

October 2019

New Portlanders Speak 2.0: Recommendations from the New
Portlanders Policy Commission Ad hoc Taskforce



Follow-up report produced for the
New Portlanders Policy Commission
Office of Community & Civic Life
City of Portland

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	4
Introduction	4
Background and Context	5
Four Key Policy Recommendations Made in 2007	7
Cultural and Linguistic Support Badly Needed throughout All City Services	9
Updated Recommendations for 2018	10
Final Comments	16

Acknowledgements

In 2018, the New Portlanders Policy Commission (NPPC) revisited the document *New Portlanders Speak* produced eleven years earlier. They decided to form an ad hoc taskforce to determine which portions of the report could be updated for further development and implementation. The ad hoc taskforce members contributed significant time in addition to their regular volunteer hours with the Commission, in order to accomplish this goal. The ad hoc taskforce members included NPPC Co-Chairs, Baher Butti, Sho Dozono, Maria Garcia and NPPC Commissioners, Dr. Rick Birkel, Octaviano Merecias Cuevas, Jamal Dar, Wajdi Said, June Arima Schumann, and Natalya Sobolevskaya.

Office of Community & Civic Life staff, Linda Castillo provided staffing for the taskforce including coordination for convenings and writing of the report. Additional staff support provided by Dianne Riley. Bureau Director, Suk Rhee provided both consultation and support. Commissioner Chloe Eudaly's office provided consultation through Policy Advisor, Winta Yohannes.

Thank you to all for your commitment to this work and for your dedication to the communities we serve as the City of Portland.

Introduction

The immigrant and refugee population of Portland has steadily grown in numbers and diversity. In 2007, it was listed at 13%. As of 2014, people of color made up 28.4% of the city's population, and of that percentage 72.3% are of the immigrant and refugee population.¹ The face of our city is changing as 1-in-5 of our neighbors speak home languages other than English. Portland is home to nearly 70 immigrant and ethnic streams. Immigrants and refugees often arrive in this city full of enthusiasm and hope. With aspirations of finding home, these populations typically arrive with the deep belief that American dreams will come to fruition for them. With a diversity of experiences, intentions, needs, and expectations, all seek to feel welcomed, safe, have access to a better life and greater opportunities for advancement and prosperity.

The New Portlanders Policy Commission believes the City of Portland must play a large part in supporting the realization of these personal visions which feed into and support collective goals of all Portlanders. This Commission recognizes that Portland can do more as a Sanctuary City, a welcoming city. As a gateway to positive integration, well positioned to work across jurisdictions, Portland can provide effective services and resources to immigrant and refugee families and it should, given the

¹ Curry-Stevens, A. & Sinkey, A. (2016). *In need of a long welcome. Supporting the integration of newcomers to Portland*. Portland, OR. Center to Advance Racial Equity, Portland State University

City's proclamation as a Sanctuary City. It is important to note, that although the above research data is informative, it is outdated. Much has changed in Portland's immigrant and refugee communities. Updated and effective data collection systems are needed to keep pace with the change and growth in the demographics of these key communities. The purpose of this report is to provide a clearer picture of what the New Portlanders Policy Commission can do to move the work of supporting immigrant and refugee communities in our city forward.

Background and Context

In May 2016, borne out of earlier immigrant and refugee community recommendations, the City of Portland established the New Portlanders Policy Commission by Ordinance 187805. This Commission is comprised of up to 25 voting members, who are immigrant and refugee leaders and community leader advocates, and who live, work, play, and/ or pray in the City of Portland. These Commissioners are charged with supporting the City's equity initiatives by:

1. reviewing and refining past recommendations on immigrant and refugee community integration policies and practices,
2. developing policy and practice recommendations for improving immigrant and refugee community integration,
3. providing expert support and technical advice to City Council and City bureaus, and
4. providing expert support and technical advice to partnering schools, local governments, state and federal agencies in developing and implementing a comprehensive body of immigrant and refugee policies and practices.

