



Media Kit

ISCC's Vision for a Community Driven Municipal Immigration Strategy

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What - ISCC is a multi-stakeholder body made-up of senior representatives from Calgary's settlement agencies, funders, public institutions, ethno-cultural associations and multiculturalism bodies. We strive to be a collective voice for the sector on issues related to settlement and integration. We believe Calgary is in need of a municipal immigration strategy, and are pleased to see The City is developing a policy and framework on immigration and settlement.

A Community Driven Municipal Immigration Strategy will increase the performance outcomes of newcomers, strengthen community development, and attract skilled immigrants so Calgary can thrive in the global, national, and provincial competition for talent. Although immigration is the mandate of the federal and provincial governments, immigrants settle in cities, where countless programs impact their process of integrating, including economic development, childcare, education and upgrading, social housing, police protection, arts and culture, recreation, and public transit. The City is also ideally-positioned to be a leader and catalyst to inspire change throughout Calgary, so that our city as a whole becomes a welcoming community for newcomers.

Why - On average, **immigrants fall behind Canadian-born citizens** in a number of areas due to multiple systemic barriers. For example, despite higher levels of average education, recent immigrants have higher unemployment rates and earn less than Canadian-born counterparts¹; children and youth are not receiving culturally competent education² or adequate ESL training³; and settlement services are struggling to maintain capacity as immigration levels rise⁴. Municipalities can make a difference through comprehensive strategies that induce change in other sectors, increasing awareness of the benefits brought by newcomers, and communicating with other levels of government on the city's needs.

The issues facing immigrants are clearly complex. A municipal immigration policy needs to be supported by a strategy or action plan to coordinate and focus The City's efforts. Many initiatives of The

¹ Statistics Canada, 2006 Census: Data Products.

² Van Ngo, Hieu. *Cultural Competence 2009 Report*. Coalition for Equal Access to Education, Calgary, 2009.

³ Van Ngo, Hieu. *ESL Education 2009 Report*. Coalition for Equal Access to Education, Calgary, 2009.

⁴ Boland, Peter and Rice, Pat. *Immigrant Sector Compensation Review: Final Report*. Immigrant Sector Council of Calgary, 2007.

City of Calgary support marginalized communities: CCMARD, Fair Calgary, imagineCalgary, Calgary Economic Development Plan. However, there is not an over-arching policy that ties all of these efforts together; a unifying policy and framework would coordinate these efforts and allow The City to more clearly identify gaps and opportunities to attract, retain and integrate newcomers⁵. It would also set the foundation so that gaps and opportunities could quickly be addressed, and make it easy for other sector champions to identify where they can play a role.

Recent research proves that integration and multiculturalism policies have played a positive role in creating a well-integrated society. Newcomers in Canada are integrating more successfully than most, if not all, other Western Democracies⁶. Therefore, strategies implemented at a local level will have local impact.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities supports local strategies – they argue it positions municipalities to better communicate with other levels of government on where funding is needed, what the issues are, and to work with communities on combating racism and discrimination, etc.⁷

How - ISCC would like to see The City **develop an immigration policy and house a city-wide strategy that is sustained and driven by the community.** We will be encouraging The City to include an education and awareness campaign, research and evaluation component, and consultation with champions and leaders within the sectors of settlement, economic, health, justice, education, and civic participation so they are engaged and motivated to implement strategies within these areas.

We hope to see The City engaging leaders from these sectors at an early stage in the policy's development so that they can provide input on what their needs are, what they are currently doing to address immigration, and what they could be doing to further a city-wide immigration strategy. If change is going to take place throughout Calgary, **we need leaders from within key sectors to champion the strategy.**

When - On April 7, 2010, the Standing Policy Committee on Community and Protective Services approved a motion to work with The City's business units on developing a municipal immigration policy and framework. That day, ISCC presented and influenced them to make it a community driven policy. ISCC will stay in close contact with public servants to ensure it is truly involving community and sector champions. **The City's Administration intends to present to the SPC on Community and Protective Services in January 2011. We hope to see the policy ratified shortly thereafter.**

⁵ Community and Protective Services, The City of Calgary. Creating an Immigration Policy Framework for The City of Calgary: Summary of Rationale, Policy Framework, Best Practices and Mandates. The City of Calgary, 2010.

⁶ Kymlicka, Will. *The Current State of Multiculturalism in Canada*. Canadian Journal of Social Research. Vol. 2:1. 2009.

⁷ Cappe, M. *An Immigration Strategy: The Municipal Perspective*. Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Ottawa, 2009.