

Integrating Newcomers for a Sustainable Ontario

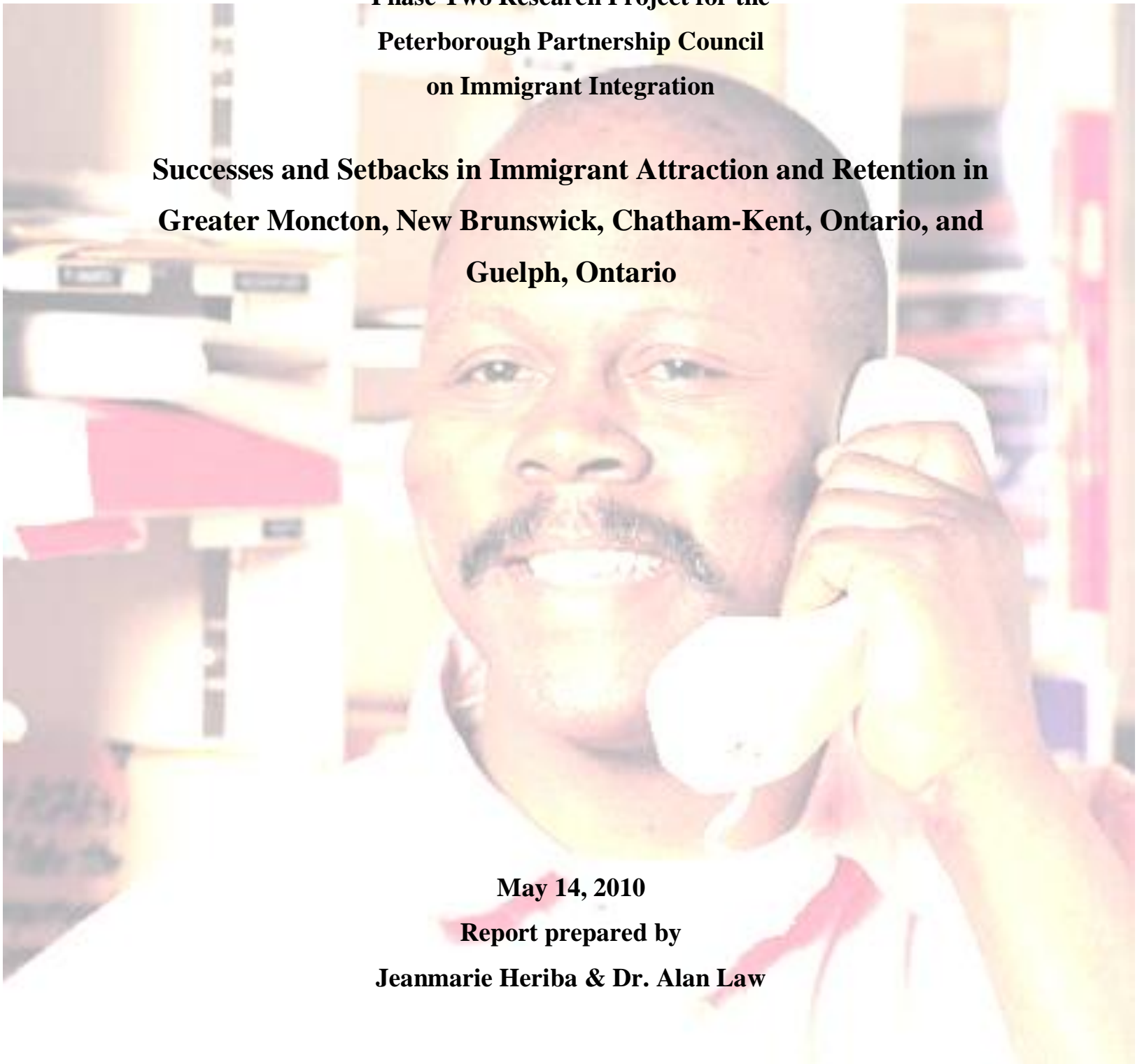
**Phase Two Research Project for the
Peterborough Partnership Council
on Immigrant Integration**

**Successes and Setbacks in Immigrant Attraction and Retention in
Greater Moncton, New Brunswick, Chatham-Kent, Ontario, and
Guelph, Ontario**

May 14, 2010

Report prepared by

Jeanmarie Heriba & Dr. Alan Law



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A sincere thank you goes to the people who were interviewed. They gave generously of their time and graciously shared their knowledge and experiences. Efforts were made by the interviewer to reflect as accurately as possible the information shared.

Executive Summary

Canadian communities are concerned about population sustainability and about having enough workers to meet labour needs. Government funding is being poured into immigrant recruitment and retention research and efforts. Many people are asking the same questions and getting the same answers. Communities may be unique; each has its own characteristics, its own essence. But people are the same. Each person needs a way to live and, for most, this means earning a living through employment, either self-employment or working for someone else. Adequate housing and necessities such as food have to be affordable. When those needs are met, all need friendship for good mental health and a high quality of life.

Research shows that the primary factor in where immigrants move is employment, except for refugees, who may be sponsored by a church or other group in a particular location. Immigrants choose a place where they can find a job and where the cost of living does not exceed income. Immigrants are coming to Canada for opportunity for their children and for themselves.

The three cities researched, one in New Brunswick and two in Ontario, are all trying, with different levels of success, to bring immigrants to their communities and help them integrate there. Greater Moncton, New Brunswick is ahead of the pack, having actively responded a little earlier than the other two to its city's need for highly skilled professionals and entrepreneurs. They stumbled along the way and are still not satisfied with their immigrant recruitment and retention, but continue to learn and go forward. This growing city learned to first identify, then strategically recruit, the population that could meet its needs. Once in the community, new immigrants were not left to flounder, but were given the supports of information, welcome, and friendship that make them stay.

Chatham-Kent felt the effects of the U.S. auto industry decline last year. There is not a large immigrant population, but city leaders want to grow that population with entrepreneurs and international students. Some of their initiatives were put into action the same week this report was released. Leaders are building relationships in the existing immigrant population and taking advantage of every opportunity to make connections that can lead to economic growth and newcomer integration.

Being one hour from Toronto, and having a high immigrant population for many years, Guelph could sit back and relax if it wanted. Instead, the leadership in Guelph knew it could do a better job of integrating the immigrants who came to the city, and have recently taken several actions to do it. Fast-tracking and bridging programs are taken advantage of, and the city is learning from those experiences to make new programs even more successful. The city's leadership is firmly behind integration of newcomers, committing time and energy to making people feel welcome. Federal funding for integration-related endeavours is going to Guelph for its many initiatives. Here, immigration will be targeted toward highly skilled professionals who can make the city prosper.

