

The Immigration Strategy: Action Plan

This Action Plan provides a framework for implementing the strategic priorities identified in the Immigration Strategy. It is organized by the goals and major strategic actions necessary to achieve each of the Strategy's four priorities. More detailed strategic actions are to be created by community partners including the municipal government, community institutions and organizations, both profit and not-for-profit, as well as community-based groups.

The implementation of this plan will be carried out collectively and collaboratively by all community partners at all levels of the community with support from the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council.

April 2010

Priority: BUILDING COLLECTIVE AND COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP

All community partners, institutions, organizations, residents and levels of government work together to ensure the successful integration of newcomers into our community.

Goals	Strategic Actions
Formal community support and endorsement of the Immigration Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Obtain signatories to the Declaration of Intent (see the Immigration Strategy).</i>
Each institution and organization in Hamilton will take the lead to ensure that immigration issues become a normal part of their everyday business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Work toward integrating immigration in all strategic documents which may affect Hamilton's settlement and integration efforts</i> • <i>Systematically engage newcomers in developing inclusive policies, programs and practices.</i> • <i>Establish and implement an immigrant settlement policy and inclusionary strategy</i> • <i>Undertake Inclusionary Impact Assessments for operational policies, procedures, processes and practices to ensure they do not exclude immigrants and refugees</i> • <i>Develop strategies for leadership capacity building that ensures representation of all of Hamilton's diverse communities</i> • <i>Identify barriers to employment and implement initiatives to remove barriers and improve representation of the workforce</i> • <i>Provide equal access to purchasing requirements for all diverse businesses and encourage local diverse and immigrant-owned businesses to register on supplier lists</i> • <i>Develop effective communications mechanisms to promote greater awareness of the importance of immigration at all levels of the organization, disseminate inclusive 'good practices' and support greater public access to data and services</i> • <i>Implement ongoing diversity training</i> • <i>Develop a community engagement strategy to include external outreach with diverse and newcomer communities</i> • <i>Produce and disseminate Annual Inclusion Reports and establish other such reporting and accountability structures.</i>
All sectors in Hamilton work toward the same vision and goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Serve and provide direction and oversight as a standard bearer for immigration issues in Hamilton.</i> • <i>Actively promote the development of policies, protocols and structures that will embed best practices regarding settlement services in the public institutions of Hamilton.</i> • <i>Review performance data on settlement and integration and make recommendations to support policy and/or operational initiatives.</i>
Closer collaboration and agreements among all three levels of government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Recommend that the municipal government lobby for a seat at the immigration policy table at the provincial and federal levels</i> • <i>Create opportunities for real exchanges of information among the three levels of government</i> • <i>Improve communication and collaboration among the municipal departments within the City of Hamilton</i>

Priority: STRENGTHENING THE DELIVERY OF SETTLEMENT SERVICES

A sustainable and seamless settlement service delivery system that is well-coordinated and readily accessed enables the successful and prompt integration of all newcomers.

Goals	Strategic Actions
A detailed analysis of the nature and role of all agencies in Hamilton involved with the provision of short and medium term settlement and integration support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Compile an inventory of Hamilton's formal settlement services</i> • <i>Undertake an assessment of the informal services and voluntary networks that assist in settling newcomers in Hamilton</i> • <i>Identify programs and services that have particular impact and relevance to the settlement process</i>
A fuller understanding of the settlement process in Hamilton as experienced by newcomers including the nature of newcomers' needs and the barriers to successful integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Undertake ongoing consultations with newcomer communities</i> • <i>Partner with local and regional settlement research initiatives to access recent trends and issues</i> • <i>Collect the appropriate data to measure and assess whether fair and equitable services are provided to newcomers and publicly share this data to allow for public monitoring</i> • <i>Ensure the recognition and participation of immigrant and ethno-specific agencies in various areas of service planning and delivery</i>
A well-coordinated and seamless settlement service system in Hamilton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Identify and address gaps in settlement service provision</i> ▪ <i>Facilitate mechanisms for ongoing collaboration with local settlement agencies</i> ▪ <i>Strengthen the linkages between the informal and formal settlement sector</i>
Increased awareness of and access to settlement services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Provide ongoing support to the Hamilton Immigration Portal and other online settlement and newcomer information systems</i> ▪ <i>Develop and establish a Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council website with links to settlement services information</i> • <i>Publish and disseminate information on both the formal and informal settlement services in Hamilton</i>
Recognition of and support for the informal and voluntary sectors in the provision of settlement services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Consult with funding agencies to establish a funding stream that recognize and gives support to the informal, voluntary sector and its critical role in the settlement and integration process</i> • <i>Recognize informal settlement services and develop complementary forms of collaboration and assistance</i> • <i>Disseminate information about formal settlement services to newcomers to these informal networks</i>
Enhanced services such as language training, employment, housing, health and public transit to facilitate the settlement process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Identify policy and program improvements that reduce the barriers to efficient integration</i> • <i>Establish and expand such initiatives as internships, mentoring, job-shadowing and co-op placements to improve newcomer access to the labour market</i> • <i>Provide bridging access to employment</i> • <i>Identify and address newcomer needs to improve access to affordable and stable housing</i> • <i>Determine usage among newcomers to public transit and address concerns regarding cost, availability, etc.</i> • <i>Identify the differential healthcare needs of newcomers and develop appropriate responses for accessible and suitable healthcare provision</i>

