

Steeles/L'Amoreaux Local Immigration Partnership

Steering Committee Meeting

Steeles/L'Amoreaux Steering Committee was established in late April. Two representatives from each working team were nominated by their team members. The Steering Committee's function is to act as the key managing body of the S/L'Am LIP and it reserves the rights to review all decisions taken by Partnership Council. Decisions reviewed by the Steering Committee that are found to be in contradiction with the policies and procedures of the S/L'Am LIP will be subject to intervention. The committee also has the authority to make decisions on behalf of the Partnership Council on the instance where an urgent decision needs to be made and a Partnership Council meeting is not scheduled.

The first Steering Committee meeting was held on May 11th, 2010 at ACSA, located at 4155 Sheppard Avenue.

Members of Steering Committee

- Team 1 - Helen Yang, Jorge Silvestri
- Team 2 - Glen Gifford, Edmond Crosbie
- Team 3 - Adair Heath, Mei Tin Lee

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Upcoming Events:

Steering Committee Meeting

- * June 1, 2010 from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm at ACSA 4155 Sheppard Ave. E

Cluster Meetings:

- * Team 1: June 29th 2010, 2:00pm – 4:00pm, (TBA)
- * Team 2: June 28th 2010, 10:00am – 12:00pm, ANC Glendower, 331 Glendower Circuit–Unit #6
- * Team 3: July 8th 2010, 10.00 am – 12:00am, CICS - 2330 Midland Ave. Toronto, Ontario M1S 5G5

Partnership Council Meeting

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Updates on the Meeting with CIC

Steeles/L'Amoreaux LIP staff participated in the "Welcome Community Initiatives" workshop organized by University of Ottawa in London, Ontario. The Steeles/L'Amoreaux Project Manager, updated the Steering Committee members in regards to the outcomes of the meeting. Some of the highlights were as follows:

Common challenges for the LIP's are:

- Bringing all the partners to work in the same direction
- Partners' willingness to take ownership
- Difficulties in engaging local businesses
- Protectionism - not willing to share resources, contacts and information
- Lack of support of some innovative ideas because it is seen as a threat to existing programs

All the LIP projects in Ontario will be extended until March 2011. It was mentioned that CIC encourages agencies to look into no-cost resource sharing and partnership, as well as to explore fund mobilizing opportunities from provincial ministries, city and other private funders in the future.

According to the feedback received from CIC officials, future program proposals submitted by service agencies within the a neighbourhood would be compared with LIP Strategic Proposal before CIC approves future funding.

The Steering Committee also discussed the following:

- Research how community groups help newcomers and building their capacity.
- Strategies on how to connect with genuine employers in the area
- Accountability of agencies who participate and charter recommendations to increase newcomers capacity to access local programs and services at a community level
- Expand the partnership
- Additional follow-up

It was also decided that the Steering Committee should meet every month to have closer follow up on the over all LIP progress.

May Team Meetings

All three teams had their second meetings in May to review the progress, identify goals, objectives and strategies.

Team 1 – Welcome and Access to Information

Team 1 discussed the progress and the tasks to be completed in the future. The following are some of the key points of the meeting:

- Steeles/L'Amoreaux LIP should establish better networks with other LIP projects in neighbouring areas to connect newcomers to different welcome centers
- Equal weight to be given to pre-arrival, arrival and post-arrival packages.
- Establish more welcome centers where appropriate
- Resource mapping is important to support our recommendations
- Need to have easily accessible data source
- Need appropriate mechanisms to promote services
- Encourage newcomers to access existing information portal
- Settlement service agencies function as one-stop-shop
- Team 1 will review and give feedback on pre-arrival and arrival packages before the next meeting.

Team 2 – Community Engagement in Settlement

Team 2 discussed the following during their May meeting:

- Conducted focus group discussions with newcomer ESL/LINC student groups to study peer support in settlement
- Invited a few newcomers to the team
- Identified existing capacity of the resident groups, what role they would like to play in settlement, and what are the requirements to build their capacity.
- Engaging every community group effectively
Maximize best practices among the resident and faith-based groups

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- Identifying opportunities for resident groups to work closely with settlement service organizations
- Settlement service organizations need to meet with community groups to get their feedback

Team 3 – Making Services & Support More Effective

Team 3 discussed the following in their second meeting in May:

- Members will need to be divided into small groups to discuss and analyze sector specific topics and make recommendations
- Analysis of service gaps
- Working together where each agency is interested to share their resources
- Partnership Council to provide general recommendations and interested member agencies may adopt those ideas
- Whenever a client receives services from different agencies, there needs to be a proper arrangement for case management

Focus Group Discussions

Steeles/L'Amoreaux LIP staff conducted a number of focus group discussions with resident groups from diverse cultural backgrounds that included Chinese, Muslim and Tamil. Resident groups shared their views regarding the existing services, their knowledge and strengths, and how they are currently helping newcomers. Residents also shared their ideas of how they wish to play a more effective role in the settlement process. Some of the discussion highlights were as follows:

Services mostly valued by the newcomers

- Interpretation/Translation

Contact Information:

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- Any information related to employment
- Food Banks
- English Language classes
- Referrals
- Information regarding children's schooling

Services that are in demand but residents lack information to share

- Recreation facilities for seniors
- Job search training/employment support
- Housing
- Day Care
- Credential assessment
- Programs for seniors
- Legal assistance
- Service for people with special needs

What role residents can play to best support newcomers

- Collaboration with settlement agencies
- Train newcomers
- Unconditional partnership
- Provide referral or interpretation support
- Volunteer for newcomers services

Focus Group Discussions with Chinese Resident Group