Successful integration is not only what the receiving community can do for the immigrant. Immigrants have to help themselves by learning about Canadian culture and understanding how the employment system works. Improving English proficiency is critical to success, and that takes time and commitment. Immigrants also have to know that these steps have to be taken. With the money and effort that is going into recruiting, integrating, and retaining immigrants, successful strategies will be found and replicated to grow and sustain communities in Canada.

Introduction

Successes and Setbacks in Immigrant Attraction and Retention in Greater Moncton, New Brunswick, Chatham-Kent, Ontario, and Guelph, Ontario report is the second part of Phase Two Research for the Peterborough Partnership Council on Immigrant Integration. The research was conducted for the purpose of gathering information to guide the development of recommendations and an action plan for an Integration Strategy for the Peterborough area.

A collaborative approach will be taken in the development of the Integration Strategy, with input from the researcher and sector working-group members. Sources for development of the strategy will include, but not be limited to: learning points from this report, Faces of Our Future report from Phase One research, Community Immigrant Retention in Rural Ontario reports, Statistics Canada data, the Together We Prosper conference convened by the Peterborough Partnership Council on Immigrant Integration, and the knowledge of the volunteer sector working-group members of their own city's needs and capacities.

The report reflects findings of site studies in three cities conducted with the goal of information gathering to find what other cities have found to be successful and unsuccessful strategies in attracting and retaining immigrants to their communities. It reflects – and respects – individuals' own experiences and learning.

Methodology

With approval from the Integration Strategy Committee, a site study was conducted of three cities to discover what others had found successful and unsuccessful in attracting and retaining newcomers to their area. The study was conducted primarily through telephone interviews of major stakeholders in each of the cities. Other sources were website information and Statistics Canada.

Cities chosen for study were Greater Moncton, New Brunswick, Guelph, Ontario, and Chatham-Kent, Ontario. Comparable size was the first consideration in identifying a city. Growth rate, location, and number of immigrants were further considerations. One city, Chatham-Kent, has a low immigrant population but is structurally similar to Peterborough, has been the subject of published immigrant-related research, and has an award-winning hospital system whose former Chief Executive Officer now presides over Peterborough Regional Health Centre.

From findings of a Phase One data review showing the dominant factor in immigrant recruitment and retention to be employment, the research methodology that was proposed to, and approved by, the Integration Strategy Committee was focused on the employment sector.

Stakeholders interviewed represented top city leadership, economic development organizations, workforce development organizations, local immigration partnerships, service providers, business organizations, and individuals knowledgeable about immigration in the specified cities. Twenty-two interviews were conducted; seven each in two of the cities and eight in the third.

Questions posed to stakeholders were:

1. What brought about the need to attract or retain an immigrant population?
2. What strategies did you use for attraction and retention and were they beneficial?
3. What problems or barriers were encountered and how were they addressed?
4. Which stakeholders were involved in efforts to attract and retain an immigrant population?
5. How did you measure the outcomes of your strategies?
6. Other questions as generated through conversations with contacts.

Anonymity has been respected to the extent possible in order to get at the heart of a city's challenges and their remediation.

Greater Moncton

Greater Moncton, New Brunswick is a growing census metropolitan area encompassing the cities of Moncton and Dieppe and the town of Riverview. It has a population of 126,424 – a 6.5% growth rate between 2001 and 2006, according to Statistics Canada. Strong immigrant growth has occurred since 2007.

A diversified economy dampened the blow of a recent recession. Currently, transportation and distribution (including an international airport), information and communications technology, life sciences, advanced manufacturing, aerospace and defence, customer contact centres, tourism, and other sectors contribute to making Greater Moncton's economy diverse and increase opportunities for entrepreneurs and those with a variety of skill sets. Greater Moncton's economic growth is being driven by entrepreneurs, and the current job growth outlook is good.

Quality of life factors are high, with cultural offerings through theatre, cinema, art exhibitions, music, and a professional ballet company. Educational opportunities are available through l'Université de Moncton and Crandall University, and Mount Allison University is within a thirty-minute drive. High water quality and good transportation services contributed to Molson Coors Canada's decision to build its first new brewery since 1955 in Moncton in 2007. A low crime rate combined with a low cost of living makes Greater Moncton attractive to all, including young families with children and retirees in particular.

Looking ahead, community leaders created a Moncton that was named as one of the top seven most intelligent cities in the world in 2009 by the Intelligent Community Forum (Fredericton, New Brunswick also made the 2009 list). Downtown Moncton is a Wi-Fi hotspot, and after the introduction of free broadband access in its entire public transit system, a first in North America, ridership on public transport quadrupled. On April 12, the Intelligent Community Forum named Shawn Graham, the Premier of New Brunswick, Intelligent Community Visionary of the Year for 2010. The decision was based on his “dedication to make New Brunswick the first complete broadband province in Canada and transform its educational system to pursue a knowledge-based economy.”

Like many Canadian communities, Greater Moncton wanted to grow its population for population sustainability. A predicted shortage in qualified workers in Greater Moncton also drove the need for newcomers. As well as retirees from other parts of New Brunswick and from Europe who find Greater Moncton a desirable location to settle, some immigrants from all over the world are resettling in Greater Moncton from other parts of Canada. A critical mass in some populations is being observed.

Materials and presentations have been developed in the Korean language and some in Mandarin. Some inquiries from potential immigrants come through city and business organization websites, but many immigrants come through the provincial nominee program, which recruits investors with the net worth and start-up funds needed to buy or start a business. Because Greater Moncton is growing, business people look at the area as a place where it is possible to start a successful business. With about 7,000 small- to medium-sized businesses in Greater Moncton, new immigrants can find opportunities to purchase, and therefore sustain or grow, businesses and their resulting employment. The Greater Moncton Immigration Board, in partnership with many community stakeholders, targets and attracts newcomers from around the world, including France and Francophone countries in Africa to whom they can market official bilingualism in New Brunswick and l'Université de Moncton.

Prior to 2007, various stakeholders were creating their own initiatives surrounding immigration. An entity was needed that would be aware of all stakeholders involved in immigration and that could act as a resource for newcomers to know where to go for services, a “one-stop shop.” The Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise Greater Moncton took the lead in bringing stakeholders such as representatives from schools, universities, businesses, service providers, the economic development organizations in the three municipalities, and immigrant populations together to create a regional agency for the purposes of efficiency and standardization, and to span the gaps in immigrant recruitment and retention. The Greater Moncton Immigration Board was created, and is comprised of one paid coordinator and a board of directors. Funding is provided by the three municipalities. The board meets regularly to improve ongoing efforts. For example, there is discussion of an online resource to match investors with opportunities

Economic development staff from Enterprise Greater Moncton and the three municipalities work closely with provincial immigration officials and have, at a minimum, monthly contact. Initially, the province worked with overseas immigration consultants in China as Asian immigrants are more likely than

European immigrants to seek the help of immigration consultants. The provincial nominee program, which focuses on entrepreneurs, resulted in few Chinese moving to Greater Moncton or staying there. It was felt that some of the Chinese immigrants were using the program to fast-track their immigration to Canada rather than intending to stay in New Brunswick. Moncton had the experience of expending a lot of time and energy to recruit and retain immigrants from China who, within six months, would move to Toronto, Vancouver, or Montreal. Eventually, interest from another population was being noticed at the provincial level.

