



WELCOMING CITIES AND COUNTIES INITIATIVE

About the Initiative

Welcoming Cities and Counties supports locally-driven efforts to create more welcoming, immigrant-friendly environments that maximize opportunities for economic growth and cultural vitality and position communities as globally competitive, 21st century leaders.

Led by Welcoming America and launched in June 2013, the Initiative convenes U.S. city and county governments to share good ideas, develop new tools, and receive recognition for efforts to create more welcoming communities that improve the quality of life and economic potential for all residents.



Participating Municipal Governments

As of September 2014, the following communities have joined Welcoming Cities and Counties, with new joining communities updated online at www.welcomingcities.org.

- * Allegheny County, Pennsylvania
- * Anchorage, Alaska
- * Atlanta, Georgia
- * Austin, Texas
- * Baltimore, Maryland
- * Boise, Idaho
- * Boston, Massachusetts
- * Central Falls, Rhode Island
- * Charlotte, North Carolina
- * Chicago, Illinois
- * Cincinnati, Ohio
- * Clarkston, Georgia
- * Columbia, Missouri
- * Columbus, Ohio
- * Dayton, Ohio
- * Denver, Colorado
- * Detroit, Michigan
- * Dodge City, Kansas
- * East Lansing, Michigan
- * Greensboro, North Carolina
- * Hamtramck, Michigan
- * High Point, North Carolina
- * Iowa City, Iowa
- * Lincoln, Nebraska
- * Los Angeles, California
- * Louisville, Kentucky
- * Macomb County, Michigan
- * Memphis, Tennessee
- * Montgomery County, Maryland
- * Nashville, Tennessee
- * New York City, New York
- * Norcross, Georgia
- * Oakley, California
- * Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- * Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- * Raleigh, North Carolina
- * San Francisco, California
- * St. Louis, Missouri (city)
- * St. Louis, Missouri (county)
- * Sterling Heights, Michigan
- * Tucson, Arizona
- * Washington, District of Columbia

What is a Welcoming City or County?

Welcoming America defines a welcoming community as one that

PLANS: All relevant sectors, such as government, business, non-profit, and others are engaged to work together to create a welcoming community climate that supports long-term integration.

COMMITTS: Commitments are made to institutionalize strategies that ensure the ongoing inclusion and long-term economic and social integration of newcomers.

BUILDS COMMUNITY: Newcomers and long-time residents are engaged to find common ground and shared leadership.

COMMUNICATES: Messages of unity and shared values permeate the community through the media, through the voice of leaders, and among residents.

SUSTAINS: Policies and practices are considered in order to ensure that interactions between new and longer-term Americans remain positive ones and the community's economic vitality remains strong.

Without the energy and intellect and innovation of our immigrant community, Montgomery County would, quite simply, be incomplete. “New Americans” are a critical piece in building a better future for all County residents.

– Montgomery County, MD
County Executive Ike Leggett

How do communities benefit from becoming more welcoming?

Competing in a twenty-first century economy means that cities and counties must take full advantage of their most important resource—people. And that means welcoming new Americans who are starting businesses, participating in civic life, and helping build a stronger local economy.

Communities across the country and around the world are in a race to the top to attract the human capital that will allow them to thrive in a global economy. Becoming a more welcoming place for immigrants gives cities and counties a leg up in that competition and helps to retain talented people of all backgrounds. It also means more customers for local businesses, more jobs created by immigrant entrepreneurs, and a thriving economy that benefits all.

“Throughout its history, Chicago has benefited from the immeasurable economic contributions of its immigrant populations.

Today, Chicago’s immigrants remain crucial drivers of our economic growth and cultural vitality. As we build a thriving 21st century economy, we must work together to attract and retain immigrants by helping them to succeed and grow in a safe and welcoming city. “

Adolfo Hernandez

Director, Chicago Office of New Americans.

“Achieving full economic recovery and maintaining America’s competitive edge globally now and into the future will require communities to fully embrace their strongest resource—their people.

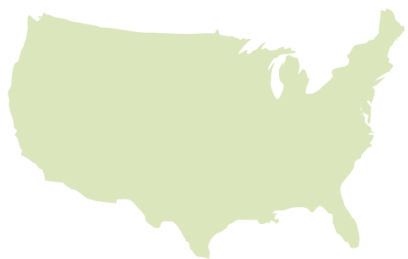
This is why communities around the country are taking a new approach to integrating newly arrived immigrants, refugees, and other newcomers into their community and creating more welcoming environments for all community members.”

– Felicia Escobar, White House

Membership

There is no membership fee to join Welcoming Cities and Counties, but participants commit to:

- Advancing a municipal or county-level proclamation or resolution declaring their locality to be a welcoming one
- Finding ways to institutionalize welcoming efforts through the adoption of policies and practices that fit the unique local context and promote inclusion within local government and the broader community
- Joining a cohort of cities and communities that want to become more welcoming
- Appointing at least one key municipal staff contact or preferably a small team of staff from across departments for the project
- Participating in three conference calls per year to share their own accomplishments and challenges and learn from promising practices from other Welcoming Cities and Counties
- Participating in an annual in-person meeting with other municipal leaders.



Benefits

Cities and counties that join Welcoming Cities and Counties will have the chance to:

- Hear from local government leaders who are making the most of their diversity, by creating “immigrant-friendly” welcoming plans.
- Learn about large and small communities that are responding to demographic change and supporting long-term immigrant integration in a way that speaks to and benefits all members of the community.
- Access new tools and resources to help advance welcoming resolutions, initiatives and strategies.
- Receive support and recognition for their efforts to foster more vibrant, inclusive, and welcoming communities.
- Participate in national and transatlantic learning exchanges that highlight promising practices from globally competitive cities.

“Atlanta’s diversity and vitality has been built on the strength of immigrant populations that have come to enjoy new freedoms and opportunities.

In partnership with Welcoming America, the City of Atlanta will continue to work on welcoming, including, and supporting the economic and social contributions of immigrants to enhance our city’s cultural fabric, economic growth and global competitiveness.”

Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed

About Welcoming America

Welcoming America is a national collaborative that builds mutual respect and cooperation between foreign-born and U.S.-born Americans, creating the conditions for long-term integration. Through a countrywide network of member organizations and partners, Welcoming America works to promote a welcoming atmosphere—community by community—in which foreign and US-born residents can find common ground and shared prosperity.

Project Partners

This initiative is supported by a number of partners, including the City of Chicago , The German Marshall Fund of the United States, AS/COA, and Maytree's Cities of Migration.

The project is made possible with the generous support of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, and has also been recognized as a 2013 Clinton Global Initiative Commitment to Action.



WWW.WELCOMINGCITIES.ORG