Priority: CREATING A WELCOMING COMMUNITY

Being proactive in developing an inclusive public and civic culture will help to ensure that all the people who reside in our city really feel at home here.

Goals	Strategic Actions
Reduced public apprehension, anxieties and misconceptions about immigrants and immigration to Hamilton	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Develop and implement a Public Education Strategy that highlights the contributions and achievements made by Hamilton's diverse immigrant communities</i>• <i>Produce and widely disseminate information combating the myths and misconceptions about migrants and immigration</i>
The elimination of racial discrimination, incidents of hate activity and the marginalization of residents because of their immigrant and refugee status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Reconfirm through various public means and political platforms Hamilton's commitment to the elimination and unacceptability of discrimination and exclusionary practices</i>
Institutional practices that are inclusive and the elimination of barriers that exclude newcomers from participating in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the city	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Identify the best practices of Hamilton's institutional sectors and promote the strategies that benefit from and celebrate Hamilton's immigrant communities</i>• <i>Ensure all communications reflect and represent the diversity of Hamilton and are disseminated through a variety of channels, formats and languages</i>• <i>Establish proactive community engagement initiatives that seek and identify the needs and aspirations of newcomer communities</i>• <i>Involve newcomers in making decisions that affect their settlement experience in Hamilton and their participation in every aspect of life in the city</i>• <i>Take robust steps to eliminate exclusionary practices in organizational policies and programs</i>
A cohesive community with an inclusive civic identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Promote mechanisms for meaningful interaction between newcomers and the resident community at the local neighbourhood level</i>• <i>Increase the capacity, skills and confidence of newcomers to participate in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the city</i>

Priority: CREATING AND DISSEMINATING KNOWLEDGE OF IMMIGRATION

The achievement of the successful integration of newcomers and the pursuit of a welcoming community must be built on a solid base of information and research.

Goals	Strategic Action
An up-to-date, evidence-based body of information and intelligence to support well-coordinated settlement services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Commission, collect and review research in areas such as:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>immigration demographics</i> ○ <i>inventory of settlement services provided in Hamilton</i> ○ <i>informal settlement services</i> ○ <i>gap analysis of settlement services</i> ○ <i>newcomer needs</i> ○ <i>immigration bibliography</i> ○ <i>immigrants and the Hamilton economy</i> ○ <i>institutional sectors and settlement issues</i> ○ <i>specific immigrant population groups (e.g., youth, women, seniors, children, etc.; and diverse ethnicities and races)</i>
Knowledge about immigration in Hamilton is continually disseminated, promoted and utilized	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Develop and disseminate both electronic and print versions of a variety of materials including a Newcomer Guide to Hamilton, Fact Sheets about immigration, newsletters, position papers, newspaper articles, etc.</i> • <i>Ensure service providers have access to the most recent research and data on immigrants to Hamilton to facilitate inclusive and equitable planning and delivery of services</i> • <i>Develop and provide information on settlement services in Hamilton:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Create an electronic directory of settlement services available in Hamilton in partnership with Inform Hamilton</i> ○ <i>Support the Hamilton Immigration Portal and the development of other online settlement and newcomer information systems</i> • <i>Develop a Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council website containing all research compiled as well as links to settlement services available</i> • <i>Learn about and respect diverse cultures to help reduce public anxieties towards immigrants and enable public and private sectors to better respond to immigrants' needs while benefiting from the assets they bring to our community</i>