



Regina Region Local Immigration Partnership Community Plan April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025

Why a Community Plan?

The Regina Region Local Immigration Partnership supports and strengthens the community's capacity to welcome, settle and integrate newcomers to the area colonially known as the city of Regina, in Treaty 4 territory – the traditional territory of the nêhiyawak (Cree), Nahkawē (Saulteaux/Anihšīnāpēk), Dakota, Lakota, Nakoda, and the homeland of the Métis Nation.

The existing Plan (2022-2024) was to be in place until next year; however, enough changes occurred to warrant a newly revised Community Plan. Examples of these changes are:

- the dissolution of RentSmart which changed the focus/activities of the Housing Education Support priority;
- the launch of the Mental and Emotional Wellness Survey that will inform activities for the Mental and Emotional Wellness priority; and
- a newly revised focus for the Cultural Bridging priority that aligns well with the needs of the community and IRCC's focus, etc.

The end of this one-year Plan aligns with the beginning of the next five-year funding cycle on April 1, 2025.

Community Plan activities will be implemented with the support of RRLIP-convened working groups and other stakeholders, however the Plan's success will depend on the engagement of the entire community. The activities presented in this Community Plan will help to mobilize community stakeholders to address the local priorities (or challenges) identified by newcomers in Regina.

Local Context

The City of Regina's total population in 2021 was 226,405. According to the Census Profile, 2021 Census of Population Data, Regina is home to 45,210 immigrants. Of that number, 14,915 are recent arrivals (arriving between 2016 to 2021). Top places of birth include India, Philippines, Nigeria, and China. Other key figures on arrivals include:

Afghan Initiative:

The Government of Canada has welcomed 45,820 vulnerable and refugee Afghans to Canada since August 2021. 375 Afghans (340 Government Assisted Refugees/GARs, 35 Private Sponsored Refugees/PSRs) were resettled in Regina.

Operation Ukrainian Safe Haven (OUSH):

The Government of Canada introduced the Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel (CAUET) to help thousands of displaced Ukrainian nationals and their family members find safety in Canada. Through this initiative 210,178 arrived in Canada between March 17, 2022, and November 28, 2023. Approximately 6231 Ukrainians have moved to Saskatchewan, but the number for Regina is unknown due to secondary migration. We do know from our partners at UCC-SK Regina's office that they continue to be very busy handling inquiries from Ukrainians arriving or arrived in Regina, as are their counterparts in other communities in the province.

Non-permanent residents (NPRs):

In the 2021 Census, "non-permanent residents" includes persons from another country with a usual place of residence in Canada and who have a work or study permit or who have claimed refugee status (asylum claimants). Family members living with work or study permit holders are also included, unless these family members are already Canadian citizens, landed immigrants or permanent residents.

- **Canada:** 924,850 (2.5% of Canada's total enumerated population)
- **Saskatchewan:** 15,830
- **Regina:** 6,115

In support of all of these arrivals, RRLIP continues to facilitate regular meetings of local settlement sector partners, which provides them opportunities to collaboratively coordinate their response. We also carry out on-going consultation with newcomers and other community partners, to understand the needs and strengths of newcomers in Regina and to identify local priorities for successful settlement and integration.

Community Engagement

Implementation of the *Community Plan (2024-2025)* will be overseen by the Partnership Council, with input from the Immigrant Advisory Table, and an evaluation framework will measure its success. At the conclusion of this *Plan's* timeframe, RRLIP staff anticipate a new 5-year funding cycle will begin. Updates and results will be shared during the 2024-25 fiscal year's annual community forum and through the progress report, project website, news blog, newsletters etc.

The priorities and activities in this revised *Community Plan* were informed by the Newcomer Survey of 2022, the Mental and Emotional Wellness Survey of 2023/2024, and augmented by input received by RRLIP-convened tables and at the community forum. In addition, service provider, newcomer and other key stakeholder feedback was considered.

The intent of the *Community Plan* is to increase awareness of the strengths and challenges of newcomers in Regina; establish or enhance partnerships between stakeholders; and improve access to, and the coordination of, services and support for newcomers.

