

City Attorney's Office Immigrant and Refugee Program

Staff Report to the Organizational Committee –
July 20, 2022



SAINT PAUL
MINNESOTA

STPAUL.GOV



Legal Defense Program

- In 2019, Ramsey County and the City of Saint Paul joined the VERA Institute for Justice's SAFE Initiative after the County and City allocated \$100,000 and \$50,000 of public funds respectively to establish a universal representation program that began services in March 2020.
- A collaborative of the [Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota](#) (ILCM), [The Advocates for Human Rights](#) (AHR) and [Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid](#) (MMLA) was selected as the service provider for the Ramsey County/City of Saint Paul Immigration Legal Defense Fund and together were awarded an additional \$100,000 in matching catalyst funds from the Vera to support the start of services
- In tandem with legal representation, Ramsey County also provided wraparound services program to promotes safety and freedom from dangerous detention conditions, and fosters family unity and community stability.



Legal Defense Program

- Program was initiated at the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Heightened Risks for People Detained by ICE
- July 2020, the Providers reported difficulties in identifying eligible clients in detention due to temporarily reduced enforcement by ICE, limited capacity and residency requirements posing restrictions on their ability to represent non-residents detained in the same facilities.



Legal Defense Program

- Expanded Referral System - Expanded scope representation to support otherwise detained residents in their requests for release :
 - Residents detained in State Criminal Custody;
 - Appeals;
 - Support to re-open cases to challenge removal orders;
 - requests for humanitarian release; and.
 - Petitions for habeas corpus for clients whose constitutional rights are being violated by their detention during COVID-19



Legal Defense Program (March 2020 to April 2021)

Case Status and Outcomes

Number of Clients

Pending Cases	13 (52%)
Currently Detained	11
Currently Released	2
Cases that began non-detained	1
Released from detention	1
Closed Cases	12 (48%)
Cases Completed in Immigration Court	6 (24%)
Relief Granted	1
Order of Removal	5
Other Closed Cases	
(e.g., Habeas Corpus Petitions or Other Release Requests)	6
Total Cases	25 (100%)

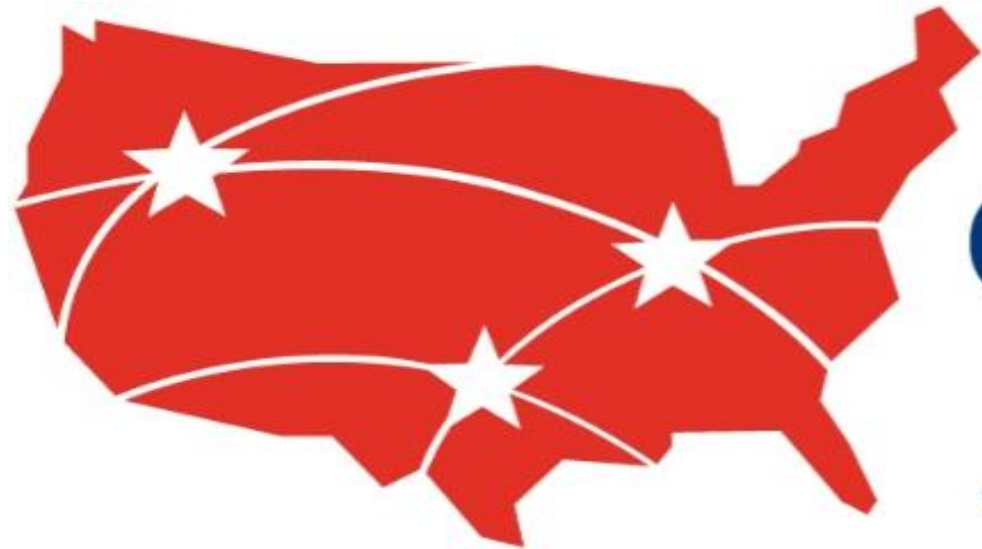
*A few of the pending cases were granted relief by the Immigration Judge but remain open because DHS filed an appeal.



