LASI	Local Agencies Serving Immigrants
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning
LINC	Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada
LHIN	Local Health Integration Network
LIP	Local Immigration Partnership
MCI	Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration
MIC	Municipal Immigration Committee
MLO	Multicultural Liaison Officer
MOST	Making Ottawa Safer Together
MTCU	Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities
OCASI	Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants
OCISO	Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization
OCRI	Ottawa Centre for Research and Innovation
OHIP	Ontario Health Insurance Plan
OIS	Ottawa Immigration Strategy
OLIP	Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership

OJMN	Ottawa Job Match Network
OPH	Ottawa Public Health
OPL	Ottawa Public Library
RDÉE	Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité
PQCHC	Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre
REPFO	Regroupement ethnoculturel des parents francophones de l'Ontario
RGA	Regroupement des gens d'affaires de la capitale nationale
RSSFEO	Réseau des services de santé en français de l'est de l'Ontario
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SPO	Service Provider Organization
SSHRC	Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council
TRIEC	Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council
WCI	Welcoming Communities Initiative
Y-LARC	YMCA-YWCA Language Assessment and Referral Centre

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Entrées

Visas

Departures / Sorties

中國 IMMIGRATION CANADA
 ADMISSION
 #1034 08 JUL 1999
 A.I. OTTAWA I.A.
 3421
 EXPIRATION:
 16 JUL 1999

Canada CUSTOMS
 DOUANES
 1057
 AU 25 2000

I. OPPORTUNITY AND CHOICE

The Ottawa Immigration Strategy was set in motion by the Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership. It is the result of an intense effort by a broad group of stakeholders to develop a comprehensive strategy that will improve Ottawa's ability to attract, welcome and integrate immigrants, while strengthening the prosperity, vibrancy and inclusivity of the city. While the components of the strategy are complex and often nuanced, the drivers are simple: opportunity and choice. The interplay between these factors across multiple domains is the subject of this report. Here, we present a powerful vision of what Ottawa's future could be.

In what follows, we develop this vision by describing our methodology and planning process, the strategic directions and priorities that resulted and the mechanisms for sustained leadership and collaboration. In Appendix A of this report, we include the Ottawa Immigration Strategy, as approved by the OLIP Council in September 2010.

1.1 BACKGROUND: THE GENESIS OF OLIP

The Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership (OLIP)¹ initiative has its origins in the municipal provisions of the Canada–Ontario Immigration Agreement (COIA), which was initially signed in 2005. COIA is the first federal–provincial immigration agreement to explicitly recognize the need to involve municipalities and local institutions in planning for the integration of immigrants. As a result, all three levels of government now recognize the importance of immigration for Ontario cities and regard local action and partnerships as essential. The COIA is currently up for renewal, and most observers expect the municipal engagement provisions to be strengthened. This consensus has been reinforced by acclaim for the newly established Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs), including a glowing review by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration. Bolstering this is the fact that Ontario's Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, Citizenship and Immigration Canada and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario – which has a formal consultative role under COIA – all see themselves as the original advocate of the LIP initiative. This strengthens their commitment.

A key premise of COIA is that immigration is essential for the future growth and prosperity of Ontario cities and that to access the benefits of immigration, cities must enhance their capacity to welcome and integrate immigrants. To achieve this, COIA commits the governments of Ontario and Canada to work alongside municipalities to develop new arrangements for engaging local leaders, organizations and employers

1 .OLIP is one of over 40 local immigration partnerships (often referred to as LIPs) that have been established in cities across Ontario

in community-wide planning for the social, economic, civic and cultural integration of immigrants. These local arrangements are envisioned in the COIA as supporting immigrant recruitment and retention, information portals, business and labour market integration strategies, service enhancements and coordination, and research to improve common understanding and the identification of best practices.

The commitments referred to in COIA can be found in the Ottawa Immigration Strategy and the strategies that have been produced by other local immigration partnerships in cities across the province. To an extent, these new strategies reflect the contribution agreements initiated by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI). At a more fundamental level, however, they also represent a response to a range of national, provincial and local influences that have been percolating for some time. These have created a constellation of opportunities and a fertile ground establishing local partnerships. Among the more important opportunities are:

- > A new recognition that immigrant integration is a community issue – not an immigrant issue – and therefore something in which we must all have a hand;
- > CIC’s modernization of settlement programming, which places increased emphasis on community receptivity and also allows programs to be flexibly combined so that multiple policy directions can be pursued;
- > Ontario’s efforts to broaden provincial involvement in the settlement and integration of immigrants;
- > The establishment of the Municipal Immigration Committee (MIC), which was created in 2004 and is co-chaired by CIC, MCI and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and explores the role that Ontario municipalities can play in immigration;
- > The advent of the Welcoming Communities Initiative, an Ontario-based consortium of universities and community agencies dedicated to enhancing immigration and diversity research and practice in cities outside of the traditional immigrant destinations – typically Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver – which are often referred to in immigration policy parlance as second- and third-tier cities;
- > The emergence of employer engagement processes in a number of Ontario cities, including the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) in 2003, and Ottawa’s own Employer Council of Champions – facilitated by Hire Immigrants Ottawa (HIO) and initiated by a multi-sector coalition of stakeholders convened by United Way of Ottawa, LASI World Skills and the former Canadian Business and Labour Council;

- > A significant funding increase shortly after COIA was signed, with the injection of millions of additional dollars into the Ontario settlement sector piquing the interest of a broad range of institutions and leading to important new programs and an increase in the number of organizations involved in settlement and integration²; and
- > A growing municipal interest in immigration. This led to the creation of the Immigration Ottawa Initiative, which was approved by City Council in 2007, and was coupled by a shift in relations between local settlement service providers, academic researchers, and key actors in the local government. The DiverCity Forums, which were organized by Metropolis, LASI (Local Agencies Serving Immigrants) and two local universities in 2004, were indicative of these shifting relationships and paved the way for OLIP.

In this context, OLIP is rapidly emerging as an important focal point for expanding provincial and municipal engagement in immigrant settlement. Importantly, OLIP has the potential to be a local hub for building formative strategic alignments among a broad range of institutions and organizations, including academic partnerships that would inject intellectual capital into the promotion of inclusive and cohesive cities, where growth and development are dependent on immigration.

Any one of the above developments would be reason enough to suggest that the OLIP bears watching; taken together, these factors provide a powerful rationale for the involvement of local institutions that have a stake in Ottawa's future. The Ottawa Immigration Strategy, described in detail in this report, provides ample opportunities for the engagement of actors from multiple sectors.

1.2 THE CONTEXT: IMMIGRATION AND DIVERSITY IN OTTAWA

In 2009, the most recent year for which data are available, some 6,300 immigrants chose to come to Ottawa. That number was augmented by 2,700 temporary workers, 2,300 students, 460 humanitarian admissions, and 440 refugee claimants. All told, roughly 12,000 new arrivals chose to make Ottawa home. Approximately three-quarters of these were visible minorities. These figures have been more or less consistent over the past 10 years and, not surprisingly, the face of Ottawa has been changing, both in size and composition.

Indeed, Ottawa has gone from a population of some 87,000 people in 1911 – when visible minorities accounted for less than 2 percent of the total – to an estimated 920,000 people in 2011, of which 22 percent are foreign-born and 19 percent belong to a visible minority group. Immigration has contributed significantly to Ottawa's

2. Recently, the federal government has signaled that it will reduce settlement funding in Ontario by somewhere between fifteen and twenty percent in coming years. The reduction, while significant, does not invalidate the work of the LIPs or its importance.

development, with the most recent Census data suggesting that foreign-born arrivals are responsible for 79 percent of the city's population growth.

Perhaps the most telling feature of Ottawa's immigration story is its impact on the labour market. It is estimated that immigration currently accounts for 100 percent of the city's net labour force growth. This makes it all the more significant that Ottawa's immigrants are the most educated of any city and that a much larger proportion of Ottawa's newcomers enter under the economic category than is the case in other comparable cities.

More than 90 percent of the city's immigrant population speaks at least one of Canada's official languages. Among new arrivals, 20 percent either speak French or are bilingual. These data are clearly reflective of immigrant flows, with some 16 percent of Ottawa's Francophone population having been born abroad, and those coming from Africa comprising the largest group. Secondary migration from Quebec has further augmented the city's Francophone population. As the nation's capital and the seat of its federal government, the growth of Francophone immigration to Ottawa is a key demographic reality.

Another unique reality is the large proportion of refugees who choose to settle in Ottawa. Though, to our knowledge, there is no research examining the attraction Ottawa holds for refugees, one possible explanation is the large and growing presence of immigrant communities and the efforts that they exert to sponsor relatives and others from all over the world.

Notwithstanding the biographies and qualifications of immigrants in Ottawa, their integration trajectories have been affected by many of the same factors that have depressed the economic prospects of immigrants in other cities over the past two decades. Ontario, in particular, has been hard hit by economic globalization and the need to restructure provincial labour markets. These factors have combined with proactive and aggressive immigrant recruitment in other provinces to reduce Ontario's absolute intake of newcomers and decrease its overall share of total immigration to the country. The past decade has seen Ontario's intake of immigrants fall by roughly a quarter from its 2001 peak, with Toronto being especially hard hit. Ottawa, too, was affected, particularly by the sharp decline in the high-tech sector and by slower public sector growth, though immigration remained fairly steady from 2003 onwards. Interestingly, there appears to have been some recovery in immigrant earnings and job prospects in Ontario led, in part, by a recovery in engineering, computing and information system jobs. This suggests somewhat more optimistic prospects for Ottawa immigrants than have been the case for quite a few years.

Nonetheless, while the labour market may be showing signs of improvement, public investment in immigrant integration has been scaled back from its historic 2005–06 peak. Two separate measures are responsible for the decrease: first, an initial, across-the-board reduction of about 5 percent in overall settlement expenditures and, second, a funding allocation model linked to immigrant landings, which resulted in a further 12 percent expenditure cut for Ontario. How this reduction will affect Ottawa is not yet fully known, but some impact on the level of support accorded to new immigrants would seem inevitable. This makes it all the more important to collaboratively plan for the attraction, settlement and integration of immigrants. The challenge for OLIP partners will be to adapt to the funding cutbacks by actively seeking the means to broaden support beyond Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

1.3 THE OLIP VISION

The OLIP vision articulates the aspirations of immigrants, policymakers, service providers, civic groups, and those concerned with the development and prosperity of their community. The vision incorporates and carefully balances three themes. In the first place, the vision speaks to Ottawa’s economic and demographic objectives and the role that immigration and diversity can play in the creation of a welcoming environment for the attraction of talent and investment.

In the second place, the vision speaks to fairness and equity. In particular, the integration of immigrants is fraught with many challenges, and immigrants face multiple and complex barriers that can delay their integration, their ability to access appropriate jobs and public services and their success to make fruitful connections in the community. As a result of these challenges, too many immigrants remain on the margins, and administrative complexities, service discontinuities, discrimination and a lack of voice combine to reproduce this marginalization of families and communities. Eliminating the cumulative effects of years of delayed integration will not be easy.

As such, the vision speaks to a third theme, which is the need for local institutions to work together to ensure social, cultural and intellectual vibrancy. Partners must include the municipal government, settlement service agencies, school boards, health and social services, employers, civic groups, and immigrant associations. These stakeholders must share knowledge and proactively collaborate on a plan to generate new capacities and local development. Failed integration will sap public support for immigration, which will lead to social and economic stagnation and undermine the city’s future vitality. This outcome would clash with Ottawa’s self-image as a vibrant and inclusive capital. These pillars are articulated in OLIP’s vision statement:



A vibrant, prosperous national capital of a bilingual and multi-cultural country, strengthened by the contribution of immigrants

- > A prosperous city attained through greater participation of immigrants in Ottawa's economy and labour market
- > A vibrant city achieved through diverse and cohesive cultural, intellectual, and civic perspectives
- > An inclusive national capital that upholds our tradition of public service and the Canadian values of multiculturalism and bilingualism.



1.4 THE PRINCIPLES AND PRECEPTS

The OLIP partners recognize that the pursuit of the OLIP Vision is a collaborative and collective project (by all of us, for all of us) that will need to be pursued in an incremental, but sustained fashion over a long time period. Supporting this commitment to the OLIP Vision is a shared understanding of the following basic ideas:

- > Immigration is key to Ottawa's future prosperity and vitality, yet the settlement and integration of immigrants is currently fraught with multiple and complex challenges, which must be systematically untangled and resolved.
- > Successful integration of immigrants is a community issue, not an immigrant issue. This means that efforts to attract, settle and integrate immigrants not only aid newcomers but transform and benefit the entire community.
- > The successful attraction, retention and integration of immigrants will require a combination of proactive government policies, the commitment and collaboration of all sectors in our community, a shared awareness of the integration process and challenges, and welcoming attitudes.
- > The OLIP partner institutions and community stakeholders, including immigrant civic groups, are diverse, and each brings a unique set of strengths that make their contribution to the collective pursuit of the OLIP vision indispensable.

- > Strong bridging connections between immigrants and the public service institutions and host communities that welcome them are essential for improved access and inclusive participation.
- > Trust is a prerequisite for the development of links between individuals, institutions and groups.
- > Trust must be carefully nurtured through dialogue, mutual understanding, and through transparent engagement.
- > And finally, Ottawa has considerable strengths on which to build. From this foundation, we can transform our city into a model national capital, a welcoming community where immigrants succeed and diversity thrives.

1.5 ETHICAL GUIDELINES

In working toward this vision, OLIP partners will abide by the following ethical guidelines:

- > Be community driven by basing all decisions on the needs of the community;
- > Foster collaboration by building trust, articulating common goals, and facilitating inter-sectoral knowledge mobilization;
- > Be purposeful by always keeping the OLIP vision, mission and objectives at the forefront;
- > Be inclusive by making sure that all voices are heard and by working “with” the community – not “for” the community in the strategy development process;
- > Be flexible and responsive by listening to community voices and by being flexible enough to integrate new learning and opportunities;
- > Be respectful by listening, providing opportunities to speak, and understanding that every idea is valuable and worth hearing;
- > Operate with transparency by communicating openly with each other and with the community; and
- > Seek and heed best practices by being inquisitive about what works best, while paying attention to our city’s specificity and the particular needs of our population.



II. THE PLANNING MACHINERY

The planning process and methodology that OLIP employed to develop the Ottawa Immigration Strategy included three inter-related stages, which are described in detail below. Briefly, however, the stages were:

Building a Shared Understanding

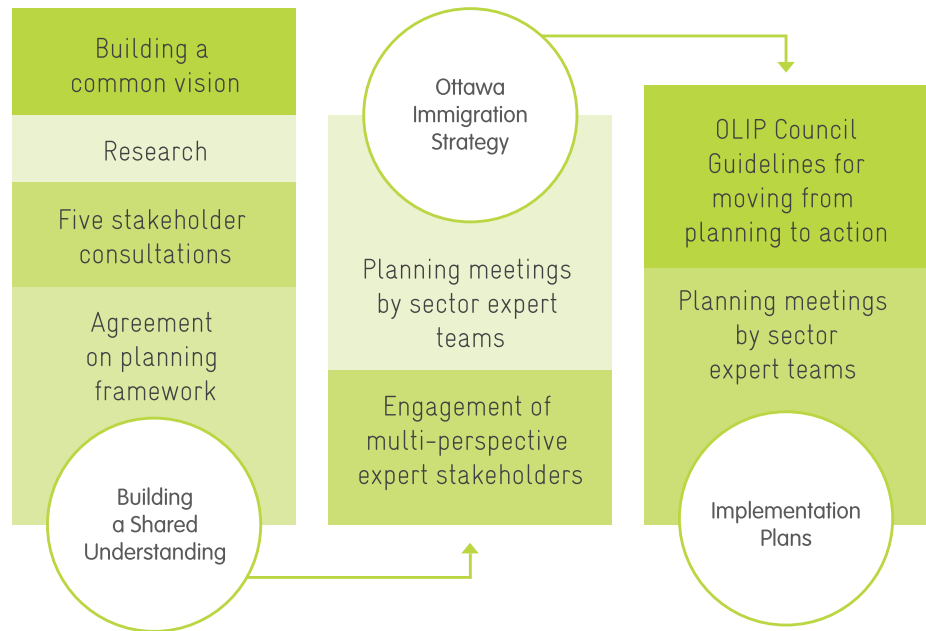
As a starting point and over a period of six months, the OLIP Secretariat conducted a series of consultations, launched a number of research projects and shared key findings. The aim was to foster among stakeholders a common understanding of the city's landscape of services and supports and to identify the challenges facing newcomers, employers, local institutions, agencies and the community at large.

Developing Strategic Priorities

In this stage and over a period of four months, teams of expert stakeholders worked to develop the Ottawa Immigration Strategy (also referred to as the Strategy, or OIS), which was subsequently endorsed by the OLIP Council. The OIS includes six sectoral strategies and one horizontal strategy, with the priorities for each described in the next chapter. The compendium of sectoral and horizontal strategies, which was approved by the OLIP Council, is included in Appendix A.

Planning for Implementation

In this stage, OLIP partners and key community stakeholders focused on planning for the implementation of the Strategy with a focus on two principal activities: (1) determining how best to action the priorities; and (2) designing a community-wide governance model to lead and support the implementation of the new Strategy.



2.1 STAGE 1: BUILDING A SHARED UNDERSTANDING

Shortly after commencing operations, the OLIP Secretariat initiated a number of analytic projects. The first of these was a review of the research literature, which was aimed at producing a sound and nuanced understanding of Ottawa’s immigrants, especially recent arrivals, with a focus on the challenges typically faced during the integration process.

In addition to the literature review, and in partnership with the Welcoming Communities Initiative (WCI), OLIP launched a detailed local audit, cataloguing key services for new immigrants, identifying the types of organizations that deliver those services and noting the existence of specialized municipal structures that focus on integration and offer support to new immigrants. The audit provides a baseline snapshot against which to measure progress that Ottawa makes toward becoming a more welcoming community.

A third study examined the role of immigration in Ottawa’s growth over the last 100 years and the city’s shifting demographic makeup. This study compared Ottawa’s immigration and diversity trajectory with a number of cities that were once comparable to Ottawa, but whose paths have since diverged. In particular, while Ottawa’s attraction of immigrants and its overall diversity lags behind that of its prairie counterparts – namely Calgary, Edmonton and Winnipeg – it is ahead of other cities, including

Hamilton and Quebec City. One of the key findings of this historical analysis was that the successful attraction and retention of immigrants requires a combination of proactive government policies, welcoming attitudes and coordinated interventions.

In addition to these three studies, the OLIP Secretariat initiated a series of consultations with stakeholders, which included:

- > Individual immigrants (including two focus groups in French and two targeting women newcomers);
- > Employers and those involved in economic development;
- > Settlement service providers;
- > Social, health and education service providers; and
- > Immigrant civic associations.

The aim of these consultations was to elicit first-hand information about the personal and organizational challenges related to immigrant integration and the welcome accorded to newcomers. The sessions also provided information on the need for investments in capacity-building and helped pinpoint the areas upon which OLIP should focus.

The focus groups with immigrants highlighted, in particular, the primacy of employment to integration, the need to inform the public about the positive contributions that immigrants do make to their communities, the importance of information as a means for improving immigrants' access to services, and the critical necessity of improving immigrants' access to housing. Taken together, the consultations illuminated the importance of improved collaboration and coordination among sectors, stakeholders and governments and the need to target interventions at currently under-served immigrant populations.

These findings were presented to OLIP Council; they bolstered our partners' understanding of the existing policy and program field and provide a foundation for subsequent stages of OLIP's planning process.

