

## Community Settlement: Becoming a Welcoming Community

- “Imagine a community free from racism where community and differences are celebrated, where neighbors talk to each other, share ideas and get involved in their neighborhoods. Where residents of all classes and backgrounds feel they have a voice and are reflected in the political, institutional and societal structures of the city. Imagine a community where everyone can have access to affordable housing, child care, health care and other services; where income security is adequate to live on and where no one needs to go hungry or live on the street. Imagine a city where immigrants of color are not just the dishwashers and taxi drivers, but share in the wealth of the city and are able to use their skills to gain access to better jobs.”

Ramona Gananathan

Grassroots to Governance: Reflections and  
Recommendations on Advancing Social  
Planning in the City of Toronto. March, 2006.

# Welcoming Community Principals

- A welcoming community not only tolerates, but it encourages & promotes the active participation of **all** residents in the social, cultural and economic life of the region, providing no room for discrimination.
- A welcoming community creates opportunities to explore differences in a safe and positive environment.
- Being a welcoming community is not a “one man’s/woman’s”, or a “one agency’s” job. Every community member/agency has a role to play.

# Residents in the welcoming community:

- Embrace diversity
- See newcomers and interact with them
- Are open to new ideas and customs
- Recognize contributions newcomers make
- See opportunity to learn from other cultures
- Reach out and assist newcomers

# Why Become a Welcoming Community

- Shortage of workers (2015 Canada will have more people retiring than entering the work force)
- Decline in Population (schools are closing, who will pay tax when I retire?)
- Diversity encourages greater understanding of human value systems
- Economic & social growth

# A welcoming community educates itself

- "... we have become increasingly convinced that we learn about culture primarily not by learning the "facts" of another culture, but rather by changing our attitude. Our underlying openness to those who are culturally different is the key to expanding our cultural understanding."

(McGoldrick, 1996, p. xi)

# Eastman Immigrant Services

- **Philosophy:** At Eastman Immigrant Services our philosophy is to be of support to the newcomers while empowering the newcomer to become independent.
- **Goals:** successful settlement, integration and retention.

# Services

- Settlement Services
- Employment Services
- Career Coaching
- Integration Programming
- Resource Centre
- Community Networking (central point)

# Settlement Services

- Reception Orientation
- Legal Documents (S.I.N., MB Health, CCTB, Drivers, Banking etc.
- Housing
- Schooling
- Support Counseling
- Referral
- Settlement Partners
- Information on Immigration



# Employment Services

- Pre-employment counselling
- Interview skills training
- Assistance with Resume
- Identifying employment opportunities
- Referral

# Career Coaching

- Newcomers with post secondary training
- Strong background in trades
- Highly skilled, often underemployed
- Develop a career plan
- Navigate credential recognition process

# Resource Centre

- Video centre with relevant DVDs
- Access to computer/internet/printer
- Lending library: books on how to write a resume, customs, cultures
- Brochures: health, education, employment settlement, law, tourism...

# Needs Integration?



# Integration Programming

- Events (parade, ladies groups, quiz night, community picnic, information session, orientation session, essay competition)

# Community Affiliation

- Department of the Steinbach Chamber of Commerce
- Network Meetings (E.R.A.C. & E.I.S.N.M.)
- Advisory Board – community representation
- Strategic Planning – interviews with community leaders

# Last Six Years

| Year   | Families | Individuals |
|--------|----------|-------------|
| ● 2004 | 146      | 645         |
| ● 2005 | 156      | 680         |
| ● 2006 | 200      | 843         |
| ● 2007 | 203      | 815         |
| ● 2008 | 380      | 1350        |
| ● 2009 | 234      | 835         |

# 2008 - Top 10 Countries of Origin

|     |             |     |          |
|-----|-------------|-----|----------|
| 1.  | Germany     | 144 | families |
| 2.  | Philippines | 92  | "        |
| 3.  | Paraguay    | 30  | "        |
| 4.  | UK          | 19  | "        |
| 5.  | Mexico      | 15  | "        |
| 6.  | Bolivia     | 14  | "        |
| 7.  | India       | 8   | "        |
| 8.  | Russia      | 5   | "        |
| 9.  | Korea       | 5   | "        |
| 10. | USA         | 5   | "        |



# Additional Countries of Origin

Belarus

Israel

South Africa

China

Kazakhstan

Spain

Colombia

Kenya

Sweden

Congo

Madagascar

Ukraine

Egypt

Netherlands

Vietnam

France

New Caledonia

Zimbabwe

Haiti

Saint Vincent

Hungary

Sierra Leon

# Immigration Status Upon Arrival

| <u>Year</u>         | <u>2008</u> | <u>2007</u> | <u>2006</u> | <u>2005</u> | <u>2004</u> |
|---------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>MPNP</b>         | <b>152</b>  | <b>88</b>   | <b>110</b>  | <b>95</b>   | <b>86</b>   |
| <b>Citizen</b>      | <b>62</b>   | <b>41</b>   | <b>57</b>   | <b>47</b>   | <b>50</b>   |
| <b>Work Permit</b>  | <b>105</b>  | <b>71</b>   | <b>30</b>   | <b>9</b>    | <b>0</b>    |
| <b>Visitor Visa</b> | <b>30</b>   | <b>2</b>    | <b>3</b>    | <b>5</b>    | <b>8</b>    |
| <b>Student Visa</b> | <b>8</b>    | <b>0</b>    | <b>0</b>    | <b>0</b>    | <b>0</b>    |

# Lessons Learned

- Reactive response
- Working in the dark
- No proper planning ahead
- Information newcomers had often incorrect
- Inadequate resources

# Opportunity for Growth

- Marketing Eastman at a global scale
- Projection: Who will come, when, and what the needs will be
- Partner with City and Economic Development of the Region
- Chamber & EIS direct link to employers in the region.

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