In August 2018, the New Portlanders Policy Commission acted upon their first charge while also supporting the City's equity initiatives by forming a taskforce to review each of the original recommendations of the *New Portlander Speak* document created in 2007. The four key recommendations from the 2007 report are shared in the section below for context. A key conclusion of this follow-up report is acknowledging the ways in which the New Portlanders Policy Commission can work along with City of Portland elected officials and bureaus to act upon the recommendations now offered below. The Taskforce met six times August through December 2018 to produce the following:

1. Reinforce, fortify, and develop best practices to better serve the immigrant and refugee constituent base by providing these functions at the City:
 - a) Coordination of information, practices, and resources
 - b) Provide protection of rights
 - c) Help community build power, increase civic engagement and leadership
 - d) Support Integration
 - e) Sustainable funding support

2. Establish updated and effective data collection systems.
3. Conduct an audit of City of Portland internal services and programs to assess effectiveness in meeting the needs for immigrants and refugees.
4. Build collaborative cross jurisdictional programs, services and policies with leveraged funding, improved communication and innovative partnerships to support immigrants and refugees.

The NPPC ad hoc taskforce knows through lived experience and from community reports, immigrants and refugees seek a streamlined system at the City and hope to find a welcoming, effective and well-informed, well-coordinated, and resourced government that can support and inform their integration into city life. Such improvements will capacitate their leadership and civic engagement while supporting their successful thriving and well-being in the City of Portland.

The Office of Community & Civic Life (also known as Civic Life and formerly known as the Office of Neighborhood Involvement or ONI) has a long history of serving diverse communities and neighborhoods by developing with them, opportunities in civic engagement and creating pathways to participatory democracy. Civic Life has strived to address issues of racial discrimination, inequitable resourcing and siloed services which negatively impact immigrant and refugee populations. Changes in community expectations, and the evolution of Civic Life over time were informed and formed by among other things, Portland history, demographic changes, and policy goals.

For example, in the 1980's, in response to the large refugee arrivals from South East Asia, Africa, Russia and Romania, then Mayor Frank Ivancie created the Office of Refugee Affairs. During Mayor Vera Katz' terms, the Office was shuttered.

In 2007, Mayor Tom Potter convened several community input opportunities, including Community Connect (January 2008) to strengthen the role of community and government partnership and collaboration in the realm of democracy within City Hall and in the community. These efforts provided opportunities to immigrants and refugees to share their experiences, struggles, and simultaneously to sit at public policy tables to create a shared vision for Portland. Thousands of individuals offered their hopes and dreams in these various opportunities from *New Portlanders Speaks*², to the *Portland Plan*³. As a result, many immigrants and refugees have come into City Hall, some for the first time ever, to speak with Council members, the Mayor, and to testify on issues that concern them, their families, and their community. Despite outreach efforts, community focus groups, development of frameworks and strategic plans,

² *New Portlanders Speak: Recommendations of the Immigrant and Refugee Task Force*. Convened by Mayor Tom Potter. December 2007.

³ *The Portland Plan*. The document presents a strategic roadmap and framework for equity developed through a two-year research, workshop and community engagement project for the City of Portland. The plan's three integrated strategies and framework for advancing equity were designed to help realize the vision of a prosperous, educated, healthy, and equitable Portland. On April 25, 2012, City Council adopted the Portland Plan.

activating and implementing collaborative efforts within the City via community, business, and government, there are still challenges in effectively addressing the needs of the immigrant and refugee population. To begin to get a better understanding of what issues could be better addressed through policy, in 2007 Mayor Potter convened a twenty-person Immigrant and Refugee Taskforce, with 15 refugee and immigrant leaders and five City bureau representatives, one of which was the Office of Neighborhood Involvement (which would later become the Office of Community & Civic Life). They met from March through December of 2007. As a product of these convenings, a report was created, with the help of Kristen Lensen Consulting and writer Ann Shiler titled, *New Portlanders Speak*. The report and recommendations were accepted by City Council in January 2008. In the report several areas of success and challenge were highlighted, and four policy recommendations were made. These recommendations are detailed below.

In brief, the *New Portlanders Speak* report highlighted what's working according to the Immigrant and Refugee Taskforce, (p. 3)

- Overall, services in these bureaus, agencies were generally working well: parks, transit, libraries, police, schools, community and social services.

But challenges remained according to the Immigrant and Refugee Taskforce, (p. 4)

- Challenges continue in accessing services, linguistic and cultural barriers, immigrants face difficulties deciding how much to integrate into U.S. society, basic needs are not being met. There are issues obtaining good jobs and dealing with employment abuse. There is a lack of awareness or understanding of resources and fragmentation of service providers is prevalent. Immigrant and refugee communities fear interacting with the government due to recent experiences and historical homeland legacy of discrimination, and uneven school services.

