



**Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows, and Katzie Nation Local  
Immigration Partnership (LIP)  
Research Project**

**Community Engagement Report**

*Prepared by the Social Planning and Research Council of BC*

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## Introduction

This report summarizes findings from three key community and stakeholder engagement activities for the Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows, Katzie LIP Research Project. The results from another engagement activity, the online Newcomer Survey, are presented in a separate report.

This report summarizes the following engagement activities:

- Key Informant Interviews
- Newcomer Focus Groups
- Newcomer One-on-One Engagement

For a full list of participating interviewees and the questions used to guide each engagement activity, please refer to Appendices B – D.

## Key Informant Interviews

### Background

To better understand the local service context for newcomers in Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows, and Katzie, the consulting team interviewed 13 key informants (i.e., individuals that were identified as having experience, knowledge, and organizational perspectives on the needs of newcomers in the community).

The interviews took place between December 2020 and January 2021 and included staff from ISS of BC; SUCCESS; Work BC; Ridge Meadows Multicultural Society; Fraser Valley Regional Library; and City of Maple Ridge Parks, Recreation, and Culture. Please see Appendix A for a complete list of interviewees.

Key informants were asked a range of questions about the current state of services available to newcomers in the Ridge Meadows area, including their own organizational challenges and successes. The interviewees were also asked to share suggested priorities for actions that could be taken to help meet the needs of newcomers in the community. See Appendix B for the complete Key Informant Interview Guide.

### Overview of organizations & their role in supporting newcomers

Table 1 below provides an overview of the roles each organization plays in supporting newcomers. This table is not intended to be a comprehensive account of all services available in Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows, but only a snapshot of services directly reported by the key informant interviewees.

**Table 1: Overview of Organizations Represented in Key Informant Interviews**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Organization &amp; Program</b>	<b>Services/Role</b>
<b>Settlement</b>	<b>SUCCESS – Settlement Worker in School (SWIS)</b>	Provides settlement, employment, and school registration support to families in the School District
	<b>ISS of BC</b>	Full range of settlement, LINC, and employment services (JobQuest, Business Quest, program for women in tech)
<b>Employment</b>	<b>Douglas College – Career Path for Skilled Immigrants</b>	Client-based support for PR-holding newcomers wishing to continue work in a professional field in Canada
	<b>Work BC</b>	Employment services for all newcomers with goal of securing long-term, meaningful employment
<b>Language</b>	<b>Community Literacy Committee</b>	Provides community programs, including ELL conversation group for women and Immigrant Reading Buddies
<b>Community</b>	<b>Ridge Meadows Multicultural Society</b>	Non-profit society with mandate to help newcomers feel welcome, wide range of community events, charitable drives, and educational webinars
<b>Community Partners</b>	<b>Senior’s Network</b>	Wide range of planning and community task groups & services for seniors (including Community Response Network for abuse and neglect, Senior Party bus)
	<b>City of Maple Ridge: Parks, Recreation, Culture</b>	Recreational and cultural services and programming, aim of universal access for all programs
	<b>Fraser Valley Regional Library: Maple Ridge Branch</b>	Collections include material in different languages and range of online learning and job search tools; formerly hosted Newcomer Hub; outreach to newcomers through Library Champions program (led by New to BC)
	<b>MCFD: Early Years Development Coordinator</b>	Funds wide range of services to support children and families, principles of inclusivity and responsiveness

## Languages

The largest settlement service provider in Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows, ISS of BC, offers services in many languages. Most staff are multilingual, and volunteers are also available to offer translation support. Other organizations that are not settlement-focused rely on connections to ISS of BC, community groups, and, informally, on their own staff and volunteers, to offer services to clients in languages other than English.

## Share of clients who are newcomers

The share of newcomers served by each organization varied widely and was sometimes difficult to estimate. While some programs are available to support clients who have been in Canada for longer than five years, several programs are limited to serving newcomers only.

## Staff training

Settlement service providers offer extensive training for staff and volunteers to help them successfully support newcomers with a wide range of challenges and needs. This training is both in-house or through government and other agencies. Outside of the settlement sector, some staff receive training in areas such as cross-cultural competency and trauma-informed practice, which may be helpful when working with newcomers.

## Organizational successes in working with newcomers

Many respondents expressed pride in offering high quality services to newcomers and connecting them to services they need. Many shared stories of newcomer success and emphasized the importance of facilitating belonging and inclusion. In Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows, communication and collaboration between community agencies is a major community strength. Some respondents also mentioned the importance of diverse staff, including those with first-hand experience immigrating to Canada, in making settlement and other services accessible and welcoming to newcomers.

