

**MULTICULTURALISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Wednesday, November 17, 2021**

A Regular Meeting of the Multiculturalism Advisory Committee convened on Wednesday, November 17, 2021 at 7:03 p.m. in Council Chambers, City Hall, 3000 Guildford Way, Coquitlam, BC, with the following persons present:

|                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| COMMITTEE MEMBERS: | Councillor Brent Asmundson, Chair<br>Simin Ahmadian<br>Adrienne Ahn<br>Carolina Echeverri<br>Leticia Pamela (Pam) Garcia<br>Honore Gbedze<br>Andrea Kwasnicki<br>Iris Sun<br>Zahra Zaker                                                                                   |
| REGRETS:           | Ann Johannes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| ABSENT:            | Jessica Liu<br>Priti Shah                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| ALSO PRESENT:      | Abigail Cameron and Thabata da Costa, Managers, Tri-Cities Local Immigration Partnership                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| STAFF:             | Genevieve Bucher, Director Community Planning<br>Tiina Mack, Manager Recreation and Culture Facilities Planning<br>Demian Rueter, Community Social Development Manager<br>Torill Gillespie, Social Planner<br>Narita Ico, Research Assistant<br>Jeri Hohn, Committee Clerk |

**CALL TO ORDER**

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

**1. Minutes of the Multiculturalism Advisory Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, October 13, 2021**

The Minutes of the Multiculturalism Advisory Committee meeting held on Wednesday, October 13, 2021 were approved.

## NEW BUSINESS

### 2. Tri-Cities Local Immigration Partnership (TCLIP) Presentation

The Chair invited the Director Community Planning to make introductions.

The Director Community Planning introduced the Community Social Development Manager, noting that he would assume the role of staff lead to the Committee staff in 2022. The Community Social Development Manager spoke to his pleasure at working with the Committee in future, and the Chair welcomed him to the Committee.

The Director Community Planning welcomed and introduced the current Manager TCLIP, Abigail Cameron, to the meeting. The current Manager TCLIP introduced herself and the new Manager TCLIP, Thabata da Costa.

Ms. Cameron previewed a video for the Committee titled “TCLIP Tri-Cities Local Immigration Partnership”.

The TCLIP Managers provided a joint on-screen presentation, utilizing slides titled as follows:

- Tri-Cities Local Immigration Partnership
- About Us
- Mandate
- Our Partners
- Roles and Responsibilities
- 2020 Research on Community Priorities
- TCLIP Strategic Priorities 2020 - 2025
- Immigrant Labour Market Integration
- Other Upcoming Initiatives
- Opportunities for Collaboration
- Questions?
- Thank You!

The new Manager TCLIP invited the Committee members to share information regarding upcoming collaborative events titled “Diverse Leaders Tri-Cities for Organizations” and “Service Provider Forum” with their contacts and networks. The Chair requested that she provide event information and registration links to the Committee Clerk for circulation to the Committee, and she undertook to do so.

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- The length of time it takes newcomers to be settled in affordable housing, once they apply for assistance
- The structural barriers that newcomers can experience when applying for affordable housing, including references and credit checks, and identifying how service providers could support newcomers relative to structural barriers
- The general Tri-Cities unemployment percentage rate noted in the previewed video and whether more detailed information was available
- That the unemployment statistics provided in the video were taken from Census Canada’s 2016 census data

- That some employment statistics are being collected by TCLIP relative to employment

In response the Committee member's question, the Director Community Planning undertook to check with staff and report back regarding the City's available census information (data sets) relative to the desire for a breakdown of unemployment percentages by job type and Tri-Cities communities.

Discussion continued relative to the following:

- The belief that a network of referrals and good quality information is important for newcomers and immigrants to have access to
- How TCLIP creates its network of referrals, whether it provides newcomers and immigrants with legal-based information, and the best way to share such information or resources with TCLIP
- That TCLIP has been working to identify gaps to determine the best way to create and support a more effective and fluid referral system amongst service providers
- The belief that competition amongst countries for immigrants would become tougher over the next five years
- How TCLIP was planning/preparing to attract more skilled immigrants to the city in order to avoid future unemployment and, perhaps, homelessness
- The belief that one of the biggest challenges skilled immigrants face is one of language, i.e. that they come from non-English speaking countries
- The belief that offering English-language integration programs to immigrants, rather than the typical English-as-a-second-language (ESL) programs, are necessary to effectively combat language gaps
- The belief that offering English-language integration programs would offer skilled immigrants real job opportunities by allowing them to comfortably express themselves in English
- The belief that immigrants' skills should be assessed very early on so that skilled individuals can be integrated and placed in employment positions within their own fields of expertise

In response to a Committee member's question regarding how the TCLIP planned to go about helping to solve immigration and employment issues (in the Tri-Cities) over the next five years, the current TCLIP Manager noted the challenge of answering such a question. She spoke to the following:

- The importance of collaboration between municipalities and service providers, including the need to collectively understand and raise awareness around (local) issues and trends
- The hope that, through collaboration, important information such as where immigrants will settle in (Tri-Cities) communities could be projected and communities informed so that they know what to expect
- The understanding that the federal government had committed to increase immigration by a substantial amount over the next 5 years
- That, of the immigrants coming to Tri-Cities, a significant amount (over 60%) are economic immigrants (i.e. they have good skills that they are bringing into the community)
- That underemployment is recognized and many local service providers offer programs to support all levels of language skills