South Koreans were taking a clear and enhanced interest in New Brunswick, and community stakeholders took advantage of this fact. Working with overseas consultants, economic development staff in Greater Moncton learned that Canadian and South Korean business practices are comparable. Because Greater Moncton offers entrepreneurial opportunities, it would be possible for this population to integrate into the business environment. Families of young children became the primary target as many South Koreans with exposure to other countries and ways of life were seeking an education system for their children that did not require all-day schooling and tutoring at night.

With the help of South Korean consultants in Seoul and Yeosu, representatives from the city, the economic development sector, and the school district travelled to those cities for nine days in 2007 to pitch the quality of life in Greater Moncton with potential immigrants. This effort would later be viewed as incredibly successful: in the first couple of months after the visit to South Korea, fifty families arrived. From five families in 2005, there are now over four hundred South Korean families living in Greater Moncton. Some families broke with typical behavior and left most of the family in South Korea, bringing their children to Greater Moncton to try the school experience for a year. Deciding to stay, they then applied for Permanent Resident status from within Canada. Eventually the family joined the mother and children and invested in the community, purchasing stores or restaurants, or opening bed and breakfast operations. Some South Koreans see schooling their children in a Canadian school system as an opportunity, and immigration for this reason increased local school enrolment. The cost of schooling for nonresidents helped finance the local school system. Some immigrants purchased houses before starting the immigration process. This population wanted to become part of the community and did not want to live in clusters. Very few returned to South Korea after a year. Now, some extended family members choose to study at one of the universities in the area, which helps finance the university system due to its higher cost for foreign students. Word spread quickly in South Korea and initial success is generating more and more immigrants.

Provincial nominees must meet language requirements, make a visit, and complete an interview. The Greater Moncton Immigration Board meets with nominees to discuss areas of interest and the advantages of immigrating to the area, making this partially a sales job that needs the right person to do it well.

Major partners in immigrant recruitment and retention are found in the education sector. Adaptation by the school system to help immigrant students succeed has enhanced retention. School children are assessed and then tutored, if necessary, to help them integrate into the schools. Schools have a dedicated

staff member who registers newcomers, and this assists in the measurement of retention outcomes as it is known when intake increases or decreases. If a child leaves school unexpectedly, Immigration Board members and the school staff member discuss why. When appropriate, efforts are then directed at future remediation if circumstances permit. A welcome centre was opened in one of the schools due to the large numbers of newcomers. To demonstrate the community's welcome and to help integration, the school district hosted a reception and talent show for student newcomers, and over 450 people attended.

At the university level, some immigrants come to learn English and for the Canadian experience. An international student conference is held each year at l'Université de Moncton. Some young students who come to study at one of the universities find a life partner or employment and remain in the area after graduation.

By coming through the provincial nominee program with its inherent requirements, many immigrants already know what to expect and are emotionally and financially invested in making their immigration a success. Students come to know the way of life in the region after having lived and studied there. Retirees and others such as refugees, however, may be coming for the first time. In all likelihood, most newcomers will need some kind of reception or service. Although those involved in immigrant recruitment and retention in Greater Moncton have confirmed that employment is the number one factor in retention, they want to make coming to their area a good experience and want newcomers to become part of their communities. To help achieve these goals, Greater Moncton has resources for meeting immigrants' settlement needs.

Three service providers play important roles in retention of newcomers, the Multicultural Association of the Greater Moncton Area, the Greater Moncton Immigration Board, and Le Centre d'accueil et d'intégration des immigrant.e.s du Moncton métropolitain. Known immigrants are received with an orientation on settlement information, business information, and educational opportunities. For some immigrants, the availability of service providers is something they discover by word of mouth.

The Multicultural Association of the Greater Moncton Area receives referrals from various associations and offers many services to immigrants, primarily refugees. Client loads are heavy and resources are prioritized. Service is provided by case management, with outcomes measured by clients becoming employed or advancing in language classes. Many ethnic groups have formed their own associations over the years, an indication of immigrant retention, and the Association works closely with them. Learning and sharing between Canadian-born people and immigrants is seen by this organization as something that needs to happen.

Attempting to close the recruitment and service gap for immigrants, the Greater Moncton Immigration Board is a resource for primarily non-refugee immigrants and for businesses. It provides more than language and credential assistance – business people have a resource they can call on, in addition to local economic development staff, for individual help. As an example, a transportation company employing immigrant long-haul drivers had drivers with spouses who felt isolated. After the company contacted the

Immigration Board coordinator, arrangements were made for the spouses to meet other people and increase their social contact.

Le Centre d'accueil et d'intégration des immigrant.e.s du Moncton métropolitain works with the Francophone population of immigrants. Increasing numbers of families moving to Greater Moncton have grown this provider from one employee in 2008 who served three families to five employees in 2010 who serve thirty. It is important to the centre to make a space for the newcomer to feel at home. With a large room and refreshments available, newcomers can come for conversation and friendship.

Addressing needs specific to the person or family is necessary as there is a difference between working with refugees and those with a large amount of money to invest. Because many immigrants come through the provincial nominee program, which requires a prior visit, an interview, and contact with various people in the community, a built-in social network is available upon arrival. By being a bilingual community, a certain level of tolerance is inherent, reducing the perception of newcomers being “outsiders.” Multicultural activities are generated by the municipality, mayor’s offices, service providers, school districts, community colleges, and universities.

Beyond services, some providers working with newcomers find attitudes to be as important, if not more so, in facilitating integration. The quality of the welcome a person receives upon first arriving in a city can have an impact; the first smile is important. Immigrants from Europe, not just those from a different culture, also need a friendly welcome. People need to know they are going to have a friend, and one strong contact is a force in retaining people. Staff members in positions that work with newcomers need to have “people personalities” for which one cannot be trained. First hiring the right person, then training them for the job is essential. An ability to make a connection, which is done from the heart, is the attribute that can improve services to newcomers.

Cohesiveness of the community is vital in making newcomers feel welcome. In response to graffiti on a house of worship, for example, a team was mobilized to clean up the site and a statement from a city official was released. Quick and collective responses to pockets of issues have been appreciated by those targeted. An international night at a Canadian Hockey League game with recognition of newcomers and a reception for the families was an example of a community’s effort at inclusiveness. It also served as an eye-opener for some long-term residents to see the number of immigrants being integrated into their communities.

