

**WELCOMING CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN LONDON
Community Action Plan - Status Report**

Spring, 2006

Priority Area	INCOME
Recommended Community Action	Building on the recommendations of the Creative Cities Task Force, the Employment Sector Council of London and Middlesex (ESCLM) will strike a working group to plan a London Summit that brings key stakeholders including employers together and establishes a process to implement an Immigrant Employment Task Force in London.
Status Report	<p>A funding proposal to the Ontario Trillium Foundation was submitted in March, 2006 to support the start-up of Immigrant Employment Task Force.</p> <p>Under the leadership of the ESCLM, the Task Force will work to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage employers to secure their involvement with immigrant employment issues and opportunities; 2. Network the agencies involved with supporting the integration of immigrants into the work environment to best coordinate information dissemination; and 3. Convene a summit on Immigrant Employment in London and Region. <p>As a result of these activities, anticipated outcomes will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 500 employers will have received supporting information on how to employ immigrants; - Local employers will take on a championing role for the employment of immigrants; - An effective positioning campaign will be in place; and - Immigrant serving agencies on London / Middlesex will be better coordinated and meeting twice yearly to ensure information is shared and disseminated to the benefit of immigrants.

Priority Area	NEIGHBORHOODS
Recommended Community Action	<p>London will host a workshop that will allow London's existing network of neighborhood-based services to showcase local models of success; share ideas and empower other communities; and confirm the specific issues and opportunities within different neighborhoods/communities of need. Settlement issues will be discussed as part of this work.</p>
Status Report	<p>A community planning and dialogue session was held on November 30, 2005 at the Carling Heights Optimist Community Centre. Over 40 neighborhood-level service providers, including community resource centres, ethnocultural groups, libraries and other municipal services, participated in the session.</p> <p>Participants discussed the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What do immigrant children, families, youth, seniors need to feel that they belong in their new communities/ neighborhoods? What does belonging look like/ feel like for them? - What are we currently doing well in our neighborhoods to foster a sense of belonging for newcomers? What makes them successful? - Where are we falling short? What is getting in the way of achieving welcoming neighborhoods? What specific actions can we identify to build into our plan? <p>Following from the session, a sub-committee has been working to address some of the next steps identified by participants. One of the key priorities was the need to access community space for ethnocultural groups to meet. \$5,000 in funding from Canadian Heritage, Multiculturalism & Aboriginal Programs has been received to conduct a needs assessment of this issue in summer, 2006.</p>

Priority Area	SOCIAL INCLUSION AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
Recommended Community Action	The City of London will be encouraged to develop and implement a municipal plan that outlines their role as a community leader in fostering social inclusion and civic engagement of newcomers.
Status Report	LDRRAC has identified that their role as a municipal advisory committee positions them to effectively work with the City of London to implement this recommendation. Further action is required to move this work forward.

Priority Area	SERVICES AND SUPPORTS
<p>Recommended Community Action</p>	<p>London's Community Funders Network will work together to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Examine how to sustain long-term community development versus project funding to better support neighborhood services; ▪ Showcase good examples of successful culturally competent services and initiatives in London and other communities; and ▪ Enhance expectations of funded service providers to provide culturally appropriate programs, demonstrated through performance measurement. <p><i>The Funders Network includes representation from the following: United Way of London and Middlesex; City of London; Trillium Foundation; London Community Foundation; Service Canada; Canadian Heritage Multiculturalism & Aboriginal Programs; the Ontario Ministries of Citizenship and Immigration, Culture, Tourism and the Sport and Recreation Branch; the Ministry of Community and Social Services; the Ministry of the Attorney General; Status of Women Canada.</i></p>
<p>Status Report</p>	<p>In December, 2005, the Funders Network identified the following opportunities for action in 2006:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Host a "blue sky" session in spring, 2006 to engage all funders regarding priorities, capacity, and increased coordination; ▪ Work with neighborhood resource centres to build capacity for working with vulnerable populations including newcomers; and ▪ Explore the development of a shared funders' statement about diversity.

Priority Area	SYSTEMIC CHANGE
Recommended Community Action	A workgroup will be struck to develop a made-in-London strategy to educate Londoners about local diversity. Media and communications will play a key role in implementation.
Status Report	<p>On March 6, 2006, a community session called "Building Effective Strategies to Reach Diverse Populations" was hosted at the Chamber of Commerce. Communications staff from organizations throughout the community discussed local strategies to best reach newcomers in our community.</p> <p>One of the key messages from participants at the session was that, in order to more effectively respond to the changing face of our community, more information is needed about local diversity and best practices. Communicators, educators, human resource professionals, and other service providers are among stakeholder groups that can benefit from this increased information.</p> <p>The need for a more comprehensive approach to engaging these stakeholders was identified. This need supports the recommendation from the Creative City Task Force Report that the City of London host a Diversity Conference with the London Cross Cultural Learner Centre.</p> <p>To this end, the United Way of London and Middlesex, on behalf of the Welcoming Cultural Diversity in London sub-group, has submitted a funding proposal to the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration's "Community Builders" grant program. This grant is intended to promote awareness of Ontario's diverse heritage, offer the opportunity for multiple cultural celebrations, and promotes broad community engagement.</p> <p>Should the funding proposal be successful, the diversity conference, "Celebrating London's Diversity" would be held in October, 2006. The City of London will continue to play a leadership role in the planning and implementation of the event.</p>