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Smiths Falls Local Immigration Partnership Council

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION PLAN

SMITHS FALLS LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL
Community Consultation Plan

Last Updated: September 26, 2011

The Local Immigration Partnership Council (LIPC) is a strategic planning body working to facilitate a collaborative and comprehensive approach to newcomer¹ integration in the community. The first phase of the initiative extends until March 31st, 2012. During this period, the LIPC will be developing a local settlement strategy and a corresponding implementation plan.

Smiths Falls is one of 45 LIP communities in Ontario with funding for the project being provided by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). The Town of Smiths Falls is the project partner.

1.0 Introduction

The *'Community Consultation Plan'* outlines the proposed approach for gathering feedback from stakeholders regarding the four focus areas of the LIPC:

- Economic integration of newcomers
- Provision and promotion of settlement and public services
- Creation of a welcoming community attitude and environment
- Sustainability of Local Immigration Partnership initiative

Statistics describing the general demographics and characteristics of the newcomer community will also be collected. Recommendations included in the final settlement strategy will be based on this information, facilitating the development of future initiatives that reflect the local context and direct efforts and resources appropriately.

The complete *'Community Consultation Plan'* is available in Appendix A.

2.0 Consultation Methods

Community specific feedback will be collected from stakeholders primarily using focus groups, key informant interviews and surveys which are elaborated upon below. This information will be complemented by an environmental scan/inventory of available services and best practice research including a review of other LIP initiatives.

2.1 Focus Groups

Focus groups were identified as the most appropriate method for gathering feedback from previously established or coordinated networks of newcomers. For example, two groups that will be approached are TR Leger's English as a Second Language and the Chinese and Canadian Heritage Cultural Association.

¹ For the purposes of this document, newcomer is defined as any person born outside of Canada who self identifies as needing assistance to reach their desired level of participation in community life.

An additional public services sector focus group will be conducted to accommodate the large number of potential representatives from housing, education, health, financial and social services.

2.2 Key Informant Interviews

Key informant interviews will be the primary source of qualitative feedback. They are identified as a method for consulting with stakeholder groups ranging from newcomers to local employers. It is anticipated that the flexibility offered by this approach will result in higher participation rates and therefore a more comprehensive reflection of the current context for newcomer settlement in the community.

2.3 Surveys

To complement the qualitative information gathered through focus groups and key informant interviews, a survey campaign will be conducted. Separate surveys will be developed for newcomers, partner agencies and local employers with questions designed to provide numerical data or statistics.

Surveys will be available online as well as distributed to all participants at focus groups and key informant interviews. It is anticipated that the majority of responses will come from the latter.

3.0 Community Engagement

The *'Community Consultation Plan'* identifies contacts for each of the stakeholder groups with whom participation will be arranged directly. The listed contacts are preliminary and will evolve with ongoing recruitment.

LIP project staff expect to conduct the majority of the consultations. However, LIPC members are encouraged to coordinate with staff to conduct independent consultations with personal or professional contacts. Questions and templates for documenting feedback will be created and made available to ensure consistency between consultations.

4.0 Implementation and Reporting

Implementation of the research and outlined community consultation initiatives will occur in October 2011. LIP project staff will compile the information gathered into a profile and present it to the LIPC in November 2011.

APPENDIX A: Community Consultation Plan

The following was developed based on discussions had at the August 2011 LIPC work group meetings on economic integration, provision and promotion of services, supportive social environment and sustainability of the LIP.

A. Economic Integration

No.	Focus	Question to be Answered	Forum
1	General	Education and Training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the educational attainment of newcomers in Smiths Falls? • Are newcomers pursuing further training or education in Smiths Falls? 	Newcomer Information Form
			Published Statistics
2	General	Status and Field of Employment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the employment status of newcomers in Smiths Falls? • In what industry are newcomers in Smiths Falls employed? • Are newcomers working in their industry of training? 	Newcomer Information Form
			Published Statistics
3	Training and Credential Recognition	Process and Policy Changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the role for the LIPC in addressing barriers in foreign credential recognition processes and policies? • What is the best approach for doing so? 	Credential Recognition Key Informant Interviews
			Review of Other LIPs
			Area LIP Meeting
4	Training and Credential Recognition	Available Training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What bridging programs are available to newcomers locally? In the region? 	Published Resource Guides
			Training & Employment Services Key Informant Interviews
5	Training and Credential Recognition	Training Barriers and Gaps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the barriers for newcomers interested in participating in available programs? • What gaps exist in available programming? • How can the community best address these challenges? 	Newcomer Focus Groups & Interviews

