



**WELCOMING  
COMMUNITIES  
VERNON**

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## **Welcoming Communities Vernon Immigration and Settlement Strategy- Vernon B.C.**

### **Local Immigration Partnerships Council Terms of Reference**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

Welcoming Communities Vernon is a program to support and attract new immigrants and make our community welcoming and inclusive. It is hosted by Social Planning Council for the North Okanagan (SPCNO).

Welcoming Communities was originally launched by the Province of BC in fall 2012 to support new immigrants and ensure they feel valued and part of local communities. There is an understanding that immigrants provide important cultural diversity to local communities as well as skills, investment and an entrepreneurial spirit. Canada has an aging demographic with a declining birth rate and will need to depend on immigration for social and economic growth in the upcoming decades. According to Statistics Canada, immigrants make up approximately 11% of Vernon's population. Over half are of European descent; the majority of the balance comes from the Middle East and Asia; and 10% from the U.S.

In January 2013, over 30 participants attended a community consultation in Vernon and provided feedback for the creation of the Welcoming Communities Action Plan. Seven projects were identified for implementation, and partnerships were developed to deliver the projects within the community. The input and results gathered through this first phase of Welcoming Communities will inform the next step of the program.

#### **2.0 Project Description: Immigration and Settlement Strategy – Vernon B.C.**

The second phase of Welcoming Communities is Communities is funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada and focuses on a locally driven, broad-based strategic planning process. It will engage a wide variety of community stakeholders in further developing partnerships and capacity to support the integration of new immigrants.

Newcomers' needs, and assets and gaps in community services available to them, will be reviewed. Additional research will include:

- Review of best practices.
- Demographics and trends in the community and immigrant population.
- Labor market demographics and investment opportunities.
- Available services and capacity of existing service providers.
- Assessment of community knowledge of immigration.
- Identification of barriers to integration in key areas such as employment, housing, education and health care.
- Identification of opportunities to attract and retain new immigrants to the community.

Based on this input, an *Immigration and Settlement Strategy for Vernon* will be developed to attract and retain immigrants. Key priorities for action and a corresponding implementation plan will be included.

### 3.0 Purpose of the Local Immigration Partnerships Council

The Local Immigration Partnerships Council will act as a steering committee, providing guidance and support for the strategic planning process and project completion.

The Local Immigration Partnerships Council will also help engage a broad range of community stakeholders and partners in the strategic planning process. Members will help raise awareness of, and act as proponents for, new immigrants' needs.

### 4.0 Guiding Vision and Values

***Shared Vision Statements to be developed at meetings.***

Members of the Local Immigration Partnerships Council will:

- Listen to each other respectfully.
- Speak and act with consideration of the multiple points of view involved.
- Give priority to the needs and best interests of new immigrants.

### 5.0 Membership and Composition

In order to fulfill the purpose as stated above, the membership of the Local Immigration Partnerships Council will be based on:

- 15-20 members, including the Host Agency.
- A commitment from members to participate for two years.
- A commitment to creating a welcoming and inclusive community for new immigrants.
- Representation from the broad range of stakeholders, organizations and populations that, in making up the community fabric, impact the experience of new immigrants to the community.

New members may be added to the Local Immigration Partnerships Council from time to time during the course of the project as it evolves and the need for additional community perspectives requires.

#### Local Immigration Partnerships Council Composition

Representative Sector	Perspective
Chamber of Commerce	Brings the perspective of business, and the challenges, opportunities and need of entrepreneurs in the community.
Economic Development	Liaise with community growth strategies and bring the perspective of business and labor needs.
Private Sector Employer	Bring the perspective of an employer of international and immigrant skilled workers.
Settlement Services	Provide knowledge, history and perspective about immigrant trends, challenges faced by immigrants and available and needed services.
Academic	Provide the perspective of the post-secondary education sector and international students.
School District/Youth	Provide insight about the settlement experiences and needs of the public education sector, young international students, newcomer youth, and immigrant families.

