

Local Immigration Partnerships Council

Quarterly Activity Report

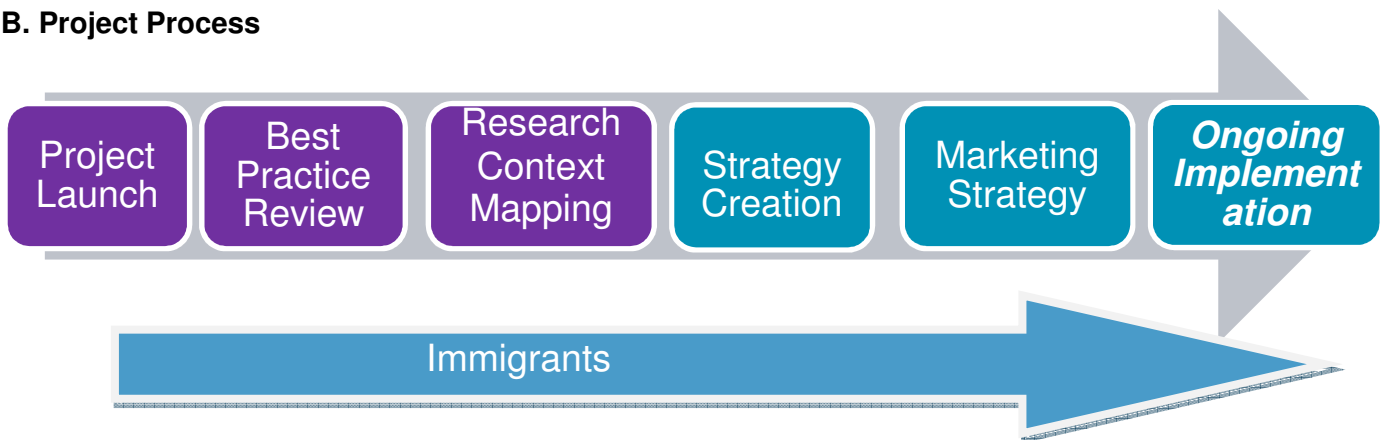
January-March 2015

A. Project Overview

The goal of this project is to develop an *Immigration and Settlement Strategy* by March 2016 to attract and retain immigrants to Vernon. There is an understanding that immigrants provide important cultural diversity to local communities as well as skills, investment and an entrepreneurial spirit that will help offset Canada's aging demographic and declining birth rate, and fuel economic growth.

The Local Immigration Partnerships Council was formed to engage a wide variety of community stakeholders in further developing partnerships and capacity to support the integration of new immigrants. Social Planning Council for the North Okanagan is the project's host agency. Funding has been provided by Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

B. Project Process



C. Quarterly Highlights

1. Community Mapping: Through research and input from the LIPC members, Urban Matters completed a Community Mapping document using the 17 characteristics of a welcoming community as reference points. It provides a snapshot or inventory of community assets and players. Some outcomes and conclusions of the community mapping exercise include:

- There are a tremendous number of players influencing the 17 characteristics.
- Most agencies are indirectly serving immigrants.
- In some areas, purpose and efforts may not be 100% aligned.
- It helps identify areas where services and capacity can potentially be increased.
- The document can help create a shared awareness of community assets, and help articulate and communicate the existing level of services to external agencies.

2. Public Opinion Survey: Pinnacle Communications & Media Inc. conducted a community public opinion survey, telephoning a random sample of 300 Vernon residents in January. The results will inform recommendations for the components of a public education campaign. A repeat of the survey tool at the conclusion of the campaign would be used to evaluate changes over the period.

- More information on the survey results is available here: <http://www.socialplanning.ca/strategy.html>

Key findings of the public opinion survey include:

- The vast majority of Vernon Residents (95%) feel it is very or somewhat important to welcome new immigrants into our community.
- Vernon is considered to be multi-cultural by two-thirds of respondents, primarily because several ethnic groups live here.
- The majority agree that Vernon is a welcoming place for all ethnicities and that communities are better off if they have many distinct cultures.
- The majority also agree that immigrants are very important to building a stable economic future for Vernon and that Vernon is accepting of different ethnic and cultural groups.
- Nearly 80% percent of respondents always or sometimes encounter immigrants or visible minorities in their daily life around Vernon.
- However, forty-five percent of all respondents reporting having witnessed prejudice or discrimination while living in Vernon.
- Three-quarters of all respondents were somewhat or very interested in learning more about different cultural groups.
- Over 7 out of 10 respondents were very or somewhat interested in attending multicultural themed activities such as ethnic food fairs, music, dance or athletic type showcases or festivals.

3. Labour Market & Investment Research Report: Urban Matters have conducted an analysis of the labour market and investment opportunities and challenges in the City of Vernon. Both primary and secondary research sources were used to identify entrepreneurial and business investment opportunities and challenges.”

- The complete report is available here <http://www.socialplanning.ca/strategy.html>

D. Next Quarterly Meeting Date for the Local Immigration Partnerships Council:

June 24 2015 Quarterly LIPC Meeting 10-12 am

3rd Floor Boardroom Community Futures 3105 33rd Street

The next meeting will focus on beginning to develop a common vision for the strategy based on the workshop discussions and input gathered to date.

E. Optional Meetings & Events (also open to the wider community):

May 19 2015 Labour Market & Investment Workshop

3rd Floor Boardroom Community Futures 3105 33rd Street

May 23 2015 Multicultural Meet Up: A Taste of the Philippines 12:30-2:00

Vernon Branch Okanagan Regional Library (Free Event)

June 9 2015 Immigrant Perspectives Workshop

3rd Floor Boardroom Community Futures 3105 33rd Street

June 27 2015 Multicultural Meet Up: A Taste of China 12:30-2:00

Vernon Branch Okanagan Regional Library (Free Event)