The overall goal of a Local Immigration Partnership (LIP), including the Regina Region Local Immigration Partnership (RRLIP), is to support newcomers to become fully engaged in the social, economic, and cultural life in their new community. The *Community Plan* reflects the local, community-driven approach the RRLIP will undertake to involve and engage Regina residents in building a more welcoming community.

About Local Immigration Partnerships

Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) are community-based initiatives that utilize a multi-sector approach to improving integration outcomes for newcomers. As a community collaborative engaging with many stakeholders, LIPs address challenges and opportunities associated with fostering an inclusive, diverse, and responsive welcoming community.

Guiding Vision

Regina strives to become a welcoming, inclusive city where newcomers are fully integrated, benefiting from and contributing to the social, cultural, and economic fabric of the city.

Structure

The RRLIP **Partnership Council** meets a minimum of four times per year and is comprised of representatives from many sectors such as settlement, education, government, and employment. The **Immigrant Advisory Table** meets a minimum of four times per year and exists to provide input into the work of the RRLIP and to ensure the newcomer perspective is reflected in its work. **Working groups** and **additional advisory tables** are formed when needed, to address the *Community Plan* priorities.

Examples of RRLIP working groups and advisory tables:

- Labour Market Working Group (newcomer employment concerns)
- Canadian Housing Advisory Committee (newcomer housing-related challenges)
- Local Private Sponsorship Group (information/support for refugee sponsors)
- Anti-Racism/Discrimination Working Group
- Mental and Emotional Wellness Working Group
- Other short-term groups assembled to address emerging priorities

History of the Regina Region Local Immigration Partnership (RRLIP)

The Regina Region Local Immigration Partnership (RRLIP) was formed in 2014 and is funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). Regina Open Door Society (RODS) oversees the project and is responsible for all the RRLIP deliverables. Three staff members support the work of the RRLIP.

The RRLIP Project, guided by its **Partnership Council**, informed by its **Immigrant Advisory Table**, and supported by **working groups/advisory tables**, has accomplished these strategic tasks to date:

- Governance Structure developed, finalized, and approved (2015-16)
- Terms of Reference developed, finalized and approved (2015-16); On-going annual reviews
- Vision Statement revised and approved (2016-17)
- Series of 13 community forums conducted to gather emerging priorities for newcomers in Regina; followed by large scale research project and community asset mapping (2016-17)
- Action Plan finalized and adopted (2017-2020); implementation phase of Plan activities (2017-19)
- Action Plan revised to meet shifting priorities (2019-20); implementation phase of Plan activities (2019-20)
- Annual Forums facilitated; long-term and emerging priorities discussed at each forum (beginning 2016)
- Large Scale Newcomer and Community Surveys conducted (2019-20)
- Revisions to the Action Plan finalized and adopted (early 2020)
- Implementation phase of Plan activities (2020-2022)
- Newcomer Survey conducted (2022)
- Revisions to the Action Plan finalized and adopted (Dec 2022)
- Mental and Emotional Wellness Survey conducted (2023/2024)
- One year *Community Plan 2024-2025* finalized and adopted (pending Partnership Council approval Feb 2024)

Ongoing Tasks of the RRLIP

The *Community Plan* activities are always informed by newcomers, RRLIP-convened tables, settlement agencies and other community organizations, and the broader community. Implementation tasks related to the *Plan's* activities occur daily.

In addition to these activities, the RRLIP, like other Local Immigration Partnerships, fulfill funding agreement requirements by completing tasks such as:

- facilitation of annual community forums
- conducting research, as needed, around newcomer challenges/gaps in services
- on-going maintenance and support of all RRLIP-convened tables (e.g. Partnership Council, Immigrant Advisory Table, Working Groups/Advisory Tables)
- conducting annual project evaluation to understand strengths and impacts, as well as areas of improvement
- continual surveillance of operational strength and sourcing of additional funding for project work, whenever possible

Emerging Priorities/Shifting Priorities

Although community plan activities are planned, implemented, and completed as per the proposed timelines, the RRLIP, like all Local Immigration Partnerships, must remain responsive to the shifting and emerging priorities occurring in the community. For example, an unanticipated influx of global refugees and displaced persons require support and coordination at the local level. The RRLIP assists and supports wherever possible. Therefore, daily activities must not only account for the Community Plan priorities but also consider the capacity needed to address other emerging challenges.