2.2 STAGE 2: DEVELOPING STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Based on the results of OLIP's research and analysis, the Secretariat created six sector planning tables that were subsequently endorsed by the OLIP Council. The six

sectors were: (1) Economic Integration; (2) Integration Capacity Development; (3) Settlement; (4) Education; (5) Language; and (6) Health and Wellbeing. In addition, a horizontal strategy was developed by the Secretariat to focus on targeted and cross-cutting themes. Sector planning tables varied in size from eight members to nearly 20, with members selected because of their institutional affiliations and personal expertise. Diverse perspectives were sought and attained; this included the representation of immigrant associations, as well as membership from OLIP Council partners.

Each sector table received a background paper based on the Secretariat's initial consultations and research, and two workshops were then convened for each sector. In these initial workshops, participants addressed two questions: first, what should be the sector's strategic priorities and, second, what actions should be undertaken to implement those priorities? A lead sector representative chaired the workshops, and the Secretariat moderated the discussion. Following these workshops, the Secretariat produced a short paper that outlined the identified priorities and proposed actions. The sector table reviewed the paper, and the groups reconvened for a second set of sector workshops. At these sessions, participants reacted to their sector's short paper and were invited to identify anything that had been missed. Based on this feedback, the papers were adjusted, and the result was six sector strategies that were later presented to, and approved by, the OLIP Council.

In addition to the sector-specific strategies, the Secretariat also produced a horizontal strategy that identified key thematic targets and cross-cutting priorities. This also was reviewed by the Executive and Steering Committees before being presented to the OLIP Council for endorsement.

The six sector strategies and the horizontal strategy comprise the new Ottawa Immigration Strategy; a compendium of the strategies and action measures is included in Appendix A.

2.3 STAGE 3: PLANNING FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The same cross section of local practitioners, specialists and civic groups that developed the strategic priorities were convened to plan how to put those plans into action. In part, this decision was driven by the view that without hands-on experience and detailed knowledge of the sector, its players, its constraints and its assets, the resulting approaches would be limp and unrealistic. Equally important, however, was the idea that for real change to happen, the parties responsible for implementation would need to be fully committed to the strategies and proposed actions.

The sector tables' work began with a series of strategic choices. This was necessary because the half dozen or so strategic priorities that had been identified for each sector exceeded the existing local capacity. As a result, the sector tables were tasked with paring down their plans and selecting a subset of priorities and actions for further development. They were then asked to articulate anticipated results under each identified priority, and who – that is, which institution or organization – would play a lead role. Lastly, the sector tables identified the initial steps that would need to be taken to put the priorities into action.

To ensure consistency and coordination across the sectors, the OLIP Council issued guidelines for developing the strategic directions and moving these plans into action. The guidelines included two broad directives: (1) that we maintain and solidify the commitment of partners; and (2) that we ensure coherence between plans and action.

Each implementation plan articulates medium-term goals for each sector; they outline the key priorities and anticipated outcomes, chart the necessary first steps and identify lead institutions or organizations. The Secretariat's implementation plan for the horizontal strategy follows this same model. The resulting compendium of seven implementation plans was endorsed by the OLIP Council in March 2011. To access the full implementation plans, please visit the OLIP website: www.olip-plio.ca.

OLIP Council Guidelines for Moving from Planning to Action

A. Solidifying the commitment of partners and stakeholders

The sector's selected actions must capture the imagination of individual actors, including funders, stakeholders, governments, and civic groups, as well as the community at large. This means that:

- > The actions should facilitate the mobilization of Ottawa's leadership cadre.
- > The actions should not overwhelm the capacities of the stakeholders to absorb ideas or to create the structures that are needed for sound management and public accountability.
- > The first actions implemented by OLIP must contain a mix of projects, some of which can be brought to fruition quickly while others mature slowly.

B. Ensuring coherence between plans and action

The sector tables were asked to ensure that selected actions were coherent with the overall sectoral strategy (intra-sectoral coherence), but also with the Ottawa Immigration Strategy as a whole (inter-sectoral coherence).

- > Intra-sectoral coherence. The sectors are to establish explicit goals for the medium-term. They will select a subset of priorities for implementation, and under each priority they will identify clear milestones along a path leading to their established goals. This will strengthen the internal coherence and coordination of actions that may be led by different stakeholders.
- > Inter-sectoral coherence. In facilitating the implementation planning process, the OLIP Secretariat will support each sector and ensure that the respective plans are mutually supportive and align with the core themes of the OLIP vision.



III. THE OTTAWA IMMIGRATION STRATEGY

3.1 ECONOMIC INTEGRATION SECTOR

Context: What is being resolved?

The successful economic integration of Ottawa's immigrants and newcomers is conditioned by a combination of global and local factors. As is the case in other Canadian destinations, the growth of Ottawa's labour force will soon depend entirely on immigrant arrivals, most of whom are visible minorities. To grow and prosper, Ottawa will need to attract and retain talented newcomers, but must compete with other destinations that are facing similar demographic challenges; as a result, Ottawa must become more welcoming. An important asset in Ottawa's arsenal is its array of colleges, universities and other educational institutions, which attract international students who may then choose to make the city their permanent home.

That being said, a peculiarity of the Ottawa labour market is the dominant position that the federal government occupies. This is a mixed blessing. On the one hand, the federal government is predisposed to helping immigrants settle. On the other, employment requirements, such as official bilingualism and security clearances, can make it difficult for immigrants to find work in this sector. Other quasi-public institutions, including those in health and education, are highly regulated with similar consequences. The result is that opportunities must be generated in other sectors, most notably within small- and medium-sized enterprises. These bring new challenges, and our Economic Integration Strategy presents an important opportunity for coordinated planning around immigrant employment and labour market integration.

On the supply side, Ottawa receives a disproportionate number of refugees and Francophone immigrants, many of whom initially landed in Quebec and who may not have access to English language training and other settlement supports. These factors complicate the usual challenges faced by risk-adverse employers, including language difficulties, qualification and credential issues and discrimination. An alternative route that many newcomers have taken is entrepreneurship. As a result, the percentage of self-employed immigrants is higher than that of the general population. Nonetheless, this group remains under-served.

MEDIUM-TERM GOALS FOR THE ECONOMIC INTEGRATION SECTOR

- > Because of its coordinated approach to economic and social integration, Ottawa will have a reputation – both nationally and internationally – as a place where it is easy to immigrate;
- > Ottawa will be a leader for immigrant entrepreneurship and provide effective support for immigrants engaged as entrepreneurs and small business owners;
- > There will be an increase in supports and access to credit for business start-ups and, as result, we will see a 25% growth in business registrations from first- or second-generation immigrants;
- > The disparity in unemployment rates between the Canadian-born population and immigrant and racialized professionals will be reduced, baseline data will be gathered and shared milestones will be set;
- > There will be a reduction in the “transition penalty” for immigrants seeking work, including in recruitment, demands for Canadian experience and security and citizenship requirements. The federal public service will lead in the elimination of key barriers to employment for immigrants, and up to half of all jobs will not include major barriers;
- > There will be more awareness and recognition of the under-representation of immigrant and racialized professionals in leadership positions, and there will be a commitment to change this;
- > Employers, particularly within small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), will meet staffing needs more easily by recruiting immigrant talents;
- > There will be increased retention and upward mobility for immigrants in the workplace, and employers will be equipped with the necessary competencies, strategies and tools to hire, retain and promote immigrants;
- > Training and upgrading will be directly linked to employment, not only for so-called “highly skilled” immigrants, but also in the trades, management and administration, services, retail, sales and maintenance; and
- > There will be coordination among immigrant employment stakeholders, and this will be readily apparent to those accessing services.

Strategic Priorities for the Economic Integration Sector

The Economic Integration Sector working group developed seven strategic priorities to tackle the challenges surrounding immigrants' economic integration.

1. Help immigrants navigate toward their employment goals.

We propose undertaking a detailed mapping of the pathways available to immigrants accessing occupations in key sectors, including the federal government, and within health, education and the trades. This should identify the requirements that newcomers must meet in order to access employment in these areas as well as identifying the services – and especially bridging and mentoring programs – that are available to newcomers. A parallel proposal concerned the mapping of pathways for the start-up of small- and medium-sized businesses, including the services that are available for training, guidance and access to capital. This information should be widely disseminated and accessible to immigrants, employers and key economic institutions, including the City of Ottawa, the Chamber of Commerce and not-for-profit institutions that support immigrant hiring.

2. Enhance access to employment in small and medium enterprises.

We propose the development of straight-forward, employer-friendly information about hiring immigrants. This should include a city-administered, one-stop shop to help employers navigate the complexities of hiring and integrating newcomers into the workplace. The working group also advocated targeted marketing to educate small and medium-sized firms about the “value-added” of hiring immigrants and to introduce them to new recruitment methods and tool. This would be introduced at services points where employers typically access business loans or government assistance.

3. Encourage entrepreneurship among newcomers.

We propose that immigrant entrepreneurs be made more aware of training opportunities related to business start-up and operations. Furthermore, we suggest that capital, loans and business support programs be more accessible to immigrants. We would like to see immigrant entrepreneurs linked more closely to larger business networks, including the Ottawa Centre for Research and Innovation (OCRI), the Ottawa Chamber of Commerce and other business coalitions. This may mean reducing membership fees or examining requirements that might constitute barriers to newcomers.

4. Improve coordination among relevant agencies and take stock of competing activities.

We recommend the creation of a small task force of economic integration agencies that would develop proposals for greater inter-agency collaboration in the

acquisition of funding and client service. This task force would map the nature and scope of activities offered by various agencies, including those provided by the City of Ottawa. Among the near-term outputs would be an inventory of proposed agency events and initiatives; this would illuminate – and, as necessary, help us rationalize – competing activities.

5. Improve Ottawa’s capacity to attract and retain newcomers, including international students.

Explore and, if possible, emulate the “Manitoba model,” which has proved to be successful in attracting and retaining immigrants. This direction is linked with a workshop, sponsored by the federal government, the province and the Welcoming Communities Initiative, and which included municipal officials and agencies from the Ottawa, London, Hamilton and North Bay. Pilot activities in some centres – including Ottawa – are expected, and the working group suggested that greater attention be given to branding Ottawa as an attractive, welcoming community for newcomers and international students. The group suggests, in addition, that greater effort is needed to support the integration of Francophone immigrants.

6. Clarify misconceptions and myths about immigrant employment.

There is an under-appreciation of the economic and demographic importance of immigration, both among the general public and with sectors that are about to experience skill shortages. As such, sector-specific education programs and the use of industry ‘ambassadors’ who would meet with employers and outline the business case for immigrant recruitment would be needed. The development of infrastructure to stimulate favourable media coverage about the importance of immigration and immigrant employment will be necessary in order to support positive public awareness. The City of Ottawa is viewed as a key partner in this regard.

7. Increase the ‘return’ on innovation.

A number of local initiatives, including Hire Immigrants Ottawa and the Ottawa Job Match Network, show much promise but may be operating below their optimal scale. These initiatives could be scaled up and introduced into the mainstream as promising practices, rather than continually inventing new approaches.

3.2 SETTLEMENT SECTOR

Context: What is being resolved?

Ottawa's settlement sector is better coordinated and operates more collaboratively than settlement organizations in many other cities. This achievement is noteworthy because government settlement funding tends to focus on service delivery rather than on inter-agency coordination or corporate activities like planning, fundraising or evaluation. The result has been chronic underinvestment in service innovation and in systems to identify and extend best practices. Moreover, little to no investment has been made in agency capacity development whether on staff competencies, human resource management, service standards or service management tools. Organizational capacity challenges are exacerbated by the excessive administrative burden posed by funders' reporting requirements. This often leads to the under-reporting of successes and an under-estimation of sector contributions.

New challenges have also emerged as a result of changes at the federal level. These include spending cuts and changes in the composition of the immigrant population, including larger numbers of refugees and increasing volumes of skilled, fluent, job-ready workers and international students who immigrate alongside low- and mid-skilled applicants, who are often temporary workers. In addition, new organizations have begun to deliver settlement services, including schools, libraries, colleges, the YMCA-YWCA and other institutions, a development that increases the potential for overlaps and duplication.

To adapt to shifting goals, a changing client composition and enhanced competition within the settlement sector, agencies must retool, develop new delivery mechanism, and build the capacity to work more closely with immigrant associations and the city's social, health and education sectors. Fortunately, settlement agencies are uniquely positioned to respond to these challenges by virtue of the relations they have developed with partners over the years. In spite of this, apart from the LIPs, there has been little government investment in partnership development or management. As such, it is vital that we find the means to grow, sustain and capitalize upon this experience and these connections.

Immigrants will feel that they are in control of their lives because they are able to make informed choices

MEDIUM-TERM GOALS FOR THE SETTLEMENT SECTOR

- › Immigrants will feel that they are in control of their lives because they are able to make informed choices about the supports they need, and they are served competently and with dignity. This will increase immigrants' sense of belonging to the community;
- › The Settlement Sector will effectively track the annual arrival of immigrants, refugees, international students and temporary workers and will update stakeholders on Ottawa's changing demographics and needs. This knowledge will be used by all sectors and stakeholders to inform program and service design and policy evolution;
- › The settlement sector will provide an effective, decentralized 'Welcome Service' that connects immigrants to the specific services they need;
- › No immigrant will be left behind and there will be no "wrong doors." All immigrants will be eligible for services regardless of their immigration status, and they will be well-served by agencies that have a neighbourhood focus and hours that extend beyond 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.;
- › Settlement services will be delivered seamlessly, using case management and community development approaches. A mechanism will be put in place that will adhere to privacy guidelines while allowing for communication between agencies – both settlement and "mainstream" – on clients' case histories;
- › The settlement sector will no longer be regarded as temporary and will be appropriately recognized by all levels of government who will work in partnership with the sector to support the effective integration of immigrants into the community;
- › The settlement sector will collaborate effectively with other relevant sectors, including social service, health care, education and economic development agencies, to better link all public services with the goal of establishing an integrated continuum of culturally proficient supports for immigrants;
- › Settlement service providers will work toward recognized community outcomes that are linked to the outcomes pursued by other sectors. Outcome indicators will take into account quantitative and qualitative measures of success and demonstrate the effectiveness of services and the sector's contribution to the community;
- › Relationships with immigrant associations and ethno-cultural minority communities will be enhanced, and collaborations that advance key community goals will be established; and
- › Settlement service organizations will coordinate their plans effectively so that agencies can provide complementary services and client-centred, non-competitive funding arrangements. Gradually, this approach will result in a more efficient use of resources and a more comprehensive approach to emerging needs.

Strategic Priorities for the Settlement Sector

1. Ensure that Ottawa is – and is seen to be – a welcoming community

Communities play a central role in the settlement, integration and inclusion of immigrants, newcomers and refugees, and we must promote Ottawa as a welcoming community. We should capitalize on the flexibility afforded by CIC's recent modernization initiative and develop projects that create a welcoming environment, contribute to a sense of belonging among newcomers and pro-actively address racism. We will need to engage community leaders from the public and private sectors, within voluntary and faith-based institutions and in the mainstream and ethnic media who will promote the benefits of immigration. To this end, sector stakeholders proposed the creation of an accessible 'bank of information' and a roster of experts who can liaise with the media. The Welcoming Communities Initiative is seen as a key partner on this priority.

2. Enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of settlement agencies.

Stakeholders elaborated a range of measures for promoting effectiveness and efficiency within the sector. At a structural level, stakeholders identified a need to enhance the machinery for collaborative planning and project development. This recommendation included expanding participation in existing planning forums, broadening leadership arrangements and emphasizing partnerships that take advantage of agency specialization and location. At an institutional level, stakeholders suggested the creation of a sector-wide needs assessment facility that would receive and direct newcomers to services immediately after arrival. More collaboration to develop projects on cross-cutting issues was also recommended, with a focus on youth projects.

Stakeholders also identified a number of changes that would require high-level government intervention. Among these is a suggestion to improve cross-government collaboration in policy and program design; indeed, services do not exist in isolation and must be coordinated to successfully address challenges. Stakeholders also recommended efforts to leverage additional resources from a broad spectrum of agencies so that presently ineligible populations could be better serviced. They also suggest further investments in knowledge and skills development for settlement workers, and a major effort to persuade CIC to immediately implement the Blue Ribbon panel recommendations and reduce the administrative burden on settlement agencies³.

3. Treasury Board of Canada (2006). "From Red Tape to Clear Results – The Report of the Independent Blue Ribbon Panel on Grant and Contribution Programs." Retrieved from: <http://dsp-psd.pwgsc.gc.ca/Collection/BT22-109-2007E.pdf>.

3. Better align the needs of immigrants who settle in Ottawa with the funding that the settlement sector receives.

Here, we propose a systematic, collaborative effort by local agencies to adjust plans and build capacity around anticipated policy directions and gaps. In particular, stakeholders cited challenges related to the mixed composition of Ottawa's newcomer population. This includes larger numbers of refugees who may experience multiple integration barriers, growing numbers of low- to mid-skilled labour market entrants and, simultaneously, more skilled, fully fluent applicants and international students. Other service gaps include those pertaining to Francophone immigrants, youth, seniors and persons with disabilities as well as populations that are not eligible for settlement services, including temporary workers, foreign students and persons who have already attained Canadian citizenship. Sector stakeholders view CIC's modernization initiative as an opportunity to better align services with the city's unique challenges.

4. Improve the ability of "mainstream" organizations to assist and provide services to immigrants.

Stakeholders recommended increased collaboration between immigrant service providers and mainstream service organizations; this should be led by the settlement sector's leadership cadre. As an initial step, agencies should meet and describe their work so that they may identify opportunities for collaboration. Specific recommendations include the participation of settlement organizations in the strategic planning and environmental scans that are conducted by social, education, and health services providers, the promotion of cultural competency within agencies and public institutions and an examination of the mainstream agencies that have successfully adapted their services to better serve newcomers to transfer learning. As one example of successful service adaptation, stakeholders cited the Ottawa Public Library, where a combination of government investment, committed leadership and partnership with the settlement sector has led to a transformation in service offerings. The examination and application of best practices will also allow for knowledge exchange between sectors and the export of applicable practices. Here, we can look to the Multicultural Liaison Officers program, which links immigrants to relevant public services, a model that could be applied in other areas, including health and other key social services. Finally, as a means of coordinating between sectors, stakeholders recommended a study that would involve the settlement sector, the City of Ottawa and key funders, and would examine the participation of immigrant leaders on boards and advisory structures within agencies and public institutions.

5. Promote innovation and excellence within Ottawa's settlement sector.

There is a need for a process to identify, analyze, document and disseminate 'best practice' information and to determine whether practices can be scaled

up, 'mainstreamed' or applied elsewhere. The analysis should extend to other provinces and cities with a view to importing good ideas. In this regard, an opportunity exists for strengthening the partnerships already forged by the Welcoming Communities Initiative and to improve the sector's analytic, research and planning capacities. In addition to this, Ottawa should take advantage of its special access to the government's national headquarters and engage with the federal policy community. To optimize this advantage, service provider agencies and the City will need to agree on strategic interests and coordinate their approach. They will also need to systematically cultivate relations with key policy officials.

6. Promote the attraction and retention of highly trained students.

There is an opportunity for collaboration between the City of Ottawa, local universities, colleges and service providers to brand Ottawa in a way that would enhance the City's ability to attract and retain international students. This effort should include measures for enhancing international students' access to essential services, including language training, counselling and educational support. In addition, there is an opportunity for collaboration between service providers, the City, local universities, and major employers who can jointly develop employment opportunities for international students.

3.3 EDUCATION SECTOR

Context: What is being resolved?