Legal Defense Program (March 2021 to April 2022)

Case Status and Outcomes

	Number of Clients	Percent of All Cases
Pending Cases	7	26%
Currently Detained	3	11%
Currently Non-Detained	4	15%
Cases that began non-detained	2	
Released from detention	2	
Closed Cases	20	74%
Cases Completed in Immigration Court	14	52%
Relief Granted 3		
Termination 1		
Order of Removal 9		
Habeas Moot After Client Removed 1		
Other Closed Cases (e.g., Habeas Corpus Petitions or Other Release Requests)	6	22%
Total Cases	27	100%



GATEWAYS *for* **GROWTH**



**WELCOMING
AMERICA**





Gateways for Growth (G4G) Initiative

- The Gateways for Growth Challenge (G4G) is a competitive opportunity for localities to receive research support and technical assistance from the [American Immigration Council](#) and [Welcoming America](#) to improve immigrant inclusion in their communities.
- In the fall of 2020, Saint Paul and Minneapolis awarded separate data reports and technical assistance.
- In the spring of 2021, each City initiated a community engagement process.
- Engagement was initiated during the height of the Pandemic and in the aftermath of the George Floyd killing.
- Engagement participants expressed frustration - “over-engagement” without ever seeing input reflected in a final product and skepticism whether initiative would result in tangible outcomes.
- Each initiative invited same organizations and communities to participate thus doubling the time commitment for stakeholders who ultimately formed the Advisory Committee.
- Leaders' teams recognized and established one joint Twin Cities Advisory Committee - more efficient use of stakeholders' time and talents to develop recommendations in this report



Gateways for Growth (G4G) Initiative- Leadership Teams

SAINT PAUL

- Edmundo Lijo, Assistant City Attorney, City of Saint Paul
- B Kyle, President and CEO, St. Paul Area Chamber
- Rita Dibble, Vice President for University Advancement, Foundation Executive Director Metropolitan State University

MINNEAPOLIS

- Grace Waltz, Vice President of Public Policy, Minneapolis Regional Chamber
- Michelle Rivero, Director, Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs, City of Minneapolis

We would also like to acknowledge Patrisha Deutsch who assisted with this initiative as part of her internship through North Hennepin Community College and thank her for her contributions.



Gateways for Growth (G4G) Initiative Advisory Committee

- Dr. Bruce Corrie
- Coalition of Asian American Leaders
- CAPI
- COPAL
- SEWA-AIFW
- Hmong 18 Council
- LatinoLEAD
- MN DEED
- Minnesota Hmong Chamber of Commerce
- UNIDOS MN
- YMCA
- Advocates for Human Rights
- CLUES
 - Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans
 - African Economic Development Services
- HACER
- Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota
- International Institute of Minnesota
- Minneapolis Regional Chamber
- St Paul Area Chamber
- RealTime Talent
- Minnesota Council of Latino Affairs
- Youth Coordinating Board
- Minnesota Africans United
- MORE
 - Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage
- Hennepin County Office Multicultural Services
- Hennepin County Library
- Leo Lopez, Old National Bank
- Employees of the City of Saint Paul
- Employees of the City of Minneapolis
- Ramsey County
- University of Minnesota
- Metropolitan State University



New Americans in Saint Paul

The Demographic and Economic Contributions of Immigrants in the City¹

Population

60,500

immigrants lived in Saint Paul, Minnesota, in 2019.

Immigrants made up



of the total population in the city in 2019

In comparison,

476,556

immigrants lived in Minnesota in 2019. They made up **8.5%** of the population.²

Between 2014 and 2019, the population in the city increased by



The immigrant population increased by

+15.2%

during the same time period.

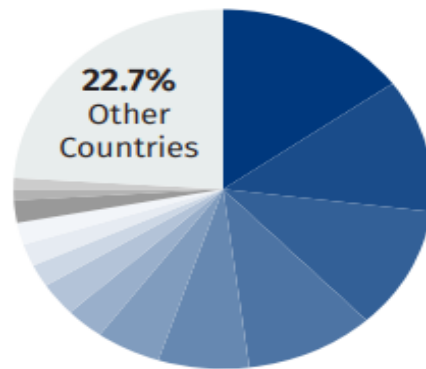


of total population growth in the city was attributable to immigrants.



New Americans in Saint Paul

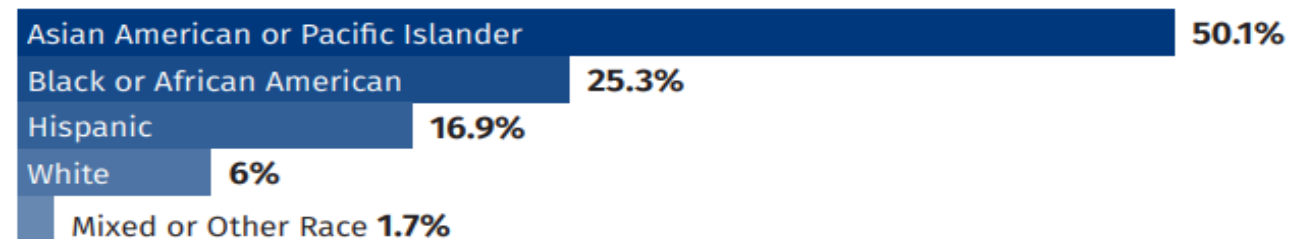
Demographics *continued*



The top countries of origin for immigrants living in the city:

Laos (15%)	Ethiopia (7%)	Philippines (2.2%)
Thailand (12.3%)	Somalia (5.4%)	Korea (2%)
Mexico (11.1%)	Eritrea (3.4%)	India (1.6%)
Burma (Myanmar) (9.8%)	China (2.9%)	Kenya (1.3%)
	Vietnam (2.4%)	Canada (0.9%)

The immigrant population by race and ethnicity:





17,900

immigrants living in the city had limited English language proficiency, making up

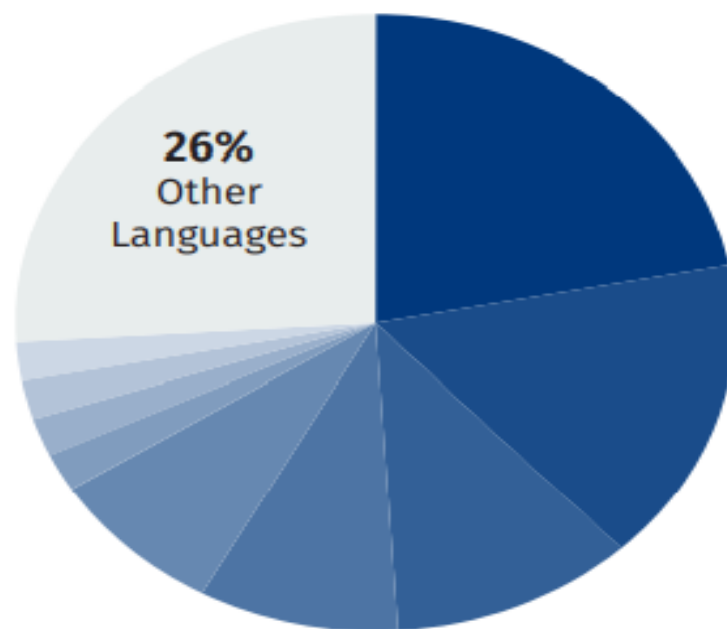
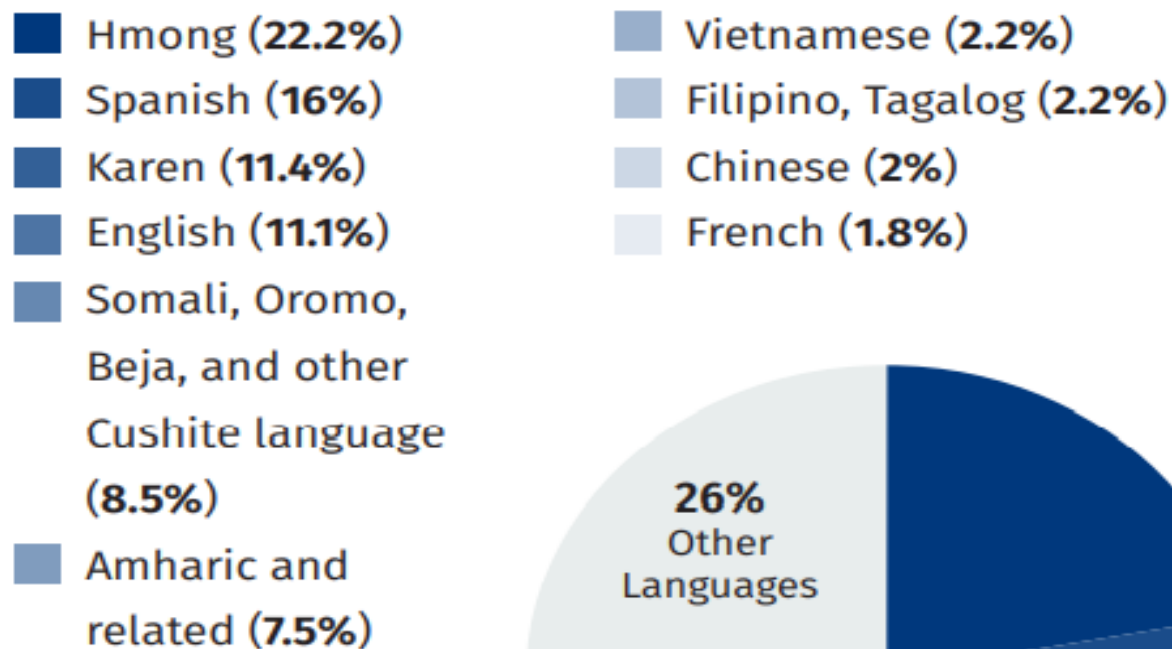


of the immigrant population.

