



**Canadian Union of
Public Employees**

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- Service Units

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- Long-Term Care Homes
& Services Part-Time
- Recreation Workers
Part-Time
- Unit B Part-Time

*Toronto Community
Housing Corporation*

**SERVING OUR
MEMBERS
SINCE
1942**

January 31, 2013

Councillor Jaye Robinson, Chair
and Members of the Community Development and Recreation Committee
10th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Ms. Robinson and Members of the Community Development and Recreation Committee:

RE: CD18.7 Toronto Newcomer Strategy

CUPE Local 79 would like to commend the City staff at Social Development and the various other Divisions who contributed to the development of the Toronto Newcomer Strategy, and its component pilot projects. Participating partners and agencies should also be commended for their contributions. Initiatives that enable our City to respond to the growing needs of newcomers are essential to city-building – providing access to important services neighbourhood by neighbourhood, community by community. Services to newcomers comprise a critical component of Toronto’s social infrastructure.

The successful outcome of the Toronto Newcomer Initiative pilot projects across the city highlights the growing need for access to these services, in particular the settlement outreach work. In recreational programming alone, Parks, Forestry and Recreation offered 172 newcomer-focused programs and brought hundreds more participants into recreation programs. This work should be maintained and expanded. We should build on these results and develop a plan that spreads this success across the city.

Having resources to provide newcomers in communities across the City with awareness of and access to services is the key to providing much-needed supports. Newcomers need to know what’s available to help them settle and thrive – they need to know how welcome they are.

Whether it’s Public Health, Children’s Services, Housing, Recreation or Employment and Social Services to assist entry into the workforce, services provided by the City can make all the difference to families and communities. The services provided by various settlement agencies across the city also make a big difference to newcomers. We need to aid and facilitate access to settlement services and make all of our programs more inclusive of newcomers. Building bridges and partnerships with newcomers to find the supports they need is vitally important.

The majority of people living in Toronto were not born in Canada. The resulting transformation of Toronto needs to be embraced and celebrated. Each and every newcomer brings a promise for the future growth, diversity, and livability of our City. Diversity is our strength. According to the Toronto Newcomer Strategy “newcomers face challenges compared to long term immigrants and Canadian born residents. For example, after the 2008 recession Toronto’s overall unemployment rate climbed to 9%, but the rate was significantly higher (14%) for newcomers during the same period.” Whatever can be

done to assist Newcomers in their settlement in Toronto by the City, in partnership with community organizations, must be pursued.

The pilot projects provided hope and insight, and CUPE Local 79 hopes that this work will continue. We are happy to be a part of any process that helps further this initiative. We understand and we're here to help. We are willing to engage as a partner, representing thousands of dedicated, caring City employees who deliver valued services to Torontonians, particularly newcomers, in communities across the city.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Maguire', written in a cursive style.

Tim Maguire
President