PNSG Working Groups' Recommendations
August 9, 2010

INTRODUCTION

With the development of the vision of a new model for newcomer settlement and inclusion in Peel came the need for planning for the future. To map out future course of action, Peel Newcomer Strategy Group steering committee convened eight working groups to develop specific recommendations for implementations aligned with the community's vision of a new model entitled, *Newcomer Settlement and Inclusion in Peel: Building on Existing Assets.*

Guided and inspired by four key principles -- 1) Strengthened service coordination and planning across the region; II) Accessible, client-centered services for all newcomers; III) A continuum of effective employment strategies; and IV) Enhanced receptivity of the host community -- the vision of the community's new model includes the creation of a network of coordinated one-stop services for newcomers, building on existing assets and expertise.

Key elements of the vision of the new model include establishment of community hubs/networks, use of existing assets and services, a no wrong door approach, a central planning table, and delivering appropriate services related to employment and career development.

PNSG's two-year research, analysis and discussion with the community confirmed the need for service coordination. The research and community consultations also confirmed that settlement organizations are providing valuable services to the newcomers. Some of these organizations have valuable areas of specialization: such as women abuse and services related to specific ethno-cultural groups. However, the existing services do not fully address many barriers, resulting in unemployment, poverty, social exclusion, inadequate and unaffordable housing and poor health.

One of the key messages received during the community consultations was that the implementation of the new model should take place in ongoing consultations with the settlement sector to ensure full utilization of existing assets, such as specialization

related to service delivery, program design and development, and functioning partnership to name a few.

The working groups are comprised of participants (Appendix 1: List of the Group Members) who are well informed about the infrastructure, policies, and processes of the settlement sector as well as the labour market needs of the employers. The working groups were designed to have informed debates and discussions about the future course of action for materializing the community's vision.

One of the key principles in forming the working groups was to engage a broad range of community members in the planning process to add value and ensure ownership of the community's future planning and implementation efforts. As a result, 58 individuals joined PNSG working groups from outside the existing steering committee members.

The working groups were formed in the following thematic areas:

1) Community Hub Development

2) Employer Engagement

3) Host Community Receptivity

4) Intake, Assessment and Referral System/Case Management System

5) Informal Services Network

6) Communications and Community Engagement

7) Research and Data Literacy

8) Investment and Funding

Process: The purpose of the working groups was to come-up with carefully planned transition and implementation recommendations with specific implementable actions for the above mentioned areas. The responsibilities and processes of the working groups were identified and spelled out in the Terms of Reference for each working groups (Appendix 2: Terms of Reference).

The working group meetings took place in an environment of great vigour and engagement. Each meeting were recorded and were approved by the group members in the subsequent meetings. Each of the working groups met a number of times ranging from 2 to 5 meetings during May to July, 2010, to discuss and finalize their recommendations. After detailed discussions and analysis, the working groups submitted their recommendations to the PNSG Steering Committee.

Contextual Alignments: As a collaborative, PNSG has always been mindful about the discourses related to settlement policy and programs that are taking place in the region and beyond. As a result, the PNSG collaborative has taken special care in aligning its work with the objectives of the funding partners. The working group discussions and recommendations were informed by the current priorities of funding partners including CIC's Modernization Approach, MTCU's Employment Ontario Transformation, and Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs).

The community's vision of the new model is clearly aligned with CIC's modernization approach and its 2011-12 Ontario Region Settlement Priorities[1]. By proposing innovative strategies and enhancements to the settlement programs to appropriately meet the needs of newcomers, the proposed model explicitly echoes the outcome based approach recommended by CIC's Modernization Approach.

The Peel community also clearly followed program and policy development[2] processes recommended by the Modernization Approach. PNSG's work during the past couple of years including research and community consultations resulted in the development of the vision of the new model that is evidence-based, informed by stakeholders' input and addresses the barriers and needs of both newcomers and capacity of the settlement sector.

The proposed new model is also aligned with CIC's settlement "Priorities by Category"[3] including:

1) To Support programming expansion in Underserviced areas
2) To Support Specialized Client Services
3) To Support the implementation of Innovative Service Delivery Models

MTCU's Employment Ontario is also aligned with the PNSG collaborative's new vision. Employment Ontario's Integrated Service Delivery framework is designed to provide accessible, customer-centred services to employers, job seekers, apprentices and new Canadians.[4] Employment Ontario's six principles – accessible, customer-centered, integrated, cost-effective, accountable and be of quality – are also consistent with the PNSG collaborative's work.