Employment Skills & Training/ Volunteer	Provide insight from the perspective of employment and volunteer resources, programs and needs.
Local Government	Bring the perspective of local government, including priorities, strategies and partner opportunities.
Newcomers	Provide a firsthand voice about newcomer perspectives, experiences and needs.
Community Health	Provide insight about the challenges and needs of immigrants in the context of the provincial and local health system.
Multicultural/Francophone	Provide input on behalf of diverse community cultural and language groups.
Recreation	Provide input about community recreation opportunities and needs.

## 6.0 Roles and Responsibilities

### Members

- Review and support the development of the work plan.
- Provide feedback and support to the Project Coordinator.
- Participate in reviewing community data gathered and presented.
- Provide input into the development of the *Immigration and Settlement Strategy*.
- Help to engage a broad variety of community stakeholders in the project.
- Support the creation of a welcoming and inclusive community for new immigrants.
- Prepare for and attend regular quarterly and other meetings
- Notify the Chair in advance when unable to attend a meeting
- Where possible, locate a substitute to attend the meeting
- In the event a member does not attend a meeting, without notifying the Chair, three times, that member will be asked to step down from the Local Immigration Partnerships Council and a replacement will be sought
- Participate in subcommittees, public discussion groups or presentations as available
- Declare any conflict of interest

### Chair

- The Project Coordinator will act as the Chair for the meetings
- Call meetings and request agenda items
- Develop and distribute an agenda in advance of the meetings
- Ensure that meetings are purposeful
- Ensure that meetings proceed with an appropriate balance of debate and harmony and see that all members have an opportunity to have their views heard respectfully
- If the Project Coordinator is unable to attend a meeting, the Project Coordinator will arrange in advance with the Host Agency to designate an alternate chair for that meeting
- Record and distribute the minutes of meetings

### Host Agency

- Support the functions of the Local Immigration Partnerships Council
- Maintain a record of the minutes of meetings
- Ensure minutes and agendas have been distributed
- Provide meeting space for the Local Immigration Partnerships Council
- Supervise the Project Coordinator and consultants based on feedback from the Local Immigration Partnerships Council
- Act as spokesperson for the project as necessary
- Update the Local Immigration Partnerships Council and the funder (Government of Canada) on the financial status of the project

### Project Coordinator

- Attend Local Immigration Partnerships Council meetings
- Take guidance from the Local Immigration Partnerships Council
- Keep the Local Immigration Partnerships Council informed of the project status and progress
- Alert the Local Immigration Partnerships Council of potential issues.
- Take minutes of meetings and distribute to Local Immigration Partnerships Council members.
- Act as a spokesperson for the project as necessary.

## **7.0 Meetings**

The Local Immigration Partnerships Council will meet quarterly for the duration of the project, and additionally if required upon the call of the Chair or the Host Agency. The schedule of regular quarterly meeting dates will be determined at the first meeting to be held in June 2014.

Three members of the Local Immigration Partnerships Council will constitute a quorum at a meeting. In the absence of a quorum, a meeting may continue, but decisions will be ratified via adoption of the meeting minutes at the following Local Immigration Partnerships Council meeting.

If facilities are available, members who live outside of the community may attend via teleconference.

## **8.0 Decision Making**

Decision-making will be done by consensus. Decisions will be summarized by the Chair at the meeting and noted in the minutes of the meeting, which will be circulated to members of the Council.

## **9. Media Contact**

The meeting minutes will be considered to represent the official position of the Local Immigration Partnerships Council.

Media enquiries to members are to be referred to the Project Coordinator or the Host Agency's representative.

## **10.0 Conflict of Interest Policy**

A conflict of interest is a conflict between a person's primary obligations with regard to their role on the Local Immigration Partnerships Council, and a competing secondary interest--financial, professional, private or other.

A member of the Local Immigration Partnerships Council who is, directly or indirectly, interested in a proposed contract or transaction arising as part of the Welcoming Communities project must disclose fully and promptly the nature and extent of the interest to the Local Immigration Partnerships Council. The decision as to whether the member is in a conflict situation will be determined jointly by the Local Immigration Partnerships Council as a whole and the Host Agency.