On average, most immigrant children succeed academically in Ottawa schools. Nonetheless, we do see very low scholastic achievement among immigrant students who live in low-income neighbourhoods, suggesting that there is a link between neighbourhood conditions and the educational outcomes. The factors behind this achievement gap are complex, but relate to a confluence of challenges and constraints that affect schools on the one hand, and students, families and communities, on the other. The challenges are compounded by a shortage of adequate support and information to help immigrant children and their parents adapt to the expectations, standards, rules and curriculum of the Canadian school system. Parents' lack of official language proficiency may also pose a barrier to their integration into the school system. Further, we have identified a disconnect between students and school staff as well as between schools and neighbourhoods with a high proportion of immigrant families.

There is a need for greater diversity within the teaching and educational cadre, and teachers should be trained to understand and address the unique needs of immigrant and refugee children. Too often, the expectations for children, youth and families from ethnically diverse backgrounds or low-income neighbourhoods are lower and, as a result, students will have little support and motivation to excel and meet their potential.

Provincial measures to address these concerns suffer from small budgets and an uncertain future, in part because allocations at the district level are discretionary and reflect parents' influence and level of organization. As in most other sectors, there are innovative programs that have shown great successes. Ottawa can build on these and address the challenges that it faces.

MEDIUM-TERM GOALS FOR THE EDUCATION SECTOR

- > Ottawa schools should be welcoming reception centres for immigrant families; they will be hubs of neighbourhood activity beyond designated school hours – open into the evenings, on weekends and holidays – and will be connected to non-academic services for families;
- > All children will be encouraged and supported to succeed. Expectations for students will be the same, regardless of background, immigrant status or income;
- > Graduation rates and post-secondary enrolment for immigrant youth will increase, especially in neighbourhoods with high concentrations of immigrants and low-income families. This will include the gradual elimination of the scholastic achievement gap for immigrant students, particularly those living in low-income neighbourhoods;
- > Sufficient funding will exist to support the academic achievement of immigrant, refugee, racialized and other high needs students. The four Ottawa school boards will recognize the specific needs of these children, and there will be a concerted effort by trustees, education directors, superintendants, immigrant parents, the settlement sector, and neighbourhood-based community agencies to mobilize adequate funding and investment in the elimination of the achievement gap;
- > Curricula will be adapted to the diversity of students, which will strengthen students' connection to the materials that are being taught, and there will be increased recognition of, and support for, the language needs of immigrant students, families and parents;
- > Staff, teachers and schools will reflect the diversity of the student population, and staff will recognize and appreciate the cultural diversity of students and their families, sharing and celebrating all cultures within the school community;
- > Sustainable and systematic connections and collaboration between schools and families, communities and neighbourhoods will increase as a result of dialogue with immigrant communities and deliberate action by school boards to address the needs of immigrant students;
- > School board trustees, principals and teachers will understand the contributions that immigrant parents can make and see them as partners in the education of their children. This will lead to increased trust and cooperation between immigrant communities, families and school administration. We will see some redress of the loss of power that families can sometimes experience when educated parents are under- or unemployed.

Strategic Priorities for the Education Sector

- 1. Develop neighbourhood or school catchment area plans to emulate the Pathways to Education Model in schools with a high proportion of immigrant students.**

We recommend that a scaled-down version of the highly successful Pathways to Education model be extended to neighbourhoods with large numbers of at-risk immigrant children. To do this, stakeholders agreed to map and mobilize local resources that correspond to core elements of the original model and are crucial for school success. School boards, the Education Foundation of Ottawa, settlement service providers, community health and resource centres, immigrant and ethno-cultural minority associations, and other not-for-profit organizations should then be brought together to determine whether emulation is possible. The working group also recommended examining other coordination initiatives to see if existing efforts and relationship could be built on or scaled up.
- 2. Improve the “fit” between schools, teachers and other “communities of interest” particularly in immigrant-intensive neighbourhoods.**

While schools and teachers are central to the education system, there are other “communities of interest,” including students and parents from the minority ethno-cultural communities that are prevalent in the school catchment area. With this in mind, sector partners and stakeholders focused on five measures to improve the responsiveness of the education system to the needs of immigrant families and communities. These would include cultural competency training for teachers, which would be reinforced by adjustments to job requirements and curriculum in teachers’ colleges. A second set of actions would focus on increasing the number of minorities in teaching positions by, for example, working with settlement organizations to increase the uptake of foreign-trained professionals. A third set of measures would concentrate on expanding contact between ethno-cultural communities and schools, including principals, teachers and administrators. Relatedly, there should be measures to involve communities in monitoring school performance and helping school boards to implement equity and inclusion strategies. A fourth set of actions would focus on increasing access to counselling resources – by schools, settlement service providers and ethno-cultural groups – in an effort to support school initiatives. In the final set of actions schools would be repositioned as community hubs for cultural and recreational services, particularly for youth, in order to create bridging relationships. Collaboration between service provider organizations and the City of Ottawa was seen as instrumental for achieving this priority.
- 3. Evaluate the impact and efficacy of the metrics and funding formulas used to allocate educational resources in Ottawa relative to the needs of neighbourhoods, with low-income or high proportions of at-risk immigrant children.**

The partners and stakeholders recommended examining the metrics used by the Ministry of Education to allocate resources to schools, particularly those with large immigrant populations, particularly those with special needs, including refugees and Francophone newcomers. They also proposed a study to assess the impact of discretionary funding decisions and related performance metrics on resource allocation, including language training and supports for at risk students. Finally, we require research on the efficacy of interventions that address school performance and dropout rates.

4. Develop an integrated neighbourhood approach that is structured around support for schools and parents so as to better address the needs of at-risk students in neighbourhoods with high immigrant populations.

We recommend the creation of structures at the neighbourhood level to support immigrant students' academic success by channelling and coordinating services that affect educational attainment and aspirations. These services include language training and interpretation, justice services, (mental) health services and access to school personnel. Settlement service provider organizations were seen as key facilitators of better access.

5. Increase participation by minority parents and by immigrant associations in schools and in the larger education system.

Partners and stakeholders recommend more language training and interpretation to facilitate parent-school interactions and the better tailoring of information to inform parents of key issues, including school registration, report cards and dealing with conflict. This should be provided in plain language and in many languages, using formats that accommodate diverse literacy levels. Outreach programs developed by service provider partnerships and immigrant associations were seen as essential for supporting the achievement of this priority. This should include Multicultural Liaison Officers to assist in community outreach and serve as cultural interpreters. We would also promote community engagement by profiling successful initiatives, such as the Somali Mothers Association.

3.4 HEALTH AND WELLBEING SECTOR

Context: What is being resolved?

Immigrants' health and wellbeing is affected by the challenges that they face in economic and social integration. Difficulties accessing adequate housing, good jobs and affordable and nutritious meals, coupled with the stress of migration and settlement lead to a deterioration of both physical and mental health among immigrants. New immigrants, most notably refugees and temporary residents, have special needs related to language and cultural barriers. Support for this is complicated by a lack of coverage by OHIP and private health insurers.

For immigrants who have been in Ottawa longer, access to health care services, even at the neighborhood level, is made difficult because of low levels of health literacy and a lack of diversity and cultural competency among health professionals. Immigrant seniors, in particular, are further affected by a lack of interpretation services.

Sparse data for local health planning and lack of coordination capacity between healthcare providers and settlement service organizations act as disincentives to the development of comprehensive and sustainable community solutions that would counter health deterioration among immigrants.

Priorities for the Health and Wellbeing Sector

1. Improve immigrants' and refugees' access to health services, including those related to mental health, disease prevention and health promotion.

Analysis is needed to identify the coordinated health service delivery model that would best serve immigrants and refugees in Ottawa. The model must take into account factors such as service efficiency, the special needs of local immigrant populations, the geographic distribution of newcomers and their levels of literacy. Related to this is the need for health agencies to improve service coordination and collaboration with each other, the settlement sector and ethno-cultural associations, which could facilitate access to ancillary services, such as interpretation. Additionally, stakeholders indicated that the model should include multicultural brokers to facilitate outreach, and it should aim to locate health services, including primary care, in close proximity to the places where immigrants and refugees live. This would increase uptake and control costs.

Related to this would be the collection and dissemination of information about the services available to newcomers in various entry streams, including those for skilled immigrants, sponsored refugees, asylum claimants, students and

MEDIUM-TERM GOALS FOR THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING SECTOR

- > Immigrants and refugees arriving in Ottawa will have timely and effective access to culturally appropriate health assessment services and health promotion information. They will receive help navigating our complex health system and advice on accessing the healthcare services they need;
- > Settlement sector staff and other frontline workers will have improved capacity in health literacy, including knowledge about health system access points, which they pass on to their clients. They will also have access to appropriate tools and training;
- > Health service providers will collaborate effectively and share learning and best practices through the improved use of virtual meeting technologies, specialized communities of practice, and Ottawa's Annual Immigration Strategy Forum;
- > The health sector workforce in Ottawa will be well-equipped to serve our diverse community. There will be opportunities to hire immigrant health care professionals, including first- and second-generation local graduates of health-related fields, who will enter the community-based health promotion and service provision profession;
- > Immigrant leaders, civic associations and lay health workers will engage effectively with healthcare providers to help transfer health-related information, knowledge and promotion practices to inform policy evolution;
- > Health care professionals will be trained on intercultural competencies, approaches and practices, and will be aware of the effect of intersecting factors, like gender, age, sexual orientation and ability, on clients' experiences in the health system. This will enable them to serve clients of all backgrounds and to meet the needs of a continually changing client population;
- > Appropriate relationship-based supports, such as community health brokers and linguistic interpreters, will be linked with critical healthcare service centres and will be made available and accessible to clients who require them; and
- > Policy-makers and service providers will recognize that immigrants make up a significant proportion of Ottawa's population, and they will therefore integrate considerations for immigrant health into their policies and priorities.

temporary workers. This information is essential for newcomers but also for the health service providers, settlement agencies and ethno-cultural associations that help newcomers access and navigate the health system, including regular health services and so-called 'special' services. Finally, there is a need for primary care providers and health services organizations to work together to transfer non-clinical services to settlement agencies. These include illness prevention, health promotion, counseling and education, as well as assistance to those who have family members with disabilities or requiring chronic care. This is essential if we are to devise culturally appropriate medical protocols that reconcile health service standards with cultural realities.

2. Enhance health literacy among immigrants and refugees.

Here, we are concerned about primary care, disease prevention, health protection (including vaccinations and immunization), health promotion (including exercise and healthy eating), and the navigation of the healthcare system. In all cases, better coordination among the organizations that deliver these services is the key to enhanced health literacy. Healthcare providers need to make better use of the connections that settlement service providers and ethno-cultural associations have with immigrant groups in order to better communicate information about preventative practices, early intervention, mental health services, family supports and the organization of, and access, to the health system. Collaboration is the key to providing this information in a manner that is readily accessible to immigrant and minority communities, where language and literacy skills may. Additionally, stakeholders underlined the need for health service providers to make use of venues where immigrants and refugees tend to congregate, including language training classes, which would be a forum for knowledge dissemination. Stakeholders also emphasized the need for training to improve health workers' communication skills and to establish a better, more collaborative system for sharing scarce interpretation and language services. Furthermore, health service providers require additional communication vehicles through which to share knowledge and best practices. The sector stakeholders indicated that better support for the Immigrant Health Network would facilitate this process.

3. Improve the quality of and access to health and population data for Ottawa immigrants and refugees, and promote research on pressing health matters.

Stakeholders recognized that insufficient data at the neighbourhood level impedes the development and assessment of effective health interventions. Research is needed to assess the needs of particular immigrant and refugee sub-groups – including women, youth, seniors and people with disabilities – as well as data disaggregation by ethnic group and immigrant population. As one example, little is known about the consumption of medical services by immigrant

groups and the efficacy of various interventions; additional data would help shed light on this question.

4. Ensure that health workers reflect the diversity of the population and that staff are adequately trained to effectively serve immigrants, refugees and ethno-cultural communities.

Stakeholders stressed the need to improve organizational and individual responses to diversity. They recommended more cultural competency training for health service professionals and leaders suggested that this training be integrated into the curricula of local universities, colleges and training facilities. At the practitioner level, stakeholders emphasized the need for proactive recruitment to increase the number of health workers from immigrant and ethno-cultural minority communities, coupled with measures to make better use of internationally trained health workers. This could include foreign-trained professionals with opportunities to serve as health advisors, community educators or nutritionists. Outreach to local health practitioners was recommending as a means of upgrade the knowledge on tropical illnesses and treatments; this should be incorporate into the curricula of local training institutions.

3.5 LANGUAGE SECTOR

Context: What is being resolved?

Federal language programs provide the opportunity to learn and settle in only one official language, and it is therefore difficult for immigrants to access language training in both French and English. This does not take into account the unique situation of Ottawa as a bilingual city where fluency in both official languages is a significant asset, particularly in the job market. Moreover, French language training lags English language training in terms of quality, standardization, availability and accessibility, and this presents additional problems.

There are several types of language programs offered in Ottawa, and these are funded by both the federal and provincial governments. However, the lack of coordination between programs leads to inconsistencies in language services, including differing standards, eligibility requirements and factors affecting accessibility, including child-care and flexible hours. This leads to a paradoxical situation where under-utilized capacity co-exists with under-service and access challenges. Vertical coordination of funders' investments must be coupled with local coordination of language service offerings.

Other factors that disproportionately affect Ottawa's 'language market' include literacy challenges, low levels of proficiency with the Roman alphabet, differing norms of culturally based communication and a lack of sufficient language training programming for immigrants with disabilities.

Language programs will need to be customized for different types of clients. Rising numbers of very highly skilled professionals may further increase demands for client-specific and customized language training.

New immigrants and seniors tend to rely more heavily on interpretation services, which facilitate their access to a variety of essential services. Currently, publicly funded interpretation services are only offered for a limited number of social services, including counselling and support for women escaping domestic violence. Moreover, there seem to be risks associated with private interpretation services, which tend to not be standardized; this leaves immigrants vulnerable to exploitation.

Priorities for the Language Sector

1. **Enhance the quality and availability of French language training in Ottawa.**
To support this priority, stakeholders suggested that we explore policy and program changes that could improve immigrants' access to bilingual language

MEDIUM-TERM GOALS FOR THE LANGUAGE SECTOR

- > Workplace language and literacy programs will be in place, with priority placed on city-operated workplaces, long-term care facilities and hospitals;
- > Employers will have recognized the Canadian Language Benchmarks and developed the knowledge to identify the actual language needs for each job vacancy;
- > Language training and associated benchmarks will be consistent, and confusion among immigrants and employers will be reduced. All students will be trained to the same standard, and this standard will be consistent across programs and jurisdictions;
- > There will be more flexibility with respect to accessing language assessments, and all assessments will be expected to meet the same standards;
- > A permanent Council will have been established to provide a forum for service coordination and the sharing of best practices and resources, while providing a space to monitor language training and ensure the system is responding to emerging needs;
- > An integrated access system with multiple access points and a standard mechanism of service delivery and referral will be established and will provide immigrants with seamless access to the information and services they require. A 'case-management model' will be utilized and will include integrated intake and assessment of clients, as well as service in French and English, and other languages where possible;
- > Federal and provincial funding for language training will be coordinated to eliminate the barriers and service restrictions that affect immigrants;
- > Language training will be part of an integrated system of supports for immigrants and their families with all agencies working in collaboration to ensure collaboration and effective service;
- > This system will be truly client-focused with agencies complementing each other and avoiding duplication and competition;
- > Language training will be provided in ways that are accessible to those unable to attend classroom-based programs and in a manner that addresses the needs of families, including children;
- > There will be increased recognition of, and services for, at-risk populations and people with special needs and at-risk populations; and
- > There will be a 'tele-interpreter' service that will allow service provider organizations to phone and access an interpreter to assist their clients.

training. We should also look at improving collaboration among service providers, which would enable service providers to deliver both federal and provincial language programs and could result in an increase to resources. Collaboration between school boards was also seen as essential for increasing the number of French language trainers, improving training standards and guidelines and promoting teacher 'swap' arrangements so that schools board would have the capacity to deliver language training in the 'other' official language. Finally, stakeholders proposed comparative research on cities in New Brunswick and Manitoba to determine if they are delivering bilingual training in a manner that could be emulated by Ottawa.

2. Improve the planning and deployment of language courses to better match the needs of Ottawa immigrants, and harmonize federal and provincial language programs so they are complementary and mutually supportive.

OLIP partners and stakeholders agreed that we need to better understand the volume and type of language training that immigrants and employers require. In support of this, the group noted that Ottawa language training providers must collaborate and make their administrative data available for analysis. We should also explore ways to benchmark and accredit language training programs so that course completion would be recognized and valued by local employers and educational institutions. The final set of actions under this priority would focus on advocacy and encouraging the federal and provincial governments to harmonize their French and English language offerings. This would increase program flexibility and broaden access to immigrants. This would also allow immigrants to compare language training pathways and select those that best meet their needs. Related to this, the stakeholders advocated easier access to city language programs and suggested that the requirement for prior fluency in an official language be relaxed.

3. Increase access and reduce wait times for immigrants seeking to obtain specialized, work-related language training.

The aim here is to improve flexibility and capitalize on unused capacity. The proposed measures include collaboration with universities and colleges that would allow immigrants to attend – for a nominal fee – classes related to their field of expertise. This would help equip them with job-relevant language skills. We also recommend collaboration with employer organizations that could offer on-the-job training and mentoring and an analysis of the demand for specialized, self-funded and high-quality language training programs. Finally, we would like to see local colleges and service providers expand language-related bridging programs.

4. Promote special language programming for populations at risk of exclusion.

OLIP partners and stakeholders recommended expanding federal and provincial support for language programs where literacy is a concern, particularly in Francophone communities where this is a significant problem. To support the expansion of these programs, it will be necessary to adapt language instructors' training so they are better equipped to meet the needs of students with varying levels of literacy and language ability. We must also promote cultural competency training and the hiring of instructors from diverse cultural and linguistic groups. A second set of measures under this priority would see greater collaboration among ethno-cultural minority associations, service providers and language training organizations, which would ensure that changes in the composition of the immigrant population and, hence, their needs, would be reflected in the range of language training services offered in Ottawa. This might include additional services targeting elderly immigrants, those aimed at women who have been out of the workforce for some time, or those that would equip parents to better interact with schools.

5. Increase immigrants' awareness of language training options, including opportunities to acquire on-the-job language training.

The working group expressed the need for a comprehensive map depicting federal, provincial and municipal involvement in the design, funding, acquisition and delivery of language training and interpreter services in both French and English. The map should include policy goals, targets and delivery modes. The goal is to improve immigrant counseling by making service providers and ethno-cultural associations more aware of strengths and limitations in the language training sector.

6. Improve and extend access to interpretation services for a broad range of legal, justice, health and social related services.

The main action recommended in this priority was to enhance collaboration between the language training sector and the interpretation and translation sector. This would promote access to services and might also induce more people to work in the field. The working group would encourage federal and provincial governments to develop standards for interpreter training and ethical conduct.

3.6 INTEGRATION CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT SECTOR

Context: What is Being Resolved?

Ottawa's growing immigrant and ethno-cultural minority communities experience isolation and exclusion from public services, opportunities and decision-making structures. Particular sub-populations -- including Francophones, racialized minorities, women, seniors, people with disabilities and youth -- tend to be especially excluded and require targeted services.

Moreover, the integration of immigrant youth is mired in a unique set of challenges. Not only is it complicated by the development transitions that young immigrants experience, but it is intimately linked to the migration experiences of their parents and critically subject to peer influence. On the other hand, immigrant youth quickly develop and express a multicultural outlook, which if nurtured can become an important asset for Ottawa's future. Currently, services and supports for immigrant youth are fragmented and unfocused, with promising initiatives operating below-scale and with little cross-sectoral cooperation and learning. This reality affects youth's school performance, skills development, employment, mental health and access to community-based recreational and social services.