Addressing Challenges

During the creation of a new organization a few years ago, a lack of understanding of its role and responsibilities created friction among some organizations and individuals. As sometimes happens when new organizations are begun, power struggles within and perceived competition in the larger community can be issues. By hiring a new leader, recruiting a new board chair, and seating new board members, personality issues are now resolved. Practice has shown that perceived competition did not materialize.

Stakeholders are trying to keep in mind that the issue is not about immigrant services, but about immigrants being able to establish themselves in a community.

Surveys conducted by different economic development organizations in Greater Moncton show that most employers are willing to hire immigrant workers. Some employers involved in international business look for people abroad and welcome new ideas. However, some can be reluctant to hire immigrants because they may need to adapt to the workplace and culture, and some feel immigrant employment is too complicated to deal with. With jobs being created at a fast pace in Greater Moncton, the availability and quality of workers are serious issues facing businesses. Education of employers is an option, but “feeling the pain” of not finding the right workers may be what will necessitate giving immigrants a chance. For instance, a construction company could not find an estimator and, after much searching, hired an immigrant from South Korea. Today, the employer is extremely pleased as the employee is a hard worker. The employer hired a tutor for the employee to practice his English. Economic development staff members relate stories such as these during presentations to the business community and work on a case-by-case basis to assist employers.

A barrier to possible entrepreneurial recruitment is a provincial government plan to require a two-year deposit from nominees based on resource amounts. This plan will be lobbied against by business organizations. The province will also be lobbied to recruit more skilled workers.

Conclusion

Greater Moncton has people in many sectors actively working on recruiting and retaining newcomers to their communities for the purposes of population sustainability and labour needs. Community leaders in the three municipalities that make up Greater Moncton work together to make sure their communities are attractive to newcomers and then welcome them when they arrive. They have been successful in attracting the types of newcomers who can benefit their area both economically and socially. They are willing to do the hard work of addressing challenges. They recognize that there is much to be done around immigration and they assess what is urgent, what can be impacted, and what cannot. They anticipate barriers and face the fear of the unknown. There is much to be learned from Greater Moncton’s experience.

Learning Points

1. Make sure the community is a place where people will want to settle. Imagine an objective look at the community from a newcomer’s perspective.
2. Forecast needs of the community where immigration could address challenges, such as a need for skilled labour.
3. Develop economic growth targets and needed workforce structure in collaboration with provincial officials.
4. Conduct direct efforts to recruit the identified population by working with overseas consultants.

5. Work together as a community, with representatives from all stakeholders, to recruit and address the needs of both businesses and immigrants.
6. Publish online business, city, and social provider information in the language(s) of the targeted population(s).
7. Partner with all levels of schools, including the college and university, to brainstorm and identify potential problems that can be addressed. Address problems as they arise.
8. Provide resources for newcomers and for businesses to access help in meeting the needs of their immigrant employees.
9. Offer newcomers friendship.
10. Recognize that different populations, such as refugees and investor class immigrants, have needs specific to them.
11. Hire the “right” person for positions associated with immigrant recruitment and retention.
12. Respond quickly and collectively to any issues such as acts of racism or discrimination.
13. Be alert to possible barriers in accessing immigrant labour or entrepreneurs.

Quotes

“No question that if you have a job, you stay.”

“They come for their children.”

“Pick your market.”

“Friendship is essential to retention.”

“We need to learn and share from one another.”

“Immigration is a hard subject to tackle with employers.”

“Partnerships and stakeholders working together, and the cohesiveness of the community are critical.”

“One of the criticisms of settlement organizations is once you get too big, you lose the personal touch.”

Chatham-Kent

Chatham-Kent is a city of 108,177 people (Statistics Canada; 2006 Census of Population) located in southwestern Ontario, the agricultural heartland of the province. Compared with other cities and towns in the region, it has a relatively low number of immigrants and a high number of retirees. Large-scale and small niche-market farms, energy, and automotive industries are vital to the economic health of Chatham-Kent, and its retail sector is a centre for the region. Road and rail access to Midwestern markets in the United States is a draw for new business. A University of Guelph campus, Ridgetown College, is one of

the university's centres for agricultural and biochemical research. St. Clair College's Thames Campus, with a focus on adult learning programs, is expanding. That Chatham-Kent has an agricultural sector, and is a community under study by Community Immigrant Retention in Rural Ontario, makes it a city to watch.

Chatham-Kent Health Alliance is one of the community's largest employers. It was named one of Canada's Top 100 employers in 2009 and 2010, and is recognized as a Best Practice Spotlight Organization. The alliance has received awards for employment excellence, information technology, and communications and environmental efforts, according to its website. Ken Tremblay, President and CEO of Peterborough Regional Health Centre, was the former CEO of the Chatham-Kent Health Alliance.

Housing costs are low in Chatham-Kent compared with ten other cities, both larger and smaller, in Ontario. From a comparison chart on the city's website, the average cost of a detached bungalow is \$150,000. A two-bedroom apartment in an apartment building can be rented for \$600 per month with utilities included. Other selling points for Chatham-Kent are low traffic, public transit buses running every thirty minutes, bus service to outlying areas, and passenger rail service within Ontario and other parts of Canada. Toronto is a three and a half hour drive. Recreation amenities on two Great Lakes are nearby and Detroit is a little over a one-hour drive for those interested in watching professional sports.

With the downturn of the economy in 2009, particularly in the automotive industry, Chatham-Kent has been experiencing a high unemployment rate. When jobs were lost, some residents, immigrants and native-born alike, moved away. Currently, there is no shortage of skilled tradespeople.

As with many other cities and towns across Canada, Chatham-Kent is on the move to attract and retain newcomers to sustain its population and grow the economy. Faith groups bring in refugees. City leaders have recognized that many immigrants to Canada possess the skills and experience to fill professional job gaps and start new businesses. Typically, workforce development boards, or councils, municipalities, and business-related organizations are the best sources for the community inventory data needed to assess which skills are lacking in the community and those needed for sustainability or growth. Chatham-Kent commissioned a growth analysis and a local immigration trend study to assist with determining what type of newcomer they needed. The economic downturn will not last forever, and the city council has made immigration part of the city's strategic plan. Their targets of immigration are entrepreneurs and international students.

Overall, immigration has been positive for Chatham-Kent as many newcomers integrate into the community, find employment, and help sustain the schools, tax base, and businesses. Many who come are entering the medical and education fields, and are bringing expertise in value-added agriculture. Increasing numbers of newcomers are joining the boards of nonprofit organizations. Some immigrants have moved to Chatham-Kent from Toronto so their children can learn English, leaving the cultural silos they were living in and moving to this smaller city where it is easier to integrate into the larger society.

Cultural perspectives and knowledge of what is happening in the world are valued in Chatham-Kent. More than just economics and business retention, immigration is about community living.

