

<b>TO:</b>	<b>CHAIR AND MEMBERS STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING ON MAY 29, 2017</b>
<b>FROM:</b>	<b>SANDRA DATARS BERE MANAGING DIRECTOR, HOUSING, SOCIAL SERVICES AND DEARNESS HOME</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REGARDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CITY OF LONDON TO BECOME A SANCTUARY CITY</b>

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
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That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Housing, Social Services and Dearness Home, the following report on the consultations regarding appropriate arrangements for the City of London to become a Sanctuary City, **BE RECEIVED** for information.

<b>PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER</b>
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None

<b>BACKGROUND</b>
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On February 1, 2017, City Council resolved that the following actions be taken in response to the President of the United States of America's executive order to ban individuals and families from Syria, Iran, Sudan, Iraq, Yemen, Libya and Somalia from entering the United States of America:

- a) *the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to consult with the Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Oppression Advisory Committee (DIAAC) and the community stakeholders who are working on the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, and report back at a future meeting of the Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee with the appropriate arrangements for the City of London to become a Sanctuary City where residents can expect access to service without fear; and*
- b) *the Mayor BE REQUESTED and the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to communicate to the Federal Government, including the Ministry of Immigration and Citizenship, that the City of London continues to be committed to receiving refugees from Syria, Iran, Sudan, Iraq, Yemen, Libya, and Somalia who have been banned from entry to the United States of America as per the President's recent Executive Order;*

This report focuses on the consultations held to date by Civic Administration regarding appropriate arrangements for the City of London to become a Sanctuary City where residents can expect access to service without fear and outlines the next steps in the consultation process.

**Background/Context:**

The City of London is committed to being an inclusive community for all and to responding to the diverse needs of the people arriving and living in London. This includes inviting all residents to participate and engage in the life of the city. This commitment is embedded within the City of London's Strategic Plan 2015-2019 within the focus "Strengthening our Community", specifically creating a "diverse, inclusive, and welcoming community". It was echoed by the Mayor in his letter welcoming Syrian Newcomers to London in December 2015 when he stated, "London is a destination for families to settle from around the world. Our city is a great place to live, work and raise a family. We are diverse and multicultural. We thrive on this diversity – it is one of our strengths". London residents and community agencies welcomed over 1,200 Syrian refugees between November 2015 and March 2017, and continue to help with the integration of these people along with all other refugees arriving into our city every month. Through the London & Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership; service agencies, volunteers, and immigrant communities develop and implement locally-driven strategic plans for the successful integration of immigrants in London and Middlesex.

The term “Sanctuary City” is often used to designate a geographic locale and area (including municipalities) which have adopted “Access Without Fear” policies or access initiatives for individuals with uncertain or no immigration status (also called non-status migrants). According to a working paper published by the Ryerson Centre for Immigration and Settlement at Ryerson University entitled (No) Access T.O.: A Pilot Study on Sanctuary City Policy in Toronto, Canada, a non-status migrant is a “person who has entered and/or remains in Canada without permission of the federal government. This would include persons who overstay their visas, persons who have had their status revoked”.

While immigration is a federal responsibility, it touches on many areas under provincial jurisdiction such as education, housing, social assistance, health care, and policing. The City of London delivers a wide range of services to residents of London, and in many instances, these services are delivered without regard to or requirement of proof of immigration status. However, provincial services delivered by the City of London such as social assistance and housing, require, by legislation, proof of immigration status.

### **Consultations and Feedback:**

On February 23, 2017, Civic Administration convened a public consultation attended by 150 individuals, which included citizens as well as local agency representatives and advocacy groups. After an introduction and presentation by Civic Administration coupled with discussion and a variety of viewpoints, participants were invited to submit their feedback in writing either on the distributed consultations guides or by email to an address provided. Along with the consultation guide, Civic Administration provided participants with a draft list of municipal-based services offered to all residents regardless of status.

