REPORTS

355. Motion 2002/09/24

Memorandum of Understanding between The City of Winnipeg, the Province of Manitoba and the Government of Canada on Immigration

File G-8 (Vol. 6)

WHEREAS on July 17, 2002, the Executive Policy Committee mandated the Mayor to enter into negotiations with the Governments of Manitoba and Canada in support of developing a broad tri-level agreement towards building innovative immigration partnerships in favour of growing Winnipeg's population;

AND WHEREAS the Mayor has now negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Governments of Manitoba and Canada;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlined in attachment "A" between The City of Winnipeg, The Province of Manitoba and The Government of Canada and forwarded to Council for approval.

Moved by Deputy Mayor Thomas,

That the recommendation be concurred in and forwarded to Council.

Carried

BETWEEN:

The Government of Canada, as represented by the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration ("Canada")

- and –

The Government of Manitoba, as represented by the Minister of Labour and Immigration ("Manitoba")

- and –

The City of Winnipeg, as represented by the Mayor ("Winnipeg")

WHEREAS:

A. Canada, Manitoba and Winnipeg wish to cooperate in promoting and supporting an increased flow of immigration to Winnipeg;

B. Canada is committed to fulfilling Canada's international legal obligations with respect to refugees and to affirm Canada's commitment to international efforts to assist those in need of protection through resettlement;

Manitoba is committed to increased immigration to the Province through all immigration streams and recognizes the contributions of immigrants to the economic, social and cultural fabric of Manitoba communities;

Winnipeg's Homegrown Economic Development Strategy focuses on "closing the skills gap and enhancing immigration" as one of its three priority policy foundations and issues, and the City must "play a leadership role in supporting enhanced immigration sponsorship programs;

C. The Parties share the goal of providing protection to refugees abroad in need of Resettlement, and reuniting refugee families;

D. The Parties realize that the "retention rate" for refugees directed to Winnipeg is often higher in cases of "family, or community-linked" private refugee sponsorships;

E. Canada, Manitoba and Winnipeg recognize the value in pursuing their respective strategies in a coordinated manner;

F. The Parties support the concept of volunteerism and recognize the effectiveness of the volunteer community in welcoming and integrating refugees. The parties agree on the importance of working in partnership with the refugee sponsorship community in Winnipeg, and other community organizations involved in the sponsorship and settlement of refugees;

G. The Parties agree that the specifics of the Winnipeg Private Refugee Sponsorship Assistance Program will be detailed in an Annex and attached to this Memorandum of Understanding. The program design will be flexible and responsive, and will include accountability and evaluation provisions;

H. The Parties also recognize that visa office-referred refugees (i.e., refugees selected by visa officers overseas and identified as in need of settlement assistance that sponsoring groups are able to provide), allow the City to build new immigrant communities or augment established ones. The program allows for support for visa-office-referred cases, as detailed in the Annex;

I. The Parties acknowledge that adequate support systems need to be in place for refugees to ensure their settlement and integration in Winnipeg. The City will ensure access to funds to provide support for refugees (including visa-office referred cases), in circumstances detailed in the Annex;

J. The Parties agree that refugees sponsored under this program must meet Canada's eligibility and admissibility criteria for privately sponsored refugees, as defined by the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act.

Therefore, Canada, Manitoba and Winnipeg in the spirit of cooperation and mutual interest in providing protection to refugees and building a vibrant community in Winnipeg will detail specifics of the program in an Annex which will reflect the principles enunciated above and which will be attached to this Memorandum of Understanding.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended by the mutual written consent of all of the Parties.

The Annex referred to in Section G of this Memorandum of Understanding as well as any other Annex agreed upon by the Parties following the signing of this Memorandum of Understanding will form part of this Memorandum of Understanding.

This Memorandum of Understanding shall remain in effect for five years (to be discussed).

The Parties may agree, in writing, to renew this Memorandum of Understanding.

Any Party may terminate its participation in this Memorandum of Understanding by providing written notice at least [specify time period] in advance (to be discussed).

IN WITNESS WHEREOF this Memorandum of Understanding has been signed by the Parties on the dates written below.

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

_____	_____	_____
Witness [Title]	Date	The Honourable Denis Coderre Minister, Citizenship and Immigration

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF MANITOBA

_____	_____	_____
Witness [Title]	Date	The Honourable Becky Barrett Minister, Labour and Immigration

FOR THE CITY OF WINNIPEG

_____	_____	_____
Witness [Title]	Date	His Worship Glen Murray, Mayor