Four Key Policy Recommendations Made in 2007

1) Create an Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs. (p. 6-9)

- a. Rationale: The Office would give a "permanent place" for immigrant and refugee communities in the City and would create a structure to allow city government an identified place for "consulting, communicating, and collaborating" (p.7) with immigrant and refugee communities. It would allow communities to have access to financial and organizational resources for rapid responses and addressing ongoing problems, and this office can educate the non-immigrant community through outreach efforts.
- b. Functions: serve as a bridge and facilitator between immigrant and refugee communities and City government, increase civic engagement of refugee and immigrant communities, offer culturally competent services and support, assist the City in outreach to communities, help refugees and immigrants advocate for public education reforms.

- c. Implementation Plan: create an office with multi-ethnic staff; a program manager, three program specialists, and a senior administrative specialist. This office would also answer directly to the Mayor's office.

2) Establish a multicultural center. (p. 9-10)

- a. Rationale: Offers space for community meetings and gatherings, this space would be reflective & responsive to the refugee and immigrant community and allows opportunities for cultural exchange.
- b. Functions: Offer community meeting and gathering space for culturally specific events, a gathering place to talk about issues relevant to refugee and immigrant communities, and have educational exhibits open to the public.
- c. Implementation Plan: City and refugee and immigrant communities provide funding, the immigrant and refugee communities are involved in planning, implementing and operating the center.

3) Provide additional resources for immigrant and refugee organizations to train their constituents in civic engagement. (p. 10-11)

- a. Rationale: The Diversity and Civic Leadership (DCL) program in the city needs to expand to include more refugee and immigrant community members and communities
- b. Functions: Raise awareness and develop leadership skills of refugees and immigrants to allow them to advocate for themselves and their communities.
- c. Implementation Plan: Continue to support programs like DCL and expand them in proportion to projected increase of number and diversity of refugees and immigrants in Portland.

4) Assess City Human Resources policies and practices. (p.11-13)

- a. Rationale: Conduct a professional evaluation of the city's current HR policies and practices and recommend changes to increase and better support immigrant and refugee staff members in the City of Portland to better serve diverse communities, would also expand internship and employment opportunities to immigrant and refugee youth
- b. Function: Evaluate the following hiring barriers: the placement of job offers, language of job assignments, application procedures, and interviewers' cultural competency
- c. Implementation Plan: Recommend hiring objective and culturally competent outside consultant

2007 Appendix: (p.14-18)

- A list of resources for refugees and immigrants in Portland are provided. Many of these resources have changed significantly since this report was written.

Cultural and Linguistic Support Badly Needed throughout All City Services

Cultural and linguistic barriers persist as do a dearth of right-size services for immigrants and refugees who seek City services and resources. Here are some highlights on our current immigrant and refugee community and which languages have been identified as Harbor Languages which mandates the City to provide translated materials in those target languages. Our current Limited English Proficiency LEP Harbor languages are: Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Romanian, Russian, Spanish, Somali, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese.⁴

Through community verified reports by immigrant and refugee leaders within these communities, our growing populations are in the Lao, Chuukese, and Tongan community. In the last two years, the Tongan community has grown from 500 to 1200 members in the Portland metropolitan region. The Syrian, Afghan, Iraqi, and Somali communities continue to grow, as well. Newer arrivals reside in East Portland which is the current home of approximately 100 Rohingya Muslim families, and many Bhutanese community, and indigenous Latinos. By far the Latino community is the largest cultural and linguistic group at 13% of the City's population with a majority from Mexico, then Puerto Rico, Cuba and smaller percentages from the remaining 30 countries. Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander populations also reflect an enormous diversity of culture, language, and religion.⁵

Historically, and during this recent federal administration, our immigrant and refugee communities face increasing barriers, racism, and hate as many interpret the actions of federal government as permission or an invitation to express hostile xenophobia. Though communities are grateful the City passed the Welcoming, Inclusive, Sanctuary City Resolution in March of 2017, there are still many community, federal, and local threats which create long-term and toxic stress to our communities and vicariously to the providers who serve them.

