

**TO: Secretary, Planning and Operations Committee**  
**FROM: Chair, Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Committee**  
**DATE: November 5, 2004**  
**SUBJECT: Proposal for Development of a City of Saskatoon**  
**Immigration and Refugee Resettlement Plan**  
**FILE NO: CK. 100-10**

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**RECOMMENDATION:** that a report be forwarded to City Council recommending:

- 1) that the City of Saskatoon develop a strategy and action plan to:
  - a) Accommodate more immigrants to Saskatoon;
  - b) Effectively address the difficulties facing newcomers to improve retention of immigrants;
  - c) Effectively address the challenges facing the community; and
  - d) Take full advantage of the many opportunities and benefits that increased immigration can offer; and
- 2) that a qualified person be engaged to consult with the various stakeholders and resource persons, to produce a more detailed set of objectives, a proposed strategy and a community based action plan for consideration by City Council.

## **REPORT**

Over the past year, the Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Committee has been reviewing issues relating to immigrant and refugee resettlement and the challenges and opportunities for Saskatoon.

City Council appointed Mr. Gatdeet Wakou, member of the Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Committee, to the Saskatoon Settlement and Integration Coordinating Committee. Mr. David Simpson, another member of the Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Committee, also sat on that Committee as a representative of the Global Gathering Place.

Part of the Committee's review of the matter included a meeting with the provincial Settlement and Integration Officer, as well as a member of the Saskatoon Settlement and Integration Coordinating Committee, representing the Immigration and Refugee community. Following that meeting, Messrs. David Simpson, Gatdeet Wakou and Andrew Mason were asked to put together

a list of issues to be considered by the Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Committee at a future meeting. The attached report was provided to the Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Committee and approved for submission and consideration by City Council, through the Planning and Operations Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Mason', written over a horizontal line.

Andrew Mason, Chair  
Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Committee

**City of Saskatoon Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Committee (CDRRC)**

**PROPOSAL FOR DEVELOPMENT OF A CITY OF SASKATOON  
IMMIGRATION and REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PLAN**

**Challenges and Opportunities**

The Saskatchewan Government plans to increase immigration to this province. Saskatoon stands to benefit significantly from an increased immigrant population. The City needs to develop and implement an effective strategy and community based plan of action that:

- will encourage and promote immigration to Saskatoon,
- will improve retention of immigrants<sup>1</sup> who initially settle here, and
- will enable the City to anticipate and deal effectively with the challenges and opportunities that an increased immigrant population will create.
- is consistent with and will facilitate and support provincial and federal initiatives in these areas.

**Background**

- In 2002, over 229,000 people from foreign countries immigrated to Canada. A total of 1,665 of those immigrants came to Saskatchewan.<sup>2</sup> Approximately 43% of the immigrants who come to the province settle in Saskatoon.<sup>3</sup>
- Most recent (2001) census figures show that approximately 57% of the people who had immigrated to Saskatchewan within the previous 10 years remained in the province. This compares to 78% and 86% and 88% for Manitoba, Alberta and B.C., respectively. The average retention rate of provinces is 82%.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In this document, the term "immigrants" refers to all people who come to Canada from other countries and includes refugees and persons allowed to stay in Canada on humanitarian grounds.

<sup>2</sup> **Citizenship and Immigration Canada**, "Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration 2003", Gov. of Canada, April 2004, at p. 17 and 29.

<sup>3</sup> See generally, **Douglas Elliot**, "Demographic Trends in Saskatchewan, A Statistical Analysis of Population, Migration, and Immigration", Gov. of Sask., August 2003, at p. 74.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, **Elliot**, note 3, at p. 47.

- 5% of Saskatchewan residents are first generation immigrants. This is less than one-third of the Canadian average.<sup>5</sup>
- A Saskatchewan labour shortage is being predicted. The Saskatchewan Government, Immigration Branch, estimates that this shortage will be 30,000-70,000 workers over the next 10 to 15 years.<sup>6</sup>
- The Saskatchewan Government is taking steps to increase immigration to this province. It established an Immigration ministry in 2001. In 2003 Pat Atkinson was appointed as the Minister Responsible for Immigration. Skilled workers, business owners and foreign students will be the focus of the Saskatchewan immigration nominee program. (180 were nominated in 2003; the 2004 target is 300).
- At any given time there are approx. 1000 foreign students at the University of Saskatchewan (some of whom apply for permanent resident status). There are numerous visiting professors and researchers at the University of Saskatchewan.
- Post secondary foreign students who graduate in Saskatchewan and find work in their field can now apply to become a permanent resident with the assistance of the Saskatchewan nominee program.
- Settlement and integration coordinating committees have been established in Saskatoon, Regina, Moose Jaw and Prince Albert. The Saskatchewan Settlement Integration and Planning Council was created by the province in 2003 in order to address better information sharing and program coordination for immigrants and refugees.
- In Saskatoon there are organizations dedicated to assisting immigrants and refugees who come to Saskatoon, such as the Open Door Society. In a 2003 report to the Government of Saskatchewan, MLA Pat Lorje has identified improving the funding for these agencies as an important priority.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Nationally, 18% of Canadian residents are immigrants. See, *ibid*, **Elliot**, note 3, at p. 76.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, **Elliot**, note 3, p. 80 ff. The Saskatchewan Government information is contained in a fax to the Chair of this Committee dated October 22, 2004.