Priority Setting

The priorities and activities identified in this revised *Community Plan (2024-2025)* were informed by the Newcomer Survey (2022), the Mental and Emotional Wellness Survey (2023/2024) and augmented by input received from RRLIP-convened tables and community forum feedback. In addition, service provider, other key stakeholder, and pan-Canadian research was considered.

Survey Reports are available below:

- [Newcomer Survey Report 2022](#)
- [Mental and Emotional Wellness Survey Report -2023-2024](#)

Each priority is outlined in further detail below.

Priority #1: Employment Priority

The *Employment priority* is supported by the RRLIPs Labour Market Working Group (LMWG). The group is currently comprised of staff from settlement and other pertinent employment programs. The group meets 4 to 6 times a year and focuses on the challenges and barriers newcomers face in seeking/retaining employment and discusses strategies to address the challenges. Another way the RRLIP supported the *Employment priority* in the 2023-25 fiscal years is through coordination of the local expansion of the [#ImmigrantsWork](#) initiative, in partnership with [World Education Services \(WES\)](#). This project engages local employers and service providing agencies to co-design solutions to local labour market challenges, through more successful recruitment, hiring and retention of immigrant talent already in the community. A multisector table of Foundational Partners from the Regina community have informed and guided the local implementation of this initiative, towards delivering four project outputs, including a Communications Campaign, Employer Training Series, Video Series, and online Employer Navigator self-assessment and supports referral tool.

Planned Activities to Address the Employment Priority:

- Grow awareness of the Employment Programs page on the RRLIP website. Local settlement and other agencies are featured to enhance awareness of employment programs/services in Regina. **When:** On-going activity.
- Continue local coordination of #ImmigrantsWork initiative (emerging priority started in 2023-24 fiscal year, part of larger Canada-wide initiative) until completion in October 2024, with outcomes that extend into 2025 and beyond.
- Coordinate an annual event or other support - identified as key to service agencies and newcomers (e.g. Newcomer Employment Readiness Week). **When:** by Feb. 28, 2025.

Key Partners:

Labour Market Working Group members, other newcomer-serving community organizations who also provide employment programs, etc.

Activity Timeline:

All activities associated with the employment priority will be completed between April 1, 2024 and March 31, 2025 (within the duration of this *Plan*). Dates for each activity are noted above.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Newcomers have increased awareness of local opportunities for learning and career advancement.
- Employers have increased awareness of promising practices and resources to support successful recruitment, hiring and retention of local immigrant talent.

Priority #2: Mental and Emotional Wellness

The *Mental and Emotional Wellness* priority is supported by the RRLIPs Mental and Emotional Wellness Working Group (MEWWG). It is comprised of members from settlement organizations, umbrella organizations, mental health programs, etc. The members meet approximately 4 to 6 times a year.

Planned Activities to Address the Mental and Emotional Wellness Priority:

- Share findings from the Mental and Emotional Wellness Survey (2023-2024) with community stakeholders. **When:** On-going activity, starting February 27, 2024 (MEW Virtual Event) - March 31, 2025.
- Coordinate, plan and implement a mental and emotional wellness knowledge-sharing event informed by the findings of the MEW survey of 2023-2024. **When:** By February 28, 2025.

Key Partners:

Mental and Emotional Wellness Working Group members, other newcomer-serving community organizations who also provide wellness supports, healthcare stakeholders, etc.

Activity Timeline:

All activities associated with the mental and emotional wellness priority will be completed between April 1, 2024 and March 31, 2025 (to align with the duration of this Community Plan). Specific dates are included by each activity.

Anticipated Outcome:

- Newcomers, and other community members, have an increased awareness of the impact of mental and emotional wellness challenges and the support available to assist newcomer populations.

Priority #3: Social Connections

The *Social Connections* priority currently does not have a working group in place to support it. This priority will be addressed by providing support and partnership to other community stakeholders, whenever possible.