⁴ *Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Populations for Portland: "Factor 1" Analysis.* Uma Krishnan

⁵ Demographic references are provided by community verified reports from community leaders within these communities. These are informal reference placeholders until other data collections systems can be introduced.

Updated Recommendations for 2018: The New Portlanders Policy Commission Ad hoc Taskforce make the case for better serving the needs of all Portland immigrants and refugees

As the New Portlanders Policy Commission reviewed the *New Portlanders Speak* report, the taskforce initially focused on the creation of an Office of Immigrant & Refugee Services. This 2007 recommendation remained as an unfulfilled concept directly connected to a lingering constellation of issues. At that point, it appeared that the best approach for coordinating systemic change within the City might be through an ongoing entity and resource like an Office of Immigrant & Refugee Services.

However, as the taskforce dug deeper and discussed the feasibility of a new Office with City Commissioners, it became increasingly clear that the lack of action from 2007 was tied in part to an uphill battle for funding in an ever-increasingly competitive struggle for resources within the City budget. Furthermore, in the decade since the report emerged new technologies and organizing systems have emerged that might provide stronger long-term service to our intended constituencies, audiences and populations. The Office concept ultimately might not be the most effective or efficient solution for needed immigrant and refugee supports. While initially, the taskforce was fervent in its recommendation for an Office of Immigrant & Refugee Services, the taskforce began to investigate emerging proposals and changes within the City that presented potential solutions to the issues that an Office would ideally correct. A new focus on functions of office services rather than attempting to create an office infrastructure became central for the taskforce, yet the passion and interest in a home, or central space for convening and coordinating immigrants and refugee supports remains.

For example, the taskforce grappled with the lack of coordinated programs to serve Portland's immigrant and refugee population and were intrigued to learn of the promising multi-year phased launch of 311. Taskforce members could envision this as a platform that could provide streamlined, improved language access with cultural contextualization and an immigrant and refugee supportive communication resource system—essentially a high-quality and customized service. Could this be a service that would accompany individuals from the initial call through the linkage to the right person and/or program with proper interpretation service all along the way?

With this new approach to addressing longstanding community needs, the Commission presents the following recommendations in the hope of moving forward actionable ideas that will serve immigrant and refugee Portlanders.

The taskforce's concrete recommendations follow:

1) Reinforce, fortify, and develop best practices to better serve the immigrant and refugee constituent base by providing these functions at the City

Build structures for information sharing, to improve practices, and resource communities

The first key short-term goal is establishing a clearly identifiable, reliable, responsive, and well informed “home/space/place and staff” that would serve as a bridge between City resources, their governmental representatives, immigrant and refugee communities, and social services, nonprofits, and resources that serve immigrants and refugee community. One way to think of this “home/space/place and staff” is as a dedicated team of City staff focused on developing all City systems to be more responsive to the Portlanders that are also immigrants and refugees. The City staff who serve this community must have a culturally oriented lens—stemming from for example, lived immigrant or refugee experience, as well as a trauma-informed and intersectional analysis of disability, mental health, sexual orientation and gender identity. As with any population, immigrants and refugees are living with layered identities, but also a gambit of traumatic histories and experiences, past and present. This well-trained staff team might include coordinators, policy advisors, legal advisors, community support specialists, and researchers in a space that provides a permanent place for community discourse and a culture positive meeting space. Of significant importance is providing the cultural contextualization of City governance, mentoring and coaching to activate effective participation in government structures and in democracy.

A second key element needed is an effective intra-City system that is responsive in the language, culture and needs of the immigrant and refugee caller and/or visitor. A sense of “home” is important for all these services and likely can be imbued by the warmth of the people who serve in this capacity—as it is the people that create home as much or more than the structure of any building. The staffing of all these and the recommended functions, supports and utilizes a well-informed community service pathway—from first call to resolution— referral system. Such a pathway could be a system platform such as 311.

A third key element needed is immigrant and refugee “space” in the form of an intercultural center, a space for collaboration and learning among community, governments, non-profits, and academia. If we imagine multiple partners sharing both the investments into creating the space and the fruits of collective labor, exciting innovation and problem solving are likely to be inevitable outcomes. In partnership with City leaders and the New Portlanders Policy Commission, it may uplift best, promising and emerging practices for recognition and replication. This immigrant and refugee “home” would be a strong and assertive

representation of the community's interests, traditions, values—in practices and policies. It would be a place that fosters the celebration of cultural heritage and shares this with the larger community.

