

DIVERSITY AND IMMIGRATION COMMUNITY PLAN



IT'S YOUR PLAN

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There was a tremendous response from the community to provide input into the development of this plan and the Local Diversity and Immigration Partnership Council would like to thank:

- the community members, institutions, agencies, boards and organizations that participated in the consultations, summits, survey and interviews;
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- the convening partners of the Council: the Community Development Council of Durham, the Durham Region Local Training Board and the Department of Social Services, Region of Durham;
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MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS OF THE LOCAL DIVERSITY & IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL



Dr. Hugh Drouin

Larry O'Connor

“ A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step”

Laozi

The Local Diversity and Immigration Partnership Council is pleased to offer this Plan as a blueprint towards building a more inclusive and welcoming Durham region. All residents of Durham region should have opportunities to fully participate in their communities and utilize their skills and creativity. This plan is a framework to build on the work already being done in Durham and consider how to move forward to build the kind of Durham region that will grow, prosper and be a community of choice. As challenges emerge and trends shift, this framework will serve as a mechanism to address changing needs and new priorities. This is a community driven plan. Every resident, employer, agency and institution has a role to play in its success. The Local Diversity and Immigration Partnership Council is charged with the responsibility of overseeing the implementation of this plan.

We would like to acknowledge former Co-Chair of the LDIPC, April Cullen, and her commitment to this initiative.

These are exciting times and the work that lies ahead is a chance for Durham region to become a leader in diversity and immigration matters.

Dr. Hugh Drouin

Larry O'Connor

Co-Chair, Local Diversity &
Immigration Partnership Council
Commissioner, Social Services Department,
Region of Durham

Co-Chair, Local Diversity
& Immigration Partnership Council
Mayor, Township of Brock

BACKGROUND

In 2005 the Canada Ontario Immigration Agreement (COIA) was signed by both the federal and provincial levels of government formally acknowledging for the first time that municipalities have a role in the integration and settlement of newcomers to Canada. The federal government through Citizenship and Immigration Canada has responsibility for setting immigration levels, citizenship and public policy. The province of Ontario's Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration has specific responsibilities they share with the federal government. What is new is the explicit role of municipalities in supporting the immigration and settlement process.

Through the Municipal Immigration Committee, the COIA calls for the development of Local Immigration Partnership Councils. These Councils will strengthen the role of local communities throughout Ontario in serving and integrating immigrants.

Local Immigration Partnership Councils are a mechanism to develop local partnerships and community-based planning around the needs of residents and newcomers. The areas of priority for the Local Immigration Partnership Council are to create a culture of inclusion; attract and retain newcomers; improve labour market outcomes for newcomers; and enhance settlement capacity. Elected officials of the Region of Durham recognized the value of these goals and endorsed the creation of the Durham Local Diversity and Immigration Partnership Council (LDIPC), aligning Durham Region with this federal initiative.

Local Immigration Partnership Councils are advisory bodies, assisting in the coordination of existing diversity and settlement initiatives, the coordination of new initiatives and overseeing the development and implementation of a community plan.

Many of Durham's municipalities, educators, service providers and businesses began the journey of integrating the needs of newcomers into planning processes long ago. What was missing was a single body to assist in capturing those activities, identifying emerging needs and planning for the future to ensure the best use of resources, shared best practices and avoiding duplication. The LDIPC meets that need.



PROCESS

Throughout 2008 - 2010, community consultations that included more than 500 individuals representing thousands of constituents took place. Key informant interviews, focus groups, sector specific working groups, an online survey, a literature and research review, two summits, and the findings from over sixty community contributors who developed content for the Durham Immigration Portal fed into the consultation process. The Durham community is ready and eager to see this work move forward. This plan is a result of those consultations.

The community of Durham region indicated that diversity must be defined using the broadest definition of the word to be inclusive of all populations that include the young, aged, newcomers, minorities, people with disabilities and those of all sexual orientations. As such, in Durham region, the Local Immigration Partnership Council is named the Local Diversity and Immigration Partnership Council.

Short term, the community recognizes that we are accountable to the mandate set out under the Canada Ontario Immigration Agreement (COIA) and must focus on the needs of newcomers. Long term, this community is proud of its willingness to create a path to weave the complex needs of the broader diverse community into the infrastructure of the Council and the plan.



WHO LIVES IN DURHAM? POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographic complexity and population diversity affects service delivery, economic development and planning. There is much to be considered when setting planning and service priorities.

