

**THUNDER BAY
IMMIGRATION COMMITTEE STRATEGIC PLAN
WORKING DOCUMENT**

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The core strategic plan, vision to the strategies, identified, is a result of two strategic planning sessions among a number of representatives of various community groups. The Strategies and goals & action will be finalized in September 2011.

VISION

Thunder Bay and the region will be a culturally diverse and welcoming community, a destination of choice for immigrants who will contribute to, and benefit from, both social and economic development.

MISSION

To develop community capacity, programs and services to attract and retain immigrants.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Encourage community participation
 - Identify opportunities and build on our existing strengths
 - Allocate/focus resources to address and resolve existing gaps
 - Work with all levels of government to maximize our ability to attract and retain immigrants
 - Treat our partners, immigrants and community members with integrity, respect, compassion, and acceptance
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STRATEGIES

1. Identify and attract immigrants by:
 - a. Identifying the target source countries and domestic locations where numerous landed immigrants will be present
 - b. Identifying the skills needed
 - c. Developing and implementing a marketing strategy to promote the community to potential immigrants
 - d. Engaging government, business and other organizations to support these initiatives
 - e. Attending the target source countries and/or domestic locations to attract immigrants
 2. Foster a welcoming, supportive and inclusive community through education, promotion and participation
 3. Ensure that coordinated services are available to fulfill newcomers' needs
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STRATEGY #1 - IDENTIFY AND ATTRACT IMMIGRANTS

To attract successful, committed and community minded immigrants. To drive economic growth by forging and sustaining partnerships with local champions, government, business and cultural organizations in the community.

IDENTIFY THE SKILLS NEEDED

1. Business succession survey to be completed (May 2010)
2. Develop advisory groups in the community to discuss needs as identified over time:
 - a. Confederation College, Lakehead University, Chamber of Commerce, Association Francophone of Northwestern Ontario, Multicultural Assoc., Community Economic Development Corporation, Labour unions
 - b. Professional associations – engineering association, construction association, OMA, etc.
 - c. Banks and Financial Institutions
3. Develop system where personalized contact with employers and businesses is made
4. Host a Think-tank meeting early September with these various groups

IDENTIFY THE TARGET SOURCE COUNTRIES AND/OR DOMESTIC LOCATIONS WHERE NUMEROUS LANDED IMMIGRANTS WILL BE ATTENDING

1. Utilize skills shortage information to identify potential Labour pools
2. Identify cultures (immigration patterns) that are already developing within the community
3. Connect with source communities through newcomers' who have moved here
4. Determine similar geographic, social and/or cultural identities
5. Leverage student placements and international student recruitment
6. Identify and connect with other organizations and similar programs that already have an established immigrant recruitment program

DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A MARKETING STRATEGY TO PROMOTE THE COMMUNITY TO POTENTIAL IMMIGRANTS

1. Find sources of funding
2. Apply and secure funding in order to complete and carry out business plan and marketing plan
3. Engage a firm to develop the business plan
4. Determine whether a separate organization should be incorporated to engage in these activities and if so, when is the appropriate time

5. Engage a professional marketing firm to develop strategy to attract immigrants, in conjunction with the immigration portal marketing strategy
6. Seek help from local immigrants to determine how Thunder Bay could be effectively marketed to their countries
 - a. Continue to identify champions or success stories with newcomers who have developed a life in Thunder Bay
7. Partner with local educational, research, medical and manufacturing institutions to attract immigrants
8. Develop a community ambassador program...identify funding, linkage to Sister City program
9. Identify business and career opportunities that could attract immigrants; ensure the information is available and accessible; could also be used at trade shows and job fairs:
 - a. Provide job/business opportunities on portal in order to attract immigrants from target countries.
 - b. Develop a target list of saleable investment properties for portal.