Among them, the top languages spoken at home other than English were:

Hmong	27.9%
Spanish	22.8%
Karen	22.6%
Vietnamese	4%

The top languages spoken for immigrants living in the city:





Workforce

Workforce Although the foreign-born made up 19.9% of the city's overall population, they represented:

- 24.2% of its working-age population;
- 22.2% of its employed labor force, and
- 17% of its STEM workers in 2019.



Entrepreneurship

- 4,000 immigrant entrepreneurs generated \$43.8 million in business income for Saint Paul in 2019.
- Immigrants account for 33.2% of the city's business owners, and 13.5% of the total business income in Saint Paul.



Photo Credits:
Lauren Cutshall
Visit Saint Paul



The Journey to Belonging in the Twin Cities



Engagement Timeline and Summary

Once a joint Saint Paul/Minneapolis Advisory Committee was established, the Leadership Team reviewed the Welcoming Standards and consolidated those standards into the following four thematic areas as a starting point for discussions with the Advisory Committee:



**CONNECTED
COMMUNITIES**



**SAFE
COMMUNITIES**



**ECONOMIC AND
WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT**



**EQUITABLE
ACCESS TO
EDUCATION,
HOUSING, AND
HEALTHCARE**

The Advisory Committee met monthly from August-November of 2021 to endorse the thematic areas selected, discuss the most significant topics impacting immigrant and refugee residents of the Twin Cities and develop recommendations that resonated with the Advisory Committee as being reflective of the unique situations in each city.



Photo Credit:
Paola Carlson-Sanchez/
Meet Minneapolis

SUMMARY OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS AUGUST TO NOVEMBER 2021

AUG

August Discussion Topics

- Endorsement of thematic areas
- Improvement of engagement strategies
- Increase of knowledge and awareness for residents
- The importance of two-way communication
- Increased funding to support immigrant and new American residents
- Worker protection
- Ensuring equitable access in consideration of technology
- Utilizing existing engagement opportunities to communicate information and empower people to action.

SEPT

September Discussion Topics

- What creates a sense of community belonging and how to create pathways and systems for new residents to find success
- Whether to create one joint report covering both cities or separate reports per city
- Consensus for developing concrete, actionable items with shorter-term implementation time frames
- Potential metrics and benchmarks of success

OCT

October Discussion Topics

- October's discussions consisted of 4 separate meetings, one per thematic area, to refine and focus the goals and strategies previously advanced in each thematic area.

NOV

November Discussion Topics

- The final meeting was focused on reviewing the draft recommendations, identifying any last concerns and thoughts, and addressing how to move forward with publication of the plan.
- For more detailed information on discussion topics from each meeting, please visit the Gateways for Growth website, where meeting summaries can be found.



Gateways for Growth (G4G) Initiative- Next Steps Implementation Plan

The following priorities were identified as especially critical for immediate action:

- Increase the number of residents in Minneapolis and Saint Paul that obtain United States Citizenship through naturalization.
- Increase opportunities for immigrant and refugee communities to obtain competent legal advice on immigration legal issues.
- Support the creation of a statewide “Office of New Americans.”
- Promote Cultural Destination Areas (Saint Paul) / Cultural Districts (Minneapolis) as a drivers of economic vitality and increased awareness of immigrant and refugee cultures and contributions.
- Create new and elevate existing entrepreneurial toolkits, resource guides and entrepreneurship hubs, all of which should be accessible in multiple languages and non-internet-based formats.



Gateways for Growth (G4G) Initiative- Next Steps Implementation Plan- Continued

- Create, expand, and provide additional resources to trusted messenger, ambassador, and navigator programs.
- Develop infrastructure across sectors (business, philanthropy, academic, faith based, civic organizations, governmental) to support new large-scale resettlement.
- Create pathways and remove barriers so that community voices can more effectively inform municipal policy impacting immigrant and refugee residents
- Develop metrics for tracking progress.
- Development of mid- and long-term goals, strategies and metrics will require continued collaboration between the Cities, Chambers, and additional community stakeholders.



Gateways for Growth (G4G) Initiative- Implementation Grant

G4G awarded Saint Paul \$15,000.00 Implementation Grant to:

Hire a consultant to assist with the development of an Entrepreneurial Toolkit and Resource Guide and to develop a pilot navigator/natural helper's program to assist immigrant entrepreneurs in Saint Paul.