

LMIEC City of London Budget Delegation
January 22, 2015
Gus Kotsiomititis Draft Speech

- Good afternoon Mayor Brown, Councillors - Thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today.
- My name is Gus Kotsiomititis. I am the Vice President Commercial Banking for RBC Royal Bank, London-St. Thomas. I am also the Chair of the London Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council (also known as LMIEC).
- The LMIEC is a business-led organization that connects local employers to Canadian newcomers and, in turn, grows our local economy.
- On behalf of the many employers and community partners represented through the LMIEC, I am here to highlight the importance of the City of London sustaining its investment in one of our key programs -- the LMIEC Job Match Network -- through Strategic Funding in 2015.
- The LMIEC Job Match Network is a direct and innovative response to the long-expressed need by local employers for coordinated access to qualified talent.
- Launched in 2012, the initiative brings together employers, job seekers, economic development organizations, labour market planning bodies, employment providers and immigrant serving agencies, in a unique partnership that gives London a competitive edge in retaining, attracting and developing a skilled labour force.
- In 2013, through prosperity funding, the City of London funded a pilot project that enabled the LMIEC to connect employers with top talent that was not eligible for service through existing provincial and federal investments.
- As a result, the LMIEC was able to begin connecting international student graduates, immigrants on work visas and newcomer talent across **all** occupations to job opportunities in our City.
- The project surpassed all targets in its first year of delivery and as a result, was recommended and approved for a second year of funding through to September 2015. Through the City of London's funding and this project's 15 months of service delivery to-date, London employers have shared 282 specialized job postings; 144 new Canadians have been matched to London opportunities, and 75 of these new Canadians have found employment in our City. The project is on pace to exceed all targets again this year. When all investments are included, the LMIEC Job Match Network has connected 250 newcomers with commensurate employment.

- Western University, Fanshawe College, College Boreal, WIL Employment Connections, Cross Cultural Learner Centre and LUSO Community Services are just some of the 14 partner organizations that have come together to make the initiative a success. As a result, London is attracting and retaining top talent that our community would have otherwise lost to other cities, provinces or countries, and London employers are hiring talent for positions that would have otherwise gone unfilled.
- Based on the demonstrated impact of the innovative partnership, the City of London recommended that LMIEC seek strategic funding to support its work beyond September 2015. I am here today to encourage this Council to support the Strategic Funding allocation.
- Through ReThink London, our community came together and emphasized the importance of “planning for prosperity” to “attract people from around the globe” as part of London’s “top quality labour force.”
- The London Plan celebrates the growing diversity of our City, noting that today, one in five Londoners are new Canadians and by 2035, one in three people in the labour force will be foreign-born. The London Plan further affirms that “culturally rich and diverse cities attract the best and the brightest labour force, (and that) those cities that are able to attract this labour force will be successful in the economy of the future.”
- Based on these emerging realities, the LMIEC Job Match Network is strategically aligned with the values and vision of the London Plan, and directly advances a number of its key directions namely:
- Direction #1: The LMIEC Job Match Network helps “**London plan strategically for a prosperous city**”.
- It “supports existing and emerging industrial sectors” with access to the right talent, at the right time to support their hiring needs, thus driving London’s future economic development and “ensuring an adequate supply of employment areas” for **all** Londoners. It markets London as a go-to destination for settlement, thereby strengthening municipally-led efforts including the Immigration Web Portal and Local Immigration Partnership.
- Direction #2: The LMIEC Job Match Network “**connects London to the surrounding region**” and is actively partnering with Middlesex, Oxford and Perth counties as part of a coordinated talent attraction and retention strategy.
- Direction #3: The LMIEC Job Match Network “**celebrates and supports London as a culturally rich, creative and diverse city**”.

- The London Plan emphasizes the importance of “considering and supporting new Canadians through all the planning processes that we undertake,” and “using culture and creativity as a prosperity tool to attract and retain labour force and business investment.” The LMIEC works with regional employers to recognize immigrant skills and experience, ultimately a key consideration to the labour market integration and support of new Canadians.
- In summary, for a modest investment, the City of London can utilize the LMIEC Job Match Network as a strategic asset in the implementation of the London Plan and leverage significant federal and provincial dollars, as well as private sector contributions, for the benefit of our City. The LMIEC is seeking a flat \$54,025 annual investment from the City of London. As funding allocations have already been approved through to September 2015, the amount requested in 2015 is prorated to 4-months of delivery for a total request of \$18,009.
- We look forward to carrying forward this important work together. Thank you again for your time and consideration. I, along with Jennifer Hollis, the Project Manager for the LMIEC, am here to answer any questions that you may have.