

Clause embodied in Report No. 9 of the Community Services Committee, as adopted by the Council of the City of Toronto at its meeting held on October 29, 30 and 31, 2002.

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## **Toronto Immigration and Settlement Communications Framework**

*(City Council on October 29, 30 and 31, 2002, adopted this Clause, without amendment.)*

The Community Services Committee recommends the adoption of the following joint report (September 10, 2002) from the Commissioner of Community and Neighbourhood Services, the Commissioner of Corporate Services, and the Chief Administrative Officer, with amendments to Recommendations Nos. (3) and (5), so that the recommendations now read as follows:

**“It is recommended that:**

- (1) Council adopt this report as the framework for the City’s immigration and settlement communications messages and activities;**
- (2) City departments and divisions as well as agencies, boards and commissions, in consultation with Corporate Communications, be guided by the immigration and settlement communications framework when informing the general public, City Councillors and staff, the business sector, all orders of government and immigrants regarding matters relating to immigration to Toronto, settlement in Toronto and integration into the economic mainstream;**
- (3) the interdepartmental work group (Social Development and Administration, Strategic and Corporate Policy, Corporate Communications, Toronto Public Health, Economic Development, City Planning, Parks and Recreation, Social Services) that developed the framework be expanded to include other departments and divisions (Homes for the Aged, Children’s Services, Shelter, Housing and Support, Works and Emergency Services and Toronto Public Library) to guide the implementation and ongoing evaluation of the immigration and settlement communications framework;**
- (4) departments and divisions continue to build on current work and identify both excellent practices and areas that require further attention for communicating to and about immigrants;**
- (5) the City of Toronto Web site be enhanced to support immigration and settlement as follows:**

- **Phase 1(a)** \$5,000.00 be allocated from the Corporate Communications 2002 budget to translate material (key messages, accounts of newcomer experiences) into the appropriate newcomer languages and French (as outlined in the City's multilingual policy) for use on a new immigration and settlement portal on the City of Toronto Web site; and
    - (b) that the portal be live by January 2003 with basic information about City services and programs appropriate to newcomers available in English, French, Chinese and Italian; and
  - **Phase 2:** by March 2003, Corporate Communications and other staff as appropriate consult each department regarding additional appropriate service information; and that staff use the 2001 Census data regarding languages in Toronto, expected to be available to the City in December 2002, to determine the top ten languages by population, and that information in these languages and French be posted on the City Web site by June 2003; and
- (6) the appropriate City officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.”:

Purpose:

As directed by Council in June 2001, this report outlines the content and identifies the costs of a Toronto communications framework that will further assist and promote successful settlement and integration of immigrants, including their economic integration.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

The report identifies a cost of \$5,000.00 from the 2002 Corporate Communications budget to translate material (key messages, accounts of newcomer experiences) into the appropriate newcomer language groups and French (guided by the City's multilingual policy) for use on a main immigration and settlement portal on the City of Toronto Web site. This is consistent with the Council direction received during the 2002 budget discussions with respect to appropriate expenditures in the multilingual services budget. This page will also contain links to substantial but non-Toronto-related immigration Web sites. Other potential costs (e.g., translation of brief service descriptions linked to department Web pages, diversity and anti-racism training for City staff) will be reported out by departments as part of the 2003 and onwards budget cycles.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and concurs with the financial impact statement.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) Council adopt this report as the framework for the City's immigration and settlement communications messages and activities;
- (2) City departments and divisions as well as agencies, boards and commissions, in consultation with Corporate Communications, be guided by the immigration and settlement communications framework when informing the general public, City Councillors and staff, the business sector, all orders of government and immigrants regarding matters relating to immigration to Toronto, settlement in Toronto and integration into the economic mainstream;
- (3) the interdepartmental work group (Social Development and Administration, Strategic and Corporate Policy, Corporate Communications, Toronto Public Health, Economic Development, City Planning, Parks and Recreation, Social Services) that developed the framework be expanded to include other departments and divisions (Homes for the Aged, Children's Services, Shelter, Housing and Support, Works and Emergency Services) to guide the implementation and ongoing evaluation of the immigration and settlement communications framework;
- (4) departments and divisions continue to build on current work and identify both excellent practices and areas that require further attention for communicating to and about immigrants;
- (5) the City of Toronto Web site be enhanced to support immigration and settlement as follows:
  - Phase 1: \$5,000.00 be allocated from the Corporate Communications 2002 budget to translate material (key messages, accounts of newcomer experiences) into the appropriate newcomer language groups and French (as outlined in the City's multilingual policy) for use on a new immigration and settlement portal on the City of Toronto Web site; and
  - Phase 2: by June 2003, Corporate Communications and other staff as appropriate consult each City department regarding appropriate service information to be translated into appropriate newcomer languages and French for the immigration and settlement portal, each of these descriptions to be linked to department Web pages and that such descriptions then be added to the immigration and settlement portal; and
- (6) the appropriate City officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Background:

In June, 2001, Council adopted an immigration and settlement policy framework for the City of Toronto. The goal for the policy framework is to enable the City, within its mandate as municipal government and service provider, to work with all other orders of government, all sectors that make up the economic, social and cultural web of the City and immigrants to ensure that it continues to:

- (a) attract newcomers; and
- (b) provide supports to enable them to develop a sense of identity and belonging and to fully participate in the social, economic, cultural and political life in the City.