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[1] Settlement Program: Implementation of the Modernized Approach, Winter 2010.
[2] Settlement Program: Implementation of the Modernized Approach, P. 12
[3] CIC – Ontario Region Settlement Priorities 2011-12, Annex A, P. 2
[4] Employment Ontario Transformation – Background
(http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/eotransformation/transformbackground.html)

1. Community Hub Development Working Group

T he Community Hub Development Working Group is comprised of service providers, funders, settlement and planning organizations (Appendix 1: List of the Group Members). It brought together stakeholder groups to engage in rich discussions and thoughtful analysis of the issues related to the selection and development of the concept of community hubs.

In the process of developing recommendations, the group discussed the following major areas:

- Characteristics of the community hub locations

- Core programs, services and service-standards needed to provide one-stop services to newcomers

- A standard process that can connect mainstream and specialized agencies to the community hubs

- Criteria and processes for selecting community hub anchors and its governance

- Potential locations for piloting community hubs as recommended by the model

In order to align recommendations with the community's *Vision of a New Model* report, the Working Group undertook the following activities:

- Reviewed the report recommendations
- Developed a terms of reference to guide the group's work
- Reviewed each of the 4 out of 10 potential community hub locations based on:
  - The census data and demographics of the particular geographic area provided by the Peel Data Centre and the Social Planning Council of Peel
  - The existing service providers in that area
  - The community assets (preliminary) that exist in that area, such as schools, libraries, recreation centres, etc
  - Transportation accessibility (preliminary)
- Based on this analysis, the Working Group identified four geographic locations as pilot sites for consideration for the project implementation

- The Working Group also visited the Welcome Centres in York Region to learn about the community engagement and planning process that occurred with five lead agencies in that region
- The group conducted in-depth discussions to develop a set of Guiding Principles, Standards and Recommendations

Recommendations

In order to implement the recommendations, the following steps are recommended:

- Extensive planning, coordination and partnership development work be undertaken between and amongst the settlement agencies to develop a Service Delivery Network. The Service Delivery Network would be comprised of settlement service providers, organizations, associations and key stakeholders. To facilitate this, it is recommended that an organization be identified to play the role of convener to bring the various service providers together for these purposes. The role of the convener would be to host and facilitate these meetings.

> *Extensive planning, coordination and partnership development work to be undertaken between and amongst the settlement agencies to develop a Service Delivery Network...four identified sites are: Malton, Roche Court, Brampton-Springdale and Caledon.*

- The Service Delivery Network model be employed in each of the 4 community sites identified: Malton, Roche Court, Brampton-Springdale and Caledon.

- It is recommended that the Intake/Referral and Case Management Working Group be integrated and aligned with the Community Hub Development Working Group. The planning and coordination aspects will rely heavily on a solid referral and case management process and tool. This joint work should then work together on further implementation.

- Begin the Service Delivery Network discussions first with settlement agencies before seeking to expand more widely.

- The Service Delivery Network incorporates "out of the box" thinking to link with new and existing partners to ensure that in communities where space and accessibility are issues other innovative options are explored. For example, explore opportunities to identify organizations or sites where it might be possible to place itinerant services (e.g. goodwill stores, plazas and other community spaces). In the short-term, consider developing an extensive support network of itinerant services for areas which lack services to provide services to those who need it sooner rather than later.

> *The Service Delivery Network incorporates "out of the box" thinking to link with new and existing partners to ensure that in communities where space and accessibility poses limitations, other innovative options are explored.*

A community hub for the community to foster inclusion	- Phased in approach: starts with settlement services - Considerations for sites where well established services, where no or minimum services exist - Pilot sites: Brampton (likely Springdale), Malton & Roche Court – plus dialogue with Caledon
Service Planning & Coordination – local team linked to the Central Planning Table	- Define settlement services - Information Sharing - Service Coordination - Joint Planning & Delivery