<sup>7</sup> **P. Lorje**, "Open Up Saskatchewan! A Report on International Immigration and Inter-Provincial In-Migration Initiatives to Increase the Population of the Province of Saskatchewan", Gov. of Sask., Sept. 2003, p. 22. The author recommends that funding be increased from \$100,000 per year to \$600,000.

## **Opportunities**

There are many potential opportunities and benefits that can accrue to the City of Saskatoon from immigration:

- Population growth and an increased tax base.
- New business ventures and investments.
- Tourism (e.g. family members come to visit / cultural events to attract visitors - e.g. Folkfest).
- A highly skilled and strongly motivated target group.
- Strengthening of business ties with other countries.
- A more interesting and culturally richer city through increased cultural diversity.

## **Issues that face Immigrants and Refugees**

- Getting a job. A 2002 Government of Saskatchewan report found:

“Better career opportunities is the most critical factor to improving settlement and retention of immigrants and refugees”.<sup>8</sup>
- Personal and community support.
- Learning English.
- Having their credentials and work experience recognized.
- Learning the culture and “ways” of a new country.
- Understanding (and trusting) law enforcement and the legal system.
- Racism.

## **Issues that face the community**

- Providing a welcoming and supportive community - making everyone feel at home in Saskatoon:

“Successful settlement and retention requires a welcoming community”.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> “MEETING NEEDS AND MAKING CONNECTIONS: A Report on the Saskatchewan Immigrant and Refugee Settlement Needs and Retention Study”, Government Relations and Aboriginal Affairs, Gov. of Sask., Nov. 2002., p. 4.

- Coordinating services to immigrants and refugees and funding for organizations that provide support and services.
- Providing education and training opportunities, in conjunction with private and public sector employers.
- Providing jobs for everyone and career opportunities to qualified persons; ensuring that private sector and public sector employers support this goal.
- Where practical, providing support for immigrants seeking to have their foreign credentials or qualifications recognized.
- Encouraging and accommodating investment by business immigrants;
- Meeting increased demand on city services and infrastructure.
- Ensuring that measures targeting immigrants are accepted and supported by all groups in the community<sup>10</sup>. This is particularly important with respect to our aboriginal community, which includes many newcomers to Saskatoon who face the same kind of problems that can be experienced by immigrants in getting jobs and housing and feeling welcomed. A focus on immigrant needs should enhance, not diminish, the support given to other groups.
- Law enforcement issues relating to immigrants (e.g. differences between police in Canada and police in country of origin; possibility of problems with criminal gangs and organized crime having an ethnic base or target).
- Housing and ethnic distribution throughout the city.
- Addressing other reasons immigrants move on to larger centers in Canada.

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid, note 8, p. 5.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, note 7, p. 38. P. Lorje recommended: "That the implementation of any or all of the preceding recommendations not undermine programs and services for Saskatchewan's Aboriginal people."

## **The Approach of Winnipeg and Calgary to Immigrant Settlement**

Winnipeg has a very well established and successful immigrant settlement strategy. In 2002, 4,621 persons immigrated to Manitoba, 82% of whom settled in Winnipeg.<sup>11</sup> In 2003 the figure rose to 6,492, 79% of whom settled in Winnipeg.<sup>12</sup> Winnipeg has established an International Centre operated by the Citizenship Council of Manitoba Inc. which is dedicated to providing a comprehensive range of services and programs that support and facilitate the integration of immigrants to Winnipeg.

In 2003, Alberta welcomed 15,738 immigrants, 9,064 of whom settled in Calgary and 4,540 of whom settled in Edmonton.<sup>13</sup> Calgary has established the Calgary Immigrant Aid Society, funded by the three levels of government, business and private foundations and individual donations. The Society provides a broad range of services. It has successful programs to help immigrants find work. It operates the Immigrant Language and Vocational Assessment - Referral Centre (ILVARC) and a Language Bank providing comprehensive interpretation and translation services including translation for such things as certificates, diplomas, licences, transcripts, and forms.