If the issue does not or will not harm the integrity or credibility of the Local Immigration Partnerships Council or the Welcoming Communities Program, and there is agreement from the members of the Local Immigration Partnerships Council and the Host Agency, the matter can proceed. Where there is a deemed conflict, the member of the Local Immigration Partnerships Council will not participate in the discussion of that matter or take steps to influence any decision or action of the Local Immigration Partnerships Council.

A record of the conflict of interest disclosure and the Local Immigration Partnerships Council decision will be maintained in the minutes of the meeting.

## List of Members of Local Immigration Partnerships Council

<b>Welcoming Communities Vernon Immigration and Settlement Strategy for Vernon B.C. Local Immigration Partnerships Council</b>	
<b>Social Planning Council for the North Okanagan (SPCNO)</b> Annette Sharkey, Executive Director	<a href="mailto:info@socialplanning.ca">info@socialplanning.ca</a>
<b>Vernon and District Immigrant Services Society (VDISS)</b> Carol Wutzke, Executive Director	<a href="mailto:vdiss@shaw.ca">vdiss@shaw.ca</a>
<b>Vernon Chamber of Commerce (VCC)</b> Dan Rogers, General Manager	<a href="mailto:manager@vernonchamber.ca">manager@vernonchamber.ca</a>
<b>City of Vernon (COV)</b> Kevin Poole, Economic Development	<a href="mailto:kpoole@vernon.ca">kpoole@vernon.ca</a>
<b>Community Futures North Okanagan</b> Marcel Korver	<a href="mailto:mkorver@futuresbc.com">mkorver@futuresbc.com</a>
<b>North Okanagan Employment Enhancement Society (NexusBC)</b> Lynn Belsher, Executive Director Pam Meyers	<a href="mailto:lynn@nexusbc.ca">lynn@nexusbc.ca</a>  <a href="mailto:pam@nexusbc.ca">pam@nexusbc.ca</a>
<b>North Okanagan Youth and Family Services (NOYFSS)</b> Lisa Krushen	<a href="mailto:lisakrushen@noysfss.org">lisakrushen@noysfss.org</a>
<b>North Okanagan Family Resource Centre (FRC)</b> Jan Schulz, Executive Director	<a href="mailto:jschulz@vernonfrc.ca">jschulz@vernonfrc.ca</a>
<b>Okanagan College, Vernon Campus (OC)</b> Jane Lister, Regional Dean	<a href="mailto:jlist@okanaganbc.ca">jlist@okanaganbc.ca</a>
<b>School Inclusionary Teams (School District #22)</b> Jackie Kersey, Principal	<a href="mailto:jkersey@sd22.bc.ca">jkersey@sd22.bc.ca</a>
<b>Downtown Vernon Association</b> Lara Konkin, Executive Director	<a href="mailto:lara@downtownvernon.com">lara@downtownvernon.com</a>
<b>City of Vernon</b> Juliette Cunningham, Councillor	<a href="mailto:jcunningham@vernon.ca">jcunningham@vernon.ca</a>
<b>Public Art Gallery</b> Dauna Grant, Executive Director	<a href="mailto:dauna@vernonpublicartgallery.com">dauna@vernonpublicartgallery.com</a>
<b>Interior Health</b> Tanya Osborne, Community Health Facilitator	<a href="mailto:Tanya.Osborne@interiorhealth.ca">Tanya.Osborne@interiorhealth.ca</a>
<b>Silver Star Ski Resort Ltd.</b> Alison Crick, Human Resources Director	<a href="mailto:acrick@skisilverstar.com">acrick@skisilverstar.com</a>
<b>Regional District North Okanagan</b> Tannis Nelson, Community Development Coordinator	<a href="mailto:Tannis.Nelson@rdno.ca">Tannis.Nelson@rdno.ca</a>
<b>School District 22 International Student Program</b>	tbd