Durham remains one of the fastest growing municipalities in Ontario. Almost 85% of the region's total population is located in five municipalities situated along Lake Ontario, stretching from Pickering in the west to Clarington in the east. Durham Region's population is forecast to increase to nearly one million people (960,000) by the year 2031. In 2006, the date of the last census, the population of Durham Region was 561,258.

The western portion of our region has experienced a steady increase in the numbers of new immigrants as evidenced by 2006 census data. The northern parts of our region are rural in nature and the communities much smaller. While the north has not yet had the same attraction for new immigrants, there is a realization that these rural communities could potentially benefit from increased settlement of newcomers.

Diverse populations in Durham region represent substantial groups of residents. For planners, elected officials, business owners and service providers, these numbers translate into powerful planning considerations. The numbers indicate that the business of serving diverse populations is indeed, everyone's business.

Diverse Populations¹	Estimated number of residents in Durham
Residents who identify as visible minorities (16.8%) ²	93 000
Residents over the age of 65 years (10.7%)	60 000
Residents under the age of 15 years (20.5%)	115 000
Residents who do not identify as heterosexual (estimates range from 1.7% to 14%) ³	9 500 to 78 600
Residents who are immigrants (21%)	118 000
Residents with a disability (15.7%) ⁴	70 000
Residents with French as their mother tongue (1.8%)	10 000
Residents who identify with an Aboriginal group (1.2%)	6 565

IDENTIFYING PRIORITIES



Where to start?

Durham region has reached a turning point in its history. How and where residents work, play and live in Durham region for the next 40 years will depend largely on how shifting demographics and economic trends are embraced today. A diverse population brings skills, creativity and innovation. The opportunities Durham region creates to utilize those skills, spark innovation and spur creativity will impact what the community and the local economy will look like in the future.

Ontario is changing. Ontario in the Creative Age, a report commissioned by the Province of Ontario, suggests communities that shift to economies of creativity will compete and prosper in the new Ontario and that attracting and retaining the best and the brightest are essential components of that transition. The authors define economies of creativity as “an economy [that] is shifting away from jobs based largely on physical skills or repetitive tasks to ones that require analytical skills and judgment ... and a shift from employment in goods-producing to service industries, from occupations that depended on physical work to produce goods to ones that provide service and rely on creativity”.⁵

Durham region is changing and the creation of the Diversity and Immigration Community Plan is one of many good first steps towards framing that change.

Based on community consultations and local research, four primary areas of priority have been identified to position Durham region to meet the needs of all residents and make Durham region a community of choice. These four areas of priority are:

- create a culture of inclusion;
- improve labour market outcomes for newcomers;
- attract and retain newcomers; and
- enhance Durham’s settlement capacity.



Alignment with the Durham Region Strategic Plan

Growing Together: Durham Region Strategic Plan 2009-2014⁶ established key priorities, directions and related considerations that are important within the broader community context and was endorsed by Regional Council. The Diversity and Immigration Plan flows from that document with complementary priorities in alignment with the vision residents have expressed for Durham Region.

“ It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences”

Audre Lorde

Responsibility

Every resident, organization, institution, agency, government and individual has an opportunity to make this plan successful. Integration is a two-way street with the responsibility of successful integration resting with both the existing community and those finding their place in it. We are all leaders. This plan is designed to create plenty of opportunities for all voices to be heard and new leaders to emerge.

The global movement of people and continuing shifts in the world economy will ensure that the work of Local Immigration Partnership Councils around the province will be constantly evolving as needs change, populations change and indeed our definition of diversity changes. Communities understand that defining challenges is a moving target.

The purpose/goal of this plan and the Durham Local Diversity and Immigration Partnership Council is to serve as a mechanism to ensure that the tough questions get asked and that the process of defining challenges is an ongoing shared responsibility.



COMMUNICATION ON PROGRESS OF THE PLAN.

This plan will be posted on www.durhamimmigration.ca and shared with the community members who participated in its development.

Reports on progress will be made regularly and posted on www.durhamimmigration.ca and www.durham.ca to ensure transparency and an open approach to this work. Progress will also be reported to Durham Regional Council annually.

Additionally, the LDIPC in conjunction with the community, will undertake a process to develop a community report card. The report card will define what success looks like and will create local measurements which are meaningful.

Copies of the Diversity and Immigration Community Plan are available in alternate formats upon request.