Multiple Entry Sites	- Consistent Intake, Assessment and Referrals, branding - Database Technology
Settlement Services Providers	- Memorandum of Understanding: Partnership – Lead Agency - Service Standards & Principles - Link to Central Planning Table
Customer Service	- Roles /Responsibilities
Charter	- Governance - Service Standards - Multiple Entry Sites - Settlement - Branded Visibility Logo at Each Site

Next Steps:

- Begin discussions with settlement agencies and key stakeholders regarding Service Delivery Network
- Develop selection criteria for Service Delivery Network anchor
- Identify organizations that can act as conveners for Service Delivery Network sites in the four proposed neighbourhoods
- Develop Memorandum of Understanding document for the network
- Conduct a baseline that maps existing assets of the neighbourhoods
- Develop and identify service needs for the community
- Develop key measurement indicators for the work of the network

2. Employer Engagement Working Group

The Employer Employment Working Group consisted of 26 members with representatives from businesses, boards of trade, chambers of commerce, educational institutions, settlement services organizations and the government (Appendix 1: List of the Group Members).

The working group discussed the following key areas:

- Innovative, effective and sustainable employer engagement strategies that work
- Employment programs that result in newcomer employment i.e. mentoring, paid internship, and bridging programs etc.
- A support system that would assist employers in hiring newcomers
- Resources required to implement the group's recommendations

Recommendations:

1. Establishing a leadership/advisory council

What it is	A short-term leadership committee comprised of C-level executives from notable Peel-based employers, convened to identify opportunities and develop a strategy for increasing employer awareness of skilled immigrants locally.
Strengths	- Collective ability across the working group and PNSG to convene this leadership council. - Experience convening similar initiatives.
Considerations	- Concurrent asks for senior employer leaders to participate in similar initiatives (Mississauga Summit, other working groups and committees). - Similar, concurrent work taking place across the region. - Brokers who can assist in recruiting (mayors, United Way)

	• Respect for executives' time and participation.
	• Designing key messages around inclusive hiring that considers newcomer talent pools vis-à-vis the workforce at large.
	• The role of municipalities and local politicians.

2. Establishing an employer gateway entity with a recruitment model

What it is	A single access point for employers to engage the immigrant-serving sector, whether to gain access to the collective immigrant talent pool or programs and resources that enhance employer capacity to recruit and retain immigrants.
	Central to this employer gateway is a coordinated recruitment model that enables employers to post employment opportunities to the immigrant-serving sector (whether employment and settlement agencies serving immigrants, bridging and internship programs, professional immigrant networks, sector councils, associations) and receive pre-screened candidates for consideration.
	Immigrant-serving organizations may also bring employment opportunities to this network to strengthen existing employer relationships.
Strengths	• Repeated, articulated employer need for a gateway and a simplified recruitment model, validated in numerous employer-feedback initiatives.
	• An established Peel-based communications mechanism to its immigrant-serving sector.
	• Experience participating in a coordinated job developer network.
	• Informal job developer networks across the GTA already exist and share employer opportunities among each other.

Considerations	• Alignment with Employment Ontario transformation and CIC modernization.
	• Establishing a model that incents sharing and participation among immigrant-serving organizations.
	• Establishing consistent screening standards across agencies and programs
	• Determining the right employer medium – online, in-person, a combination
	• Development of infrastructure and process in advance of employer marketing. Consider a phased-approach to implementation.
	• Leveraging existing networks of job developers (e.g. NCON).
	• Consideration of existing offerings (Talent Oyster, Skills International) that might inform the development or participate in the implementation of an eventual employer gateway.

3. Establishing an employer marketing strategy

What it is	Once recruitment and employer gateway offerings are developed, an employer-targeted marketing strategy is required to raise awareness, incent trial, develop loyalty and encourage repeated use.
Strengths	• Opportunity to create a single, central brand to simplify employer engagement in connecting with the immigrant-serving sector.
	• Potential among boards of trade and chamber of commerce to provide value-added offerings
	• Potential to leverage advisory council in media relations and events.
	• Potential to identify new programs and resources that

	serve employer needs.
Considerations	• Breadth of strategy – A successful marketing strategy will depend on establishing credibility and frequency/visibility to reach employers when they have recruitment or human resource needs. • Leverage employer champions (such as the leadership/advisory council mentioned in this first strategy). • Leverage enablers, such as banks and media organizations.