## Organizational challenges in working with newcomers

Many respondents reported challenges with outreach. Newcomers are sometimes not aware of programs available and community organizations struggle to get the word out, especially to newcomers not already connected to services, classes, or community groups. Key informants reported that outreach has been even more difficult with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Language barriers can be a challenge, as translation support is not available in all situations. Some respondents also mention challenges navigating different cultural norms or expectations.

Several respondents reported organizational challenges around limited funding, need for more staff, and need for permanent, suitable program space. Some programs rely on temporary and shared spaces, which can make it more difficult for them to connect with newcomers. One respondent noted small, shared spaces also mean “less workshops, less group sessions, less community building”. In addition, some programs only receive funding to provide services for permanent residents or privately sponsored refugees, but not immigrants of other visa types.

## What would most help organization address challenges

Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows, and Katzie have many community strengths, including a wide range of programs to support newcomers, strong relationships between organizations, and joint outreach and referrals to different programs and services. These community strengths are an important foundation for addressing some of the organizational challenges described above.

To address challenges around outreach to newcomers, respondents suggested the need for more support around access to technology and digital literacy, as well as increased joint-outreach and promotion of services and events between organizations.

Respondents also described a need for increased education and training for frontline workers (including settlement workers, health care workers, and beyond) on working effectively with individuals from different cultures. One respondent expressed a desire for more information about why newcomers sometimes do not access services available, to better understand if their needs are not being met.

Several respondents expressed a desire for more funding for dedicated staff; funding to offer child minding for in-person programs; and funding to support clients with different visa types (not only permanent resident or privately sponsored refugee). Several mentioned the need for permanent, suitable, and accessible space for some programs.

Finally, some respondents reported that their organizational challenges would require advocacy to local and senior levels of government and to local employers, to help address some of the systemic barriers faced by their newcomer clients.

## What is working well for newcomers

Key informants were asked about what services are available, accessible, and working well for newcomers in the community. Most described the availability and quality of settlement and employment services as a key strength, as well as the services offered by Family Education & Support Centre. English language classes, especially at the foundational level, are perceived to be accessible and adequate to meet community need. Respondents also noted there is good access to translation and interpretation support, though there may be some gaps for situations where specialized language assistance is required (e.g. medical situations).

The partnerships and strong interconnections between organizations in the community also benefit newcomers. Many noted that the LIP plays an important role “to get community partners thinking about newcomers and how to serve them”. One respondent noted that the physical proximity of different organizations in, for example, downtown Maple Ridge, has helped organizations directly connect newcomers with other agencies.

## Challenges and barriers for newcomers

Key informants reported some general service gaps for newcomers. These include the need for more settlement workers in schools (there is currently only one for the School District); the need for more information about and promotion of existing services to newcomers, including in languages other than English; and the need for a centralized meeting place for newcomers to gather. In addition, when discussing challenges faced by newcomers, key informants often mentioned the following common themes:

### Access to technology & digital literacy

The COVID-19 pandemic has underlined the need for access to technology and support for digital literacy. This is critical for accessing information, gaining employment, and overcoming isolation.

### Employment

Newcomers face many barriers to employment. There are fewer employers in Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows than in some other areas of the Lower Mainland; jobs are not available in all sectors. Newcomers may face language barriers; lack of recognition of foreign experience and credentials; lack of local references; difficulty navigating implicit cultural norms around job searching; and, sometimes, overt discrimination. These barriers have serious repercussions for newcomers' financial well-being and mental health.

### Mental Health

Many key informants noted the overall lack of affordable mental health services. It is even more difficult to find mental health services that are culturally competent and/or offered in languages other than English. There are no addiction services available for newcomers. Interviewees suggested there may be a particular need for mental health services for youth, seniors, and for those with previous trauma.

### Social isolation

Making local friends is often a challenge for newcomers but has become much more difficult during the COVID-19 pandemic. This also has major impacts on mental health.

### Housing

Key informants reported a lack of affordable housing and not being sure where to refer newcomers with housing issues.

### Transportation

Fewer services and employment opportunities locally means people must commute to other communities. Many newcomers do not have Canadian licenses or private vehicles, and so must rely on the somewhat limited public transit services. Transportation is a particular barrier for seniors and those with young children.

### English language

While foundational English language classes are available, some key informants note that there is a gap in language classes at a more advanced level (i.e. CLB 7 or 8). However, a higher level of English proficiency is often required for higher education and professional jobs.

### Sense of belonging

Some respondents note that newcomers may not always feel a sense of belonging in the community. Ridge Meadows is less diverse than the larger centres nearby. Newcomers who are visible minorities experience systemic and interpersonal racism.