Chatham-Kent's mayor makes appearances at immigrant group events to make sure immigrants know they are welcome and supported. This is seen as important enough that, if he is unavailable to appear in person, he prepares a video presentation. Knowing that the position of mayor is highly respected in most Asian cultures, the mayor of Chatham-Kent wants to show the newcomers that he is "like everyone else." In Asian cultures, relationships come before business, and if leaders demonstrate understanding, the economics will follow. The Asian community needs to know there is sincere respect between people of different cultures. Chatham-Kent's mayor does his best to demonstrate that sincere understanding and respect.

Relationships start the talk. From personal, work, and business contacts, things can happen if the will is there. Chatham-Kent's mayor initiated a relationship with the mayor of Dezhou in Shandong Province, China. As a result, the two cities now have a sister-city agreement. The mayor of Dezhou paid a visit to Chatham-Kent. He recently sent an invitation for a reciprocal visit and inquired if the mayor would be interested in a trade mission to Dezhou. The relationship-building process is well under way.

Chatham-Kent's leaders are taking the attitude of "where the door is open, we walk through it." Taking advantage of Toronto's immigrant populations, promotion of the quality of life in Chatham-Kent is pursued through Toronto's ethnic newspapers. Immigrants have moved to Chatham-Kent from Toronto, but it is not known if these efforts were part of the reason for this.

Word of mouth through immigrant networks has been a successful approach in bringing immigrants to Chatham-Kent since "smaller cities do not fall on an immigrant's radar." One immigrant, employed in a skilled profession, and his family influenced ten other friends and families to move to Chatham-Kent. They explained they probably would not get a "big" job, but could travel anywhere in town within five or ten minutes, could find low-cost housing and a low cost of living, and would find friendly people. Of the ten families who moved to Chatham-Kent, two subsequently moved to Calgary for higher-paying jobs. Both families are considering moving back to Chatham-Kent, explaining that because Calgary's cost of living is so much higher, there may be no net benefit. An immigrant from a different county has also attracted others to Chatham-Kent from both within Canada and the home country. Examples such as these demonstrate the influence newcomers can have on immigration within their own cultural groups.

A large Ontario company based in Chatham-Kent employs many highly skilled specialists. Twenty or thirty years ago, when the company had some difficulty locating or attracting applicants with a particular technical skill set, they had to search outside of Canada, primarily in the United States or Europe. Now, the applicant pool has expanded with new immigrants and international students from Asia, Africa, South America, and the Middle East. To assist in attracting applicants from this large labour pool, the company has developed relationships with a network of employment outreach groups that includes settlement organizations, cultural coalitions, diverse employment services, and immigrant groups with job boards in

Toronto. The company's challenge is getting people to move to areas outside of major cities, but retention is not a problem: once they move, they stay, and the company has a less than 5% employee turnover rate. As part of the recruiting process, the company also works with Canadian services that assess foreign credentials. Hiring managers are required to go through diversity interviewing skills and learn how the employment process works in other countries, as it would be easy to dismiss an applicant due to lack of understanding of cultural differences.

Misunderstanding of how the Canadian employment system works is a significant barrier for newcomers, especially for those coming from a much more hierarchical system. For example, education in Asian countries can open doors; getting a job is by getting a degree. By not having credentials recognized, resumes are not accompanied with that advantageous documentation. Many employers will not go to the trouble of considering applicants without it. A lack of knowledge of these factors makes it frustrating for those who "send out 100 resumes and don't understand why nothing happens. They don't know what they don't know." After finding their own cultural and religious organizations and employment services, they learn about the process. But that takes time.

Skilled immigrants unable to find jobs often discover the common challenge of insufficient language proficiency. Employment and social integration are more difficult for those who have to learn the language. One immigrant advises newcomers to take responsibility for their own success and asks them when they will shed a sense of entitlement. Advice to others is to have a short-term plan and a long-term plan. The short-term plan is to accept any job while reeducating oneself, and the long-term plan is to become employed in one's profession. Employers are more receptive of those who follow this process as it engenders more understanding of Canadian culture. Further advice from this immigrant to newcomers is to know the lay of the land of the community and become an integral part of it. This involves becoming active in more than one's own church or social group. Instead of complaining about an environment, "you have to get yourself out there."

To assist foreign-trained professionals to enter, and remain, in the workplace, Chatham-Kent's Chamber of Commerce applied for and was awarded funding for a Global Experience @ Work program. A newly-hired coordinator will work with local employers on adapting newcomers into the workplace. Printed materials and job-shadowing experiences will assist newcomers. Sponsored by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, the twenty-one Global Experience @ Work programs will give evidence of what works for successful workplace integration, and this learning will be shared with other chambers.

As part of the Welcoming Communities Initiative, Chatham-Kent launched its immigrant-targeted website on April 30. The attractive and easily navigable website provides information useful for before and after arrival. Available rental housing can be located without navigating through many links. Contact information for settlement services, public transport, the hospital, and other organizations are listed, and the site contains a handy checklist of action steps for getting established in Chatham-Kent.

Newcomers need help in integrating into society. They need invitations to meetings, potlucks, events, and anyplace else where they can meet members of the community. Newcomers may also want to join one of the numerous cultural groups in Chatham-Kent. Some large groups have their own building, and several offer language schools. The Muslim community, represented by over thirteen countries, is forming a school open to anyone.

Settlement services and social opportunities are provided by four organizations: the Mennonite Central Committee, the Association Canadienne-française de L'Ontario, Adult Language and Learning, and the relatively new Cultural Coalition of Chatham-Kent. Members of the Cultural Coalition of Chatham-Kent include immigrants, individuals, staff members from local businesses, police and fire departments, and the municipality. Someone of official status participates on each subcommittee. The coalition provides services, creates relationships, and promotes cultural communities. The Cultural Coalition of Chatham-Kent has produced a Know Your Rights! booklet, which is available in several languages. Other communities were interested in the booklet, and the coalition allows "R & D – rip off and duplicate." Coalition members invite immigrants to participate on their board and in events. Immigrant members promote participation to other immigrants. Now funded by the federal government, the coalition's past funding came from the municipality and the Chamber of Commerce.

Adult Language and Learning offers not only English-language instruction, but something wanted and needed – childcare during classes. The childcare is free for Permanent Resident immigrants. Adult Language and Learning also partners with the Mennonite Central Committee to provide language instruction to the Committee's clients. Becoming known to newcomers can take several routes for providers. Word of mouth is a common one. Various providers set up booths at expos and participate in a newcomer-information fair. Not only do these marketing techniques make providers known to immigrants, but serve to remind other fair participants of their services.

Settlement organizations and economic development organizations have to work together to make immigration successful. Measuring that success can be elusive. Statistics Canada data have been the primary outcome measurement tool for immigrant growth. One of the strategic goals of Community Immigrant Retention in Rural Ontario is to establish measures of success that can be used by other rural communities.