Provide protection of rights

These staff would have authority, knowledge and/or collaborate with entities who can provide a regulatory function regarding civil rights and ADA issues.

Immigrant and refugee staff might include an ombudsman and/or activate an ombudsman system that addresses concerns or complaints from the immigrant and refugee community. An empowered and independent ombudsman can provide redress and accountability. This recommendation was also identified by the Welcoming/Inclusive/Sanctuary Cities Taskforce (WIS) which was presented before City Council in March of 2018.

Another area of importance is job protections and information on employment rights. Many immigrant and refugee workers do not know who to turn to receive information or help regarding job protection and rights, workplace discrimination, wage theft, equitable wages, assets at work and other issues, but they do come to City Hall as a known government entity, to receive information and assistance in these matters. The City's Immigrant and Refugee team should be able to provide appropriate referrals, linkage, and guidance to individuals seeking such help and guidance.

Help community build power, increase civic engagement and leadership

Immigrant and refugee communities want to build their power base and be at the decision-making public policy table particularly on issues that that can and have impacted them disproportionately. As such, the community is interested in building a community system that includes and recognizes their assets and rights within community sectors. The City in partnership with culturally specific non-profit organizations, has created the Diversity and Civic Leadership (DCL) program which has helped community leaders build foundational civic participation skills. Many of these DCL graduates become Community Engagement Liaison (CEs) who utilizes their culturally contextualized practical skills and assets to assist government in improved outreach and engagement of underserved and underrepresented communities. Yet, communities want to more deeply fortify their leadership skills by increasing their ability to engage politically and be a force in public policy creation and development. The community seeks to be engaged as an equal partner to support collective impact and community specific driven results.

The New Portlanders Policy Commission can act as a policy advisor to support the development and refinement of policies, facilitate partnerships, create a forum to set

integration goals, and act as expert consultants who can also advocate and knowledgeably testify at budget hearings. In addition, these entities can support the development and growth of relationships with other Council members to have more City-wide impact and provide feedback to commissioners on their own policy agendas and those of the immigrant and refugee populations.

Support Integration

An Immigrant and Refugee team could assist in guiding positive integration through supporting effective immigrant and refugee supports at the County and through a variety of partnerships. This would include creation of supports and collaborative partnerships for job acquisition, employment retention, support with basic needs referrals, and helping people (new arrivals) adjust to the US, understand governmental system and how to access community resources. While many of our resettlement agencies take the lead in these areas for refugees, not all immigrants meet criteria at these agencies and will reach out to the City for assistance and referrals. These needs continue to be important no matter how long an immigrant or refugee family or individual resides within a city. In addition, integration improvements can boost the business sector and economic development which in partnership with other entities is key to community sustainability, growth, and prosperity.

As noted from the 2007 *New Portlanders Speak* report, these areas continue to be of paramount need and concern; reducing linguistic/cultural barriers, creating positive paths of integration, contextualizing issues of employment, information on meeting basic needs, reducing fragmentation of service providers, and educating government and others on immigrant and refugees' fear of negative impacts from all levels of law enforcement and immigration authorities.

The Immigrant and Refugee team should be pivotal in helping the New Portlander Policy Commission and other government jurisdictions in building relationship, collaborating, coordinating and supporting a welcoming system of care for immigrants and refugees.

Sustainable funding support

Economic and financial challenges that come from the significant and ongoing fiscal obligations of creating an "Office" or more City infrastructure for immigrant and refugee services can be avoided by channeling City resources and fiscal support into more thoughtful and possibly more impactful community partnerships and grantmaking. Funding that might be dedicated to creating City infrastructure could instead provide more state of the art, community-based need grants that are needed and co-designed with the community. For example, a Russian speaking network (MAA) shared that they are challenged to compete

with larger CBO's in their efforts to help fund community needs. They advised, "Let the community define its own needs and not force it to fit government or other funders particular criteria". Such a shift would allow a community to access flexible funding that would help community meet its own self-generated, self-defined needs and goals which in turn fosters more positive integration and community self-direction. Allies and advocates should also be able to apply for competitive Request for Proposals (RFPs) that support and advance interests of immigrant and refugee communities, if they have demonstrated expertise and commitment. Lastly, freeing the City of the ongoing financial obligation of an Office while investing in an Immigrant and Refugee team sets the City up for strong partnerships with the community where financial resources can be applied according to the most pressing needs of the moment and nimbly over time. The Welcoming/Inclusive/Sanctuary City Taskforce also identified the need to establish sustainable funding for the human capital that would be required to support these functions and services that serve the immigrant and refugee community at the City.