6	Job Opportunities	<p>Newcomer Employment Context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many local employers have newcomers on staff? • How much of the employer's workforce do newcomers account for? • Are local businesses interested in employing newcomers? 	Employer Information Form
7	Job Opportunities	<p>Support for Newcomers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What programs and resources (i.e. wage subsidies) are available to newcomers seeking employment in the area? 	Published Resource Guides
			Training & Employment Services Key Informant Interviews
8	Job Opportunities	<p>Newcomer Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the challenges in regards to attaining employment? • What are the challenges with regards to succeeding in the workplace? • How can the community best address these challenges? 	Newcomer Focus Groups & Interviews
9	Job Opportunities	<p>Support for Employers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What programs and resources are available to employers for hiring and integrating newcomers? 	Published Resource Guides
			Training & Employment Services Key Informant Interviews
10	Job Opportunities	<p>Employer Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What challenges exist with regards to hiring newcomers? • What are the challenges in terms of utilizing newcomers effectively in the workplace? • How can the community best address these challenges? 	Employer Key Informant Interviews
11	Entrepreneurs and Investors	<p>Supports for Newcomer Entrepreneurs and Investors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What programs and resources are available locally? In the region? 	Published Resource Guides
			Entrepreneur and Investor Key Informant Interviews

12	Entrepreneurs and Investors	<p>Newcomer Entrepreneur and Investor Challenges and Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What types of opportunities are most attractive to newcomers? • What are the challenges with regards to investing in and operating businesses locally? • How can Smiths Falls become more welcoming to newcomer entrepreneurs and investors? 	Entrepreneur and Investor Key Informant Interviews
13	Entrepreneurs and Investors	<p>Community Opportunities and Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the opportunities for entrepreneurship and investment in the area? • What are the challenges in attracting and retaining newcomer entrepreneurs and investors? • How can the community best address these challenges? 	Entrepreneur and Investor Key Informant Interviews
14	Training and Credential Recognition & Job Opportunities & Entrepreneurs and Investors	<p>Awareness of Available Programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are partner agencies familiar with related supports for newcomers? • What resources do partner agencies refer to address related inquiries? 	Partner Agency Survey

B. Provision and Promotion of Services

No.	Focus	Question to be Answered	Forum
1	General	<p>Population and Demographics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many newcomers are in Smiths Falls? • Of what age are newcomers in Smiths Falls? • What is the family status of newcomers in Smiths Falls? 	Published Statistics
			Newcomer Information Forms
2	General	<p>Language(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the newcomers' first languages? • What level of English abilities do newcomers have? 	Published Statistics
			Newcomer Information Forms
			Partner Agency Survey

3	Settlement and Public Services	Service Availability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What services are available for newcomers in Smiths Falls? • What capacity and usage do service providers have? 	Community Resource Guides
			Partner Agency Survey
4	Settlement and Public Services	Service Needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What services do newcomers require? • Which are the priority services? • How do service needs change as newcomers integrate into the community? 	Newcomer Focus Groups
			Settlement Services Key Informant Interview
			Best Practice Research
5	Settlement and Public Services	Service Expectations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are newcomer’s expectations for services in Smiths Falls? • Are they satisfied with diversity and accessibility of these services? 	Newcomer Focus Groups
			Settlement Services Key Informant Interviews
6	Settlement and Public Services	Service Usage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What challenges do newcomers face in accessing and using available services? 	Newcomer Focus Groups
			Settlement Service Key Informant Interviews
			Public Services Focus Group
7	Settlement Services	Settlement Service Provision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the challenges in providing these services to newcomers? • How can the LIP initiative assist? 	Settlement Service Key Informant Interviews
8	Public Services	Public Service Provision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do newcomers needs differ from those of other residents? • What strategies are employed to address these differences? • How can the LIP initiative assist? 	Public Services Focus Group
9	Awareness and Communication	Available Information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What information is available for newcomers? • Where is this information provided? 	Community Resource Guides
			Provincial and Federal Websites
10	Awareness and Communication	Information Acquisition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through what mediums do newcomers retrieve information? • Who are the primary contacts for newcomers? 	Newcomer Information Forms