Implicit in this goal is the recognition that:

- (1) immigrants are a source of real and potential contributions to the economic, social and cultural life of the City;
- (2) immigrant settlement is a continuum involving newcomers and all sectors in the community; and
- (3) successful settlement benefits everyone.

The City policy framework contains strategic directions and actions that support successful settlement. Placed in six theme areas (economic integration, intergovernmental consultation and collaboration, service access and equity, planning and co-ordination, advocacy and public education and building community capacity and civic participation), the strategic actions in the policy framework support current initiatives taking place in City departments and provide a foundation for continued advocacy and service-related actions in support of successful settlement. In other words, departments and divisions should use the content of the policy framework, as adopted by Council, to support current activities and as a lever to bring forward initiatives for implementation in the area of immigration and settlement.

As a support to achieving the goal of the immigration and settlement policy framework, to continuing current City activities and bringing forward future initiatives as well as to encourage newcomers to settle in Toronto and ensure that the City provides a climate of welcome, Council directed that:

“staff of the Social Development and Administration Division, Strategic and Corporate Policy Division and Corporate Communications Division report to Council by December 2001, on the content and costs of a Toronto communications strategy that will further support successful settlement and integration of immigrants into the economic mainstream”.

Workload pressure has delayed the submission of the report to this time.

Comments:

As a primary source of population increase, immigrants are an essential part of Toronto's future economic growth. The release of 2001 census data show that, with an ageing population and low birth rate, Ontario has very few options for growth in the labour force and, therefore, growth in the economy. As the new census data indicate, immigration from outside Canada is the most viable source of population increase.

Successful newcomer settlement benefits everyone. Although a good and remunerative job or a business started is the most visible sign of engagement in the economy, many other elements need to be in place to make the acquisition of such a job or entrepreneurial opportunity possible. Some of these elements are: a strong economy that generates jobs and supports a wage structure sufficient to keep individuals and families, at a minimum, out of poverty, a high quality of civic life that encourages people to live, work and start businesses, a society free of racial barriers and the presence of supports to employment or entrepreneurship such as the recognition of overseas education, credentials and work experience. The City communications framework is one initiative among many that will help support Toronto's economy by assisting newcomers in achieving their economic goals.

There are signs that newcomer economic integration takes longer than it did fifteen years ago. While education levels of immigrants are higher than in previous generations (60 percent of immigrants to Toronto have completed either university or post-secondary technical education), the incidence of immigrant poverty has grown and it now takes longer for newcomers to reach the average Canadian income. Toronto, as an order of government, a major economic force in Canada and a service provider can play a role in reversing this trend and, in fact, must do so if the City, as a whole, will continue to prosper.

In addition, the City has internal communications needs in the area of immigration such as providing information for Councillors and staff on an ongoing basis and as particular issues arise. Common, agreed-upon messaging will provide Councillors and staff with a framework for responding to questions from the public and the media, promoting Toronto as a destination for immigrants or outlining the contributions of newcomers to Toronto's economy (for example, the majority of immigrants are economically self-supporting and do not receive social assistance; over time, immigrants contribute more in taxes than they use in public benefits).

Intergovernmental relations also generate requirements for communications messages and activities, as the City frequently makes the case for increased influence over immigration policy and programs with other orders of government.

Integration into the economic mainstream is the most efficient way of both engaging in a new society and avoiding poverty. If the City wishes to continue to attract the well-educated and well-qualified immigrants who are now choosing Toronto, both pre- and post-arrival information in languages from the most frequent countries of immigrant origin is required. Such information should include essentials such as how to look for and obtain employment commensurate with qualifications and previous employment experience, how to match qualifications in a country of origin to those in Canada, how to acquire additional training to upgrade qualifications and how to start a business. Some of this information is currently outside the City's scope of responsibility

or available from other government or non-government organization. However, the City can provide links to appropriate sources of employment, education and business-related information either on the web or via more traditional print and video forms.