We must ensure that immigrants and ethno-cultural minorities are included in public life and have access to the full range of public services. This is essential for integration and social cohesion, but can only be accomplished with the support of the immigrant and ethno-cultural associations and civic groups that play a vital role in welcoming new arrivals. These associations are often chronically under-funded, with limited opportunities to improve their resource base, a heavy reliance on volunteers and a degree of isolation from "formal" organizations and the broader community. Leveraging the commitment and knowledge of these associations by promoting their participation in Ottawa's civic leadership and facilitating their access to information will undoubtedly build bridges between immigrants and public service organizations.

At the same time, public institutions and service organizations also face considerable challenges in meeting the continually changing needs of the community and their clients. While efforts have been made by service institutions and organizations, these obstacles persist. Solutions must be based on dialogue between service providers and immigrant communities and should include leadership development and engagement strategies.

A number of new capacities are needed to support immigrants, institutions and service organizations. Among these are improvements to the current information infrastructure, which will ensure that immigrants are aware of, and can access opportunities,

services and programs. Ottawa will need to go beyond a sole reliance on the default position of flyers and websites. We also require word-of-mouth and relationship-based dissemination through networks and in places where people typically meet, including libraries, religious institutions, schools, hair stylists and healthcare centres.

Opportunities for high-quality interactions will build positive awareness of immigration within various segments of the Ottawa community. Annual, public, neighbourhood-based events that bring together and build on the socio-cultural assets of residents will create inclusive civic cultures that tap into the unique qualities of Ottawa's diverse places.

Ensuring access to recreational and cultural activities is essential to supporting immigrant integration and community cohesion. The ability to express one's culture openly and in a way that is validated by broader society has implications for the attraction and retention of immigrants and overall community well-being. Access to culturally relevant recreation is equally important.

MEDIUM-TERM GOALS FOR THE INTEGRATION CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT SECTOR

- > Ottawa will have public events, celebrations, and spaces that reflect the diversity of the community and strengthen the bonds that unite residents. There will be a high level of interaction, collaboration and partnership between the diverse cultural communities, as well as frequent opportunities for connections between ethno-cultural communities and “mainstream” service providers. There will be an awareness of the need to reflect Ottawa’s diversity in physical landscapes of the city and its neighbourhoods;
- > There will be an integrated system of program and service information that will be easily accessible through community-based hubs and networks of trust. Information on services, programs and opportunities will be accessible to all, and systems will be coordinated so that immigrants can be served or effectively referred, regardless of their access point. Information will be passed onto immigrants through effective networks that are based on trust and cultural understanding;
- > Conditions will be created that enable immigrants and minority ethno-cultural communities to exercise strong, effective leadership and engage in the broader community;
- > Processes and systems will link members of immigrant and minority ethno-cultural communities with opportunities to participate and contribute to life of the community. This will include positions of influence, leadership, and decision-making or voting, where they could experience a true sense of belonging;
- > Immigrant youth will be empowered to utilize their talents and cultural heritage as integration assets, and there will be high levels of participation in the workforce, in sports and recreation, and in civic issues.
- > The City’s advisory groups will be well-connected to ethno-cultural communities and will represent them effectively in municipal decision-making; and
- > Institutions and organizations will be supported to develop practices and systems that support immigrants’ evolving access to settlement, health, education, and social services. Policies and practices will be changed to enable immigrants’ access to public services and programs, and all sectors will have developed and implemented inclusion policies and practices. Finally, the community will have established qualitative and quantitative inclusion benchmarks, against which institutions and organizations will be measured.

Priorities for the Integration Capacity Development Sector

1. **Create structures and relationships that will help service providers design inclusive programs, governance structures and policies to better serve immigrants and ethno-cultural minority communities.**

Inclusion should be a priority with particular attention given to underserved groups, including racialized minorities, Francophone immigrants, women, girls, youth, seniors and people with disabilities. Four broad measures are included in this priority. First, we must create institutional structures that will bring together and strengthen the voices of immigrants and ethno-cultural minority communities. In this regard, an umbrella organization of ethno-cultural minority associations was proposed. Second, we must actively recruit and develop talented leaders through an initiative to increase the representativeness of key city institutions. Third, translation and interpretation services should be used more effectively to improve access to city service by immigrants and ethno-cultural minority communities. Finally, we should develop a stronger relationship with researchers, notably through the Welcoming Communities Initiative, which would support policy-relevant analysis, innovation and program design.

2. **Create bridging opportunities for ethno-cultural communities by promoting collaborative and inclusive cultural and recreational activities as well as enhancing access to inclusive services and activities.**

This priority sets new directions to create multiple pathways and opportunities for communities to connect in high-quality broadly based public spaces and recreational facilities, rather than in immigrant-focused forums. This will aid in the creation of a cohesive civic culture that embodies and reflects the creativity and cultures of all Ottawa residents. As part of this direction, OLIP recommends greater investment in cultural and recreational activities, especially in community- and neighbourhood-level sports, recreation, fashion, literature, poetry and the arts to promote bridging among children, youth and parents. When investing in these activities, it is important to break down barriers, including cost, complex procedures, poor transportation and a lack of clarity in instruction, which may impede immigrants' participation. An important aspect is to make physical spaces, such as parks, sports fields, community pools and informal gathering areas, more accessible.

3. **Promote and scale-up youth programs that are collaborative, achieve multiple outcomes and create value for immigrants, ethno-cultural minority communities and the city.**

This priority includes three measures. First, we recommend scaling up successful youth programs that are collaborative and achieve multiple outcomes, including Youth Futures, Multicultural Liaison Officers, and the Pathways to Education

project, as well as a number of other programs in the areas of settlement, employment, recreation and social services. Part of this measure is to improve the links between these programs so that we can enhance their complementarities. Second, we recommend developing a city-wide framework and the leadership to build awareness and enhance cooperation among stakeholders. Finally, we propose an expansion of the “40 hour” school programs that are dedicated to community work, which would create bridging opportunities for newcomer youth and allow them to build networks and connections to employers and public institutions.

4. Enhance the quantity, accuracy and “understandability” of information available to immigrants and ethno-cultural minority communities.

Under this priority, OLIP recommends developing clear, straightforward information in multiple languages, which would describe available services, how to access them and how to provide feedback about emerging needs. Emphasis was placed on the importance of relying on multiple communication pathways, including making use of cultural brokers and immigrants’ civic associations, as well as disseminating information in hubs frequented by members of ethnic minority communities. This could include public facilities, faith-based sites and commercial locations. It was also suggested that an effort be made to expand on the existing 311 and 211 information systems. Building on the idea of multiple information pathways and platforms, the working group proposed more collaboration among the City, settlement agencies, service provider organizations and ethno-cultural groups, including faith organizations. A strong case was made for a “one-stop shop” at the community or neighbourhood level, which would offer information on key services and policies. Finally, this priority includes the use of multicultural brokers, trainers, outreach coordinators and Multicultural Liaison Officers to increase awareness of local services and to promote an understanding of how services are organized and delivered. Service providers and ethno-cultural organizations were seen as the primary vehicles for organizing this effort.

5. Improve the capacity of immigrant civic associations and ethno-cultural minority communities to advance the interests of their members by developing stronger links to elected officials, mainstream institutions and service providers.

Under this priority, we recommend investing in the leadership and organizational capacity of immigrants’ civic associations through increased cooperation between immigrant associations and other communities, building partnerships with established organizations to provide mutual support and learning, and developing expertise and capacity in the preparation of funding proposals, financial management, data maintenance and infrastructure acquisition, including the securing of meeting space and access to computers.

At the individual level, this priority promotes greater democratic engagement by visible and ethno-cultural minority communities, through increased voter turn-out and greater representation in political structures. One model for action is the Pincrest-Queensway neighbourhood plan, which aims to increase voter turn-out by five percent.

In support of these proposed measures, we recommend extending the inventory of newcomer services and structures that was undertaken by the Welcoming Communities Initiative and OLIP, but with a focus on access and service gaps for immigrants and ethno-cultural minority communities. Key among the areas identified were safety, security and justice issues, especially as they pertain to visible minorities and youth.

3.7 THE HORIZONTAL STRATEGY

The Horizontal Strategy is the last of seven distinct but interdependent strategies that comprise the Ottawa Immigration Strategy. Unlike the other six strategies, which focus on specific sectors, the Horizontal Strategy is designed to support the work of all sectors covered by the Ottawa Immigration Strategy by addressing critical functions such as communication and coordination, leadership development, continued planning, research and analysis, and the development of guidelines, frameworks and processes to support of the work of the Partnership.

Two types of priorities can be distinguished in the Horizontal Strategy. In the first place are targeting priorities, which place a concerted focus on particular themes, sub-groups or stakeholders. The targeting priorities are based on evidence of need and on strategic considerations, such as anticipated reactions and stakeholder support. The cross-cutting priorities, on the other hand, are aimed at developing or improving capacities that affect or implicate multiple sectors.

Targeting Priorities

OLIP Council agrees that Ottawa must target interventions at two newcomer groups in particular; these are Francophone immigrants and immigrant youth, with a special focus on the racialized and refugee sub-populations within both groups. In the initial thematic consultations and the subsequent sector-specific planning meeting, these two groups were frequently cited as under-served and subject to significant challenges. A focus on these groups is strategic in the sense that it allows Ottawa to build on its unique assets. In the first place, as a bilingual city and the seat of the federal government, Ottawa holds a particular attraction for Francophone immigrants both from abroad and from other Canadian cities. In the second place, the presence of excellent post-secondary institutions attracts a large number of young immigrants and international students to the city, which has been accelerated by federal and provincial interest in promoting student flows and facilitating international students' access to permanent residency; this constitutes a clear opportunity.

Ottawa's success in integrating immigrant youth and Francophone immigrants will pay large dividends in the city's ability to keep its competitive advantage, especially when other cities are also aggressively recruiting immigrants. For Ottawa to be successful in these targeted priorities, stakeholders and leaders must be mindful of these assets and given the support needed to capitalize on them. Continued planning will also be required to ensure coordinated action by multiple sectors.

MEDIUM-TERM HORIZONTAL GOALS

- > Cooperation between the sectors will be enhanced by increased trust, new insights, awareness and leadership engagement;
- > Leaders from the three levels of government, from public institutions (including hospitals, school boards and universities) and from social services organizations will be actively engaged in support of the implementation of the Ottawa Immigration Strategy;
- > New knowledge and awareness will be developed and disseminated on key areas for all six sectors of OLIP, which will support leadership engagement, continued planning, evaluation and adjustments;
- > Strategic relationships will be built with funders at the local, provincial and federal levels, which will lead to collaborative investments in community projects identified in the Ottawa Immigration Strategy;
- > Progress will be made toward ensuring that immigrants feel valued and are able to contribute to community planning and Ottawa's public life; and
- > OLIP operations will be sustainable.

Cross-Cutting Priorities

- 1. Develop a closer, mutually supportive working relationship with the City of Ottawa**
 The City of Ottawa is a co-founder of OLIP and has been active in the development of the Ottawa Immigration Strategy. Key city departments are represented on all OLIP governing bodies, and City officials have been active participants at the sectoral planning tables, which is befitting of the City's role as a government, employer, service provider and enabler. Because of this active leadership, the Ottawa Immigration Strategy intersects with the City's economic development strategy, community development framework, social recreation strategy, service excellence plans and cultural renewal plans. Additionally, the City's public health and human resource management goals are aligned with a number of our priorities. The City of Ottawa's prominent role and commitment has prompted OLIP partners to recommend the integration of the priorities of the new Ottawa Immigration Strategy into the City's strategic planning process. We will encourage strengthened commitment and leadership as Ottawa implements the Strategy, with City Council championing community awareness and engagement.
- 2. Foster the sustainable implementation of the Ottawa Immigration Strategy by building consensus that resources devoted to successful immigration are critical to Ottawa's prosperity, vitality, and growth.**
 To increase financial support for immigrants' economic and social integration, three main ideas were advanced. First, we propose collaboration with other LIPs to create a mechanism for identifying and aggregating common interests within sectors. Based on this, discussions would be initiated with federal and provincial ministries and especially with those not currently at the table. Second, we propose an analysis of the federal and provincial allocations received by the City of Ottawa in each OLIP sector, including education, health, employment and settlement. Where the analysis suggests disproportionate funding shortfalls, an effort would be made to increase the capacity of local institutions to apply for grants and other forms of support. Announced and pending funding cuts elevate the importance of this idea. Third, local community funders will be engaged in order to identify non-government funding sources for priorities that do not qualify for federal or provincial support.
- 3. Develop and implement a communications strategy with two thrusts: a) enhance and deepen collaborations; and b) improve leadership engagement, public receptivity and support for the goals, principles and plans contained in the Ottawa Immigration Strategy.**
 The key actions for implementing this priority involve a communications strategy with both internal and external components. The internal plan would centre on a website that would serve as a data and information repository, a tracking node

and an information exchange vehicle for all OLIP initiatives. The site would provide feedback to partners and collaborators on progress in achieving strategic objectives. Meanwhile, the external plan would target key constituencies. First, it would enlist the support of local leaders for a campaign to promote positive attitudes towards newcomers; second, it would engage Ottawa's mainstream and ethnic media with a view to producing a regular series of articles featuring OLIP activities and achievements; and, third, it would create and disseminate communication materials targeting key audiences, such as human resource departments of major employers, community funders, and immigrant associations.

4. Establish a learning and evaluation framework and use this to promote learning, cooperation and progress toward the goals of the Ottawa Immigration Strategy.

OLIP partners recognize the importance of developing sectoral performance measures – identified outputs and outcomes – to chart progress on the strategic priorities. In addition, the OLIP Secretariat will work with other Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) and the Welcoming Communities Initiative to develop baseline indicators that measure community receptivity to newcomers. These will be used to promote learning and to establish, along with other LIPs, a process for promoting innovation.

5. Establish a robust analytic capacity to underpin OLIP's ongoing operations.

OLIP will establish partnerships to pursue common research needs. This arrangement would include the creation of processes for promoting and sharing promising practices and innovation, and for measuring outcomes.

6. Create a centralized needs assessment, client routing facility.

The major settlement, language training and employment organizations will collaborate to determine the feasibility of creating a centralized one-stop needs assessment facility. This would screen all newcomers to Ottawa and direct them to the most appropriate services and agencies. Participating organizations, under the leadership of LASI (Local Agencies Serving Immigrants), would prepare a joint application for government support to create such a facility.

7. Expand the OLIP partnership to develop a collaborative relationship with the City of Gatineau. This recognizes that the cities' labour markets are intertwined, and there is mobility across the two cities.

Here, we propose the negotiation of a planning and limited service partnership with the City of Gatineau to address an agreed upon set of challenges related to labour market inclusion. The City of Ottawa and Ottawa-based Francophone associations would be central in these negotiations.



IV. SUSTAINING THE VISION: THE IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

In our opening chapter, we described the Ottawa Immigration Strategy as an interplay between opportunity and choice. The results of that interplay are expressed in this report, through our strategic priorities and our proposed key actions. These reflect Ottawa's aspirations as well as the collective will to achieve the goals of the new Strategy.

The directions that the Strategy sets to achieve the three pillars of the OLIP vision – prosperity, inclusion and vibrancy – are bold. Implementing the Strategy will take leadership, commitment, time and close co-operation between governments and among stakeholders. It will also require strong management, transparent and inclusive governance and a robust analytical capacity to support a deepened understanding of the complex realities of immigrant attraction and settlement, inclusive community planning and overall social development in Ottawa.

Some of the factors required to support the Strategy's sustainable progress are already in place. Most notably, Ottawa stakeholders have established a collaborative governance system that will underpin the implementation of the Strategy, and they have agreed to protocols and mechanisms for continued planning and adjustment. These are described in the section that follows. With adequate and ongoing government investment in the OLIP Secretariat, which will support the implementation of the Strategy, Ottawa stakeholders are determined to transform their aspirations into reality.

Other elements will require partnerships between the OLIP Council and key provincial stakeholders and networks, most notably the other Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) and the Welcoming Communities Initiative. These latter partnerships are still in their infancy and will require nurturing.

4.1 THE OLIP GOVERNANCE SYSTEM: AN EXPRESSION OF COMMITMENT AND COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP

Responsibility for the implementation of the Ottawa Immigration Strategy is shared by multiple sectors of our community: governments, employers, school boards, universities, colleges, healthcare providers, social and settlement service providers, civic groups, and individual citizens. Leveraging the experience and strength of each sector and facilitating their fruitful collaboration is the focus of the OLIP governance system.

OLIP understands governance to include not only structures and roles, but also culture – that is, principles or norms of behaviour – in addition to processes and protocols for leading together.

4.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE OLIP PARTNERSHIP IN THE IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

OLIP partners agree that a threefold approach must guide the Strategy's implementation phase:

1. Facilitate the implementation of the Ottawa Immigration Strategy through continued stakeholder engagement, support and coordinated action so that we may track progress toward the OLIP vision and make adjustments as needed;
2. Continue to build a shared understanding and raise awareness within the community through ongoing research and communications;
3. Create an enabling environment for stakeholders' actions as organizations, institutions and coalitions seek to implement the priorities and principles set out in the Strategy. There are three components:
 - i. Leadership development to ensure there are effective sectoral champions and engaged institutions;
 - ii. Resource alignments or funder engagement in service development and evolution. That is, OLIP will engage the funder community and encourage them to align their investments and funding guidelines to support the shared goals and priorities of the Ottawa community, as they are expressed in the Ottawa Immigration Strategy and its implementation plans; and
 - iii. Policy influence to pursue partnership and collaboration opportunities with entities outside of Ottawa, including other Local Immigration Partnerships and the Welcoming Communities Initiative, which will aid Ottawa's progress toward the OLIP vision.

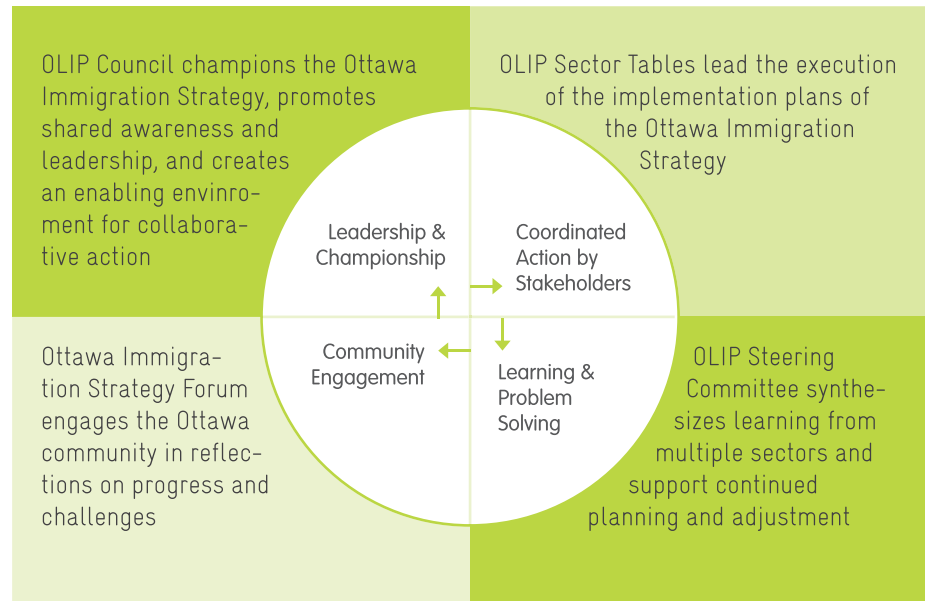
Principles that Guide the Collective Work

OLIP partners agree that the following principles will guide the partnership's work:

- > Inclusion: the effective engagement of all stakeholders, including the perspectives of immigrants;
- > Collective learning and accountability: a commitment to collective learning with stakeholders accountable to each other and the broader community;
- > Engagement of community leadership: the effective engagement of Ottawa's community leaders;
- > Support for collective planning and concerted action: convening all stakeholders to act together in a coordinated way;
- > Building on community assets, including knowledge, engagement and financial resources: work to ensure continuity and the growth of promising networks, ideas, practices, pilots and plans and to leverage public and private resources to build on what works;
- > Dialogue and consensus: the engagement of all stakeholders to address challenges and develop a consensus on collective action;
- > Transparency: clear and open information-sharing with respect to OLIP's directions, activities and achievements;
- > Creativity and innovation: the promotion of new approaches and synergy across the sectors;
- > Decisiveness and effectiveness: the ability to execute the implementation plans without undue delays because of multiple layers of approval; and
- > Sustainability and cost-effectiveness: OLIP's governance practices must not consume a disproportionate amount of time and energy; implementation should be the focus.

