



17 January 2020

Hon. Marco E. L. Mendicino
Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
365 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 1L1

RE: Local Immigration Funding Consultation Reviews

Dear Minister Mendicino,

The Fredericton Chamber of Commerce was recently made aware that your department is considering a possible funding cut to Local Immigration Partnership ("LIP") agreements across the country of up to 30% in the coming five-year funding cycle from 2020-2025. We are concerned that this potential cut would significantly restrict the effectiveness of the Local Immigration Partnership of Fredericton, which is run by our local economic development organization, Ignite Fredericton on behalf of the City of Fredericton and supported by groups such as the Fredericton chamber. We request that a more thorough review be undertaken in addition to the current funding consultation reviews that are now underway in Atlantic Canada.

Our community recognizes that new immigrants have great potential for contributing to the local economy with their skills, investment capacities, and global connections. We also recognize that the needs of various categories of newcomers are different and therefore the LIP Council plays a vital role not only identify the challenges newcomers are facing and to find workable innovative sustainable solutions, but also to act as a coordination body amongst stakeholder groups to maximize efforts and reduce duplication. A support network such as LIP is integral in taking the lead in communities to aid Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) with their mandate to offer support on the community level to address these needs.

After the establishment of a Local Immigration Partnership in 2015, the LIP has worked closely with community stakeholders and partners of LIP to identify the gaps and needs faced by newcomers upon entering into our community. In 2019 – with the leadership of Ignite Fredericton, the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce, the Multicultural Association of Fredericton and, of course, the City of Fredericton - Fredericton launched a five-year Immigration Growth Strategy which is in direct alignment and foundational to the LIP, it's mandate and stakeholder engagement. Both the LIP and the strategy are key instruments in the design of a welcoming, functional, integrated and inclusive community.

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The new strategy will elevate and benefit newcomers upon arrival as well as educate the local Fredericton community on the realities of immigration and the benefits attached to becoming a diverse and inclusive community. We are also confident that with the alignment we have developed within our strategic goal setting that our retention numbers will climb as we set our sights at bringing in more than 1800 newcomers in 2020, up from 1500 in 2019. This will only increase the need for Fredericton's LIP to be a robust and active organization.

Additionally, we feel it would be detrimental to the foundational groundwork that has been achieved by the LIP council members and the findings of the subcommittees if funding were to be reduced moving forward. Therefore, cutting resources yet at the same time identifying the heightened need for LIP to grow and evolve is detrimental to the success of their mandate. With their first three years completed they have made substantial gains in understanding the migratory trends that send newcomers out of our smaller Atlantic Provinces and into the larger centres. The challenges are great, growth is imperative, and our population is quickly aging in New Brunswick. Therefore, we respectfully suggest that funding of Local Immigration Partnerships be maintained or expanded to meet an increasing need.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Krista Ross".

Krista Ross, CEO
Fredericton Chamber of Commerce

cc: Jenica Atwin, MP, Fredericton

Cc: Mike O'Brien, Mayor, City of Fredericton

Cc: Larry Shaw, CEO, Ignite Fredericton

Cc: Lisa Bamford De Gante, Executive Director, Multicultural Association of Fredericton

Cc: Eric Megarity, Co-Chair, Fredericton LIP Council

Cc: Sebastián Salazar, Co-Chair, Fredericton LIP Council