ENGAGE GOVERNMENT, BUSINESS AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS TO SUPPORT THESE INITIATIVES

1. Partner with key organizations to identify and raise awareness of barriers for immigrants in the province.

ATTEND THE TARGET SOURCE COUNTRIES AND/OR DOMESTIC LOCATIONS TO ATTRACT IMMIGRANTS

1. Engage experienced and knowledgeable community leaders to carry out and promote these initiatives
2. Attend domestic locations, such as the National Job Fair and Training Expo or the National Immigrant Expo
3. Target countries and find local champions to travel to that country; speak with citizens about Thunder Bay and its opportunities and encourage these citizens to relocate to Thunder Bay
4. Promote Northwestern Ontario immigration portal as an effective means to provide information to potential immigrants

STRATEGY #2 - FOSTER A WELCOMING, SUPPORTIVE AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY THROUGH EDUCATION, PROMOTION AND PARTICIPATION

1. Develop a community awareness campaign to promote welcoming and accepting of others. (1)

- Extensive training/anti-racism campaign
- Cross-cultural education/training/workshops aimed at students, employers, and community at large
- Succession planning
- Address the backlash of discrimination regarding employment/layoffs (re: temporary foreign workers)
- Promoting those who are already here – success stories/champions (eg. Pritam Lamba, Uli Walther, etc)
- Why do people come here and why do they stay? (like the promo spots on radio 99.9)
- Start at pre-school level
- Create awareness and promote benefits of immigration and its impact on community's economic, social and cultural development.

2. Partnering with existing cultural groups (i.e. Philippines, First Nations, Francophones, etc) as well as service clubs (eg. Rotary) (2)

- Folklore Festival – opportunity to teach/inform community / celebrate various cultures
- greater exposure of various cultures; within institutions/work forces (eg. LU Diversity Week)
- Establish infrastructure/location for meetings, cultural events, clubs, especially for smaller groups (create inventory of available meeting spaces)

3. City of Thunder Bay – Council Resolution – we are a “welcoming community” – will permeate throughout the corporation (3)

- acknowledge/celebrate holidays of all cultures
- link to *Age Friendly Thunder Bay* program

4. Encourage active involvement of community ambassadors to meet and greet and introduce immigrants to the community.

- establish a hub – one-stop shopping for settlement services, connect with all other immigrant service providers; provide speakers, greater exposure
- Utilize volunteers as a resource for first point of contact with immigrants
- utilize seniors, long-time residents (former immigrants)
- Reactivate Newcomers Club to welcome new people to the Community

5. Resettlement Assistance Program model for skilled workers – place to stay, guides to the community

STRATEGY #3 - ENSURE THAT COORDINATED SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE TO FULFILL NEWCOMER'S NEEDS

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL INTEGRATION

1. Identify existing services and address gaps
 - a. integrate existing Francophone services
 - b. Language services - Translation and Interpretation
 - c. Assess the effectiveness of our current settlement and integration
 - d. Assess the need for additional locations ie: One stop place (TBMA), change Image to accommodate established immigrants, South side
2. Seek more funding for programs designed to assist in settling new Immigrants.
3. Promote availability of services for immigrants.
 - a. *Develop guide to services (211, Fm97.1, Library, and Community Information Centre*
 - b. Develop Linkages between services (websites), multiple people sites, City of Thunder Bay, target major employers, multiple channels
 - c. Create Awareness with the community and social services of the availability of newcomers services
 - d. Provide accurate, up-to-date, easy-to-use, and readily accessible information to immigrants.
 - e. Develop an effective message and coordinated delivery approach to promote immigration services to immigrants and residents of Northwestern Ontario region
 - f. Develop a cross-cultural education campaign to all Services working with immigrants e.g. Housing, Education, etc.
 - g. Facilitate access to appropriate health care services

ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

1. Build awareness and advise newcomers about issues relating to the Labour Standards legislation, workplace rights and responsibilities – Soft Skills Training
2. Encourage retention of international students upon graduation from postsecondary Institutions
3. Provide access to jobs
 - a. Co-op placement services
 - b. Improve secondary services – employment search and mentoring; labour market language training (profession specific).
 - c. Job search strategies
4. Conduct professional and skills accreditation in timely manner

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE IMMIGRATION COMMITTEE AND THERE PARTNERSHIPS SO FAR:

1. Northwestern Ontario Immigration Portal (launched March 2010)
2. Antiracism committee has been developed (March 2010) and is active
3. Welcoming communities initiative established March 2009 is working with community and employers to provide training
4. Local Immigration Partnership was established formally in March 2009
5. Two immigration forums were held by TBMA and NSWPB
6. NSWPB completed its Labour Market Analysis in July 2009 (on website)
7. Roundtable discussions with local immigrant groups completed
8. Local and previous resident immigrant surveys completed
9. Business succession survey developed
10. Pro-Immigration Marketing campaign in March 2010