Next Steps:

Establishing a Leadership/Advisory Council

- Identify relevant stakeholders (local boards of trade and chamber of commerce, United Way of Peel Region, local municipality leadership, TRIEC) and funding needs.
- Develop a terms of reference and potential strategies (media relations, events) for council to consider.
- Identify potential council participants. Request their participation.
- Convene council

Establishing an Employer Gateway Entity with a Recruitment Model

- Identify relevant stakeholders (PNSG, local boards of trade and chamber of commerce, TRIEC) and funding needs.
- Articulate a framework and funding proposal to develop a coordinated recruitment model
- Articulate a framework and funding proposal to develop an employer gateway entity that incorporates a coordinated recruitment model and business service offerings

Establishing an Employer Marketing Strategy

- Identify relevant stakeholders and funding needs.
- Determine media relations and event opportunities as leadership-advisory council is convened.
- Determine marketing needs as employer gateway and recruitment model are conceived.

3. Host Community Receptivity Working Group

T he Host Community Receptivity Working Group focused on the following three key areas:

- Innovative and practical strategies that reduce systemic barriers and increase the receptivity of the host community
- Opportunities for the full and equitable participation of newcomers in the civic life of Peel
- Processes that would assist the local municipalities, educational institutions and community organizations in engaging newcomers in civic life

Recommendations

1. The Mayors, Regional Chair, Municipal Councillors, Chief Administrative Officers of Public Institutions (Boards of Education, Hospitals, Police, Legal) and Senior Leadership of Community Agencies champion diversity, inclusion, and equity affirming these as core values by including them in their organizations' vision and mission statements across Peel.

2. Create a diversity and inclusion policy that outlines a vision for local government, public institutions and community organizations that seeks to actively recognize and remove barriers that create inequality and exclusion, specifically affirming that the Municipalities, institutions and organizations will provide equity of access and opportunity for all persons.

3. The Municipalities, Region, Public Institutions and community organizations create a standing *Diversity and Inclusion* Committee/Committees of Council/Boards to advise Councils/Boards on community needs and service gaps (i.e. support programs for refugees, economic disparity for immigrants, etc.). These Committees develop an annual action plan with clear goals and targets that will include:

- Creating ways to participate in local government and Boards
- Creating access to municipal, regional and institutional information, goods, services and facilities under a well developed outreach strategy that will ensure dissemination of information among new Canadians
- Creating access to employment, development and promotion opportunities based on individual merit and the principles of employment equity; and,
- Creating access to opportunities to supply, consult and/or partner with the Municipalities, public institutions and community organizations in providing programs, products and services.

In implementing the policy, apply a diversity lens to all planning, programs, and policies, and implement equity impact assessments for all existing programs and policies and commit to working towards reducing inequalities throughout the municipalities, public institutions and community organizations across Peel..

The Committee should reflect the diversity of the community, and should be open to all residents irrespective of immigration status (not just Canadian citizens).

4. The Municipalities and public institutions (school boards, hospitals, Police etc.) create a senior staff position within either the CAO's Office or senior leadership team to manage diversity and inclusion efforts.

5. The Municipalities and public institutions create diversity and inclusion working groups, to develop strategies to implement the recommendations of the *Diversity and Inclusion Committee*, to share best practices, and to model desired behaviors.

6. Develop and deliver free and/or affordable entry-level recreation and leadership development programs for children and youth in communities with high concentrations of newcomers

7. The Municipalities and public institutions collaborate to actively pursue and support a range of activities that promote inclusion, including:

   a. Community building activities and events like Carassauga, Carabram, Canada Day, community festivals, Chinese New Year, Chanukah, Eid-Mela, Diwali, Christmas, etc.

b. Organize "open houses" (twice per year) to welcome and orient new immigrants to the community. In addition to City facilities these be held at recreation centres, libraries, schools, boards of education, hospitals, settlement organizations and faith groups etc..

c. An award program that recognizes individuals and programs that excels in the promotion of diversity and immigration.

d. An award program that recognizes the contributions of new immigrants (in the country for 5 years or less).