At the March 16, 2017 Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Oppression Advisory Committee (DIAAC) meeting, Civic Administration gave a brief presentation on Sanctuary City, shared the draft list of services and briefed the group on the themes identified through community feedback. Follow-up questions were circulated and on April 20<sup>th</sup>, Civic Administration returned to continue the consultation session. Indicating support for London exploring options of becoming a sanctuary city and providing access to services without fear, the committee indicated that it wishes to remain informed of next steps and the process moving forward.

At its meetings in February and March 2017, the Community Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (CDIS) Steering Committee was approached for perspectives on the process by which to consult CDIS members regarding Sanctuary Cities. The advice provided was to hold a separate Sanctuary Cities discussion, rather than fit it into an already busy CDIS Champions meeting. The different scope of the two discussions was also raised as a reason to have more focused discussion regarding Sanctuary Cities.

On April 5, 2017, Civic Administration convened a consultation with members of the Council of Canadians, the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, the London Coordinating Committee to End Woman Abuse, the London Muslim Mosque, and the Urban League of London. This session was very productive and participants remain open to help with identifying the sectors and groups that they believe must be consulted going forward in the process. On this same note, the No One is Illegal group, whose members were unable to participate in the April 5<sup>th</sup> consultation, have advised Civic Administration that they are organizing an educational panel discussion on the concept of London becoming a sanctuary city. Time and location are yet to be determined.

Civic Administration has been working with a local subject content specialist, Dr. Michele Manocchi, who holds a PhD in Comparative Social Research from the University of Italy. Dr. Manocchi, who is actively involved in various research projects related to immigrants, recently co-published a working paper on the results of a pilot study that explored Toronto’s sanctuary city policy led by the Ryerson Centre for Immigration and Settlement at Ryerson University. Over the next year, he and his colleagues are planning to conduct a study on individuals without status or with uncertain status in London.

Through the consultations and feedback received to date, the following common themes and questions emerged:

- need for resources and funding implications of London becoming a sanctuary city;
- the role of local police would play in informing or not informing authorities of encounters with individuals with no status;
- Recommendation of education and awareness building for Londoners to ensure clear messaging on the accessibility of municipal services for all residents; and,
- Training for municipal managers and front-line staff.

Another theme that was heard was a concern that designating London as a sanctuary city would lead to an influx in refugees crossing from the United States into Canada. Many individuals and groups who have provided input believe that Council's response to this issue should have been focused locally and be separated from the actions of the United States government.

**Next Steps:**

With the ongoing support of the City's Organizational Development Specialist, Diversity and Inclusion, and with the assistance of external consulting resources Civic Administration will next convene focus groups with settlement, education, law enforcement, and health service providers to obtain feedback and recommendations on the arrangements necessary for London to become a Sanctuary City. These service sectors will have valuable input as they deliver front line services to immigrant clients and may have come into contact with individuals with uncertain or no immigration status. Drawing on feedback heard throughout the consultation processes to date as well as research, and best practices from other municipalities, Civic Administration will prepare a report outlining recommendations for the arrangements for the City of London to become a Sanctuary City for Council's review. It is expected that the report will be forwarded to Council in the fall of 2017

<b>FINANCIAL IMPACT</b>
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Work by Civic Administration on this initiative has been, and will continue to be managed within existing resources.

<b>CONCLUSION</b>
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Civic Administration recognizes the complexities of implementing arrangements for The City of London to become a Sanctuary City and offer services without fear or restrictions based on immigration status. It is anticipated that a report with recommendations will be delivered to Council in the fall of 2017.

<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>
<b>EMILY LOW SPECIALIST, MUNICIPAL POLICY IMMIGRATION</b>	<b>JILL TANSLEY MANAGER, STRATEGIC PROGRAMS AND PARTNERSHIPS</b>
<b>RECOMMENDED BY:</b>	
<b>SANDRA DATARS BERE MANAGING DIRECTOR, HOUSING, SOCIAL SERVICES AND DEARNESS HOME</b>	

- c. Kate Graham, Director, Community and Economic Innovation  
Saleha Khan, Specialist, Organizational Development, Workplace Diversity and Inclusion