Most important, many services that the City either provides, co-ordinates or supports do help newcomers settle. They require information regarding access to health care and education for themselves and their children as well as housing and services such as child care and recreation tailored to meet language and cultural needs. Child care is particularly effective as it has multiple impacts. It is a support to parental employment, a source of family support and a foundation for children's language acquisition and socialization in a new society.

In addition, a communications framework must support the City's work on the removal of systemic barriers such as racism and lack of recognition of overseas education, qualifications or work experience.

Access Toronto enquiries verify the immigrant communication needs outlined in this report. The most common e-mail, telephone and walk-in enquiries are employment and service-related and include:

- (a) how can I immigrate to Toronto?
- (b) can I cross the border from the United States and get a job in Toronto?
- (c) how can I find housing?
- (d) how can I find a job? and
- (e) how do I obtain a health card/Social Insurance number/driver's licence?

#### Communications Framework:

This report recommends that the communications framework guide departments and divisions and members of Council when they inform the general public, City staff and immigrants about matters relating to immigration and settlement.

#### The communications framework:

- (a) supports successful settlement and integration of immigrants into all aspects of economic, social and cultural life of the City;
- (b) provides information to new and prospective immigrants about Toronto, the City's amenities, services and ways to engage in municipal decision-making;
- (c) encourages a positive climate for immigrants and, where necessary, work to change negative behaviour and attitudes towards immigrants;
- (d) facilitates discussions regarding immigration and settlement with other orders of government; and
- (e) enables the City to respond to immigration and settlement issues in a timely manner.

The framework, as implemented by Councillors and staff, makes public Toronto's position regarding immigration and settlement (successful settlement benefits everyone; Toronto has affirmed the economic, social and cultural benefits of immigration through the Immigration and Settlement Policy Framework; all orders of government share responsibilities in the settlement and integration of immigrants). It provides support for actions (e.g., web-site enhancement) that encourage newcomers to settle in Toronto and link them to all aspects of city life. It assists departments and divisions in building on current City communication activities that support immigration and successful settlement as well as bringing forward future communications initiatives.

#### Activities:

A Toronto immigration and settlement communications framework builds on current City activities and avoids duplication with activities carried out by community agencies. It necessarily includes co-ordination of current internal efforts, creation of new activities and co-ordination with external organizations.

Current departmental immigration and settlement communications activities are outlined in Appendix I. New activities based on the communication framework purposes and goals will make use of low-cost vehicles such as:

- (a) current City internal and external publications;
- (b) public service announcements for print, radio and T.V., particularly in co-operation with ethnic media (as outlined in the City's multilingual policy);
- (c) promotional material on trash bins and transit shelters; and
- (d) the City of Toronto Web site and links to relevant NGO and community Web sites such as settlement.org and the World Education Service, which provides assistance with prior education and credentials assessment.

Future plans should also include diversity and anti-racism training for City staff to improve newcomer access to services that will assist settlement.

A staff co-ordinating committee, consisting of an augmented version of the interdepartmental work group that developed the communications framework will ensure that departments and divisions are aware of the immigration and settlement communications framework and activities as well as assist in the implementation of the framework and evaluate the success of the initiatives.

#### Web Site Enhancement:

The City of Toronto Web site is an important part of the communications framework because it can be accessed at many stages: when a person or family is considering emigrating from their country of origin, when they have made the decision to come to Canada or Toronto and have not yet started the immigration process, when they have just arrived and at intervals as necessary during the settlement process. Changes to the Web site can be made at a reasonable cost.

Web site enhancement will take place in two phases:

- Phase 1, to start immediately, will create a newcomer portal on the Web site. The content, translated into appropriate newcomer languages plus French, will be the City's key messages regarding immigration and settlement as well as profiles of immigrants from a variety of immigration classes and countries. The Web site will develop links to relevant external sites such as settlement.org, the most comprehensive website for newcomers.
- Phase 2, to be implemented in 2003, will expand the main page to include brief service descriptions (e.g., where to access child care subsidies, where to apply for a building permit) in the same languages as Phase 1 with links to the department Web pages, which, for cost and simplicity reasons, will remain unilingual in English. The service descriptions will state that further department information is in English and provide information on reaching multi-lingual assistance via Access Toronto.

Audiences:

The audiences for the framework include the public and Toronto's multilingual communities, members of Toronto City Council, City departments and divisions (and associated programs, e.g., community centres, child care centres, homes for the aged etc.), all parts of the business sector, all classes of immigrants (Economic, Family, Business, Refugee), other orders of government – federal (Citizenship and Immigration, Human Resources Development, Justice) and provincial (Ministries of Community Family and Children's Services, Health and Long-Term Care, Municipal Affairs and Housing, Education, Training, Colleges and Universities, Attorney General).