8. As a community, proactively build capacity, educate host community (all stakeholders) and newcomers to address racism and discrimination to truly create a receptive community

Next Steps:

- Research and review Peel's diversity and community assets to support the work of the host receptivity working group in developing a municipal engagement strategy in the areas of diversity policy and practices
- Develop an inventory of existing community assets in the areas of social marketing programs that are designed to reduce discrimination
- Develop an inventory of assets related to re-branding newcomers' contributions to our communities

4. Intake, Assessment and Referral System/ Case Management System Working Group

The Intake, Assessment and Referral System/ Case Management System Working Group focused on the following key areas:

- Intake, Assessment and Referral System / Case Management Systems that are in use in Peel, across Ontario and Canada
- Intake, Assessment and Referral System / Case Management Systems that will best suit and support newcomers needs
- Changes required for adopting an existing Intake, Assessment and Referral System / Case Management Systems
- Identify resources required to implement the recommendations

Recommendations:

1. a) That the development process for potential intake, assessment, referral and case management systems for settlement services in Peel be convened by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI), through a working group that brings together technical experts, settlement service delivery organizations in Peel Region with existing experience in such systems, government representatives (e.g. Employment Ontario) and service delivery organizations from other service sectors related to newcomer settlement, who can bring knowledge and experience in such systems, and consultant(s) to carry out research, coordinate, document and report on the outcomes of the process. It is important to recognize that the work of this group will be lengthy and the corresponding committee commitment will be over several months/years.

   b) That in the short term, an initial web based, on-line registration form be created using the models currently in existence by Halton Multicultural Council (HMC) and COSTI. Expected completion of this process 6 - 12 months.

2. a) That the development process should explore potential systems for settlement services in Peel Region at three levels

   - access and intake (e.g. basic demographic information, assignment of client ID #);
     - assessment and referral (e.g. notes from initial one-on-one session with a settlement worker); and
     - case management (e.g. clients' action plans, detailed notes from follow up sessions).

   b) That the system be suitable for adaptation beyond settlement services to all CIC and MCI funded agencies within Peel.

3. That the guiding principles and standards proposed by the Work Group be adopted for the above development process.

4. That funding resources to be sought and identified for the development process.

5. a) That input is sought from all organizations funded by CIC and MCI to deliver settlement services in Peel Region into the development process.

   b) That the development process should establish a strong connection from the beginning to Employment Ontario services and should benefit from other exist systems such as HMS and COSTI.

6. That the development process should determine the ownership of such systems, how the ongoing administration and maintenance should be carried out, and the method(s) of subscription to the systems by service delivery organizations in Peel Region.

Next Steps:

- In the short-term, a web-based on-line registration form be created using the existing model by Halton Multicultural Council (HMC) and COSTI.
- Explore the possibility of forming a working group inclusive of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration to develop a full-blown intake, assessment, referral and case management system for settlement services in Peel.

5. Informal Services Network Working Group

The informal services Network Working Group discussed the following two key areas:

- Effective and sustainable way of engaging the ethno-specific, faith-based and cultural organizations that provide informal support to newcomers
- Processes that would assist the ethno-specific, faith-based and cultural organizations in their support to newcomers
- Resources required to implement informal services engagement strategies

Recommendations:

1. Need to increase the accessibility and visibility of formal newcomer services to informal service providers

   - Support the establishment of Peel Informal Newcomer Services Group (PINSG)
   - Representation of some members of this group at NewComer Organizations Network (NCON) meetings
   - Representation of some NCON members at PINSG meetings
   - Representation of PINSG at PNSG Central Table
   - Bring formal and informal service providers together once a year through a community forum, workshops, etc.

2. Build awareness of formal programs and services available to newcomers across Peel region to the informal service providers by:

   - coordinating consistent information sharing
   - providing training on the use of tools like the web-portal

3. Build capacity of informal service providers by providing in kind support to overcome their challenges

4. Set up mechanisms for the informal service providers to register their organization and services on the Peel Community Information Database at:

   - http://peel.cioc.ca/

   - The web portal has a link under ethno-cultural groups (which is linked to the above database) and a specific page for faith groups.

Next Steps:

- To support the establishment of the Peel Informal Network Services Group (PINSG)
- To build awareness of formal programs and services available to newcomers across Peel Region to the informal service providers
- To facilitate the representation of PINSG at appropriate committees across Peel including the PNSG Central Planning Table and NewComer Organizations Network etc.
- To facilitate providing training to informal service providers on the use of tools such as the web-portal
- To bring the formal and informal service providers together once a year through a community forum/ workshop etc.