4.3 FUNCTIONS, STRUCTURES AND ROLES

In broad terms, the OLIP governance structure is made up of five mutually supportive community “spaces” that together fulfill the mandate of the partnership. These are: leadership and championship development; learning, problem-solving and strategic direction; coordinated action on implementation plans; and community engagement.



The management of the partnership is led by the OLIP Executive Committee, which supports and monitors the effective implementation of the OLIP governance system, and addresses and resolves issues that may arise. The Executive Committee is composed of the chairs of the OLIP Council and Steering Committee, a representative of the City of Ottawa, the Executive Director of the Host Agency, and a representative of the Réseau de soutien de l'immigration Francophone. There is thus a balanced representation of the key functional spaces of the OLIP governance system, which facilitates grounded operational decision-making and ensures transparency. The functional spaces are led by several community tables, and the links between these are outlined below.

FUNCTIONAL SPACES	STRUCTURES	ROLES
Leadership Table	OLIP Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Serve as ambassadors for the Ottawa Immigration Strategy and actively engage the leadership of the Ottawa community > Promote shared awareness to help create a cohesive Ottawa voice > Provide leadership for a gradual and progressive transformation of the system of public and community services to achieve an experience of seamless integration of immigrants in Ottawa > Convene and host an annual Ottawa Immigration Strategy Forum to engage the leadership of the broader community in addressing specific themes and challenges identified by the sectors > Review the progress of implementation of the Strategy and address key issues and challenges
Strategic Stewardship	Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Provide strategic oversight in the execution of the implementation plans and project priorities outlined in the Ottawa Immigration Strategy > Provide formal approval of key directions, frameworks and internal policies > Ensure the effective coordination of sector work and identify opportunities for enhanced collaboration and synergy
Coordinated & Concerted Action	Sector tables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Identify and invite appropriate and interested organizations, partnerships and coalitions to help execute the plans > Develop and track projects and seek funding to execute the implementation plans > Track the implementation of the sector strategy and address any challenges that arise
Community Engagement	Annual Immigration Strategy Forum	<p>Convened annually, the Ottawa Immigration Strategy Forum will help partners and stakeholders to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Pause and share the progress that has been made toward the OLIP vision > Engage experts from outside of Ottawa to learn from the experience of other cities > Engage the public and raise awareness
Operational Management	OLIP Executive Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Monitor the effective implementation of the OLIP governance system and resolve any issues that arise > Oversee OLIP's operational requirements by providing guidance and direction to the Project Director and Secretariat

Protocols and Processes

We have also established a number of protocols that guide decision-making.

- > First, the OLIP governance tables are accountable to each other and to the Ottawa community, and the annual Immigration Strategy Forum will update the public on progress made and challenges encountered; it will also seek the community's input.
- > Second, decision-making on project development related to the Strategy's implementation plans lies with Ottawa stakeholders, led by the OLIP Sector Tables. The OLIP Secretariat will not play a direct role in selecting who submits proposals or in vetting these in any way. In situations where key elements of the Ottawa Immigration Strategy are not being addressed, OLIP will convene a conversation between relevant organizations to promote action on the priorities. Additionally, the OLIP Secretariat will engage stakeholders in continued planning and partnership development to help implement agreed-upon projects.
- > OLIP uses highly inclusive, consensus-based decision-making processes that integrate research evidence and seek to be effective and efficient. This process starts with those working "on the ground" developing recommendations. Final decisions are kept as close to the work as possible while still ensuring adequate perspective and accountability.

Finally, we have delineated how specific OLIP decisions will be made going forward.

- > **Development of the Ottawa Immigration Strategy.** The entire community can play a role in the development of ideas and recommendations related to the Strategy's identified priorities. The OLIP Council, meanwhile, may request modifications to the Ottawa Immigration Strategy.
- > **Implementation plans, sectoral medium-term goals, first priorities, first actions and outcomes.** Sector tables are responsible for selecting the priorities that will first be implemented by their respective sectors; they will also establish medium-term sectoral visions to support the overall OLIP vision and identify expected medium-term outcomes. The Steering Committee, in seeking to ensure optimal alignment and coordination, may request modifications. The Steering Committee also recommends the final implementation plan for OLIP Council's review and approval.
- > **Policy development and adjustments to the Ottawa Immigration Strategy in Phase II.** During the implementation planning process and at the time of actual

implementation, sector table chairs may recommend to the Steering Committee adjustments to the established plans. The Steering Committee can ask that particular issues or questions be reconsidered. Additional strategies and policies developed by OLIP will similarly involve input from the sector tables and will be approved by the Steering Committee. For these types of decisions, the Steering Committee is the final decision-making body.

- > **Specific projects and programs that conform to the agreed-upon implementation plans.** The sector tables will execute the implementation plans and develop ideas for priority projects to achieve the outcomes identified in their implementation plans. They will also identify potential sources of funding and community institutions and other resources that should be engaged. On the basis of this work, individual organizations or coalitions will develop proposals and seek the resources needed to undertake identified projects, programs or services. OLIP will not have a decision-making role with respect to the organizations that will be involved in these programs or projects.
- > **OLIP operational issues. Operational issues may be identified from any level within OLIP.** The Executive Committee and Project Director are responsible for consulting all those affected and developing a recommendation for change or improvement. Following consultation, the Executive Committee will make the final decision regarding these operational issues.





APPENDIX A: THE COMPENDIUM OF SECTORAL AND HORIZONTAL STRATEGIES, SEPTEMBER 2010

ECONOMIC INTEGRATION SECTOR: STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND KEY ACTIONS

1. Strategic priority

Help immigrants navigate towards employment goals

Key actions to support priority

- > Map the 'pathways' for accessing particular occupations in key sectors (clustered according to trade, skill sets, or professional aspirations).
- > In the federal sector, the pathway should identify requirements such as skills, security clearance, citizenship, bilingual capacities, and how to navigate the application process and examinations.
- > Identify the services that are available to newcomers to help them meet the demands they encounter along the federal employment pathway. As part of this, enlist the federal government in efforts to enhance immigrants' access to federal government jobs.
- > Map the pathways for accessing jobs in key (non-federal) sectors, such as the health and education, as well as specific trades such as construction.
- > Identify the services that are available to newcomers to help them meet the demands they encounter along other employment pathways.
- > Map the pathways for business start-ups (SME).
- > Identify the services that are available to immigrant business start-ups, including training, access to advisors, and assistance in accessing capital.
- > Examine the pathways (maps) to identify systemic issues and challenges that will need to be addressed through changes in policy or through program supports.

- > Investigate the potential in various sectors for implementing one-on-one bridging programs, including mentoring, temporary placements, etc.
- > Ensure the mapping information is widely available and accessible to immigrants, employers and key institutions such as the City of Ottawa, the Chamber of Commerce, Hire Immigrants Ottawa, Service Canada, etc.

2. Strategic priority

Enhance access to employment in small and medium sized enterprises

Key actions to support priority

- > Create concise, simple information products that offer clear, employer friendly advice and reduce the complexity of recruiting and hiring immigrants
- > Develop clear, easily accessible guides that help employers to integrate newcomers into the workplace.
- > Create a one-stop shop for employers run by the City. In conjunction with this proposal, investigate the appetite among employers for a 'premium service' to assist them with immigrant recruitment, workplace integration and promotion. (Such a measure has been successful in the United States. This proposal may be more apt for larger employers)
- > Investigate the feasibility of developing an on-line system (similar to the 311 system) to support employers wishing to hire immigrants (a means of advertising services that help employers).
- > Persuade/educate/work with employers to access qualified immigrant candidates using new methods (such as on-line inventories of immigrants seeking work) in place of traditional recruiting methods and sources.
- > Identify and 'advertise' hiring/recruitment practices that have yielded positive results.
- > Market (to employers) the idea that immigrants are assets: carefully analyze how to frame immigrant hiring as a 'value added proposition' for small and medium-sized employers; identify appropriate incentives; and investigate whether the notion of immigrant hires as a value proposition can be introduced at the point where employers seek access to business loans, government permits, etc.

- > Undertake research to identify sectors that are approaching a 'tipping point' where domestic sources of labour supply are about to become exhausted and employers will need to access immigrant (and foreign student) labour; tailor the 'value added proposition' and advertising to these sectors.

3. Strategic priority

Encourage entrepreneurship among newcomers

Key actions to support priority

- > Make immigrant entrepreneurs aware of the training opportunities that are available to help them start and run small businesses
- > Examine and, where possible, reduce the obstacles that immigrant entrepreneurs face when trying to access capital and loans.
- > Investigate the accessibility, utility, and scale of existing business support programs (offered by all levels of governments) for immigrant entrepreneurs.
- > Develop networking opportunities to link immigrant entrepreneurs into larger business networks (including OCRI, Chambers of Commerce and other business coalitions).
- > Investigate the possibility of making business networks more accessible to immigrants by reducing membership and participation fees, as well as other thresholds.

4. Strategic priority

Improve coordination among agencies involved in immigrant economic integration and rationalize competing activities.

Key actions to support priority

- > Build on the OLIP inventory to prepare a detailed map of what various actors (including the city) are doing; the map should clearly identify the scope of services or actions being undertaken.
- > Develop a calendar of proposed agency events and/or actions.
- > Coordinate and limit the demands on employers by coordinating and limiting the number of workshops targeting employers; also by making the workshops more accessible and more appropriate (in terms of length and materials).

- > Develop a small task force comprised of economic integration agencies and charge the taskforce with developing proposals to promote collaboration and to manage competition for funds and clients.

5. Strategic priority

Improve Ottawa's capacity to attract and retain newcomers, both immigrants and students.

Key actions to support priority

- > Investigate whether the "Manitoba model", which showed enormous success in attracting immigrants, can be emulated by the City of Ottawa. Ottawa will collaborate with the "Welcoming Communities Initiative" (the research initiative affiliated with OLIP), with representatives from London, Hamilton and North Bay, and with other agencies to evaluate the idea and develop a follow up plan.
- > In collaboration with universities and colleges identify ways to reduce the barriers faced by foreign students wishing to remain in the city.
- > Develop a plan for attracting and retaining francophone immigrants and supporting their integration into a Francophone work milieu.
- > Develop effective and target approaches to make Ottawa better known abroad – the goal should be to "brand" Ottawa in key markets.
- > Carry out research to better understand the characteristics and motivations of emigrants (out-migration), including graduating students, with a view to altering their behaviour.
- > Develop a clear plan for attacking discrimination and promoting pluralism so as to ensure that Ottawa is seen as a welcoming community.

6. Strategic priority

Clarify misconceptions and myths about immigrant employment

Key actions to support priority

- > Clearly articulate for the general public the importance of immigration for Ottawa based on solid economic and demographic arguments and evidence.
- > Invest in visioning for Ottawa's future economic picture, including predicting the impact of workforce retirement and job availability, by sector, in 10 years time.

- > Develop a public education plan that targets key sectors and delivers sector-specific messages regarding the need to progressively engage more immigrants. Begin with sectors experiencing, or about to experience, critical shortages.
- > Engage “expert ambassadors” in an outreach strategy that focuses on face-to-face relationship building with employers.
- > Work collaboratively with the City of Ottawa to influence key industry sectors, making them more aware of the need to hire immigrants and of the tools available to them.
- > Develop machinery for influencing the media and generating more favourable press treatment of immigrants.
- > Develop an asset based approach that articulates the business case for recruitment and retention of immigrants.

7. Strategic priority

Increase the ‘return’ on innovation

Key actions to support priority

- > Analyze existing and recent pilot projects with a view to scaling up and mainstreaming promising ideas
- > Assess the scale of successful programs in relation to need and devise strategies for scaling up and mainstreaming effective support services.
- > Support HIO and the Ottawa Job Match Network in their efforts to persuade employers to hire more immigrants and improve the matching of immigrants with vacancies

SETTLEMENT SECTOR: STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND KEY ACTIONS

1. Strategic priority

Ensure that Ottawa is – and is seen to be – a welcoming community

Key actions to support priority

- > Proactively engage the mainstream and ethnic media to create a positive image of immigration as an asset for the City of Ottawa; provide evidence to counter myths; develop closer relations with the media, providing a readily accessible ‘bank of information’, facts to back up stories about immigrants and immigration, and access to experts. (Enlist the WCI to assist.)
- > Enlist community leaders – from the public and private sectors as well as voluntary and faith-based institutions – to create a more receptive environment for newcomers both within their own organizations (bringing about positive changes in staff attitudes and behaviours) and in the city at large. (Need to promote an asset based view of immigrants.)
- > Promote the use of CIC’s modernization initiative to develop programs and projects that create a more welcoming environment and foster a sense of belonging among newcomers.
- > Develop a more robust and proactive anti-racism plan that is linked to the media and leadership strategies cited above.

2. Strategic priority

Enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of settlement agencies

Key actions to support priority

- > Promote inter-agency collaboration in dealing with complex cross-cutting issues such as addressing the challenges facing youth, including shared projects and partnerships that take advantage of agency specialization and location.
- > Make better use of the existing coordination infrastructure to plan and develop collaborative projects and activities. This could include structural measures such as designating a rotating chair so that leadership is shared between organizations, or bringing in an external facilitator.

- > Advocate for opportunities to promote cross-government collaboration in policy and program design (because services do not exist in isolation and must be combined to address problems); effective advocacy will require investments in Ottawa's ability to evolve coordinated positions and to sustain a dialogue with funders and decision makers about gaps and problems.
- > Collaboratively establish shared needs assessment facilities.
- > Leverage additional resources or assistance to service currently ineligible populations in order to avoid accountability problems and unflattering program evaluations.
- > Invest in improving the skills and knowledge of settlement workers so as to increase the professionalism of the sector. (There is a need for certification in order to boost credibility.)
- > Lobby governments to reduce the administrative burden on settlement agencies (in the case of CIC, by immediately implementing the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon panel) and to coordinate their reporting and accountability demands.

3. Strategic priority

Create a better alignment between the migrants who settle in Ottawa and the funding that the settlement sector receives.

Key actions to support priority

- > Make use of CIC's modernization initiative to align services in a manner that addresses the unique challenges of Ottawa's new immigrant population and achieves key integration outcomes; the challenges include the need for additional capacity to assist Francophone immigrants and to build capacity so as to better serve children and youth, seniors, as well as immigrants with disabilities.
- > Adjust agency plans to build capacity around anticipated policy directions which include more multi-challenged refugees, growing numbers of labour market entrants with low to mid-level skills, a greater emphasis on high-skilled, fully fluent applicants, and a greater reliance on students as a source of high skilled talent.
- > Develop services for francophone immigrants that are appropriate to the needs of francophone immigrant communities (as opposed to simply duplicating existing English services in French).

- > Promote services for populations that are ineligible by virtue of having acquired citizenship, notably, promote the extension of language training for target populations such as women and seniors.
- > Assess the needs of temporary workers and foreign students as well as those of the host population with a view to providing appropriate services.

4. Strategic priority

Improve the ability of mainstream organizations to assist and provide services to immigrants.

Key actions to support priority

- > Develop collaborative working relations between immigrant service providers and key mainstream service organizations based on mutual respect and careful, joint analysis of immigrant needs and service provider capacity.
- > Enlist the settlement sector's leadership cadre in a targeted effort to promote awareness by mainstream organizations of the fact that settlement agencies are essential partners for addressing the needs of their clients. (Creating reciprocal opportunities for settlement agencies to describe the work they undertake and to hear about what takes place in mainstream organizations will help 'legitimize' the role of settlement agencies and provide them with a better understanding of how and where to intervene.)
- > The settlement sector should seek opportunities to participate in the strategic planning and environmental scanning exercises conducted by mainstream organizations.
- > The settlement sector should promote cultural awareness and cultural competency training for mainstream organizations (including municipal institutions and not-for-profit organizations).
- > Promising practices used in Ottawa (such as the library program) and in other cities to improve the capacity of mainstream organizations and mainstream structures to interact with newcomers should be examined and promoted.
- > The settlement sector should initiate a project, in collaboration with the City of Ottawa and key funders, on how best to support the participation of immigrant service provider executives on boards and advisory structures operated by mainstream organizations. (Participation currently operates on a pro bono basis.) An initiative might be piloted in respect of youth issues.

- > The settlement sector should examine and seek additional support for expanding the use of multicultural liaison officers. **5. Strategic priority**

Promote innovation and excellence within Ottawa's settlement sector

Key actions to support priority

- > Develop a collaborative process among Ottawa's settlement agencies for identifying, analyzing, documenting and disseminating best practice information. Extend this process to the examination of pilot projects with a view to identifying practices than might be scaled up and 'mainstreamed'.
- > Develop a collaborative process among Ottawa's settlement agencies for examining practices and policy directions employed by other provinces and cities and determining what ideas could be replicated in Ottawa.
- > Take advantage of Ottawa's unique position – which provides access to both National Headquarters where policy is developed as well as to Ontario region – to gain influence with the federal policy community. To optimize this advantage, service provider organizations and the City will need to agree on strategic interests, coordinate their approach to policymakers, and disseminate information about the consultation outcomes. As well, local organizations will need to systematically cultivate relations with key policy officials.
- > Strengthen the partnership with the Welcoming Communities Initiative in order to improve the settlement sector's analytic, research and planning capacity.

6. Strategic priority

Promote the attraction and retention of highly trained students by Ottawa.

Key actions to support priority

- > The City of Ottawa should work collaboratively with universities and service providers to brand Ottawa and to develop a strategy for enhancing the City's ability to attract and retain international students.
- > Service providers and the City should enlist the help of major employers to enhance employment opportunities for international students.
- > Settlement service providers should work collaboratively with the City and with local education institutions (colleges and universities) to organize and enhance access by students to essential services (including language training, counselling and educational services).

EDUCATION SECTOR: STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND KEY ACTIONS

1. Strategic priority

Develop neighbourhood, or school catchment area, plans for emulating the Pathways to Education Model in city schools with a high proportion of immigrant students

Key actions to support priority

- > Extend the OLIP inventory project to determine the (non-financial) resources that exist and could (in theory) be mobilized to recreate the core elements that Pathways has identified as crucial for school success.
- > Initiate discussions with school boards, the Education Foundation, immigration service providers (SPOs), community health and resource centres, ethno-cultural groups and other not-for-profit organizations regarding their willingness and ability to coordinate their services and to deliver or support the core elements identified by Pathways.
- > Initiate discussions with the community – in collaboration with SPOs and ethno-cultural associations – to ascertain the help that parents would need to support the process.
- > Examine other educational coordination initiatives – including the Youth Summer University and Success by 6 – in order to build on existing efforts and relationships.

2. Strategic priority

Improve the ‘fit’ in immigrant-intensive neighbourhoods between schools and teachers, on the one hand, and communities of interest, on the other (where the ‘community of interest’ is understood to consist of students and parents from minority ethno-cultural communities prevalent in the school catchment area).

Key actions to support priority

- > Expand the number and quality of cultural competency training programs for Ottawa teachers and ensure that competency training is mandatory in teachers colleges and is integrated into the hiring process. Engage immigrant settlement organizations in the provision of cultural competency training.