Conclusions:

Consistent with the goal of Toronto's Immigrant and Settlement Policy Framework (adopted by Council in June, 2001) and recognizing that immigrants are a source of real and potential contributions to the economic, social and cultural life of the city, that immigrant settlement is a continuum involving newcomers and all sectors in the community and that successful settlement benefits everyone, this report outlines the content, identifies the costs and recommends the adoption of a communications framework that will further assist and promote the successful settlement and integration of immigrants, including their economic integration.

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List of Attachments:

Appendix: Examples of Current Departmental and Divisional Activities

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Appendix I: Examples of Current Departmental and Divisional Activities

City departments and divisions currently provide a range of communications resources to assist immigrants to Toronto. For example:

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| Economic Development<br>Enterprise Toronto: | (a) with the federal and provincial governments, has implemented "Passport to Business Success" which provides individual consultations, affordable professional seminars and workshops and assistance with government regulations to immigrant entrepreneurs; and |
|   | (b) is developing a labour force development plan for the City of Toronto which will recommend actions to accelerate the integration of internationally trained and educated professionals into the labour force;  |
| City Planning:                              | (a) prepared material in 15 languages to support the Directions Report for the new Official Plan; and  |
|   | (b) advertised public meetings for the new Official Plan in the ethnic media;  |

- Parks and Recreation:
- (a) works closely with settlement workers and social agencies to communicate information about community centres, programs and the City's Welcome Policy, which removes financial barriers to recreation services in the City of Toronto. City of Toronto residents who are eligible for the Welcome Policy can register in Parks and Recreation Programs free of charge. Information on the Welcome Policy is available in 16 languages; and
  - (b) plans to develop a multi-lingual photo brochure on Parks and Recreation;
- Toronto Public Health:
- (a) provides services through multilingual staff or use of interpreters;
  - (b) translates print resources into different languages based on need;
  - (c) promotes programs in ethnic media to improve access to various programs; and
  - (d) works in partnership with various community organizations to provide first-language community services;
- Works and Emergency Services:
- (a) translates public education materials on such programs/issues as Blue Box recycling, drinking water quality, traffic and pedestrian safety, etc., in up to 17 different languages. Some of these materials are delivered to all households in the City;
  - (b) provides door-to-door and additional community outreach (presentations, displays) using students/volunteers who speak additional languages to English;
  - (c) provides Language Line training and access to customer service staff;
  - (d) advertises programs and services in other-language newspapers and provides press releases to the multilingual media;
  - (e) implements public attitude surveys that target particular ethno-racial groups to help us craft our public education;

- (f) provides regular presentations and information to ESL classes; and
- (g) Web site is linked to some information in additional languages;

Emergency Medical Services:

- (a) is translating information brochures on the use of the 911 system into other languages; and
- (b) staff attend community information sessions and provide displays and demonstrations;

Children's Services

- (a) provides child care subsidy brochures in 6 languages;
- (b) employs staff who, collectively, speak over 30 languages to work with children, parents and programs;
- (c) publishes a multi-ethnic calendar with a program activity resource guide;
- (d) holds annually "Art from the Start", showcasing children's art that celebrates their culture and background; and
- (e) holds an annual Diversity Resource Fair;

Social Services:

- (a) provides brochures on Ontario Works and divisional services in a wide variety of languages;
- (b) makes community newspapers and flyers in different languages with information on jobs and services available in Employment Resource Centres;
- (c) provides outreach to communities, including immigrant and ethno-specific groups, to assist with participation in Ontario Works; and
- (d) developed and promotes the Community Participation Innovation Fund which provides resources to encourage agencies to develop projects that will serve particular groups, including immigrants and ethno-specific populations;

Shelter, Housing and Support (a) provides language-specific (where possible) staff assistance to newcomer and refugee City of Toronto shelter residents in such areas as applications to Citizenship and Immigration, access to City and community services, enrolment in schools, acquisition of housing and other supports as necessary;

Corporate Communications: (a) through Multilingual Services provides translation and interpretation to City departments;

Access Toronto:

(b) has the capacity to respond to enquiries in 140 languages through language use services; and

(c) provides first-language presentations on local government to English as a Second Language classes;

CAO, Strategic and Corporate Policy, Diversity Management and Community Engagement Unit (formerly Access and Equity Unit): (a) provides targeted mailings to immigrant and refugee organizations to inform them of relevant programs, services and events;

(b) translates City documents of interest to newcomers into 10 languages and makes them available to community and ethnic media;

(c) holds consultations with immigrant communities on items such as the Access and Equity grants program;

(d) organizes poster campaigns to combat hate activities; and

(e) organizes public education events to mark special dates such as Refugee Rights day.