

## **RETHINKING POVERTY 2: IMMIGRANT PERSPECTIVES**

### **Action Strategies**

Early this year, the Rethinking Poverty 2 Conference solicited participants of the conference, representing members of immigrant and visible minority communities, and the agencies that serve and support them, for their feedback on the barriers that they face in integrating as prospering and equal participants and residents of Ottawa. This feedback was collected and presented as “Community Feedback.” We strongly encourage you to review this document to hear from these individuals “first hand” about the barriers they face and the actions they view as necessary for substantive change and progress.

Coming out of this community feedback, the Rethinking Poverty 2 Committee has developed a set of Action Strategies that can be implemented in short order and that would have an immediate positive impact on immigrant, visible minority and low-income populations of the City of Ottawa. We strongly encourage you to take these strategies into account and include them in your Poverty Reduction Strategies.

Increase the ability of Immigrant and Visible Minority and low-income individuals to improve socialization and inclusivity, and to obtain employment by:

1. Increase the number of available childcare spaces, and create more subsidized spaces at flexible schedules.
2. Expand late night bus routes to accommodate shift workers. Provide subsidized bus passes for all low-income individuals.
3. Direct City of Ottawa funds identified for affordable housing to proven and reliable agencies, such as Centretown Citizens Ottawa Corporation (CCOC), which have shown an ability to provide and maintain low-income housing units.
4. Lobby professional associations to expedite the recognition of foreign credentials and work experience.
5. Provide support for professional mentoring programs to improve employability.
6. Create or expand employment-internship programs to assist in finding and securing employment in an individual’s specialized field.
7. Increase accessibility to language training on flexible schedules for both English and French.
8. Ensure adequate representation by staff and elected officials at events and forums, such as Rethinking Poverty 2.
9. Develop an improved communications strategy between the city and service agencies and immigrant communities.
10. Re-examine the entire recreation strategy of the City to make it financially accessible and to increase socialization and language skills of immigrants through involvement in multi-ethnic social events.