6. Communications and Community Engagement Working Group

The Communications and Community Engagement Working Group discussed the following two key areas:

- Identifying different aspects of communication and engagement needs in presenting and implementing the new model
- Developing a comprehensive and effective communication plan for the presentation of the model on June 16, 2010
- Developing a comprehensive and effective communications, marketing and outreach strategies and plans for engaging stakeholders during the implementation phase of the model/strategies

Recommendations:[5]

- Branding of the Service Delivery Network services and sites
- Establishing an employer marketing strategy
- Developing a municipal engagement strategy in the areas of diversity policy and practices
- Collaborate in developing social campaigns to educate the host community and newcomers to address racism and discrimination in creating a receptive community
- Collaborate in developing outreach strategies to reach maximum number of newcomers who can utilize existing settlement and ELT programs provided by the settlement agencies

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[5] Most of the recommendations of this group came from other working groups. The communications and engagement working group has met once and discussed communications strategies for the community presentations on June 16, 2010. The group will meet soon to discuss its detailed recommendations to the Steering Committee.

Next Steps:

- Identify potential partners who are already doing some aspects of the recommended tasks i.e. employer marketing, diversity policy and practices, social marketing campaigns, etc.
- Form a communications and marketing advisory council
- Initiate a collaborative exercise that maps the existing assets and tools in employer marketing, diversity policy and practices, and social marketing campaigns etc.
- Develop a plan of action for communications and marketing
- Initiate a quick communications audit in the areas of newcomer outreach to identify what is working and what is not, so that a proper outreach strategy can be put in place to reach newcomers maximizing existing services and resources

7. Research and Data Literacy Working Group

The Research and Data Literacy Working Group is considering the following issues while making their recommendations.

- Evaluating and validating existing data available on immigration in Peel
- Gap analysis of the data required for the implementation of the new model
- New and additional research required to have access to data that would assist in the successful implementation of the new model
- Evaluation and outcome measurement of the model implementation using Result Based Accountability frame-work
- Engage key stakeholders for consultation

The Research and Data Literacy Working Group have had only one meeting so far. The main objective of this working group is to support the successful implementation of the new model/strategies by making required data available. The group will also support the evaluation and outcome measurement of the model implementation.

After the first meeting, the group members with the support of Region of Peel staff have developed the following data and mapping for the community hub development working group so that they can make an informed decision in identifying potential pilot hub locations across Peel:

- The census data and demographics for the particular geographic area provided by the Peel Data Centre
- List of existing service providers in the identified locations. This list is extracted from the *Inventory of Settlement Services in Peel* document prepared by the Social Planning Council
- Mapping of the community assets (to some extent) such as schools, libraries, recreation centres, etc. that exist in the area.

o The group is expected to support the planning and implementation phases of the model in an on-going basis.

8. Investing/Funding Working Group

The mandate of the investment/Funding Working Group is to look into the following key areas:

- Identify public and private funding resources available for implementing key elements of the new model
- Meeting with funding agencies and foundations to identify funding support
- Preparing funding applications to seek financial resources

Next Steps:

The members of the working group have been identified. However, the work of this group[6] has been delayed until specific project implementation plans are in place.

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[6] PNSG staff is preparing a document detailing potential funding information to inform the work of the Investment and Funding Working Group

CONCLUSION

The assembling of the working groups has been one of the best practices entailed by the PNSG collaborative during its work over the last couple of years. The contributions of the working groups have been invaluable in terms of their time, expertise and hard work.

While the group's recommendations have provided directions to the PNSG collaborative's future work, it has also provided us with key questions to remember as the collaborative evolves. The groups' recommendations will, indeed, form the core framework for the work of the PNSG collaborative.

It is clear in the recommendations that the PNSG collaborative has to undertake short and long-term plans in moving forward in translating the community's vision into reality. While some of the working groups' recommendations are directly related to programs and services, some are more concerned about overall environment, policies and practices.

So, the PNSG collaborative's future plans have to address a diverse range of recommendations to form a holistic programmatic view that will result in creating a community where all Peel residents can maximize their potential in the labour-market and in the community.