AREAS OF PRIORITY

1. Create a culture of inclusion



2. Improve labour market outcomes for newcomers



3. Attract and retain newcomers



4. Enhance Durham's settlement capacity



PRIORITY AREA 1: CREATE A CULTURE OF INCLUSION

All residents of Durham region have a right to fully participate in their community. Inclusive communities ensure that people of all ages, sexual orientation and ability have a right and a responsibility to civic engagement, labour force participation and social inclusion whether they are newly arrived or have been in Durham for generations. By creating a culture of inclusion, all Durham residents will benefit.

Goals:

- 1.1 Representation of municipal leaders/council/boards are reflective of the community.
- 1.2 Diversity is authentically reflected as part of the community identity.
- 1.3 All municipal councils work together to achieve and support diversity initiatives and model/own inclusivity.
- 1.4 Acceptance is modeled by elected officials, institutions and organizations; policies reflect inclusive practices.

Areas of Activity:

Information Gathering & Research

Best practices related to creating, nurturing and growing a culture of inclusion will be gathered and mined for local relevance. Promotion and access to this information and these resources will be shared with community stakeholders.

Knowledge Sharing (Communication, Education & Outreach)

Through a series of guest speakers, demonstrations, workshops and other events, we will create opportunities for knowledge sharing with community partners. Some of these may include (but are not limited to) conversations about grappling with diversity, workshops on developing barrier-free service delivery, information sessions on external sources of funding, as well as the promotion of the work of the Local Diversity & Immigration Partnership Council. Through our communication tools we will celebrate, promote and showcase success stories, 'diversity' activities of agency-providers, employers and institutions throughout Durham Region.

Evaluation

Learning is integral to the success of the LDIPC community plan. We will work with community stakeholders to develop measures of success for meeting the goal of creating a culture of inclusion.

Sample of planned or in progress activities:

- Showcase local best practices and emerging leaders through a variety of local media
- Develop a resource of best practices related to increasing diversity at leadership levels
- Promote the role and work of the LDIPC to local service organizations (e.g. Kiwanis, Rotary, Optimists)



PRIORITY AREA 2: IMPROVE LABOUR MARKET OUTCOMES FOR NEWCOMERS



To address our current and future skill requirements, an integral part of our local labour market and economic development strategy will be to establish Durham region as a community that actively welcomes and values the skills, experience and training that all its residents possess.

Goals:

- 2.1 Durham will have a business sector that understands and takes advantage of the diversity in the workforce.
- 2.2 The benefits of inclusive hiring practices are fully understood by both the public and employers.
- 2.3 The development of a local organizing body with a mandate to plan and develop programs and services that facilitate the successful integration of all workers into the workforce is explored.

Areas of Activity:

Information Gathering & Research

Work will include, but not be limited to creating a local and publicly accessible online library of labour market resources. Work will expand to include best practices, gap analysis and capacity building activities and will inform the new community report card. Attention will be paid to both current and future trends.

Knowledge Sharing (Communication, Education & Outreach)

The LDIPC has a commitment to sharing knowledge and to leveraging existing experience and practices to assist in the integration of newcomers and to work towards creating cultures of inclusion in the business and labour communities.

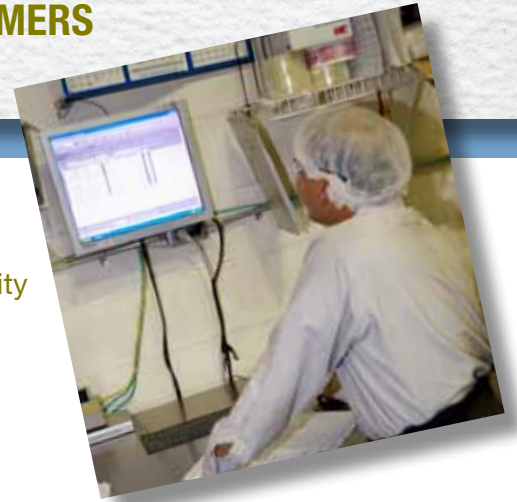
Evaluation

Durham needs to assess the current level of labour market integration of diverse populations and identify key indicators that would assist in local planning and policy making, as well as determine if we are successfully moving towards our goals. We will work with community stakeholders to develop measures of success for meeting the goal of improving labour market outcomes (report card).