Planned Activities to Address the Social Connection's Priority:

- Promote existing cultural and cross-cultural connection events (e.g., Pipe ceremonies, Muslim education events, Chinese New Year, etc.), in the project blog, Facebook page, in RRLIP-convened meetings, community partner meetings, etc. **When:** On-going activity.
- Share the *social connections related data* from the 2022 Newcomer Survey. Support the efforts of community stakeholders to address the identified challenges through collaboration/partnership, whenever possible. **When:** April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025.

Key Partners:

Cultural organizations/associations, faith groups, services providers, municipal government, etc.

Activity Timeline:

All activities associated with the social connection's priority will be completed between April 1, 2024, and March 31, 2025 (to align with the duration of this *Community Plan*). Specific dates are included by each activity.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Regina community members, and specifically newcomers, are better informed of opportunities to share and learn cross-culturally.
- Key community stakeholders are more aware of the identified social connection challenges identified by newcomers.

Priority #4: Cultural Bridging Priority

The *Cultural Bridging priority* is supported by the RRLIPs Anti-Racism/Discrimination Working Group (AR/D Working Group). The AR/D Working Group has coordinated various learning opportunities for its members and the broader community. Some examples are: the facilitation of community forums with themes that center on cultural bridging, acknowledging and learning about Indigenous history and culture and the racism experienced in Canada, training sessions that share anti-racism/discrimination response strategies, the research and development of resources that address racism/discrimination, etc.

Planned Activities to Address the Cultural Bridging Priority:

Coordinate, plan and implement a cultural bridging event or series of training/education sessions that enhance cross-cultural connections and promote understanding between past/recent newcomers and:

- Indigenous and Canadian-born members of this community;
- 2SLGBTQ+ community members; and
- between Francophone and Anglophone communities in Regina, specifically between Francophone and Anglophone newcomers.

When: By February 28, 2025.

Key Partners:

AR/D Working Group members, Indigenous organizations and leaders, cultural organizations/associations, faith groups and leaders, 2SLGBTQIA+ organizations and community members, Francophone and Anglophone organizations, and service providers, etc.

Activity Timeline:

The activity associated with the cultural bridging priority will be completed by February 28, 2025 (to align with the duration of this *Community Plan*).

Anticipated Outcome:

Cross-cultural understanding and connections are fostered between newcomers, Indigenous, Francophone, Anglophone, 2SLGBTQIA+ and other groups in Regina.

Priority #5: Housing Education and Support

The *Housing Education and Support priority* is supported by the RRLIPs Canadian Housing Advisory Committee (CHAC). The CHAC members meet on a quarterly basis to discuss housing-related challenges, gaps, and opportunities, as they relate to newcomers. As identified in the RRLIPs 2022 Newcomer Survey, maintenance issues, lack of references, landlord issues, language barriers and neighbour issues were some of the identified challenges that newcomers experience.

Planned Activities to Address the Housing Education and Support Priority

In the aftermath of the dissolution of the RentSmart Education and Support Society, the RRLIP connected the Canadian Housing Advisory Committee (CHAC) with a SK non-profit that offers another housing education program: RentEd. This program provides training for tenants, and a train-the-trainer program for local agency staff. CHAC members may continue to explore viable education program options, and also advance the housing education and support priority through the coordination of community conversations with a diversity of partners, focusing on the housing crisis impacting newcomers and other populations in the city of Regina.

- Support the implementation and promotion of an educational housing program in the city of Regina. **When:** April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025.
- Depending on capacity, possibly coordinate, plan and implement a community conversation, with a diversity of community partners (e.g., housing stakeholders, Indigenous leaders, settlement orgs, City of Regina, etc.), to discuss housing crisis impacts and workable solutions. **When:** by February 28, 2025.

Key Partners:

Canadian Housing Advisory Committee members, settlement service providers, housing service providers, other newcomer-serving community organizations, Indigenous leaders, etc.

Activity Timeline:

All activities associated with the housing education and support priority will be completed between April 1, 2024, and March 31, 2025 (to align with the duration of this *Community Plan*). Specific dates are included by each activity.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Community organizations, and in particular settlement agencies, engage with the housing and life skills education program for staff training to provide newcomer clients.
- Community partners are more aware of the impacts of the housing crisis on newcomer populations and are engaged in the conversation for change.

Acknowledgements

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