



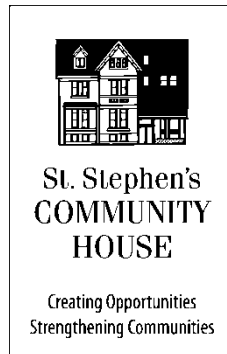
**LEAVING & ARRIVING:
IMMIGRATION PANEL**

**LOCAL IMMIGRATION
PARTNERSHIP COUNCILS**

Local Immigration Partnerships Councils

This presentation is a version of a larger workshop offered by Local Immigration Partnership project partners St. Stephen's Community House and WiseSolution Consulting.

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Purpose of Session

- To share a recent example of a settlement service coordination & planning process
- To encourage a community leadership approach to planning processes
- To encourage a broad definition of “immigrant” and “settlement” or “integration”

Canadian Context

	Canada	Ontario (Province)	Toronto (City)
Population	32 million	13 million	2.5 million
Annual Immigration	250,000	120,000	40,000

Toronto Immigrants - Top Five Places of Origin

- China (2000-2009)
- India
- Pakistan
- Philippines
- Iran

Toronto Context

- Annual immigration to City of Toronto about 40,000 people. This has declined from 90,000 people in 2001.
- Nevertheless, City received half a million new immigrants in the past decade.
- In Toronto half of the total population is an immigrant born outside of Canada, and half of the total population is “visible minority”.

Political Context

- Despite reduction in immigrants and slower speed of immigration, the Federal and Provincial Governments invest heavily in settlement or integration services.
- Combined over \$800 million is spent annually by government in Ontario. Most of the settlement services are located outside of government in school boards (municipal) and NGOs.

Political Context

- Immigration is popular in Canada and in Toronto. There is public support for both immigration and settlement services.
- While the government is accepting fewer “immigrant class”, there is an increase in “temporary student class” and “temporary worker class”. Roughly same number of people but with more barriers to citizenship and services.

Context



Planning Context

- The Canadian government and Ontario provincial government signed an agreement to coordinate settlement and integration services in 2005.
- One new element of the agreement was the creation of the “Local Immigration Partnerships” to form “Partnership Councils”.
- Councils would be local with strong participation from municipalities and NGOs.
- Goals include planning and coordination.

Local Immigration Partnership Councils



West Downtown Toronto

- Our Local Immigration Partnership Council is in Toronto
- The area is approximately 26 km²
- Over 145,000 immigrants live here, including over 25,000 newcomers less than 5 years in Canada
- Over 60 newcomer service provider organizations are located in this area and participate in the Council.

West Downtown Toronto

- “Organic” system of settlement services
 - Funded by different levels and different departments of government over many years through a competitive process. No coordination or plan.
 - Rich service environment, often with choices to receive services by language, by gender or by location.
 - Settlement Houses/Neighbourhood Houses play a very active role in delivery of settlement services.

Barriers

Major barrier to accessing services in Canada is government eligibility criteria. Funding is focused on landed immigrants and convention refugees in first years of arrival.

- Immigrants on temporary permits (students, workers) are not allowed to access services.
- Refugees with rejected claims are not allowed to access services.
- “Illegal immigrants” without status are not allowed to access services.
- Immigrants who become citizens are not allowed to access services.

Barriers

Many immigrants with greatest integration challenges are excluded from government services.

Other barriers faced by immigrants who can access services are:

- Difficult to find work in profession
- High cost of living in the city (housing, travel)
- Access English classes
- Poverty and decline in health status

Lessons



First lesson

Settlement House/Neighbourhood Houses can play a lead role in settlement planning. Of the 30 planning Councils set up in Ontario, most have an NGO as the Chair or Co-chair. In Toronto, at least 6 of the Councils are lead by IFS members.

NGOs are seen as the experts in settlement/integration services and are setting the agenda.

First Lesson

Partnership Council funding has been very helpful to provide professional facilitation, research, and stipends to small NGOs. But, Partnership Councils can be set up at low cost. We built ours on existing network. Settlement Houses were concerned about service coordination also.

This model of Local Immigration Partnership Councils are made up of NGOs, municipalities, school boards, hospitals, universities, faith groups, and local businesses.

First Lesson

- Councils create Strategic Plans for a geographic area, but do not deliver services.
- An example of a Strategy is at www.torontolip.ca . Also more information on the formation of Councils and creation of local strategies.

Second Lesson

It is important for NGOs to set principles and values of the Council.

- Values of the Council
- Definition of Immigrants

Second Lesson

Here are some values from our Council:

- NGOs & newcomer populations:
 - Make unique & essential contributions
 - Their diversity is a strength
 - All have a role in planning process
- Council will work together:
 - With honest dialogue & transparency
 - Model anti-racism, anti-oppression, gender equity & cultural competency principles in our work with each other

Second Lesson

We agree a service delivery system will be:

- Client-focused
- Inclusive
- Reflecting and valuing cultural differences
- Built on Service Equity

Second Lesson

For planning it is important for NGOs to have Councils define immigrants to include previously excluded groups.

Our Council definition is “Any individual born in another country who has moved to Canada”

- Sponsored family members
- Internationally trained skilled workers
- Convention refugees
- Refugee claimants
- Temporary workers
- Live-in caregivers
- Business immigrants
- Provincial nominees
- Protected persons
- Foreign students
- Any individual seeking permanent residence status
- Immigrants after having become citizens

Future



Future

- Local Immigration Partnership Councils are new - founded in 2009.
- First Strategic Plans are being presented now – 2010.
- Resources to implement Strategic Plans are uncertain. Federal government is renewing funding of all NGOs in 2011.
- Councils will play an on-going role in implementation and lobbying for their Strategic Plans.