- > Involve community leaders in screening potential candidates for principal positions and in monitoring their performance.
- > Create incentives for superintendents to improve student achievement in low performing schools and to end the practice of sending the best teachers to the highest performing schools.
- > Enlist settlement service provider organizations in creating opportunities for face-to-face contact between teachers and school administrators, on the one hand, and members of minority ethno-cultural communities, on the other. The contact would occur at events (such as workshops) aimed at promoting understanding of social, cultural and neighborhood factors shaping the lives of immigrant students. It would also bolster teacher expectations regarding achievement levels.
- > In order to better reflect local dynamics, increase the hiring of minorities into the school system by making greater use of Ottawa-based settlement organizations to identify and steer potential candidates in the direction of the education system; also, enlist the support of unions, regulatory bodies and settlement organizations to help minority, foreign trained professionals acquire the certification needed to teach in Ottawa.
- > Support local organizations in their efforts to help school boards implement the Ministry of Education's Equity and Inclusion Strategy.
- > Increase access by students and parents to counselling resources available in schools and in the community at large (from settlement service providers and ethno-cultural groups) to support teacher initiatives.
- > Reposition schools as community hubs, particularly for youth, in order to create bridging relationships; work with service provider organizations and the City of Ottawa to insert cultural and recreational services into schools in order to boost minority community participation.

3. Strategic priority

Evaluate the impact and efficacy of the metrics and funding formulas used to allocate educational resources in Ottawa relative to the needs of neighbourhoods, particularly low-income neighbourhoods, with high proportions of at-risk immigrant children.

Key actions to support priority

- > Assess the impact of discretionary board funding decisions on the type and level of services available to support immigrant children. In particular, assess the extent to which discretionary board decisions impact the availability of language training for immigrant students (language training comes from designated and non-designated apportionments, the latter category being susceptible to cuts based on contingencies).
- > Assess the extent to which school board and community allocations accurately reflect the needs of schools with large immigrant populations.
- > Assess the impact of the metrics used to assess 'at risk' student programs on the allocation of resources to immigrant students (who may fall well below the threshold for achieving scholastic success).
- > Assess the disproportionate impact of Ottawa's substantial refugee and Francophone populations on school support needs.
- > Work with local school boards to introduce better metrics - more testing data, test performance scores and monitoring of dropout rates - as a basis for assessing the efficacy of interventions and building accountability relations involving schools and communities.

4. Strategic priority

Develop an integrated neighbourhood approach that is structured around support for schools and parents so as to better address the needs of at-risk students in areas with high immigrant populations

Key actions to support priority

- > Ensure that there are structures at the neighbourhood level to support education by channelling and coordinating services that impact educational attainment and aspirations. The structures should have the ability to promote access to services and involvement by immigrant service providers, housing agencies, language training and interpretation agencies, justice-related organizations, and (mental) health services as well as community organizations, school administrators (principals) and school boards (trustees).
- > Increase the volume and quality of interactions between parents, on the one hand, and schools and teachers, on the other, by improving the availability of language training and interpretation.

- > Create and disseminate tailored information for parents (in plain language and with regard to literacy) about education and the supports that are available in the community.

5. Strategic priority

Increase participation by minority parents and by minority ethnic associations in schools and in the larger education system.

Key actions to support priority

- > Expand the production and dissemination of information aimed at parents in plain language and in multiple languages – employing a variety of media – about how to engage with schools, how to register a child, how to read report cards, conflict resolution, etc.
- > Enhance access to translation and interpretation services by parents and schools. (See the language sector priorities.)
- > Build community awareness and understanding of how the public education system works through outreach programs based on partnerships between service provider and minority ethno-cultural organizations; incorporate measures to address parents who speak neither English nor French and where literacy is an issue.
- > Promote community engagement and empowerment by profiling successful initiatives (such as Somali Mothers Association and REPF0) at the community level.
- > Ensure the availability and deployment of Multicultural Liaison Officers (MLOs) to assist in community outreach and to serve as cultural interpreters. There is a need to stabilize support for MLOs by ensuring that funds allocated to school boards (for this purpose) are dedicated to MLO functions; alternatively, with a view to creating a more sustainable platform, financing of MLOs could be organized through settlement service provider organizations who would then ‘place’ the MLOs in designated schools.

IMMIGRANT HEALTH AND WELLBEING SECTOR: STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND KEY ACTIONS

1. Strategic priority

Improve access by immigrants and refugees to health services, including mental health services, prevention and health promotion services.

Key actions to support priority

- > Undertake a comprehensive analysis and consultation process to identify the health service delivery model that will best serve immigrants and refugees in Ottawa.
- > Clarify the services and service pathways available to newcomers who enter Canada in different immigration categories (as immigrants, government sponsored refugees, privately sponsored refugees, refugee claimants, students or temporary workers). Disseminate this information to newcomers, health providers, settlement agencies and ethno-cultural agencies.
- > Improve coordination and referrals among health agencies, placing the onus on agencies, as opposed to on newcomers and ethno-cultural organizations, to coordinate their services in an orderly and efficient manner in response to community and individual needs.
- > Promote harmonization between federal and provincial health services by identifying gaps in eligibility and coverage that result in inequities and complicate administrative processes. As well, a coordinated effort is needed to effect a smooth transition between agencies providing 'special' services and the regular health care system (with appropriate supports).
- > Use outreach and inter-agency exchanges to locate culturally sensitive health services, including primary care, as close as possible to where immigrants and refugees live.
- > Promote collaboration between health care providers and settlement organizations in order to provide 'navigators/brokers' and cultural and language interpreters (at the point of intervention) to help immigrants, refugees and communities access health services.
- > Improve collaboration between settlement and ethno-cultural organizations and health care providers in order to help refugees access mental health services and ancillary health services. (Note Ottawa's high concentration of refugees).

- > Work with health care agencies, with other service providers, and with ethno-cultural communities to devise culturally appropriate medical protocols that reconcile health service standards with cultural realities.
- > Build capacity and knowledge through public or neighborhood forums aimed at sharing information and improving service coordination for refugees and immigrants.
- > Primary care providers and health services organizations should collaborate in a sustained effort to transfer non-clinical services to settlement agencies (prevention, promotion, counseling/education and assistance relating to family members with disabilities or requiring chronic care). The goal would be to facilitate coordination (including coordination of ancillary services such as interpretation and translation), to locate services closer to newcomer populations, to increase service uptake and to control costs (without compromising care).

2. Strategic priority

Enhance health literacy among immigrants and refugees in regard to primary care, disease prevention, health protection (e.g. vaccination and immunization) and promotion (e.g. exercise, healthy food), and navigation of the health care system.

Key actions to support priority

- > Health care providers and settlement organizations should collaborate with ethno-cultural communities to promote health literacy, including information about social determinants, preventive practices, and early intervention. Information also needs to be communicated about the organization of the health system and how different services can be accessed. This will require both passive (written material) and active (outreach) communications, adapted to the understanding of clients.
- > Health providers and settlement organizations need to collaborate in providing accurate health information in a manner that is readily accessible by cultural communities (equipped with different levels of sophistication, language skills and literacy) making use of venues where immigrants and refugees congregate, including language training classes.
- > Health workers must be trained in health literacy concepts and effective communication skills to enable them to better serve immigrant and refugee clients.

- > Agencies need to develop a more effective and collaborative approach to sharing scarce interpretation and language services
- > Service providers need to work with ethno-cultural communities to educate immigrants and refugees about mental health and the services that are locally available to support families.
- > Fora and communications vehicles should be developed so health service providers are able to share challenges, solutions, knowledge and best practices. Supporting the Immigrant Health Network would facilitate this process.
- > Settlement service providers should collaborate with the City to provide incentives so grocery stores in poor neighborhoods stock and offer better, more nutritious food.

3. Strategic priority

Improve the quality of and access to health and population data for Ottawa immigrants and refugees and promote research on pressing and practical health matters.

Key actions to support priority

- > Analyze the impact of processed food, poor nutrition and socio-economic integration problems on the decline in immigrants' physical and mental health.
- > Conduct needs assessments with respect to particular immigrant and refugee cohorts, notably women, seniors and youth.
- > Analyze the consumption of medical services by immigrants and refugees who entered Canada in different immigration categories.
- > Carry out research at a neighborhood level focusing specifically on immigrant and refugee populations and subpopulations (defined by demographic and ethnic characteristics).
- > Undertake research on the efficacy of particular interventions.
- > Conduct research on the needs and treatment of immigrants and refugees with disabilities.

4. Strategic priority

Ensure that health workers in Ottawa reflect the diversity of the population and that staff are adequately trained to effectively serve immigrants, refugees and ethno-cultural communities.

Key actions to support priority

- > Improve organizational and individual responses by introducing cultural competency training for agencies providing medical and health services. Cultural sensitivity training should be introduced into the curriculum of local universities, colleges and training facilities.
- > Health and medical service providers should adopt proactive recruitment practices to increase the number of health workers from ethno-cultural communities.
- > The Ottawa medical and health practice community should continue to look for innovative ways to introduce and make better use of internationally trained health workers in Ottawa's health system. For example, health organizations should collaborate in developing opportunities for foreign trained professionals to serve as lay workers in the capacity of health advisors, community educators, nutritionists and so on.
- > Enhance the knowledge that local practitioners (including family medicine practitioners) have of tropical medicine and illness that more frequently affect Ottawa's immigrant population. The changes should permeate teaching at local universities and colleges.

LANGUAGE SECTOR: STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND KEY ACTIONS

1. Strategic priority

Enhance the quality and availability of French language training in Ottawa

Key actions to support priority

- > Coordinate representations to both the federal and provincial governments by Ottawa voluntary agencies and the City regarding the importance of bilingual language training in Ottawa; in addition, contact COIA committees (Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement) and other federal structures aimed at promoting Francophone minority communities outside Quebec.
- > Support the French school boards in developing and delivering an improved language training program aimed at increasing the number of French language trainers.
- > Promote collaborative efforts to improve standards and guidelines relating to French language training in order to parallel English language instruction (i.e. bring students and instructors to the same level in either language).
- > Promote collaboration among service provider organizations to apply for additional funding in order to increase CLIC training numbers (French language training).
- > Encourage SPOs and LINC providers to develop a capacity to deliver CLIC.
- > Develop agreements among the various school boards allowing them to swap teachers so that language classes can be offered in the 'other' official language. (Where demand is sufficient, the trainers would travel instead of the students; boards would make space available to teachers from other boards.)
- > Conduct research to determine if New Brunswick and Manitoba are delivering bilingual training in a manner that can be emulated by Ottawa.

2. Strategic priority

Improve the planning and deployment of language training courses so as to better match the needs of Ottawa immigrants; as well, harmonize federal and provincial language training programs so they are complementary and mutually supportive.

Key actions to support priority

- > Conduct research/analysis to determine the volume and type of language training required by Ottawa immigrants; extend this analysis to a mapping of employer needs.
- > Systematize the collection of data from key assessment nodes such as the Language Assessment and Resource Centre operated by the Y; develop an analysis plan.
- > Promote collaboration among different language training providers with a view to sharing and analyzing administrative data about training needs and outcomes (to be modeled through course subscription rates which provide information about course desirability, including course length, level, location, and volumes).
- > Explore ways to systematize benchmarking and accreditation for language training so that course completion is recognized by educational institutions and employers.
- > Encourage federal and provincial governments to employ similar standards in their language training programs.
- > Encourage federal and provincial governments to modify access rules so immigrants can navigate among courses (and languages) in order to self-design programs that more closely fit their training needs, permitting optimization of both English and French skills.
- > Encourage federal and provincial governments to harmonize criteria for accessing language training, adopting the broadest possible criteria based on the fact that an ability to communicate is fundamental to securing employment, exercising citizenship and fostering belonging. (The federal prohibition on language training for citizens needs to be relaxed.)
- > Encourage the development of French language training programs that offer the same degree of flexibility as is available in the English stream.
- > Enhance access by immigrants to city language programs by amending the requirement that applicants have a strong capacity in one of the official languages.

3. Strategic priority

Increase access and reduce wait times for immigrants seeking to obtain specialized, work-related language training

Key actions to support priority

- > Encourage local colleges, in collaboration with (employment-related) service provider organizations, to apply for and deliver more bridging programs (such as those at Algonquin which provide diplomas in one year, in place of three.)
- > Collaborate with universities and colleges to allow immigrants to sit in on classes related to their field of expertise (at nominal rates) so as to equip them with relevant language skills.
- > Conduct a market study of the (potential) demand for specialized, self-funded, high quality language training for immigrants (closely linked to labour market needs). (If warranted, develop paid language instruction.)
- > Collaborate with employer organizations to offer on-the-job language training and related mentoring services.

4. Strategic priority

Promote special language programming for populations at risk of exclusion

Key actions to support priority

- > Encourage the federal and provincial governments to expand language programs where literacy issues must be addressed (a significant problem in Francophone communities).
- > Systematize and tailor the training of language instructors to meet the needs of students with varying levels of literacy and ability. This requires an understanding of the diverse dimensions of literacy and language among immigrant and refugee populations.
- > Provide training and accreditation for language instructors that includes cultural competency training; also encourage the training and hiring of instructors from the same cultural and linguistic groups as their students.
- > Encourage collaboration between ethno-cultural organizations and organizations offering language training to ensure that language training is responsive to the needs of the changing immigrant and refugee population in Ottawa.
- > Encourage service provider organizations to partner with ethno-specific agencies to develop programs and to seek funding for language services for elderly immigrants and for women who are (or have been) at home minding their children.

- > Encourage service provider organizations to partner with ethno-specific agencies to develop initiatives that enhance the linguistic and cultural capacity of parents to participate in the education system (and to interact with schools, in particular).

5. Strategic priority

Increase immigrant awareness of language training options, including opportunities to acquire on-the-job language training

Key actions to support priority

- > Develop a comprehensive mapping of the federal, provincial and municipal agencies that are involved in the design, funding/purchase and delivery of language training services and interpreter services (reflecting policy objectives, target populations, and mode of delivery). Build on the OLIP inventory that has been developed in collaboration with the WCI.
- > Ensure that service provider organizations and ethno-cultural associations are fully aware of language training options so they are able to counsel their clients.
- > Inform immigrants of the loss of eligibility for language training following the acquisition of citizenship.
- > Create mechanisms to ensure that francophone immigrants are aware of the services, supports and structures available to them in French to help them settle, live and work in Ottawa as francophones.

6. Strategic priority

Improve and extend access to interpretation services for a broad range of legal, justice, health and social related services

Key actions to support priority

- > Develop a collaborative approach to the province (involving the language training sector and the interpretation sector) aimed at promoting expanded access by vulnerable populations to translation services; also ensure that interpretation and translation services are available from French to other languages.
- > Encourage federal and provincial governments to develop standards for interpreter training as well as standardized testing procedures. The common standards will also need to address ethical concerns, particularly in relation to vulnerable populations.

- Encourage collaboration between the language training sector and the interpretation sector to develop common standards for interpretation and to attract more people into interpreter training in both official languages.

INCLUSION AND INTEGRATION CAPACITY SECTOR: STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND KEY ACTIONS

1. Strategic priority

Create structures and relationships to help service providers design better programs that target services to cultural/ethno-specific communities and sub-groups, including francophone immigrants, visible minority communities, women, girls, youth and seniors at a more 'granular level'.

Key actions to support priority

- Support and build on the City of Ottawa's equity/inclusion lens so it is universally adopted by city institutions; promote the training of city staff in the use of the lens.
- Create and support an umbrella ethno-cultural coordinating/associational body that will facilitate contact with cultural communities (this can borrow from models like the Ethno-cultural Council of Calgary).
- Enlist the support of settlement service provider organizations to create opportunities (workshops or town hall sessions) that would allow cultural communities to meet local decision makers and program staff (to address issues of common concern to communities).
- Extend the use of translation and interpretation services to improve access by immigrants, refugee and ethno-cultural communities to the city's services.
- Continue to increase the representativeness of key city institutions (important services, boards, leadership positions, advisory structures) through active recruitment and talent management programs, drawing on the help of settlement service organizations.
- Develop a structured relationship with researchers to provide analyses, assessments and best practice advice on matters of concern linked to policy and

program design. (In particular, build on OLIP's relationship with the Welcoming Communities Initiative – WCI.)

2. Strategic priority

Create bridging opportunities for ethno-cultural communities by promoting collaborative and inclusive cultural and recreational activities as well as enhancing access to inclusive services/activities.

Key actions to support priority

- > Where possible, provide alternative pathways to services, either by supporting access and utilization of mainstream services or by providing specialized (transitional) services.
- > Enlist the support of service provider organizations to deliver services to cultural communities, directly or in association or partnership with ethno-cultural organizations.
- > Ensure the availability of public spaces such as parks and pools for informal use by newcomer communities; avoid focusing exclusively on formal recreational activities and facilities and find out what communities themselves want. (Bear in mind the special needs of women, seniors and youth.)
- > Break down barriers that impede cultural communities from accessing public facilities such as parks or pools by reducing financial requirements, simplifying financial assistance procedures, providing instruction (for example, swim lessons) and facilitating transportation.
- > Develop a media strategy that results in more favourable treatment of cultural communities and improves receptivity by other consumers of public services.
- > Build on initiatives, such as the Community Cup, which are community-focused as opposed to immigrant-focused in order to engage cultural communities and to foster broader community and civic links. Caribana in Toronto is an example of an ethno-cultural event that has transcended cultural boundaries.
- > Use cultural and recreational activities, particularly sports, organized at a community level to promote bridging among children and youth and among their parents. This creates networking opportunities for participants involved in playing, organizing and attending.

- > Adopt specific measures to promote the engagement of immigrant girls in sports and recreation. (Note the existence of a research partnership between the Boys and Girls Club and the University of Ottawa on girls' participation in recreational activities.)
- > Make greater use of '40 hour' school obligations to create bridging opportunities for youth, helping youth to build networks that link them to employers and to public institutions. Where possible enlist youth in offering services to other youth.

3. Strategic priority

Promote and scale-up programs that are collaborative, involve multiple impacts and which create value for cultural communities and for the city. In particular, focus on youth.

Key actions to support priority

- > For example, expand the Youth University project (connecting youth to employers; providing time away from the job to attend summer university; providing participants with leadership training and bringing back 'graduates' as role models and mentors) by:
 - > Working with local employers and employer associations to continually expand the number of participating employers in order to expand the potential placements available to the City.
 - > Working with local universities and colleges to continually expand the number of placement opportunities available in those institutions for summer instruction.
 - > Enlisting the support of settlement service providers to ensure that participating youth have the necessary (soft) job skills and supports to fully benefit from the experience (through training and counselling).
 - > Enhancing the size and capacity of the Youth University secretariat that is responsible for promoting the 'youth university' and expanding employer and educational participation.
 - > Developing programs and projects for youth participants to undertake that, on the one hand, create value for cultural communities and, on the other, create bridging opportunities to mainstream institutions and the City.

- > Investigating and, where possible, linking the Youth University project to other successful youth undertakings (such as the Pathways initiative, youth employment initiatives organized by postal code and Job Fairs).