### **City of Saskatoon**

It is apparent that the figures for immigration to Saskatoon and the retention rate of those who initially settle here, do not compare favourably with the major cities in our neighbouring provinces. In fact, it is among the lowest in Canada.

The City of Saskatoon's new Cultural Diversity and Race Relations policy calls for the City of Saskatoon to:

“work with community organizations, business and labour, all orders of government, and other stakeholders to create an inclusive community, where ethno-cultural diversity is welcomed and valued, and where everyone can live with dignity and to their full potential, without facing racism or discrimination”.

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<sup>11</sup> Manitoba Immigration Facts, 2003 Statistical Report, Manitoba Labour and Immigration, Immigration and Multiculturalism Division, 2004, p.10

<sup>12</sup> Loc. Cit.

<sup>13</sup> An Overview of Immigration to Alberta, 2003, Alberta Learning, Gov. of Alberta, 2004, p. 1

The comparative immigration and immigrant retention figures indicate that our city is not succeeding (as well as it could) in achieving these goals.

The policy calls for the City to be:

“A leader in the community by communicating the City's vision and role in regards to the issues” and for the City to be a facilitator to “bring other agencies together to work jointly towards the outcomes”,

“to bring stakeholder agencies from First Nations, Métis, immigrant, refugee, and other agencies working in the field together to discuss the formation of a working committee to develop joint strategies, priorities, and action plans, to begin to address some of the outcomes that the community wishes to achieve”.

A comprehensive Immigrant Resettlement strategy would play an important part in achieving the objectives set out in the Cultural Diversity and Race Relations policy.

### **The Task Required and Funding**

In order to Saskatoon to develop a comprehensive and effective strategy to accommodate and retain more immigrants and to address the issues that will face new immigrants and the community, further work will be needed. This will likely require engaging outside assistance from persons and/or organizations with particular skills and knowledge to carry out that process. The process should result in a clear set of objectives and a strategy and community based action plan for consideration by City Council.

Funding for this project may be available from:

- Citizenship and Immigration Canada - Immigration Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP - B). Applications may be obtained through and submitted to the CIC Saskatoon office,

Carol Oliver, Settlement Counsellor,  
6<sup>th</sup> Floor, 410-22<sup>nd</sup> Street East, Saskatoon  
Phone: (306) 975-4593;  
Fax: (306) 975-4525;  
email: Carol.Oliver@cic.gc.ca;

The program is explained in detail at:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomer/isap-2e.html#1>

- Government Relations, Immigration Branch, Saskatchewan. There are no funding programs established but the department will consider applications for funding this kind of project.

Apply to:

Eric Johansen, Director, Immigration Branch,  
2nd Floor, 1919 Saskatchewan Drive, Regina, SK S4P 3V7,  
Phone: (306) 787-6356  
Fax: (306) 798-0713  
email: ejohansen@gr.gov.sk.ca

- Department of Canadian Heritage, Multiculturalism Program. This grant program is available for funding community action projects, institutional development projects, and public education projects. Phone: (819) 953-1970, Toll-free: 1 888 776-8584, email: multi\_canada@pch.gc.ca. Application forms and guide are available at:

[http://www.canadianheritage.gc.ca/progs/multi/program/guide/gafapp\\_e.pdf](http://www.canadianheritage.gc.ca/progs/multi/program/guide/gafapp_e.pdf) (form)  
[http://www.canadianheritage.gc.ca/progs/multi/program/guide/guide\\_e.pdf](http://www.canadianheritage.gc.ca/progs/multi/program/guide/guide_e.pdf) (online Guide)

Canada-Saskatchewan Career and Employment Services may also be willing to participate in, and provide funding for, this project - contact Bill Fletcher, Tel. 933-5191, email: bfletcher@dcre.gov.sk.ca

Consideration should be given to involving the Saskatchewan Regional Economic Development Authority (SREDA), the Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce, the Saskatoon Tribal Council.

**Recommendations:**

1. It is recommended that the City of Saskatoon develop a strategy and action plan to:
  - Accommodate more immigrants to Saskatoon;
  - Effectively address the difficulties facing newcomers to improve retention of immigrants;
  - Effectively address the challenges facing the community; and
  - Take full advantage of the many opportunities and benefits that increased immigration can offer.
2. It is recommended that a qualified person be engaged to consult with the various stakeholders and resource persons, to produce a more detailed set of objectives, a proposed strategy and a community based action plan for consideration by City Council.

Dated at Saskatoon this \_\_\_\_ day of November, 2004

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David Simpson, CDRRC Member

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Gatdeet Wakou, CDRRC Member

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Andrew Mason, CDRRC Chair