11	Awareness and Communication	Information Needs and Gaps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What information are newcomers seeking? • What are the information gaps? • What are the challenges in utilizing available information? 	Newcomer Focus Groups
			Partner Agency Survey
			Immigration Portal Viewership Report
12	Awareness and Communication	Awareness of service availability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are service providers and residents familiar with available services? 	Settlement Services Key Informant Interviews
			Public Services Focus Group
			Residents Focus Group

C. Supportive Social Environment

No.	Focus	Question to be Answered	Forum
1	General	Population and Demographics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many newcomers are in Smiths Falls? • Of what age are newcomers in Smiths Falls? • To what cultural or ethnic heritage do newcomers relate? 	Published Statistics
			Newcomer Information Forms
2	Creating Relationships in the Community	Social Contacts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What cultural organization and social opportunities exist for newcomers locally? • With which contacts, service clubs or community organizations do newcomers interact with upon arriving in Smiths Falls? On an ongoing basis? 	Community Resource Guides
			Newcomer Focus Groups and Interviews
			Partner Agency Survey
3	Creating Relationships in the Community	Social Expectations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What type and degree of socialization are newcomers seeking? • Are the relationships being sought cultural or interest based? • Are these expectations being met? 	Newcomer Focus Groups and Interviews

4	Creating Relationships in the Community	Social Networking Challenges and Opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What barriers do newcomers encounter with regards to forming relationships in the community? • How can the community build on existent social assets to address current barriers? 	Best Practice Research
			Newcomer Focus Groups and Interviews
			Social Integration Key Informant Interviews
5	Building a Welcoming Community Attitude	Newcomer Perception: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How welcoming do newcomers perceive Smiths Falls to be? • What factors influence this perception? 	Newcomer Information Forms
6	Building a Welcoming Community Attitude	Current Community Attitude: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How supportive of immigration are Smiths Falls' residents? Of diversity? • What understandings are influencing these attitudes? • What regional and/or provincial trends are influencing these attitudes? 	Community Documents
			Residential Survey
			Social Integration Key Informant Interview
7	Building a Welcoming Community Attitude	Fostering a Welcoming Attitude: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What initiatives would support the development of a more welcoming community? • Which stakeholders should be involved in the development of these initiatives? 	Best Practice Research
			Review of Other LIPs
			Newcomer Focus Groups and Interviews
			Social Integration Key Informant Interview

D. Sustainability of the LIP

No.	Focus	Question to be Answered	Forum
1	Funding	Government funding that aligns with the objectives of the LIP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What funding is available through provincial and federal governments? 	Inventory of Immigration Funding Sources
			Key Informant Interviews
2	Funding	Local funding that aligns with the objectives of the LIP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What funding is available through or to partner organizations? 	Partner Agency Survey

3	Reporting Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What LIP reporting structures have been applied successfully in other communities? • What options are available to the Smiths Falls LIPC? 	Review of Other LIPs
			Key Informant Interview
4	Membership and Staff	LIPC membership for Phase Two and onwards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are member's expectations and desires regarding continued participation? • How will the role and responsibilities of LIPC members change? • Should the size of the LIPC change? 	Member Consultations
			Review of Other LIPs
			Key Informant Interviews
5	Membership and Staff	LIPC Chair: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would be the Chair's specific responsibilities? • What characteristics and/or experience should a Chair have? • Which LIPC members would be interested in filling this role? 	Member Consultations
			Review of Other LIPs
6	Membership and Staff	Project staff for Phase Two and onwards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would be the roles and responsibilities of future staff? • What are the alternatives to keeping staff support for the LIPC? 	Member Consultations
			Review of Other LIPs
7	Regional Relationship	Potential for Partnerships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where are the LIPC service boundaries and areas of overlap? • How do the contexts compare between Smiths Falls and surrounding areas with LIPs? • What are the objectives of surrounding LIPs and do they match Smiths Falls? • Which common objectives could be best served regionally? 	Area LIP Meeting
8	Regional Relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What policies and procedures should be implemented to facilitate this relationship? 	Area LIP Meeting
			Key Informant Interview