4. Strategic priority

Enhance the quantity, accuracy and 'understandability' of information available to ethno-cultural organizations

Key actions to support priority

- > Produce information for ethno-cultural communities in plain language and in multiple languages (employing a variety of media) describing the services that are available, how to access them and how to get involved in providing feedback and communicating needs. Ensure that this information is available at a street level in the locations that members of ethnic minority communities frequent (including public and commercial facilities).
- > Extend the use of informal gathering sites such as libraries, parks community events to gather and supply information (library computers, facilitators for town halls);
- > Develop structured, collaborative initiatives between the City and service provider organizations to communicate and interpret information to ethno-cultural groups.
- > Make increased use of faith organizations as hubs for information sharing and connect formal communication structures with ethno-cultural associations.
- > Create 'one-stop shops' located at the community/neighbourhood level to offer information on key services and policies.
- > Extend the use of community liaison officers, outreach officers and leaders/trainers (such as those used by CAWI) to build awareness of local services and opportunities for engagement. (Linked to the role of Outreach coordinators and Multicultural Liaison Officers.)
- > Enhance the scope and accessibility of translation and interpretation services.
- > Build community awareness and understanding of how support services are organized and delivered (how the system works) by means of outreach programs based on partnerships between service provider and ethno-cultural organizations.

- Build on information systems – such as the 311 and 211 systems – to communicate information about available services. Ensure these systems are accessible to newcomers and that newcomers are aware of the systems and how to use them.

5. Strategic priority

Assess and develop the capacity of ethno-cultural organizations to advance the interests of their communities and to communicate with mainstream institutions and with service providers. Similarly, assess and develop the capacity of the Canadian-born host population to welcome new immigrants and diverse populations.

Key actions to support priority

- Build leadership capacity by creating mentorship opportunities for established service provider organizations to help ethno-specific associations. Ensure that this strategy has a youth component.
- Prioritize and promote engagement by ethno-cultural communities in the democratic process. This includes increasing the representation of immigrants and racialized people in political structures and increasing voter turn-out by immigrant and/or racialized communities. Projects such as Pinecrest-Queensway's plan to increase neighbourhood voter turn-out by 5% should be explored as models for action.
- Explore the dimensions of exclusion and access that result from issues of safety and security among racialized ethno-cultural communities. Promote activities that build trust between communities and authorities and encourage representation by at-risk community members in key institutions.
- Work with communities to generate an improved understanding of the barriers and challenges facing racialized ethno-cultural communities, in particular youth, related to safety, security, justice and marginalization.
- Enable the leaders of ethno-cultural associations by equipping them with relevant information and by helping them to carry out organizational essentials such as preparing contract bids, managing finances and maintaining data and securing meeting space and access to computers.
- Create opportunities for ethno-cultural associations to partner with established settlement service providers, Community Health and Resources Centres and other relevant organizations around projects that bolster links between mainstream

institutions and ethno-cultural groups and that help to build capacity and expertise.

- > Create and support an umbrella ethno-cultural association that will focus on identifying and advertising capacity building opportunities.
- > Create additional “capacity building opportunities” for cultural communities by increasing their access to public space and to underutilized space (such as schools after-hours).
- > Promote outreach that extends to the entire Ottawa community and equally involves all Ottawa residents. For example, conduct outreach activities in both diverse and less diverse neighbourhoods.
- > Extend the inventory of newcomer services and supportive structures undertaken by the Welcoming Communities Initiative and OLIP to include service and gaps in respect of ethno-cultural communities. (Ensure that the exercise has a geographic component so that needs and resources can be mapped at a community level.)
- > Promote policy that ensures equal access to public spaces (for meetings, recreation etc) for all members of the community and community groups. This should be supported by up-to-date and accessible information about what spaces are available to the community.

HORIZONTAL PRIORITIES

Two types of horizontal priorities can be distinguished:

- i. Targeting priorities designed to create a focus on particular themes or groups;
- ii. Cross-cutting priorities aimed at developing or improving capacities that impact or implicate several sectors.

The choice of targeting priorities is based not only on 'technical' considerations but on anticipated public perceptions and key stakeholder support.

I. TARGETING PRIORITIES

The Executive Committee and Secretariat have proposed two targeting priorities:

- a. Economic development
- b. Social inclusion

In addition, it is recommended that the economic development priority emphasize youth employment and labour market incorporation while the social inclusion priority should emphasize refugees and visible minority youth. These groups were cited frequently in the initial thematic conferences and the sector-specific workshops that followed.

The recommendations reflect the need to engage the public and to ensure balance:

- > Economic development and inclusion were identified at the outset by OLIP as critical considerations in respect of immigration to Ottawa. Economic development is universally perceived to be in the public interest; hence the importance of associating immigration management with Ottawa's growth prospects. Inclusion is essential because fairness is a fundamental value and growth must benefit all Ottawa residents, not just a lucky few.
- > Ottawa's migrant intake is characterized by a disproportionate number of refugees. Current policy directions suggest that these flows will increase with a further tilt in the direction of persons with multiple challenges.
- > Youth are linked to the city's economic development because it is anticipated that international student numbers will rise (including Francophone students)

– Ottawa is well endowed with educational institutions – in response to both federal and provincial interest in promoting student flows; as well, visible minority youth represent an inclusion challenge that Ottawa will need to take seriously.

II. CROSS-CUTTING PRIORITIES

1. Strategic priority

Develop a closer working relationship with the City of Ottawa that is mutually advantageous and supportive.

Key actions to support priority

- > Enlist the support of the City's key management cadre.
- > Share OLIP plans with city managers and work with managers to ensure that the City of Ottawa's planning and priority process advances OLIP priorities and supports key strategies.
- > Assist City of Ottawa managers to deliver on their plans insofar as they intersect with OLIP priorities.

2. Strategic priority

Ensure that a "francophone lens" is applied across the sectors and through all of OLIP's work to ensure that the unique experience of francophone is recognized.

Key actions to support priority

- > Continue to strengthen OLIP's connections with the francophone community, including the Réseau de soutien de l'immigration de l'est de l'Ontario.
- > Work deliberately with community partners to promote and increase francophone immigration and retention in Ottawa

3. Strategic priority

Increase the level of financial support available to Ottawa for the economic and social integration of immigrants.

Key actions to support priority

- > Take advantage of the October WCI-LIP (Welcoming Communities Initiative) conference in Ottawa to identify common interests and partners among the other LIP projects.
- > Establish a process for collaborating with other LIPs in order to enlist support from an expanded set of federal and provincial ministries for common strategic directions
- > Analyze Ottawa's share of federal and provincial allocations in the Strategy sectors, including education, health, employment and settlement. Examine the link between Ottawa's ability to access public resources and the number and capacity of local institutions applying for grants.
- > Identify and meet with potential non-government funders to raise awareness of the Ottawa Immigration Strategy. To support this, catalogue the funding priorities of each organization and ask sector leads to identify interventions that will complement established federal and provincial funding boundaries.

4. Strategic priority

Develop a communications strategy with two thrusts: strengthening OLIP bonds and improving public receptivity and support for OLIP initiatives.

Key actions to support priority

- > Develop a website to serve as a repository and central referral point for all OLIP initiatives.
- > Establish a process for providing regular feedback to sectoral partners and collaborators as well as providing timely information and updates to stakeholders using multiple communication channels.
- > Enlist the support of key local leaders (from the city, from public and quasi-public institutions and from major industry sectors) to promote positive attitudes towards newcomers within their circles of influence. (This action should be linked to the HIO Council of Champions network.)
- > Establish contact with mainstream and ethnic media in Ottawa to enlist support for a regular series of articles featuring OLIP activities.

- > Create target communication materials for key audiences, such as industry HR departments.

5. Strategic priority

Establish baseline welcoming community indicators and performance measures for all OLIP activities.

Key actions to support priority

- > Work collaboratively with other LIPs and the WCI to develop baseline welcoming community indicators and performance measures.
- > Work to establish a shared process (with other LIPs) for promoting innovation and adopting promising practices. (Note that common indicators are essential for distinguishing the quality of practices.)
- > Work with strategy sector teams to establish performance measures (outputs and outcomes) for strategic priorities adopted by Council.

6. Strategic priority

Establish a robust analytic capacity to underpin the ongoing operations of the OLIP

Key actions to support priority

- > Work collaboratively with other LIPs and the WCI to establish a research relationship that supports the development of the LIPs.
- > Work with the other LIPs and the WCI to establish common research needs.
- > Establish a joint planning and environmental scanning process in order to create a shared strategic platform for all LIP sectors. In support of this, promote inter-agency cooperation (collaboration) in developing strategic plans.
- > Create a shared data repository for use by the LIPs. In support of this, establish a process for capturing, and making available, administrative data. Enlist the WCI to support this venture.

7. Strategic priority

Create a centralized needs assessment, client routing facility

Key actions to support priority

- > Major settlement, language training and employment organizations need to work collaboratively to identify the appropriate scope of a centralized needs assessment facility.
- > Organizations need to work collaboratively to identify the resource implications of developing a shared assessment facility; organizations should prepare a joint application to government for support in creating such a facility.

8. Strategic priority

Expand the OLIP partnership to develop a collaborative relationship with the City of Gatineau, in recognition of the fact that the labour markets of the two cities are highly intertwined and there is extensive newcomer mobility across the two cities.

Key actions to support priority

- > Enlist the help of the City of Ottawa in establishing a relationship with Gatineau. Also, obtain the assistance of Ottawa-based Francophone associations.
- > Negotiate a partnership with the City of Gatineau to address a specified set of challenges.

9. Strategic priority

Improve the capacity of ethno-cultural organizations to advance the interests of their communities and to communicate with mainstream institutions and with service providers. Conversely, expand the capacity of the Canadian-born host population to welcome new immigrants and diverse populations.

Key actions to support priority

- > Build leadership capacity by creating mentorship opportunities for established service provider organizations to help ethno-specific associations. Ensure this strategy has a youth component.
- > Work with communities to generate an improved understanding of the barriers and challenges facing visible minorities and ethno-cultural communities, in particular youth, in the area of safety, security and justice.
- > Enable the leaders of ethno-cultural associations by equipping them with relevant information and by helping them to carry out organizational essentials

such as preparing contract bids, managing finances, maintaining data, securing meeting space and accessing computers.

- > Create opportunities for ethno-cultural associations to partner with established settlement service providers, Community Health and Resources Centres, Schools and School Boards, and other relevant organizations around projects that bolster links between mainstream institutions and ethno-cultural groups and that help to build capacity and expertise.
- > Create and support an umbrella ethno-cultural association that will focus on identifying and promoting capacity building opportunities.
- > Create additional “capacity building opportunities” for cultural communities by increasing their access to public space and to underutilized space (such as schools after-hours). Develop up-to-date, accessible information about spaces that are available to community groups.
- > Extend the inventory of newcomer services and supportive structures undertaken by the Welcoming Communities Initiative and OLIP to include services and gaps in respect of ethno-cultural communities. (Ensure that the exercise has a geographic component so that needs and resources can be mapped at a community level.)
- > Prioritize and promote engagement by ethno-cultural communities in the democratic process. This includes increasing the representation of immigrants and visible minorities in civic and political structures and increasing voter turn-out by immigrant and visible minority communities. (Projects such as Pinecrest-Queensway’s plan to increase neighbourhood voter turn-out by 5% should be explored as models for action.)
- > Promote activities that build trust between communities and authorities and encourage representation by at-risk community members in key institutions.



APPENDIX B: OLIP COUNCIL TERMS OF REFERENCE, MARCH 2011

PREAMBLE

1. The central role of the OLIP Council in the Implementation Phase of OLIP is to actively engage the leadership of the Ottawa community, promote shared awareness, and to help create an enabling environment for the work of the sectors and to inform the public of community progress towards the OLIP vision.
2. The OLIP Council is working towards a vision of a more prosperous, vibrant, and inclusive national capital, strengthened by the contributions of immigrants in all spheres of life.
3. The OLIP Council members recognize that the pursuit of the OLIP Vision will necessarily be:
 - > Collaborative and collective (by all of us, for all of us)
 - > Transformational – that is, it will involve changes in how we approach policy, planning, public service, and community engagement
 - > A long term process that engages and affects all sectors of our community
 - > A two-way street, which involves and benefits both immigrants and the Ottawa community at large

MANDATE

As one of the main priorities for the next stage of OLIP's work is the engagement of the leadership of the broader community, the role of the OLIP Council will be to:

1. Actively engage the leadership of the Ottawa community and raise awareness to help create an enabling environment for the work of the sectors and inform the public of community progress towards the OLIP vision. This will include convening an annual Ottawa Immigration Strategy Forum, to engage the leadership of the broader community in addressing specific themes and challenges identified by the sectors;

2. Provide leadership for a gradual and progressive transformation of the system of public and community services to achieve an experience of seamless integration of immigrants in Ottawa;
3. Serve as ambassadors for the Ottawa Immigration Strategy throughout the community; and
4. Review the progress of the implementation of the Strategy and address key issues and challenges.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- > The work of the Council is guided by OLIP's governance principles.
- > Inclusion - the effective inclusion and engagement of all stakeholders including the perspectives of immigrants;
- > Collective Learning & Accountability - a commitment to collective learning through action and transparency/accountability to all stakeholders and the broader community;
- > Engagement of Community Leadership - the effective engagement of the leadership of the broader community in Ottawa;
- > Support for Collective Action - convening all stakeholders to act together in a coordinated way;
- > Building on community assets (knowledge, engagement, financial resources) - work to ensure continuity and growth of promising networks / ideas / practices / pilots / plans, and leverage public and private resources to build on what works.
- > Dialogue & Consensus - the engagement of all stakeholders in addressing challenging issues and developing a consensus on collective action;
- > Transparency - clear and open sharing of all information related to OLIP's directions, activities and achievements;
- > Creativity/Innovation - the promotion of new approaches and synergy across the sectors;
- > Decisiveness/Effectiveness - the ability to move forward the approval of implementation plans without undue delays from layers of approval; and
- > Sustainable/Cost Effective - OLIP's governance practices must not consume a disproportionate percentage of time and energy, which should be focused on implementation.

REPORTING & ACCOUNTABILITY

The OLIP Council is accountable, with the other governance tables, to the Ottawa community at large in all its diversity.

MEETINGS

In addition to the annual Forum, the Council will meet once a year.

Quorum: A quorum shall consist of no less than 50% of the members of the Council.

Meeting Minutes and Agendas: the OLIP Secretariat will record the minutes of all meetings of the Council. Minutes, agendas and all reference material will be sent to all members of the Council approximately one week before each meeting. The Chair of the Council will ensure that minutes are approved by the Council and provide his or her signature to indicate that all those present have approved the content.

DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

The Council will use a consensus model of decision-making. This means that if all members are on levels 1 to 4 on the following scale, consensus is achieved. If someone finds himself / herself on level 5, they have the obligation to indicate what information they require from the group. If someone is on level 6, they will be asked to offer a solution that can accommodate their needs and the needs of the rest of the group.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. Fully support</p> <p>2. Support with reservations.</p> <p>3. Acceptable.</p> | <p>4. Will not block it, can live with it</p> <p>5. Need more information or more discussion.</p> <p>6. No; cannot accept it</p> |
|---|---|

CHANGING THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Council may change, add or modify the terms of reference by consensus.

MEMBERSHIP

The Council will be comprised of the leadership of the current member organizations. Individuals will be appointed to the Council for a 3-year term (renewable)

APPENDIX C: LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS*

OLIP RESEARCH COMMITTEE	Meyer Burstein Ottawa Welcoming Communities Initiative	OLIP CONSULTATION WITH SETTLEMENT SERVICE PROVIDERS – FEBRUARY 19 TH , 2010
<p>Caroline Andrew OLIP Steering Committee, Chair Ottawa Welcoming Communities Initiative Director, Centre on Governance, University of Ottawa</p>	<p>Carl Nicholson Executive Director, Catholic Immigration Centre</p>	<p>Faduma Abdurahman Settlement Counsellor, Catholic Immigration Centre</p>
<p>Beham Behnia Academic Director, Centre for International Migration and Settlement Studies, Carleton University</p>	<p>Adnan Türegün Executive Director, Centre for International Migration and Settlement Studies, Carleton University</p>	<p>Caroline Andrew OLIP Steering Committee, Chair Ottawa Welcoming Communities Initiative Director, Centre on Governance, University of Ottawa</p>
<p>Rashmi Luther Lecturer, School of Social Work, Carleton University</p>		<p>Marcia Aronson Manager, Ottawa Public Library</p>
<p>Linda Manning Director, Leveraging Immigrant Talent</p>		<p>Roya Atmar Settlement Counsellor, Catholic Immigration Centre</p>

* The position titles and organizational affiliation of the participants listed above correspond to the positions they held at the times when OLIP held its consultations and meetings.

Fred Awada
Executive Director, Lebanese and Arab Social Services Agency

Maria Eugenia Gonzalez
Outreach Coordinator, Immigrant Women Services Ottawa

Zoë Mallett
OLIP Administrative Assistant

Meyer Burstein
Ottawa Welcoming Communities Initiative

Elwira Felczak
Manager, Community Integration Program, Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization

Hamdi Mohamed
Executive Director, Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization

Pierre Dajjo
Executive Director, Conseil Économique et Sociale d'Ottawa-Carleton

Adriana Jary
Settlement Services, Jewish Family Services

Hindia Mohamoud
OLIP Project Director

Mohamed Dalmar
Settlement Manager, Catholic Immigration Centre

Dorothy Jeffreys
Coordinator, Ottawa Public Library, Alta Vista Branch

Jill Murphy
OLIP Outreach and Research Coordinator

Deborah Dearham
Manager, Ottawa Public Library, Nepean CentrepoinTE, Centennial and Emerald Plaza Branches

Abdirizak Karod
Executive Director, Somali Centre for Family Services

Carl Nicholson
Executive Director, Catholic Immigration Centre

Tanya Mendes Gagnon
Senior Director of Newcomer Services, National Capital Region YMCA-YWCA

George Koneval
Director, Newcomer Information Centre, National Capital Region YMCA-YWCA

Philip Robert
Manager, Ottawa Public Library

Marie-Eve Gendron
Director, Job Connect, National Capital Region YMCA- YWCA

Ron Lavoie
LINC Manager, Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization

Janice Sargant
Project Manager, STEP, Algonquin College

Patricia Skarzynski
Supervising Librarian, Ottawa
Public Library, Beaverbrook Branch

Mark Zarecki
Executive Director, Jewish Family
Services

Patrick Celleri-Contreras
Employment and Training
Consultant, Ministry of Training,
Colleges and Universities

Adnan Türegün
Executive Director, Centre for
International Migration and
Settlement Studies, Carleton
University

**OLIP CONSULTATION
WITH EMPLOYERS
AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT ACTORS
- MAY 20TH, 2010**

Magdalene Cooman-Maxwell
Manager, Ottawa Job Match
Network, LASI World Skills

Cathy Turnbull
Vice President, Employment,
Enterprise and Newcomer
Services, National Capital Region
YMCA-YWCA

Henry Akanko
Director, Hire Immigrants Ottawa

Jeffrey Dale
OLIP Council member

Mengis Tsegaye
Executive Director, LASI World
Skills

Ray Barton
Chief Executive Officer, Vitesse
Re-Skilling

Stephen Daze
Executive Director,
Entrepreneurship and Innovation,
Ottawa Centre for Research and
Innovation

Tabitha Waithaka
Outreach Librarian, Ottawa Public
Library

George Brown
President, Ottawa Community Loan
Fund

Michelle Downie
Senior Research Associate,
Conference Board of Canada

Rupert Yeung
Manager, Client Services, Ottawa
Chinese Community Services
Centre

Meyer Burstein
Ottawa Welcoming Communities
Initiative

Srgt. Jim Elves
Sergeant, Resourcing and
Development, Ottawa Police
Service

Arber Zaplluzha
Program Manager, International
Medical Doctors program, Catholic
Immigration Centre

George Chin
Manager, Court Operations,
Ministry of the Attorney General

Kathleen Fairnie
Employment and Training
Consultant, Ministry of Training,
Colleges and Universities