2) Establish updated and effective data collection systems.

The City needs new data for an everchanging world. Modern systems require multi-sector data, not exclusively focused on healthcare needs, but information that orients around the whole person regarding food needs, housing, employment, legal and immigration needs, and environmental impacts, wholly known as social determinants of health. An Immigrant and Refugee team could create a comprehensive, accessible, and routinely updated list of community resources and community demographic information, trends, statistics, and infographics with their own demographer and analytics specialist. The right information will support data driven and informed decisions on types and levels of service and to best answers of who are we are serving, how can and how are we serving them best. This will provide the muscle to ask what kind of program growth or specialization of staff, programming, and policy is needed. In addition, it creates a home for data, analysis and the ability to communicate this in an easily digestible manner to the community on a website, in policy briefings, and in informative presentations. This function is needed immediately and is recommended to be on a short-term implementation track.

3) Conduct an audit of City of Portland internal services and programs to assess effectiveness in meeting the needs for immigrants and refugees.

An audit of City bureaus focused on service to immigrants and refugees may be necessary to better understand what the internal service and programmatic landscape is, and which of these are effective in serving the community. Perhaps an audit conducted by citizen panels, along with the City Auditor's Office and an external consultant would yield illuminating

results. As part of normalizing an evaluative process, the Immigrant and Refugee team could be strengthened by a continual, ongoing process improvement approach.

4) **Build collaborative cross jurisdictional programs, services and policies with leveraged funding, improved communication and innovative partnerships to support immigrants and refugees.**

A mid-to-long term recommendation is that the City begin to explore and develop joint immigrant and refugee work across jurisdictions. Anecdotally, we know our immigrant and refugee communities are mobile and seek services and resources throughout the metropolitan area to live, attend school, work, play, and pray. Coordinated efforts throughout Multnomah, Washington, and Clackamas county, including various other multiple jurisdictions, would create opportunities to increase collaboration, consolidate effective practices, leverage greater funding and resources, improve communication and reduce barriers and gaps. This coordinated effort would improve the community's social determinants of health on a collective impact scale.

Simultaneously, without an actual space where immigrant and refugee community members can come together—for healing as well as building the political relationships to address community needs—the vision of the New Portland Policy Commission remains unfulfilled. Despite the budgetary constraints and difficulty of building political unity for an actual Office of Immigrant and Refugee Services, the New Portlander Policy Commission marks this document with that vision, in order to keep it alive, intact and preserved for the record.

The taskforce recommends that seed funding come from resources drawn from Multnomah, Washington, and Clackamas County, Metro, State and private foundations to develop a joint office, collaborations and partnerships with and for the immigrant and refugee community. This will require the creation and adoption of interagency agreements in which elected officials, New Portlander Policy Commission, and designated staff can serve as liaisons between local jurisdictions, federal agencies, community-based organizations, and community members to broker relevant and effective agreements.

Final Comments

It is worth reiterating several key points here. The NPPC ad hoc taskforce knows through lived experience and from community reports, immigrants and refugees seek to navigate a less bureaucratic system at the City and find a welcoming, effective and well-informed, well-coordinated, and resourced entity that can support and inform their integration in city life. Such improvements will capacitate their leadership, civic engagement, support their successful thriving and well-being in the City of Portland. They seek an inviting city that demonstrates through intentional governance and functional systems, a respect for their language, culture, knowledge, assets, and abilities. The immigrant and refugee communities of Portland are excited to practice and be part of their new-found democracy. They seek to be an active agent in their own self-determination and community health and wealth—to be part of the American dream. The City can be key in removing barriers and building ladders, not looking down upon but helping up our hardworking and diverse community members to fortify a new and better life. We can do this by listening to the dreams of immigrants and refugees who are known as our “New Portlanders” and join, as accomplices, in making these dreams a reality.