

# Steeles/L'Amoreaux Local Immigration Partnership

## Team 1: Welcome & Access to Information Meeting Minutes May 25<sup>th</sup> 2010

**Location:** YMCA - 10 Milner Business Court – Suite 600

**Time:** 10:00am -12:00pm

**Attendees:** Lee Soda (ACSA), Sulekha Sathi (Agincourt Library), Hanna Cabaj (TCDSB), Mary Sharif (CCS), Yoga Arulsubrahaniyam (TESOC), Jorge Silvestri (MNLCT), Helen Yang (YMCA), Lucy Ren (S/L'Am LIP), Timothy Chan (Resident), Mani Mahadeva (S/L'Am LIP), Michelle Davis (S/L'Am LIP)

1. Welcoming
  - Mani opens the meeting and participants give a brief introduction of themselves
  - Mani goes over the agenda
2. Appoint Chairperson
  - Chair person for the meeting today will be Helen Yang - YMCA
3. Update on what was discussed in the Steering Committee Meeting - May 11<sup>th</sup> at ACSA
  - Jorge gives brief of what was discussed in the Steering Committee meeting
  - LIP extension from CIC
  - Concern for more input from residents and capacity building
  - Using the resources of newcomers that have been in Canada longer
  - Need to contact employers in the area, but to make that they are genuine
  - Concern that the welcoming package recommendations will affect not just newcomers in S/L'Am but the entire GTA
  - Need to add more stockholders
  - We will focus on submitting our Strategy paper in October but if CIC grants a project extension we will make further recommendations and treat the first submission as a draft paper.
  - Additional meetings to be done in between regular monthly meetings
4. Update of progress
  - Improvements to arrival package that Mani has found by reviewing the new arrival package. There are different web sites that provide information about different sectors for newcomers.

- It was found that arrival packages given at airport are different for different age groups
- Information is still not tailored made to each individuals needs
- YMCA will need to play a key role since they are the only ones currently offering language bench mark assessment in Toronto – e.g. Milner YMCA provides for all of Scarborough - need for referrals will be strong
- LIP will play a key role in knowing who the welcoming centres are and where they are located within North West Scarborough. We have to expand our network with other LIP's in Scarborough to enhance better referral services to the clients approaching any of the welcome centres within North West Scarborough
- Recommendations and Strategies need to be made based on the demographic information, community consultation and statistics found

Mani shares the output from the discussion groups:

Summary of the FGD conducted with multi cultural resident groups

#### **Services mostly valued by newcomers are**

- Interpretation/translation
- Any information related to employment
- Food Bank
- Language classes
- Referrals
- Information regarding children's schooling

#### **Services those are in demand but we do not have enough information to assist newcomers:**

- Recreation facility for Chinese seniors
- Language course at flexible hours
- Employment /job search training
- Housing
- Day Care
- Credential assessment
- Programs for seniors
- Legal assistance
- Services for people with special need- such as HIV/AIDS, homeless and mental Health

#### **Organizations frequently referred to:**

- Agincourt Community Services Association
- CICS
- Churches
- Catholic Cross-cultural Services
- Tamil Eelam Society of Canada

#### **What roles resident groups can play to best support the newcomers?**

- Collaborate or work in partnership with settlement agencies
- Can train newcomers
- Interested in unconditional partnership
- Can provide referral, interpretation support to newcomer
- Volunteer for newcomer

## Feedback

- Jorge stressed that there is a need for promotion of services through word of mouth, local newspapers and outreach, which may give way to budgetary strains
- Sulekha suggested that the children of newcomers is a good word-of-mouth resource
- Jorge suggested connecting with schools - e.g. when schools have open houses, have a booth from the service providers to introduce to attendants
- Mani suggested that with outreach to newcomers we need to make recommendations on what exists
- Lee suggested that it's important to make connections with those that need the services, ACSA uses Green Directory to obtain information on services within Scarborough and blue directory provides information on services within GTA.
- Mary shared that the functions of many settlement services are going to change. Assessment of newcomers will change and will be determined by a separate entity that will assess all newcomers at arrival and make referrals to the necessary service providers.
- Lee stressed that there is an eminent need for all service providers to stay updated on what is provided
- Hanna further imputed that there is a need for a resource that can be readily accessible for information and regularly updated by service providers
- Mary suggested looking at 211.ca that has all information related to specific areas of the GTA, and suggested that it is the responsibility of service providers to have their information updated on this resource

## 5. Process Evaluation of LIP

- Mani shares that ACSA has hired an outside source to evaluate and assess the LIP process, partners assessment and evaluation will be done via online through WISE Solutions, link sent by June. Partnership Council members are requested to complete and send their responses within two weeks.

## 6. Review and develop Goal, Objectives & Outputs for Team 1 (refer to handout)

- Participants break into two groups to discuss and review the goal, objectives and outputs for Team 1.

## Feedback

### **Focus Areas:**

- Pre-arrival:- Recommend changes for the package and need for a information session to be conduct before arrival. This will help to know most of the information before arrive here – to know the requirements & deadlines
- Establishing welcoming centres – Add CCS, Libraries having Library Settlement Program

### **Approaches:**

- Community welcome the newcomers and provide information and do referral
- Need assessment at welcome centres
- Follow up by settlement services for at least first six months. Then resident groups may help settlement services to do the follow up.

**Outputs:**

- Improve existing information packages – review pre-arrival and arrival packages and make recommendations
- Identify possible welcome centres in North West Scarborough – establish strong network, share information widely, map the neighbourhood services
- Assess the capacity of resident groups to support newcomers – networking of ambassadors. Identify and train residents on basic information
- Identify types of training/ awareness needs – Ex: cultural sensitivity, discrimination, etc.
- Recommend platform for newcomers to provide feedback – use online, use printed forms to receive feedback.

**7. Next Steps & Next Meeting Date, Time & Venue**

- June 29<sup>th</sup> 2010, 2:00pm – 4:00pm, TBA
- Mani will review the pre-arrival and arrival package with Team members before next meeting Jorge – Arrival package/ Helen – Pre-arrival package, follow-up will be done in person