Elizabeth Farrell
Manager, Employment Services
Branch, City of Ottawa

Johanne Levesque
Director, Community Sustainability,
City of Ottawa

Marie O'Dell
Director of Recruitment, Montfort
Hospital

Colin Gillespie
OLIP Volunteer

Diana MacKay
Director, Education and Health,
Conference Board of Canada

Nihan Ozhusrev
Project Coordinator, Ottawa
Chinese Community Services
Centre

Paula Green
Director General, Equity and
Diversity, Public Service
Commission

Zoë Mallett
OLIP Administrative Assistant

Olga Placinta
Human Resources Coordinator,
Export Development Canada

Jessica Hak Hepburn
Communications Manager, Ottawa
Chamber of Commerce

Kathy McKinley
Executive Director, Education,
Ottawa Centre for Research and
Innovation

Brenda Richardson
Business Development Coordinator,
Causeway Work Centre

Ana Claudia Ilha
Policy Analyst, Labour Market,
Citizenship and Immigration
Canada

Carolyn Mitrow
Service Delivery Coordinator,
Ministry of Training, Colleges and
Universities

Meena Roberts
Management Consultant

Edward Jackson
Associate Professor, School of
Public Policy and Administration,
Carleton University

Hindia Mohamoud
OLIP Project Director

Shirley-Erica Roberts
Settlement Officer, Citizenship and
Immigration Canada

Gisele Larocque
Partner, ValaConcepts, Labour
Market Planning Committee,
Ministry of Training, Colleges and
Universities

Jill Murphy
OLIP Outreach and Research
Coordinator

Ian Scott
Economic Development Officer, City
of Ottawa

Tahanie Sheikh
OLIP Volunteer

PARTICIPANTS:

Syeda Bhatti
OLIP Volunteer

Dick Stewart
OLIP Council Chair

Nimo Abubakar
Senior's Case Manager/Health
Consultant, Somali Centre for
Family Services

Emily Boehm
OLIP Volunteer

**OLIP CONSULTATION
WITH SERVICE PROVIDER
ORGANIZATIONS –
APRIL 15TH, 2010**

Mohamoud Hagi-Aden
Coordinator
Community Connections Program,
South-East Ottawa Community
Health Centre

Candice Botha
Individual Empowerment and
Skills Development Facilitator,
Ottawa Carleton Independent
Living Centre

FACILITATORS:

Caroline Andrew
Chair, OLIP Steering Committee
Ottawa Welcoming Communities
Initiative
Director, Centre on Governance,
University of Ottawa

Karen Anne Blakely
Director of Seniors Services,
Jewish Family Services

Bill Shields

Marcia Aronson
Manager, Ottawa Public Library

George Brown
Manager, Ottawa Community
Loan Fund

Rosanne Emard

Norah Barongo
OLIP Inventory Coordinator

Aaron Burry
General Manager, City of
Ottawa, Community and Social
Services Department

Charles Smith

Mary Barr
Director of Settlement and
Intergovernmental Affairs for the
Ontario Region, Citizenship and
Immigration Canada

Bernadette Bonk
Program Manager,
Employment, City of Ottawa,
Community and Social
Services Department

Kathleen Cameron
Program Manager, Parent
Resource Centre

Franca DiDionete
Executive Director, Catholic Family
Services

Michel Gervais
Executive Director, Vanier
Community Service Centre

April Carriere
OLIP Research Committee

Abebe Engdasaw
Equal Access and Diversity
Specialist, Ottawa Public Health

David Gibson
Executive Director, Sandy Hill
Community Health Centre

Marie-Andrée Carrière
Executive Director, Community
Information Centre of Ottawa

Clara Freire
Manager, Client Service Strategies,
City of Ottawa, Organizational
Development and Performance
Department

Colin Gillespie
OLIP Volunteer

Abai Coker
Administrator Adult ESL pro-
grams, Ottawa Catholic School
Board

Elizabeth Farrell
Program Manager, Employment
Services, City of Ottawa,
Community and Social Services
Department

Rick Goodwin
Executive Director, The Men's
Project

Zoi Coucopoulos
Manager of Administration,
Ottawa Family Services

Sharon Fernandez
Independent Consultant,
Employment, Immigration, Equity
and Diversity

Mohamoud Hagi-Aden
Coordinator, South-East Ottawa
Community Centre

Yolande Cremer
Program Manager, Customer
Relations and Development,
City of Ottawa, Parks,
Recreation and Cultural
Service Department

Susan Gagnon
Regional Director, Ontario Ministry
of Community and Social Services

Mohamud Hassan
Coordinator, Funding and
Employment Development, City
of Ottawa, Community and Social
Services Department

Pauline Daling
Strategic Initiatives and
Business Planning, City of
Ottawa, Community and
Protective Services Department

Aline Gahimbare
Agente de projet région Est de
l'Ontario, Campagne Voisin-es,
ami-es et familles (VAF)

Mohamed A. Islam
Youth Worker, Somali Centre for
Family Services

Adriana Jary
 Manager, Settlement Services,
 Jewish Family Services

Wanda MacDonald
 Executive Director, Pinecrest
 Queensway Community Health
 Centre

Irene Mlambo
 HIV/AIDS Prevention Coordinator,
 Somerset West Community Health
 Centre

Jolanta Kania
 Administrator International
 Languages Programs, Ottawa
 Catholic School Board

Zoë Mallett
 OLIP Administrative Assistant

Hamdi Mohamed
 Executive Director, Ottawa
 Community Immigrant Services
 Organization

Abid Khawaja
 Settlement Officer, Ontario Region,
 Citizenship and Immigration
 Canada

Christina Marchant
 Director, Health Promotion,
 Centretown Community Health
 Centre

Hindia Mohamoud
 OLIP Project Director

Susan Kuruvilla
 Community Health Worker, South
 Nepean Community Health Centre

Liam Martin
 OLIP Volunteer

Alex Munter
 Director, Youth Services Bureau of
 Ottawa

Benoît Laberge
 Coordonnateur, Service
 de développement
 communautaire, Conseil des écoles
 publiques de l'est
 de l'Ontario

Jack McCarthy
 Executive Director, Somerset West
 Community Health Centre

Jill Murphy
 OLIP Outreach and Research
 Coordinator

Line LeBel-Lylyk
 Coordonnatrice, Comité Réseau
 d'Ottawa

Elaine Medline
 Special Projects and
 Communications Coordinator,
 Champlain Local Health Integration
 Network

Kimberley Murray
 Policy and Planning Specialist,
 Client Service Strategies Branch,
 City of Ottawa, Organizational
 Development & Performance
 Department

Sylvie Leclerc
 Agente de développement com-
 munitaire, Conseil des écoles
 publiques de l'est de l'Ontario

Tanya Mendes-Gagnon
 Senior Director, Newcomer
 Services, National Capital Region
 YMCA-YWCA

Sahar Noja
 Outreach Settlement Counsellor,
 Jewish Family Services

Carl Nicholson
Executive Director, Catholic
Immigration Centre

Dunia Sakr
Volunteer Co-ordinator for Arabic
Seniors, Hunt Club Riverside
Community Service Centre

Geordie Walker
System Principal, Ottawa-Carleton
District School Board

Nicole Olivier
Program Coordinator, La Cité
collégiale

Janice Sargant
Director, Settlement to
Employment Program (STEP)-
Algonquin College

Paul Weber
Senior Policy Advisor, Citizenship
and Immigration Canada

Dominique Paris-MacKay
Anti-Poverty Community
Coordinator, Overbrook-Forbes
Community Resource Centre

Larissa Silver
Director of Programs and Services,
Western Ottawa Community
Resource Centre

Chris White
Event Manager, Community Cup
2010

David Pepper
Director of Community
Development, Ottawa Police
Service

Valerie Smith
Youth Coordinator, Ottawa
Community Immigrant Services
Organization

Rula Worall
Supervisor, Settlement Unit,
Citizenship and Immigration
Canada

Shahnaz Perveen
Housing and Transitional
Support Worker, Immigration
Women Services Ottawa

Brad Spooner
Program Manager, Nepean, Rideau
and Osgoode Community Health
Centre

Ying Xie
Program Manager, Employment
Support, Ottawa Chinese
Community Services Centre

Richard Plummer
Director, Inclusion, United Way
Ottawa

Simone Thibault,
Executive Director, Centretown
Community Health Centre

Ella Zabarsky
Outreach Settlement Counsellor,
Jewish Family Services

Nicole Rhéaume
Community Development
Manager, Ottawa Community
Housing

Shailja Verma
Manager, Continuing and
Community Education, Ottawa
Catholic School Board

**OLIP CONSULTATION
WITH IMMIGRANT
ASSOCIATIONS AND
ETHNOCULTURAL
ORGANIZATIONS –
MAY 27TH, 2010**

Ning Kee
Chin Community of Ottawa

Diana Molepo
African Diaspora Association

Azhar Ali Khan
Muslim Coordinating Council

Matshela Molepo
African Diaspora Association

Rasul Abbasi
Iranian Community, Human Rights
Activist

Zoë Mallett
OLIP Administrative Assistant

Jill Murphy
OLIP Outreach and Research
Coordinator

Amran Ali
Canadian-Somali Mothers
Association

Percival Marcaida
Spanish / Chinese Community

Nazih Nazrallah
Ahlul Bayt

Caroline Andrew
Chair, OLIP Steering Committee
Ottawa Welcoming Communities
Initiative
Director, Centre on Governance,
University of Ottawa

Fantu Melesse
Ethiopian Association

Erenia Oliver
Club Casa de los Abuelos

Jaime Baquero
Colombian Community of Ottawa

Irene Mlambo
African Diaspora Association

Meena Roberts
Facilitator

Ana Maria Cruz-Valderrama
Club Casa de los Abuelos

Hindia Mohamoud
OLIP Project Director

Hawa Shafi
Canadian-Somali Mothers
Association

Omar Ugas
Somali Fathers Association

Manal Abou-Chakra
Settlement Worker,
Lebanese and Arab Social Services
Agency

Jill Murphy
OLIP Outreach and Research
Coordinator

Barbara Wilson
Jamaican Community
Association

Mohamed Dalmar
Manager, Settlement, Catholic
Immigration Centre

Bill Shields
Facilitator

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT MEETINGS – JUNE-JULY 2010

Elwira Felczak
Manager, Community Integration
Program, Ottawa Community
Immigrant Services Organization

Abdulkadir Yussuf Settlement
Program Manager, Somali Centre
for Family Services

SETTLEMENT SECTOR

Tanya Mendes-Gagnon
Senior Director of Newcomer
Services, National Capital Region
YMCA-YWCA

Mark Zarecki
Executive Director, Jewish Family
Services

Hamdi Mohamed (Chair)
Executive Director, Ottawa
Community Immigrant Services
Organization

Sharon Kan
Executive Director, Ottawa Chinese
Community Services Centre

ECONOMIC INTEGRATION SECTOR

Meyer Burstein
OLIP Strategy Development
Coordinator

Zoë Mallett
OLIP Administrative Assistant

Jeffery Dale (Chair)
OLIP Council

Marcia Aronson
Manager, Ottawa Public
Library

Hindia Mohamoud
OLIP Project Director

Meyer Burstein
OLIP Strategy Development
Coordinator

Henry Akanko
 Director, Hire Immigrants Ottawa

Leslie Emory
 Coordinator, Career Mentorship Program, Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization

Nihan Ozhusrev
 MAPLE Project Coordinator, Ottawa Chinese Community Services Centre

Ronald Bisson
 Principal Associate, Ronald Bisson and Associates

Gisele Larocque
 Partner, ValaConcepts Inc.

Bill Shields
 Facilitator

George Brown
 President, Ottawa Community Loan Fund

Zoë Mallett
 OLIP Administrative Assistant

Ian Scott
 Economic Development Officer, City of Ottawa, Community Sustainability Department

Denis Cloutier
 La Cité Collégiale

Linda Manning
 Director, Leveraging Immigrant Talent

Mengis Tsegaye
 Executive Director, LASI World Skills

Magdalene Cooman-Maxwell
 Manager, Ottawa Job Match Network, LASI World Skills

Hindia Mohamoud
 OLIP Project Director

Ying Xie
 Program Manager, Employment Support, Ottawa Chinese Community Service Centre

Jackie Cote
 Program Officer, NHQ - Foreign Credentials Referral Office, Citizenship and Immigration Canada

Jill Murphy
 OLIP Outreach and Research Coordinator

EDUCATION SECTOR

Denyce Daikun
 Manager, Algonquin College Access Program, Algonquin College

Nicole Olivier
 Program Coordinator, La Cité Collégiale

Wali Farah (Chair)
 Help at School, Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization

Meyer Burstein
OLIP Strategy Development
Coordinator

Sue Merrill
Researcher, Pathways to Education

Bill Shields
Facilitator

Norah Barongo
OLIP Inventory Coordinator

David Moen
Trustee (Retired),
Ottawa Carleton District School
Board

Dick Stewart
Chair,
OLIP Council
Health and Wellbeing Sector

Ives Clarke
Chair, Community Council on
Ethnocultural Equity (CCEE)

Ismail Mohamed
Community Developer, Huntclub
Riverside Community Service
Centre

HEALTH AND WELLBEING SECTOR

Soumeya Daghefali
Administrative Assistant,
Regroupement Ethnoculturel
des Parents Francophones de
l'Ontario

Hindia Mohamoud
OLIP Project Director

Jack McCarthy (Chair)
Executive Director, Somerset West
Community Health Centre

Luce Lapierre
La Cité collégiale
Director, Recruitment and
Development

Jill Murphy
OLIP Outreach and Research
Coordinator

Meyer Burstein
OLIP Strategy Development
Coordinator

Gabriela Lopez
President, Making Ottawa
Safer Together

Andrée Myette
Community Development
Coordinator, Conseil des écoles
publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario

Caroline Andrew
Chair, OLIP Steering Committee
Ottawa Welcoming Communities
Initiative
Director, Centre on Governance,
University of Ottawa

Jennifer McKenzie
Chair, Board of Trustees,
Ottawa Carleton District
School Board

Hawa Shafi
Canadian-Somali Mothers
Association

Karin Decloux
Project Coordinator, International
Medical Doctor Programs, Catholic
Immigration Centre

Abdourahamane Diallo
 Program Coordinator,
 Votre santé avant tout, Conseil
 Économique et Social d'Ottawa
 Carleton

Leslie McDiarmid
 Executive Director, South East
 Ottawa Community Health Centre

Bill Shields
 Facilitator

Abebe Engdasaw
 Equal Access and Diversity
 Specialist,
 Ottawa Public Health

Elaine Medline
 Special Projects and
 Communications Coordinator,
 Champlain Local Health Integration
 Network

Dr. Kevin Pottie
 Champlain Immigrant Health
 Network, Bruyère Family
 Health Centre, Institute of
 Population Health, University
 of Ottawa

Omar Ezzat
 Clinical Coordinator, Reception
 House Clinic, Catholic Immigration
 Centre

Zoë Mallett
 OLIP Administrative Assistant

LANGUAGE SECTOR

Brigitte Gagnon
 Planning Officer, Réseau des ser-
 vices de santé en français de l'Est
 de l'Ontario

Bertha Mo
 Counselling Program Manager,
 Ottawa Community Immigrant
 Services Organization

St-Phard Desir (Chair)
 Coordinator, Eastern Network,
 Réseau de Soutien à
 l'Immigration Francophone de
 l'Est de l'Ontario

Brian Gilligan
 Executive Director, Community
 Development, Ottawa Community
 Housing

Hindia Mohamoud
 OLIP Project Director

Meyer Burstein
 OLIP Strategy Development
 Coordinator

Doug Gruner
 Medical Coordinator, Champlain
 Immigrant Health Network

Jill Murphy
 OLIP Outreach and Research
 Coordinator

Lisa Ambaye
 Manager, Workplace Language
 Training, LASI World Skills

Godwin Ifedi
 Heart Health Project Officer,
 Ottawa Public Health, City of
 Ottawa

Linda O'Neil
 Coordinator, Multicultural
 Mental Health Services Working
 Group, Canadian Mental Health
 Association

Marcia Aronson
 Manager, Ottawa Public Library

François Boucher
Settlement Agent, Conseil
Économique et Social
d'Ottawa-Carleton (CESOC)

Nicole Olivier
Program Coordinator, La Cité
collégiale

Frempon Bafi-Yebo
Liaison Officer, Community
Recreation, City of Ottawa, Parks,
Recreation and Cultural Services

Monique Brûlé
Head of Community Services
and Libraries,
Conseil des écoles catholiques
de langue française du
Centre-Est

Stephane Rainville
Director,
Language Assessment and Referral
Centre, National Capital Region
YMCA-YWCA

Jaime Baquero
Colombian Community of Ottawa

Ron Lavoie
LINC Manager, Ottawa
Community Immigrant Services
Organization

Bill Shields
Facilitator

Beham Behnia
Academic Director, Centre for
International Migration and
Settlement Studies, Carleton
University

Tanya Mendes-Gagnon
Senior Director of Newcomer
Services, National Capital
Region YMCA-YWCA

Shailja Verma
Manager, Continuing and
Community Education, Ottawa
Catholic School Board Integration
Capacity

François Boucher
Settlement Agent,
Conseil Économique et Social
d'Ottawa-Carleton

Zoë Mallett
OLIP Administrative Assistant

INTEGRATION CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT SECTOR

Aaron Burry
General Manager, City of Ottawa,
Community and Social Services
Department

Hindia Mohamoud
OLIP Project Director

Caroline Andrew (Chair)
Chair, OLIP Steering Committee
Ottawa Welcoming Communities
Initiative
Director, Centre on Governance,
University of Ottawa

Naini Cloutier
Director, Community Services,
Pinecrest-Queensway Community
Health Centre

Jill Murphy
OLIP Outreach and Research
Coordinator

Meyer Burstein
OLIP Strategy Development
Coordinator

Chelby Daigle
Project Coordinator, Making Ottawa
Safer Together

Mohamed Dalmar
 Manager, Settlement Department,
 Catholic Immigration Centre

Stacey Lauridsen
 Assistant Director, Community
 Services, Youth Services Bureau

Carl Nicholson
 Executive Director, Catholic
 Immigration Centre

Jerrett DeFazio
 Director of Programs, Ottawa Boys
 and Girls Club

Gabriela Lopez
 President, Making Ottawa Safer
 Together

Nichole Rhéaume
 Community Development
 Manager, Ottawa Community
 Housing

Suzanne Doerge
 Project Coordinator, City for All
 Women Initiative

Zoë Mallett
 OLIP Administrative Assistant

Shukria Samantar
 Ethno-Cultural Community
 Program, Youth Services
 Bureau

Jephtée Elysée
 Business Consultant, Y Enterprise
 Centre, National Capital Region
 YMCA-YWCA

Irene Mlambo
 Coordinator, HIV Prevention
 Health for African and Caribbean
 Communities, Somerset West
 Community Health Centre

Maria Cristina Serje
 Diversity Consultant, City of
 Ottawa, Human Resources
 Department

Leonore Evans
 Policy Research Analyst, City of
 Ottawa, Community Social Services
 Department

Hamdi Mohamed
 Executive Director, Ottawa
 Community Immigrant Services
 Organization

Bill Shields
 Facilitator

Mohamud Hassan
 Coordinator, Funding &
 Employment Development, City of
 Ottawa

Hindia Mohamoud
 OLIP Project Director

Mohamed Sofa
 Community Health Worker,
 Pinecrest Queensway Community
 Health Centre

Kwende Kefentse
 City of Ottawa, Parks, Recreation
 and Cultural Services Department

Jill Murphy
 OLIP Outreach and Research
 Coordinator

Adnan Türegün
 Executive Director, Centre for
 International Migration and
 Settlement Studies, Carleton
 University

Nancy Worsfold

Executive Director, Crime
Prevention Ottawa, City of
Ottawa

Natali Zuniga

City of Ottawa, Parks,
Recreation and Cultural
Services



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ottawa local
immigration partnership

partenariat local
pour l'immigration ottawa

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