



ACCESS, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION
***“Re-examining our approaches to
Settlement and Integration”***

**Welcoming Communities Initiative
Brampton Community Roundtable Discussion Outcomes**

June 24, 2008

On June 24, 2008, the Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA) conducted its first Community Roundtable in the municipality of Markham as part of the *Welcoming Communities Initiative (WCI)* project. The WCI is a three year project supported by Canadian Heritage and has been developed based on PROMPT's (Policy Roundtable Mobilizing Professions and Trades) research paper titled "*Smart Settlement: A Community Engagement Model for Sustainable Immigrant Settlement in Ontario's Smaller Communities*", which proposes a policy framework and model for sustainable and effective immigrant settlement.

WCI's objectives are to engage immigrants and municipalities as partners in building more inclusive and welcoming communities and to develop sustainable strategies that would facilitate the economic and social integration of immigrants.

The WCI is a community engagement project that will engage various stakeholders to:

- Identify the different settlement needs and issues in various municipalities across Ontario.
- Bridge social, cultural and economic differences that will enhance civic engagement.
- Engage different stakeholders (immigrants, government, educational institutions, employment sector, settlement agencies, ethno-cultural groups, etc.) to implement a suitable model which creates an inclusive and welcoming environment for immigrants and newcomers.
- Utilize various communication mechanisms (forum, consultation, and quarterly newsletter) to facilitate effective information exchange and to celebrate the contributions of immigrants.
- Foster partnerships between stakeholders to ensure equitable representation in the civic processes.

At the Brampton Community Roundtable on June 24, 2008 at the Brampton Civic Centre, various stakeholders from the government, education, settlement, employment, library, and volunteer sector as well as ethno-cultural specific agencies and community groups were brought together to discuss issues of access, equity and inclusion needs of immigrant communities in Brampton. This Brampton Community Roundtable report provides a summary of the key discussions that emerged from the group activities and identification of settlement and integration priorities for the Brampton community to move forward with.

The Community Roundtable consisted of discussions based on the following questions:

1) *What is already happening in Brampton with respect to community work in the areas of diversity, access, equity and inclusion?*

2) *What does Brampton's immigrant community need to fully participate in community building?*

3) *What are the access, equity and inclusion priorities in Brampton?*

The first discussion began with identifying what is already happening in Brampton with respect to community work on diversity, equity and inclusivity. This asset mapping exercise provided an overview of the current community initiatives, project, or programs lead by the local municipal government, school board, non-profit organizations and community-based groups. The participants identified a listing of projects, programs and initiatives related diversity and immigrant settlement.

Organization Name	Program, Project or Initiative
1. ACCES Employment Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Job fairs for Foreign-trained Professionals - mentoring (career oriented) - Bridging programs
2. Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Peel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expansion of services eg: Filipino martial arts - Networks – Diversity (Peel)
3. Brampton Neighbourhood Resource Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide settlement services for newcomers
4. Brampton Multicultural Community Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide settlement services for newcomers
5. Brampton Public Libraries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide Settlement Information for Newcomers in July & August - Multilingual Collection, e.g. multilingual materials, ESL materials - Library programs for different cultures, e.g. Asian Heritage Month events, - English Conversation Club
6. Centre for Education & Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Newcomer Information Centre - Employment Resource Centre
7. Canadian Hate Prevention Network 8. City of Brampton – Fire Department, Clerks Dept., Community Services Dept.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community involvement fair - Multilingual Services Policy - Multilingual Fire Prevention Brochures - Focus group on partners' awareness of education system
9. COSTI Immigrant Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide settlement services for newcomers
9. Harvest Community Services of Peel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Youth leadership, tutoring - Family & health referrals - Enhanced English language instruction - Job readiness
10. Inter-Cultural Neighbourhood Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide settlement services to newcomers
11. Maytree Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mentorship program, Hireimmigrants.ca
12. Muslim Community Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide settlement services for newcomers
13. Peel District School Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Future We Want – inclusive curriculum - Extra funding to open facilities to after-hour community usage important in communities with limited resources
14. Peel Newcomer Strategy Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of a newcomer settlement strategy
15. Peel Poverty Action Group (PPAG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PPAG advocates for poverty reduction in Peel
16. Region of Peel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organizational Diversity initiative
17. Senior Coordinate Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personal care eg: programs for stroke survivors - Various services to seniors in languages (s) preferred
18. Seven Arrow Learning Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Language training for newcomers /immigrants
19. Sheridan Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Career Planning for the International Trained Professionals
20. Skills for Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide settlement services to newcomers
	<p>Youth Programs & Initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Peel Youth Violence Steering Committee - YES – mentorship/leadership programs - Free-for-all outreach youth - Youth/family symposium - Programs design to address family (rights, services & info)