Small communities looking at international immigration may require more energy than targeting immigrants living in Toronto. Assessing needs of newcomers moving to another location is also important. Chatham-Kent is learning that successful immigration is a long process. In small communities, the start is the most difficult part.

Addressing Challenges

Not everyone in the community is supportive of immigration. Letters to the editor of the local newspaper sometimes question the need for immigration. In response, a stakeholder writes a letter to the editor about

the need for an informed perspective. Profiling success stories in the newspaper is another way to educate the public about immigration. Misconceptions about free services and nonpayment of taxes by aboriginal communities and immigrants are evident in Chatham-Kent. Service providers have responded collectively to these misconceptions by convening public forums with guest speakers. For businesses, the Cultural Coalition of Chatham-Kent holds forums and uses data to present the business case for immigration. Tracking the number of newcomers becoming employed by businesses receiving immigration education can measure change. Reduction in the number of letters to the editor can be tracked, but may reflect only fewer letters, not a change in thinking.

Chatham-Kent needed doctors. The Cultural Coalition of Chatham-Kent collaborated with the city and physician recruiters to host a forum for international medical graduates, a term used for those whose credentials have not yet been recognized in Canada. Practising immigrant physicians shared stories of their challenges and eventual success. A presentation was given on the credential assessment process. The forum performed several purposes. It educated potential doctors on the process of credential recognition, encouraged them to proceed, and let them know that the community welcomes them. For the medical community, participants better understood the reality of what immigrants face.

Conclusion

Facing the reality of slow population growth and suffering from the impact of recent job losses, Chatham-Kent's leadership is recognizing the positive impact immigrant entrepreneurs can have on job creation and sustainability of existing businesses and the benefits international students can have on agricultural and industrial innovation to sustain and expand those sectors. Creating a cultural coalition to add to long-established immigrant service providers, forming a Local Immigration Partnership that just hired its first coordinator, and hiring a new economic development staff person are all actions that indicate this city is taking immigration recruitment and retention seriously. Being a city under study by Community Immigrant Retention in Rural Ontario will help Chatham-Kent prepare to meet its challenges. Efforts at recruitment and retention may be relatively new, but city leaders are on board and working at it.

Learning Points

- 1.** Determine a status of immigrant to target for recruitment.
- 2.** Recognize and value the role retirees play in economic sustainability.
- 3.** Ensure low-cost rental housing is available.
- 4.** Recruit immigrants with the ability to sustain farmland by serving niche markets.
- 5.** Establish relationships between city leaders and ethnic communities by attending immigrant-friendly events such as dub poetry festivals.
- 6.** Encourage members of ethnic communities to promote migration of family and friends.
- 7.** Submit articles to Toronto newspapers promoting the community and welcoming newcomers.
- 8.** Provide directly accessible information on the Welcoming Communities Initiative website that will help newcomers find local housing, jobs, healthcare providers, and public transportation.

9. Invite newcomers to social events and service-club meetings.
10. Enlist immigrants to volunteer for community organizations.
11. Advertise the Newcomers Club at newcomer-serving locations and in local newspapers.
12. Inform immigrants of the need for: language proficiency, acceptance of an entry-level job if necessary, further education, Canadian work experience, and self efforts at social integration.
13. Promote immigration from sister city of Ann Arbor, Michigan, home of the University of Michigan.
14. Participate actively in the Local Immigration Partnership (Peterborough Partnership Council on Immigrant Integration: city officials, business leaders).
15. Publicize immigrant success stories in local newspapers.

Quotes

“What are the growing business sectors and what skills are needed?”

“Economic development and Chamber of Commerce are very important.

They do not want to brainstorm only, they need strategic planning.”

“Asked ourselves what are the key opportunities?”

“If I were an immigrant looking for a job, I would do everything I could.”

“Eighty percent of settling is the immigrant. Community can help with the infrastructure to help retain but inclusiveness is the immigrant’s responsibility.”

“The majority, eight out of ten who come from various backgrounds, feel more comfortable with their own cultural backgrounds.”

“We are open for business and are working very hard to attract and retain what we have.”

“Until recently, Chatman-Kent just helped immigrants who came.

We work at it now.”

Guelph

A city of 114,943 residents (Statistics Canada; 2006 Census of Population), Guelph has one of the highest immigrant populations (of immigrants born outside the country) in Canada (24,110 Statistics Canada, 2007. 2006 Community Profiles. 2006 Census). It is a fast-growing city in a strong economic region, and it lies within a one-hour reach of Toronto. Guelph is a gateway for immigrants to Canada with its proximity to Toronto, low unemployment rate, and small-town atmosphere. Guelph offers employment

through its vast manufacturing sector, environmental technology companies, and life sciences clusters. Guelph is a major centre for research and businesses related to agriculture. Agricultural, veterinary, and biotechnology research and development at the University of Guelph are world renowned.

Guelph is considered a secondary settlement area: community leaders have observed that newcomers spend time in Toronto and then move to the Guelph area. Established immigrant populations draw other immigrants who come to look for jobs and for opportunities for their children. Like everyone else, newcomers want a safe community that offers a good education system

The University of Guelph attracts both traditional students and post-graduate level students who may need courses to qualify for Canadian licensure before practising their profession. Post-secondary research internships have led some students to apply for Permanent Resident status while in Guelph. Guelph has environmental engineering companies and a few scientific companies that are run by immigrants who studied at the University of Guelph. Many immigrants find jobs in the manufacturing sector.

A lot of immigrant entrepreneurs are creating wealth in the community. Guelph has many examples of newcomers starting service companies, restaurants, and even a construction company. One of those examples is an immigrant who owns three restaurants and who has several relatives who own restaurants, some of which are franchise operations. Employees in these businesses are both immigrants from the same country as the owners and Canadian-born citizens. Often, employees are students at the University of Guelph. Those in supervisory roles can make a good living and others earn entry-level wages.

Diverse newcomers buy farms and grow crops for ingredients in cultural dishes, such as ginseng and maize, to serve niche markets. Some farmers are graduates of the University of Guelph.

Guelph's economic development strategy was recently updated and a key point will be to invest in people. A determination was made that immigrants are needed in skilled trades. Therefore, recruitment of newcomers to Guelph is targeted to fill gaps such as the need for highly skilled individuals in health care and agriculture. More emphasis will be on targeted attraction to match the needs and the culture of the community, rather than blanket immigration. "We want high-level people in agriculture, not workers for the fields."