Sample of planned or in progress activities:

- Explore the creation of a local immigrant employment council with local partners
- Develop a toolkit of 'best practice' resources for attracting and retaining newcomers for employers
- Promote the work of the LDIPC and the Immigration Portal to local employers, Boards of Trade and Chambers of Commerce

PRIORITY AREA 3: ATTRACT AND RETAIN NEWCOMERS



There is a world wide competition for the best and brightest. Attracting newcomers is only one half of the equation. Retaining skills in this community is important to economic growth and to deepening the pool of talent and creativity in Durham.

Goals:

- 3.1 There will be an understanding across sectors of the need to both attract and retain newcomers.
- 3.2 Durham is marketed to newcomers provincially, nationally, and internationally as a community of choice.

Areas of Activity:

Information Gathering & Research

Work in this area will include gathering existing information on programs, services and best practices currently being delivered in Durham and beyond. Key stakeholders will be identified. Emerging needs will be discussed with traditional and non-traditional stakeholders. This work will inform local capacity building, the identification of emerging trends, and innovative locally based responses.

Knowledge Sharing (Communication, Education & Outreach)

The benefits of attracting and retaining newcomers, sharing local newcomer and service provider success stories are important. Knowledge sharing will be used to support existing networks and partnerships as well as to forge new relationships across and within sectors.

Evaluation

As with the other priority areas in this plan, research and development activities will be used to feed into the development of the new community report card – leading to the creation of key indicators such as assessing Durham's attractiveness to newcomers and areas for improvement and/or future development.

Sample of planned or in progress activities:

- Support, enhance and promote the Durham Immigration Portal as an attraction and retention tool to community stakeholders
- Investigate ways to support the community to celebrate Durham as a destination of choice and leverage outreach opportunities and avoid unnecessary duplication through partnerships and working groups
- Involve newcomers, where possible, in visioning and planning sessions – targeting pre- and post-immigrant communities

PRIORITY AREA 4: ENHANCE DURHAM'S SETTLEMENT CAPACITY

It takes an entire community to successfully welcome, integrate and settle newcomers. All residents, working in partnership, can contribute to the suite of services necessary for successful settlement and integration. Newcomers are families, extended families and individuals with independent needs. Growing the capacity of all service providers in Durham region will result in improved and accelerated settlement outcomes for Durham residents.

Goals:

- 4.1 All new and existing residents will settle and integrate successfully into the Durham community.
- 4.2 A Durham-specific plan will be developed that reflects the suite of flexible and responsive services in Durham necessary to meet the unique needs of Durham residents.

Areas of Activity:

Information Gathering & Research

The Local Diversity & Immigration Partnership Council will continue to work with community stakeholders to continuously investigate the service needs of diverse communities in Durham region and develop strategies to meet those needs.

Knowledge Sharing (Communication, Education & Outreach)

Working in collaboration with community stakeholders we will explore the options for an integrated settlement service delivery system for Durham region that includes an action plan, processes for improved communication and networking, as well as opportunities for training and knowledge sharing between service providers. We will publicize and promote the development of initiatives that improve access to services for diverse communities.

Evaluation

Learning is integral to the success of the LDIPC action plan. We will work with community stakeholders to develop measures of success for meeting our goal of enhancing Durham's settlement capacity.

Sample of planned or in progress activities:

- A working group will be established to assess the options for an integrated settlement service delivery system
- Cultural competency education and training opportunities will be promoted to local service providers
- A guide to funding opportunities will be developed for local community agencies and organizations



REFERENCES

- ¹ All statistics are taken from the 2006 Canada Census by Statistics Canada unless otherwise indicated.
- ² The Employment Equity Act defines a visible minority as “persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.”
- ³ There is no generally agreed upon statistic for the average percentage of LGBTQ members in a community. EGALE Canada’s recent study of LGBTQ youth in schools puts the number at 14%; Health Canada cites 1.7% although 10% has been most commonly used by agencies working with the LGBTQ community. The variance in these numbers is a reflection of different research questions asked and different research methodologies employed.
- ⁴ This percentage (15.7%) is based on a population base of 442 034 responding to the PALS Survey. Additional detail can be found at <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/dli-ild/meta/pals-epla/2006/pals-epla2006sae-eng.doc> . As the population ages this number is expected to increase.
- ⁵ For a copy of Ontario in the Creative Age, visit: <http://www.martinprosperity.org/research-and-publications/publication/ontario-in-the-creative-age-project>
- ⁶ For a copy of Growing Together: Durham Region Strategic Plan 2009-2014, visit the Region’s website at: <http://www.durham.ca/corpooverview/communityplan/CSPFinalColour.pdf>.