### Newcomer groups with specific or additional challenges

Some newcomers face specific and additional challenges, including those with multiple barriers, refugees, temporary foreign workers, mothers of young children, seniors, and youth.

Temporary foreign workers are often geographically isolated and vulnerable based on their status. Several key informants mentioned that mothers with young children are often unable to access



programs and miss the limited window of eligibility for programs targeted at newcomers. This means lost opportunities to improve language or employment skills, often with long-term effects. Newcomer seniors are often isolated, as they are more likely to face language barriers and lack of independent transportation. Several key informants also cited the need for dedicated space and programming for newcomer youth, to meet their unique needs.

### Local context and recent changes in the community

Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows are more affordable than many other municipalities in the Lower Mainland. Lower home prices have attracted many new residents in the past few years, including many newcomers and immigrants. The area is growing rapidly. It is also much less affordable than it was previously, with surging housing prices and increased cost of living.

Ridge Meadows is relatively small. Interviewees described it as less diverse, with fewer services and fewer employment opportunities, than larger municipalities. Several interviewees cited the creation of the LIP Committee as a highly positive recent initiative to address some of the needs of immigrant residents and to help celebrate the growing diversity of the community.

Due to limited service and employment options, many residents face long commutes. While many interviewees lauded the recent addition of the new Rapid Bus line to Coquitlam Centre, transportation remains a challenge in the area. Sprawl contributes to lack of access to services and to social isolation.

The COVID-19 pandemic is of course another major recent development, with profound effects on employment, schooling, services, health, social connection, and more, with the full effects still to be determined in the coming months and years.

### Top priorities for action to improve settlement for newcomers

Top priorities for action and other action ideas suggested by key informants are listed and categorized below, rather than summarized, in order to provide a sense of how frequently each type of action was suggested.

#### **Expand access to and promotion of programs and services**

- Social awareness – getting the word out to newcomers about supports and services; not just for newcomers, but also for other locals who can connect newcomers with these
- Regular LIP newsletter highlight events and services for clients every other month
- Increase access to services and support
- Expand Newcomers Hub at the library (one-stop place for newcomers to get resources they need)
- More settlement workers for the School District
- Parent Ambassador Program from Tri-Cities to bridge newcomer families to other services & provide training and employment opportunities for the ambassadors

### **Information made available in languages other than English**

- More language resources (e.g. expanded collections at the library in different languages)
- More information available in other languages
- Translating materials and reducing language barriers as a regular thing
- Workplace safety in different languages (not just English)
- Family programming and resources in multiple languages (e.g. Early Years Navigators, Multicultural ECE program, multicultural family resource program)

### **Increased collaboration and links between organizations**

- Cross-organizational promotion of events and opportunities to newcomers
  - Increase links between newcomers and other services and programs (e.g. for seniors)
- More communication between groups and more dedication from more groups, apart from core LIP members
- Engagement and collaboration between agencies

### **Training for frontline staff to better serve newcomers**

- Train frontline workers to be more culturally competent
- Education and training for staff to work with newcomers

### **Promote social inclusion**

- Expand cultural celebrations
- Create climate where newcomers feel welcome
- Cultural specific programming (i.e. at recreation centre)
- Advocacy for TFWs

### **Dedicated space for people to meet**

- Places to gather
- More spaces for events and groups to meet regularly, within settlement service buildings

### **Evidence-based planning around needs and existing community assets**

- Support research, data gathering on needs of families
- Take a hard look at what is being provided: can it be adapted? Or do we need more funding?

### **Support for technology access and digital literacy**

- More support for technology access and digital literacy

### **Employment**

- Program that helps with navigating qualifications and experiences from other countries to employment in Canada
- Employment
- More collaboration with employers (e.g. labour market group)

### **Mental health support**

- More mental health clinic/programs
- More mental health supports, especially available in different languages

### **Transportation**

- Transportation
- Transportation – holds back newcomers and all populations looking access services
- Expanding transit (better reach and hours)

### **Increased language learning opportunities**

- Language classes for parents
- Language classes at CLB 6 and 7 level
- More LINC classes

### **Local stores with more diverse options**

- Local stores – especially halal stores
- More business that welcome and cater to newcomers

### **Child care**

- Child care
- Daycares
- Space for child care to happen (while parents access services)

### **Programs for youth**

- Initiatives for newcomer youth

### **Programs for seniors**

- Employment initiatives for older newcomer adults

### **Connection with Katzie Nation**

- Explore bridging program to connect newcomers with Indigenous elders

### **Additional comments**

In their final comments, many key informants reiterated a commitment to making Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows a place where newcomers can live, stay, and thrive. Some noted the importance of continued and increase collaboration between service providers and the importance of learning from what has worked well in other communities.