A couple of years ago leaders in Guelph realized they were not doing a good job of immigrant settlement into the workplace. Various community groups and agencies came together to form the Guelph Inclusiveness Alliance, a network of social organizations and individuals who work together to help Guelph be a place that welcomes newcomers. Alliance members started to meet and examined local demographics. The Guelph Inclusiveness Alliance then approached the city to access federal funding to design a framework for the development of strategies for immigrant integration. Guelph is now in the process of finding gaps and developing strategies. New outcome measures will be part of their final framework. Early recognition was made that if those strategies were to marginalize either newcomers or native-born Canadians, they would be problematic. Furthermore, development of strategies for

immigrant integration needs to be community-based, with the municipality as a stakeholder for administrative resources. The “city is a facilitator; we are a partner at the table. That is a big part of the success we have had so far.”

Guelph’s new Inclusiveness Alliance, comprised of twenty-six service providers, meets on a monthly basis. It serves as a main connector in the community and as an advisory group to the Local Immigration Partnership. It has researched, created, and published an online and hard copy directory of existing services in six languages.

Multicultural festivals and events originate from the community with those in positions of leadership in government getting behind the process. The mayor, the member of parliament, the member of the provincial parliament, and the chief of police have attended events in immigrant communities. Recruitment from immigrant populations is conducted by the police department. The member of parliament has established an intercultural advisory board.

Major immigrant service providers are Immigrant Services Guelph-Wellington, Onward Willow-Better Beginnings, Better Futures, and the County of Wellington. Immigrant Services Guelph-Wellington is a service provider offering traditional settlement services. Onward Willow-Better Beginnings, Better Futures programs focus on supporting children and families. Last year, Wellington County began an Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program to serve new Permanent Residents in Wellington County and the city of Guelph. With over one million dollars in funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada over the last year, new settlement-worker-related positions were created.

Service providers have found that immigrants need the same things everyone needs: supports that are coherently organized for finding work, housing, and transportation. But immigrants also need friendships, and they need them quickly. They need people to reach out to them and get to know them. Education of the community about immigration does not touch the heart. Having good interactions with someone of another race does.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada funded a bridging-to-employment program at an agricultural institute to help foreign-trained and experienced immigrants gain employment in agriculture-related fields. Applicants are referred to an education credentialing service so that once admitted to the program, they are already credential-equivalent. This is an important step for any newcomer as having international education assessed as Canadian equivalent takes any doubt away from potential employers that one’s education is not legitimate. Language skills specific to the agriculture industry are assessed, and if a predetermined benchmark is not reached, the program participant is directed to a convenient location for language training. Language competency to compete for a career is vital for today’s newcomer. The communication skill set needed to get along in a survival job is not what is required and expected of a professional. The bridging program pays for professional development and competency enhancement so that the newcomer’s skills and knowledge can be deemed current and relevant to industry needs. Agriculture-related employment workshops, proper resume and cover letter writing techniques,

and effective interview preparation, are part of the bridging-to-employment oriented program. Program staff members and field-specific mentors are able to assist participants by becoming a Canadian reference for employment applications. Those program participants who work hard, especially in the area of language proficiency, are successful in that their career aspirations are achieved through program participation and the ability to leverage a professional designation to achieve their career aspiration. For those who set up barriers to success, program participation does not benefit them.

Barriers to acceptance into the bridging-to-employment and oftentimes field-related employment, can come from the immigrant. Examples of some barriers are: 1) the feeling on the part of the immigrant that language skills possessed are good enough when they are not, 2) not taking the time to attend conferences or language training, 3) not living in a location where they can be in touch with their specialized field, 4) receiving messages from within their ethnic community that they are qualified without having to complete Canadian requirements for practice, 5) not possessing the skill set required in today's industry, 6) or having preset goals for places of employment when opportunities in those places are few. Some program participants have exited the program as they are not willing or able to leave their survival job and lack the time and resources to achieve the competencies necessary for a career in agriculture.

Guelph attracts highly skilled professionals but the common barriers of language proficiency and credential recognition prevent them from entering the job market that needs them. Immigrants get entry-level, or survival, jobs and practise language skills. This can help them move up in some workplaces, but for others, they do not get the job-specific language proficiency needed to qualify for skilled employment or a bridge training program. Some of the large companies in Guelph provide language upgrading on the job. Bridging programs and fast-tracking of professionals have been successful ways of connecting immigrants with employers who need them. More funding is being sought to offer further opportunities.

Finding where the jobs are can be a difficult task. An environmental scan revealed that Guelph has a lot of small firms and that about 80% of them have fewer than five employees. As these companies are too small to have a human resources department, immigrants working for small companies may not have access to information or resources. Informal networks for learning about job opportunities may unintentionally exclude newcomers.

Community leaders and employers are realizing that targeted immigration is necessary, asking themselves what skills are needed, who has them, and where these people can be found. Recruiting from countries where credentials can be matched and language poses no barrier can accomplish this. Guelph leaders have realized that by bringing in people such as doctors who cannot practise, immigration is not a successful proposition for the community or the immigrant.

Addressing Challenges

After the attack on the World Trade Center in New York on September 11, 2001, a mosque in Guelph was spray painted. Immediate action was taken by the mayor and a representative from the police

department, who made an announcement that such behaviour was unacceptable to the community. This created such goodwill in the Muslim population that, nine years later, this act is still remembered and is related at events attended by the mayor or a police representative. Leaders in Guelph support and make themselves visible in diverse communities. This not only sets the tone from the top that diversity is embraced, but empowers immigrants and lets the broader community know that Guelph welcomes newcomers.

Opposition from some residents near a proposed Sikh temple is considered to have a racist undertone in addition to the common “not in my backyard” response. Knowing that Toronto experienced some violence around similar issues, an interfaith council came forward to organize events with different faiths to enter into constructive dialogue. The outcome of this attempt is not yet known, but with other populations reaching a critical mass and seeking a place to worship, the community of Guelph will have knowledge of what will work or not work if a similar situation arises. Community members are coming forward and actively working to meet this challenge.

Poor management of a multicultural centre almost ended the endeavour. Several steps revived it. With funding from the federal government, a respectable location was secured. The board was rebuilt with people from different cultures represented, which was a challenge in itself as volunteering is not common in all cultures, and some immigrants lack the time to volunteer. The “right” person was hired to lead the centre. It took work, but that work was done to build in diversity, find the best person for the leadership position, and apply for federal assistance.

Conclusion

Guelph has not had to expend energy attracting immigrants. Immigrants go to Guelph, or end up there, for employment, to be with similar immigrant groups, and for the advantages of living in a smaller city than Toronto. The University of Guelph is a blessing for this city. But, even with immigrants growing the economy, there is a need for highly skilled professionals in some sectors. Actions are being taken to assist newcomers to successfully settle into their workplaces. Alliances have been formed and research is being conducted for an immigrant integration strategy. Guelph’s immigrant-serving organizations perform the same services found in other cities, and with an influx of funding last year, more settlement workers were hired. Guelph is using fast-tracking and bridge training programs that are, for the most part, successful, and managers are looking at ways to make them more successful. With the backing of the city’s leadership, integration of immigrants is one of the priorities in planning for the future of Guelph.