- That many new residents are international students who have been studying locally and the understanding that the government is expediting their immigration
- The desire to consider how best to address English-language gaps to ensure that students who are new immigrants are comfortable enough with their skill sets to access meaningful jobs
- The provision of a program offered by service providers titled “Career paths for skilled immigrants” that creates accreditation and bridging programs so that newcomers can move into the job sectors and/or jobs that they had in their home countries
- The challenge of trying to answer a question like “How fast will the process to share and find a solution be?”
- The hope that the “Tri-Cities based community planning model” would help provide solutions revolving around data sharing and understanding trends so that those municipalities and services providers involved are able to address gaps in the community.

The Chair spoke to his desire that the provincial and federal governments would provide the funding necessary to address the increased amount of immigration to come, and thanked the TCLIP Managers for their presentation.

### **3. Northeast Community Centre Update Presentation**

The Manager Recreation and Culture Facilities Planning introduced herself and provided a presentation, referring to on-screen slides titled as follows:

- Northeast Community Centre – Recommended Program and Site Fit Concept
- Agenda
- Chronology
- Location
- Population Growth
- Context
- Engagement Results
- Engagement Survey Results
- Expanded Engagement Results
- Vision
- Guiding Principles
- Site Fit
- Aquatics
- Gymnasiums
- Fitness Centre and Active Studio
- Multi-Purpose Rooms
- Community Kitchen
- Indoor Walking Track
- Library
- Support Spaces
- Covered Outdoor Space
- Proposed Program and Costs
- Potential Civic Facilities – Not Included in Program
- Financials – Operating Budget Impacts
- Major Recreation and Cultural Facilities Roadmap

- Next Steps
- Questions?
- Thank You

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- The value of the presentation and the belief that it is important to share presentations of this kind with the community

The Manager Recreation and Culture Facilities Planning noted that staff would be pleased to provide the presentation to community organizations and groups. She shared that an in-person Open House would be held on December 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> at the Discovery Centre and that an invitation would be emailed to the Committee at a later date.

The Chair noted that the facility's programming would be similar to that offered in other City community centres and, once open, it would relieve pressure from other City facilities currently nearing capacity.

Discussion continued relative to the following:

- Whether the City was continuing to conduct public engagement online or whether in-person engagement opportunities were now being offered
- Whether the City could offer workshops where (unemployed) newcomers could engage and share their experiences and skills with others in the community
- Whether the new facility could offer a device-free, "mindfulness" space
- That the facility would have a quiet, sensory space
- The potential for the facility's plaza to act as a peaceful, green-space
- The cycling activities that could occur in/around the facility in future
- That the facility would be open to all residents

The Manager Recreation and Culture Facilities Planning thanked the Committee for its feedback and the opportunity to present.

#### **4. 2021 Year-end Review/Identify Potential Items for the 2022 Work Plan**

The Director Community Planning introduced the item and invited the Social Planner to provide a presentation.

The Social Planner thanked the Committee and the Disaggregated Demographic Data Sub-Committee for its hard work during the year. She provided a presentation with slides titled as follows:

- Multiculturalism Advisory Committee – 2021 Year in Review
- 2021 Summary
- Hazel-Coy Neighbourhood Plan
- Update – Get Connected, Get Active
- Disaggregated Demographic Data
- MAC Mandate
- 2022 Work Plan

The Chair invited suggestions from the Committee relative to potential items for the 2022

Work Plan.

A Committee member suggested that, going forward, initiatives relative to Anti-Racism Day (International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, March 21<sup>st</sup>) be celebrated and recognized by the Committee and the City in some way. There were no other suggestions.

The Chair noted that, following the meeting, Committee members could share suggested Work Plan items, if any, with the Committee Clerk via email for the staff leads.

#### 5. **Multicultural Communities and Emerging Issues Updates (Standing Agenda Item)**

The Chair invited the Committee members to share items of information and emerging issues from their communities. The following was shared:

- That an event for immigrants titled “Family Law and Violence in BC” would be hosted by the Justice Education Society and Immigrant Services Society of BC (ISSofBC) on November 19<sup>th</sup>
- That local food banks and community organizations are greatly in need of assistance at this time of year, and anyone looking to help the community to please volunteer or reach out to the City’s volunteer programs
- That ISSofBC’s English language online classes would continue and it was excited to announce that physical classes were reopening
- The benefits of offering newcomers online English-language programming

The Chair thanked a Committee member for her past service to the Committee and she noted that she hoped to reconnect with the Committee in future years. The Chair thanked the rest of the Committee and staff for their hard work during the year.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

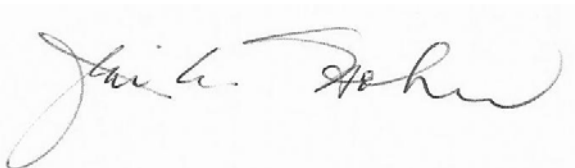
#### **NEXT MEETING – TBD (2022)**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

MINUTES CERTIFIED CORRECT

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CHAIR



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Jeri Hohn  
Committee Clerk