Source: Community Roundtable Discussions in Brampton, Jun 24, 2008

Source: Brampton Community Roundtable Discussion Outcomes, June 24, 2008
Council of Agencies Serving South Asians

Building on the asset mapping exercise, participants were given specific group questions to address **what does Brampton's immigrant community need to fully participate in community building.** The core focus of this group activity was to look beyond the initial phase of settlement which includes basic supports of housing, employment and language needs and identify gaps that prevent immigrants to be active participants in community building. The group discussions identified the following **barriers which exclude immigrants from activity participating in Brampton's civic society.**

Barriers/Gaps identified by the participants:

- Space
 - Lack of space for seniors
 - Lack of publicly accessible gathering space
- Involvement , “in touch” nature of councillors
- Language Services
 - Language barriers for seniors in health services
 - Language as a barrier which creates service gaps
 - Lack of multilingual services eg: in private sector businesses could be providing multilingual services due to multilingual employees but may not be
- Diversity awareness
 - Lack of education on equity & diversity
- Social Network
 - Social isolation of seniors in nursing homes
 - Social exclusion eg: youth
 - Lack of social networks (social capital)
- Lack of funding for seniors' group not affiliated with an agency/institution
- Intergenerational gap between immigrants
 - 2nd generation youth disconnected
 - parents (1st generation) not aware of education system
- Affordable daycare services, public transportation and housing
- Region of Peel needs to expand recreation programming
- Service coordination amongst service providers
 - Weak linkages amongst services
 - “silos” prevention of greater community participation “culture” specific
 - Coordination & communication amongst organizations/institutions
 - Good programs not all of community know about them
 - Linkages between all programs need to be solidified eg: Peel Youth Violence
 - Education/information sharing between service providers
- Understanding of communities needs eg: no libraries, no recreation centres in certain neighbourhoods

Some steps needed to ensure full participation in community building:

- Proactive involvement from city council
- Cultural events should be centralized
- Carassauga Festival – in or out of silos
- Geography important in FULL participation
- More access to language programs
 - Address under serviced – library, recreation centres in certain neighbourhoods
- Initiatives that move people outside of SILOS
- Language as a barrier which create service gaps

Source: Brampton Community Roundtable Discussion Outcomes , June 24, 2008
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The last half of the Community Roundtable focused on identifying priorities to address challenges pertaining to access, equity and inclusion work.

Move forward the priorities.

- Move away from SILOS
- Add infrastructure so that existing resources are maximized
- Fuller Access
 - eg: language based services “exclude others” . It was suggested at the roundtable discussions that language-specific services could exclude others in the community
- Capacity building is limited for some ethno-specific agencies, hence hinder service capacity
- Publicly accessible gathering space
- Poverty reduction – integrating colour of poverty campaign in provincial strategy
- Youth leadership, youth initiatives – to address youth isolation
- Neighbourhood-based services

Next Steps:

Part two of the Brampton Community Roundtable will host a residents meeting in July to provide a forum for parents, youth, seniors and local residents to discuss and share their perspective on the settlement and integration needs of immigrants.

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Note: This above summary might not necessarily capture all the discussions took place at the roundtable meeting. If you would like to include any additional and/or missing information, please contact Lele Truong.