Learning Points

1. Parlay proximity to Toronto in every marketing opportunity.
2. Publicize Trent University as a diverse learning community.
3. Identify all funding resources for new small-business entrepreneurs.
4. Recruit immigrants for positions within the police department.

5. Expand the Host Program to connect newcomers with both Canadian and immigrant families.
6. Publicize free events in immigrant communities.
7. Investigate and apply for every bridging-to-employment program and fast-tracking program opportunity.
8. Recruit targeted immigrant groups from credential-equivalent and English- or French-speaking countries.
9. Demonstrate zero tolerance for acts of discrimination.
10. Choose effective board members for immigrant-serving organizations.
11. Release ineffective board members of immigrant-serving organizations.

Quotes

“Employment and financial stability rated the most highly in importance.”

“People are coming because they can find a job.”

“Economic development and settlement go together.”

*“We’re trying to put different ethnicities in place for those positions
working with immigrants.”*

“People put up their own barriers.”

“You have to show you are someone who can compete in the marketplace.”

“Thinking you have the solution for prejudice is arrogant.”

*“Cliché training will not work. We offer training that is conversational discourse
after identifying the problems.”*

Conclusion

Growth and sustainability of the population and the economy are primary factors driving communities to recruit immigrants. Newcomers are seen as a resource to fill labour gaps and grow the economy through entrepreneurship. Even with successes, leaders in each of the three communities are not satisfied yet with their progress and they continue to experiment, learn, and apply results to improve immigrant recruitment and retention.

Greater Moncton’s experience is useful for identifying successes to replicate. Chatham-Kent is a locale to watch to observe how its directions unfold, and Guelph may be a city to connect with for learning together. Creation of the Integration Strategy, the next part of the Phase Two research project, will translate what has been learned from the three cities into concrete action steps. Steps like formation of a

joint working group with Guelph stakeholders to create a recruitment team. Vital to that translation will be the active participation in sector working groups of stakeholders from the economic development corporation, chamber of commerce, workforce development board, service providers, city council, and mayor. Input from green groups, service clubs, retirement organizations, health providers, educational institutions, the transportation sector, the housing sector, immigrant groups, recent newcomers, labor unions, the police department, stay-at-home moms or dads, and social activist organizations are needed to create a successful integration plan. These are the people who are intimately familiar with their community and each offers his or her own perspective.

Challenges come in many forms and will have to be addressed by stakeholders and newcomers. Valid outcome measures need to be developed. Population data and unemployment rates change so quickly that they can be outdated before publication. Realities of immigration need to be put forth so that potential immigrants can make good choices.

Peterborough could have an advantage in retaining immigrants because of its size. As reported in *Immigrants in the Hinterlands* (January 2008 Perspectives 14 Statistics Canada), the economic integration of immigrants “is much faster outside the largest urban centres. Immigrants living outside the largest urban centres can translate their credentials acquired abroad into a relative income advantage more easily. They are more likely to overcome their lack of ability in an official language, quickly learning English or French, enabling them to increase their ability to generate income faster.”

Some of the recommendations and strategies learned from others are already being done in Peterborough, setting the stage for successful immigrant recruitment and retention. Further research will be needed to develop a complete integration strategy. Research must go beyond economics to find what works in other areas such as housing, equity, precarious-status individuals, and many other issues. Many individuals and organizations are striving to make immigration work. Resources are numerous to make it happen, and federal and provincial funding for immigrant recruitment and retention research and initiatives is an economic stimulus in itself for communities doing this work. Peterborough stakeholders will have to take an objective look at not only what the city needs economically, socially, and culturally, but what the city can offer newcomers. Strategies that work can then be developed and applied to maintain a healthy and sustainable community.

Peterborough Positives

Peterborough Partnership Council on Immigrant Integration
New Canadians Centre
Settlement Worker in Schools program
Chamber of Commerce Global Experience @ Work program
Welcoming Communities Initiative website
Greater Peterborough Area Economic Development Corporation Strategic Plan
Chamber of Commerce Strategic Plan

Trent University

A Newcomer's Guide to Services – City and County of Peterborough Directory

Community Information Database (fourinfo.com)

Guide to Public Transit for newcomers and immigrants

Resource Links

Community Immigrant Retention in Rural Ontario

<http://www.reddi.gov.on.ca/cirro.htm>

Conference Board of Canada's Leaders' Roundtable on Immigration

<http://www.conferenceboard.ca/networks/lri/default.aspx>

City of Guelph Economic Development 2010 Downtown Facade Improvement Grant

<http://guelph.ca/business.cfm>

This table was abridged to show only those with total responses of 100 or more

Column1	Column2	Column3	Column4
Ethnic origins 2006 counts for census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations – 20% sample data			
Ethnic origins	Total responses(1)	Single responses	Multiple responses(1)
Peterborough - CMA (Ont.)			
Total population(2)	115140	52750	62390
English	47765	11970	35790
Canadian	39350	18045	21300
Irish	35925	5500	30425
Scottish	30715	3585	27130
French	13995	1130	12865
German	11100	1680	9420
Dutch (Netherlands)	6405	1710	4690
North American Indian	4720	1175	3550
Italian	4470	1150	3320
Welsh	2700	245	2450
British Isles; n.i.e.(3)	2700	870	1830
Polish	2700	810	1895
Ukrainian	1705	250	1460
Métis	1350	155	1190
American	1315	100	1215
Chinese	890	625	265
Danish	765	165	600

Russian	760	40	720
Hungarian (Magyar)	735	160	575
Austrian	675	110	565
East Indian	660	390	275
Swedish	625	95	530
Norwegian	520	30	485
Finnish	480	170	310
Portuguese	465	165	305
Spanish	450	0	450
Greek	410	160	245
Swiss	400	55	340
Jewish	340	80	260
Romanian	315	40	275
Belgian	310	70	235
Czech	300	65	225
Maltese	285	70	215
Yugoslav; n.i.e.(3)	285	25	260
Korean	270	225	40
Jamaican	235	95	140
African; n.i.e.(3)	195	30	160
Icelandic	175	15	160
Scandinavian; n.i.e.(3)	155	15	140
Mexican	140	115	20
Macedonian	140	45	95
Vietnamese	135	95	40
New Zealander	125	0	125
Czechoslovakian	120	25	95
Filipino	120	75	50
Lithuanian	115	35	80
European; n.i.e.(3)	115	35	75
Australian	110	0	105
Estonian	105	55	50
Croatian	105	45	60
Lebanese	105	20	80
Slovak	100	30	70

Source: Statistics Canada. 2007; Ethnic origins 2006 counts for census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations - 20% sample data (table).