



## ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: February 21, 2017  
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Meeting Date: March 7, 2017

TO: Vancouver City Council  
FROM: General Manager of Community Services  
SUBJECT: Vancouver Immigration Partnership 2017-2020

### **RECOMMENDATION**

THAT Council authorize the General Manager of Community Services, in consultation with the Director of Legal Services, to enter into a contribution agreement with Her Majesty The Queen in right of Canada, as represented by the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, whereby the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada ("IRCC") will provide funding up to \$528,000 for the City to undertake the Vancouver Immigration Partnership initiative between April 2017 and March 2020.

### **REPORT SUMMARY**

This report seeks Council's approval for the City to enter into a contribution agreement with IRCC to undertake the second phase of the 'Vancouver Immigration Partnership' (VIP) initiative.

In 2014, the City received IRCC funding to convene the VIP initiative. Over eighteen months, VIP developed and launched the *New Start Strategy for Immigrants and Refugees in Vancouver*, which lays out key priorities and actions for the effective settlement and integration of immigrants and refugees living in Vancouver over the next decade.

VIP's activities align with Council's priority of creating strong, safe and inclusive communities, and VIP's priority actions will support the goals and targets of the Healthy City Strategy.

## ***COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS***

On April 2014, Council approved for staff to enter into a contribution agreement with the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC, previously CIC) to undertake the Vancouver Immigration Partnership (VIP) initiative, between June 2014 and March 2016. The agreement was extended for one year to the end of March 2017.

## ***CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS***

The General Manager of Community Services recommends approval of the foregoing.

## ***REPORT***

### ***Background/Context***

In 2005, the Vancouver Mayor's Working Group on Immigration ("MWGI") was established with the mandate of providing input on immigration policy and issues. Over the years, MWGI has worked with community groups and government partners to support the establishment of initiatives aimed at newcomers inclusion. MWGI has been VIP's governance group since VIP's inception in 2014.

In 2013, the City obtained provincial funding to undertake a Welcoming and Inclusive Communities and Workplaces initiative aimed at increasing the capacity of local communities to support the integration of newcomers. The initiative launched two digital publications: *Growing Roots: A Newcomer's Guide to Vancouver* and the *First Peoples: A Guide for Newcomers*.

In 2013, local community partners urged the City to apply for the federal 'Local Immigration Partnership' ("LIP") program for Vancouver. The City was successful in the application and received funding to convene LIP in Vancouver.

As a national program, LIP aims to develop a local multi-year strategic plan to support the settlement and integration of newcomers through community-based research, cross-sectoral engagement, and improved service coordination. VIP has achieved the key goals of its first phase including the launch of the New Start Strategy, which was presented to City Council in September 2016.

### ***Strategic Analysis***

Over the past eighteen months, VIP has completed five of the six key objectives of the Partnership:

<b>Objective:</b>	<b>Status</b>
1. Establish a local settlement strategy	<i>Completed</i>
2. Conduct research on newcomers' needs	<i>Completed</i>
3. Identify community assets and gaps	<i>Completed</i>

Objective:	Status
4. Raise awareness of these needs with partner members and the wider community	<i>Completed</i>
5. Build a broad and representative partnership council	<i>Completed</i>
6. Develop action plans, begin implementation, and report on results	<i>To be completed in next phase</i>

The final remaining objective of VIP will be undertaken in the next phase of VIP, between 2017 and 2025. This aligns with the City's Healthy City Strategy implementation timeline.

The New Start Strategy was the result of a 16 month process that engaged nearly 120 people from 72 organizations and groups. The membership is comprised of the Mayor's Working Group on Immigration (MWGI), VIP's governance group, and other strategy groups. Building on the City's Healthy City Strategy (HCS) goals, VIP members developed the New Start Strategy with a focus on four themes:

1. Enhancing Access to Services;
2. Strengthening Intercultural and Civic Engagement;
3. Building Welcoming and Inclusive Workplaces; and
4. Government and Public Institutions Addressing Needs.

These four themes correspond to Healthy City Strategy goals of access to human services, being able to make ends meet, feeling connected and included, and collaborative leadership.

A total of 28 priority actions are proposed in the New Start Strategy. Details for the complete set of actions can be accessed online:

<http://www.vancouverimmigrationpartnership.ca/knowledge-research/new-start-a-vancouver-strategy/>.

## NEXT STEPS

Strategy Implementation Teams (SITs) are being established to develop annual action plan, and a Coordinating Committee will assist with the overall planning, funding and execution of projects.

For 2017-2018, VIP will undertake the following priority actions:

- a) Develop a framework to map key service systems which support immigrants and refugees settlement and integration;
- b) Undertake an employer survey in order to develop strategies to address employers challenges in improving workplace diversity and inclusion practice;
- c) Collaborate on a newcomer youth engagement project to better understand issues of cultural identity and sense of belonging; and
- d) Explore opportunities to host networking events with key sectors in order that newcomers can meet with potential employers and build networks.

For its part, the City will pay particular attention to actions within its direct mandate, and examine how the City might help VIP gain ground in discussions with funders and other orders of government.

### *Implications/Related Issues/Risk (if applicable)*

#### *Indemnification*

The standard form of contribution agreement as drafted by IRCC includes an indemnity to be provided by the City in favour of IRCC for any losses related to the performance by the City of its obligations under the contribution agreement, which is typical of many funding agreements. As there is low risk associated with undertaking this project, in these circumstances, staff recommend that the City provide this indemnity.

#### *Financial*

The federal government will provide approximately \$528K towards the VIP initiative. This funding will cover direct costs of approximately \$448K for staffing, and \$80K for program and Administrative expenses, for the period from April 2017 to March 2020.

The City's contribution will be in-kind, in the form of project stewardship, office and meeting space and supervision of the project staff. The City's in-kind contribution will be funded from within the approved Community Services Operating Budget.

In addition to the federal and City contributions, project partners will be providing significant in-kind contributions towards the VIP initiative.

#### *Legal*

Legal Services will review and approve the contribution agreement.

### **CONCLUSION**

The City of Vancouver has played a leadership role in responding to the needs of integrating newcomers in the city. With the implementation of the *New Start Strategy*, and the continual commitment of community partners and funders, VIP will further engage newcomers in accessing needed civic services, building stronger intercultural connections, finding appropriate employment and participating in all aspects of civic life. With concerted efforts by all, Vancouver will continue to be one of the most welcoming cities in Canada for all newcomers.

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