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Report 2024-069

Report Title: Settlement Services Update – Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and Shapiro Foundation

Committee Name: Economic Development, Tourism and Planning

Committee Meeting Date: May 1, 2024

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Approved by: Jennifer Moore, CAO

Council Meeting Date: May 15, 2024

Strategic Plan Priorities: Innovate for Service Excellence
 Ignite Economic Opportunity
 Foster a Thriving Community
 Propel Sustainable Growth
 Champion a Vibrant Future

Information Report

“That the Economic Development, Tourism and Land Use Planning Committee receive Report 2024-069 ‘Settlement Services Update – Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and Shapiro Foundation’ for information; and

Further That the Committee recommend that County Council receive this report for information.”

Purpose

To provide an update on activities related to Settlement Services related to both Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and the Shapiro Foundation.

Background

Settlement Services has undertaken a number of initiatives through the course of 2024 which include an application for funding which would support the creation of a Local Immigration Partnership (LIP), an opportunity to position Northumberland as the first entrant into a pilot

program specific to the Americas, with the support of the Shapiro Foundation, known as the Economic Mobility Pathways Pilot (EMPP) which would address the critical need for Personal Support Workers, as well as initial talks (again, through Shapiro) to determine the viability of a partnership between Durham College and Luminous College (located in Amman, Jordan) regarding Early Childhood Education workers.

This is in addition to supporting and enhancing Horizons of Friendship who provide services to approximately 160 temporary foreign farm workers.

Consultations

With respect to these major undertakings, we anticipate the following:

- Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) is a request for funding for a 5-year agreement over and above the existing funding agreement which currently supports Settlement Services in Northumberland. We are in the 3rd year of that agreement and now qualify for a further 5 years. The LIP was an extensive and complex application process which had an 8-week window with a late January closing date. A decision on this application will be forthcoming by July/August 2024, and if successful will be implemented by April 1, 2025, and add considerable resources to our Settlement Services activities.
- Economic Mobility Pathways Pilot (EMPP) is specific to a first-in-the-Americas pilot which is meant to address challenges in the areas of health care support, building and construction and some aspects of manufacturing. The country of choice is Columbia and specifically the City of Barranquilla which is the site of a significant Venezuelan population. Both Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada and the Shapiro Foundation have invested significant resources in launching this pilot – with Northumberland at the forefront. This would involve a maximum of 10 employable immigrants and their families. To qualify, the employable immigrant must have the job skills and language skills to meet the potential employers' requirements. In having representatives from Northumberland meet with Columbian Officials, Venezuelan Refugee Organizations, related NGOs, and Canadian Embassy Officials, and some select candidates, the intent was to validate the credibility of the situation and begin relationship building. This took place between March 4th and March 7th with the 4th and 7th dedicated to travel and the 5th and 6th dedicated to meetings and discussions related to demand, process, requirements, and timing. Northumberland representatives were Dan Borowec, Emilio Ojeda, Settlement Services and Glenn Dees representing the needs of the Golden Plough with respect to PSW's. The Shapiro Foundation underwrote the cost of the trip, less airfare. The Building Community, the Northumberland Manufacturers' Association (NMA) and both Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) and Campbellford Memorial Hospital (CMH) were invited to participate. The timeframe for participation proved too limiting for any of these community partners to engage in the initial trip.
- Early Childhood Education Opportunity – Given the significant need for ECE trained staff the other relationship that exists with the Shapiro Foundation is with Luminous College, located in Amman Jordan which graduates 12,000 students annually and aligns curriculum to match the certification requirements of the country of choice. In the case of ECEs this would require a cooperation agreement with Durham College; a meeting is scheduled for April 25 to establish a collaboration agreement. Luminous College already

has such an agreement in place with Algonquin College. Northumberland requires trained ECE talent, and this may be a path forward.

- The work with Horizons of Friendship offers an opportunity to extend services to a critical group of employees supporting the agricultural component of the Northumberland community.

Legislative Authority / Risk Considerations

N/A

Discussion / Options

As discussions continue, it will become more evident as to what areas of talent are most attainable from a Northumberland perspective. We recognize that finding accommodation will be a critical factor – however the proposed numbers appear do-able with respect to PSW's and Building and Construction. The timeframe for the Americas component in 6 - 9 months. It is important to note that there must be a guarantee by the employer of a job. Furthermore, the employer will interview the potential employee, they will undergo a strict vetting process to match that need, and most importantly they must meet an English language standard – which is applied through third party testing to qualify.

The Luminous College opportunity is longer term, but the relationship could prove critical based on the breadth and scope of training undertaken by them and the practical skills which could accommodate building trades, manufacturing, and health care.

Financial Impact

N/A

Member Municipality Impacts

It has the potential to support talent requirements in multiple areas and as such benefit all member municipalities.

Conclusion / Outcomes

Efforts will be on-going to develop the necessary relationships and resources attached to this type of endeavour. As the workforce landscape changes, it will be advantageous for Northumberland to progressively move forward with a diverse and skilled workforce.

Attachments

N/A