

SPEAKING NOTES – Mayor Jim Watson

OLIP 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Immigration Forum / City of Ottawa 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Immigrant Entrepreneur Awards  
Monday, October 1, 2012

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Thank you, Dick.

Good morning ladies and gentlemen.

*Bonjour Mesdames et Messieurs.*

On behalf of the City of Ottawa and my Council colleagues, it is my pleasure to speak to you about our city's immigration and economic integration efforts.

*Je suis heureux d'être ici aujourd'hui, au nom de la Ville d'Ottawa et de mes collègues du Conseil, pour vous parler des efforts que déploie la Ville en matière d'immigration et d'intégration économique.*

Recognize:

- Paul Dewar, MP
- Councillor Marianne Wilkinson
- Councillor Keith Egli
- Councillor Katherine Hobbs
- Councillor Steve Desroches
- Dick Stewart, OLIP Council Chair
- Salimatou Diallo, OLIP Council Vice Chair
- Georges Orfali, Président, Conseil d'école public de l'est de l'Ontario, and
- Jennifer McKenzie, Chair of the Board of Trustees, Ottawa Carleton District School Board.

I would also like to acknowledge the work of Steve Kanellakos, the City's Deputy City Manager of City Operations, whose hard work and commitment to this project has helped in the progression of the Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership.

This being the First Annual Ottawa Immigration Forum and the First Annual Immigrant Entrepreneur Awards, I am honoured to be invited here today to celebrate the achievements of the Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership over the past year.

Today's event is significant, as it brings with it a community-wide recognition of the importance of immigration for our city's sustainability, economic prosperity and cultural and social vitality.

*L'événement d'aujourd'hui est important, parce qu'il montre que toute la communauté reconnaît l'importance de l'immigration pour la viabilité et la prospérité économique de notre ville ainsi que pour sa vitalité culturelle et sociale.*

Today's event also carries a shared resolve to build our capacity to welcome immigrants and integrate them into all aspects of community life.

Our plans today include public discussion to explore how best to leverage the economic, cultural and social contributions of immigrants.

And these contributions are plentiful.

Epitomizing this history is former Ottawa Mayor Marion Dewar and her efforts in 1979 to create private sponsorships for 4,000 Vietnamese refugees – with great success.

In our city's history, immigration has always played an important role.

Ottawa welcomes about 12,000 new immigrants into our community every year.

These newcomers are a major factor in enabling our economy to grow and prosper, particularly given our aging demography.

*L'immigration est un important facteur de croissance et de prospérité pour notre économie, compte tenu du vieillissement de notre population.*

Immigrants build our economic prosperity, diversify our culture, and contribute immeasurably to our social vitality.

This diversity of newcomers offers both opportunities and challenges.

Ottawa has both the second highest proportion of its newcomers from the refugee class, and the highest proportion of newcomers with university degrees.

The City, as a founding partner of OLIP and a key contributor to the Ottawa Immigration Strategy, has made a strong commitment to ensure that our programs and services meet the

needs of our immigrant population today, and will attract the immigrants that will come to Canada in the future.

As part of this, we are working to ensure that our own municipal workforce attracts diverse people with the right skills to maintain a high-performing and client-centric focus.

*Nous nous assurons que la Ville attire des personnes d'origines diverses, qui possèdent les compétences requises pour nous aider à continuer de concentrer notre action sur le rendement et le service à la clientèle.*

We also encourage our local employers to hire immigrants.

Finally, we support the development of new businesses by immigrants.

We want to help immigrants and be the kind of place that fosters new business start-ups and business successes for them.

We are making make our entrepreneurial services accessible to more of our residents with collaboration between Invest Ottawa and our francophone and mandarin-speaking communities to translate materials and offer seminars in multiple languages.

We are also currently translating our “Discover Ottawa” mobile app into French, Spanish, Mandarin and Arabic, so that both visitors to and residents of our city may access our local businesses and attractions more easily.

And we are helping to add further language capacity that will continue to expand our outreach capacity.

Our gamut of entrepreneurial support services are available to both immigrant and non-immigrant entrepreneurs, but we are taking special efforts to make these services accessible and, in some cases, tailoring them to the immigrant community.

With the First Annual Ottawa Immigrant Entrepreneur Awards, we acknowledge the contributions of our immigrant entrepreneurs to the building of Ottawa’s economy, its cultural diversity and its social vitality.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate those who are recipients of the very first Ottawa Immigrant Entrepreneur Awards.

*J'aimerais profiter de l'occasion pour féliciter les lauréats des tout premiers Prix aux entrepreneurs immigrants d'Ottawa.*

Your hard work and dedication have made a significant contribution to our city, and I thank you for your continued efforts.

The evaluation panel for the competition was comprised of a number of individuals, and I would like to thank each of them for their assistance in this initiative:

- John Fielding, Regional Director of Business Development for the Ontario Centres of Excellence
- Mark Sutcliffe, Ottawa entrepreneur, writer and broadcaster
- Tony Bailetti, Director, Institute for Technology Entrepreneurship and Commercialization at Carleton University
- Manjit Basi, Ottawa Entrepreneur and Consultant
- Kevin Carroll, Managing Director of Innovation, Invest Ottawa
- Michael Curran, Publisher of the Ottawa Business Journal
- Hindia Mohamoud, Project Director, Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership
- Saad Bashir, Director of Economic Development, City of Ottawa.

As an annual event, we hope that next year's program will continue to grow and expand.

*Nous espérons que cet événement annuel continuera de prendre de l'expansion.*

While we acknowledge that the award winners are stellar without any categorization, we are shining a spotlight this year on entrepreneurs who are immigrants, women and youth.

This year's award recipients exemplify that the immigrant community, including women and youth, is an inspiration to us all.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank the Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership and its Council for its tremendous work.

*Je tiens également à remercier le Partenariat local pour l'immigration d'Ottawa et son Conseil pour leur formidable travail.*

Collaborative leadership and action is so important as we work towards the goals of the Ottawa Immigration Strategy.

The Ottawa Immigration Strategy is not just for immigrants.

It is for Ottawa.

Again, congratulations to our award winners, and my best wishes for a very successful forum today.

Thank you.

*Merci beaucoup.*