## Newcomer Focus Groups

### Background

To better understand the experiences and needs of newcomers in the community, four focus groups with a total of ten participants were conducted with immigrants and newcomers.

Table 2 outlines the participants' country of origin, time in Canada and time living in Maple Ridge or Pitt Meadows. Countries of origin included South Korea, China, Afghanistan, Spain, Syria, and India. Time in Canada ranged from 6 month to 7 years and time in Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows ranged from 6 months to 5 years. There were eight female and two male participants. Please see Appendix C for the complete focus group guide.

**Table 2: Overview of Focus Group Participants**

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Country of Origin</b>	<b>Time in Canada</b>	<b>Time in Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows</b>
<b>Participant 1 (female)</b>	South Korea	2.5 years	2.5 years
<b>Participant 2 (female)</b>	China	2 years	1.5 months
<b>Participant 3 (female)</b>	Afghanistan	2 years	1 year
<b>Participant 4 (female)</b>	Spain	5 years	2 years
<b>Participant 5 (female)</b>	Syria	4 years	4 years
<b>Participant 6 (female)</b>	India	6 months	6 months
<b>Participant 7 (female)</b>	Syria	11 months	11 months
<b>Participant 8 (male)</b>	Syria	11 months	11 months
<b>Participant 9 (female)</b>	Afghanistan	7 years	5 years
<b>Participant 10 (male)</b>	Syria	4 years	3.5 years

What would you say to a friend who was considering moving to Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows from your home country?

Participants overall had positive things that they would say to a friend who was considering moving to Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows. The region was described as quiet, small, safe and friendly. Participants shared there is everything that you need in Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows such as grocery stores, health services, schools, and beautiful nature. Housing was also recognized as more affordable than other areas of the Lower Mainland.

***“I love the community, I like living in the countryside and we support each other.” – Participant 2***

One respondent shared that it is important to have a driver’s license and vehicle access to live in Maple Ridge/Pitt meadows as the transit system is not very good:

***“You should have a driver’s license so you can move around more easily and to commute. The buses are not running that often.” – Participant 1***

The consensus amongst participants was that they would recommend their friends move to Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows.

***“I would recommend my friends to move to Pitt Meadows.” – Participant 10***

Thinking back to when you first came to Canada, what were the biggest surprises?

Moving to Canada came with many different surprises for those who participated in the focus group. There were both pleasant and unpleasant surprises noted. Participants acknowledged that people are friendly in Maple Ridge, compared to other places they lived previously:

***“People are very friendly, even to strangers. I did not experience kindness from strangers in [other countries]. Here people say hi on the street.” -Participant 1***

One respondent also discussed that they were surprised how much freedom people had in Canada, which was a welcome change:

***“Everyone is open to go to school and work. There is no objection. In my country, ladies are not allowed to go to school or work. It was tough. Canada is totally different, my kids are happy. When I came to Canada, I felt like a newborn, I felt freedom. I felt good, safe and everything was good.”***

***-Participant 3***

The abundance of nature was additionally recognized as a big surprise.

In terms of negative surprises, participants noted that everything was more expensive than their home country, it was very difficult to learn English, and, without English, it was difficult to meet new people and build connections. Some were also surprised at how challenging it was to find employment:

***“It was hard to meet people and it was hard to find employment. First criteria is having Canadian experience, but need to start somewhere before you can get that experience.” -Participant 6***

***“Speaking English was a surprise, when I came to Canada, I had zero English. This was very difficult for me, but now it is easier because I speak English and have a part time job.” – Participant 10***

### What has been easy about moving to Canada?

While there were challenges and surprises related to moving to Canada, participants were able to identify some aspects that were “easy”. First, some participants stated that it was easy to work with government officials and support service organizations. They were able to access the supports they needed with ease:

***“Dealing with the government was easy.” – Participant 5***

***“Dealing with people was easy (government and people in the community)” – Participant 7***

Second, accessing education for their children was also deemed easy:

***“There is better education opportunities for children. The admission process for the school was easy.” – Participant 6***

***“Was easy to get children into school. Was close to my house.” – Participant 10***

***“When I came to Canada, everything was nice and easy. Children are in school. No fees. Teachers are nice and kind. Children go to school everyday with a smile on their face.” – Participant 3***

Generally, participants recognized that the feeling of safety and security made it easier to move to a new country:

***“In Canada we are safe and happy.”- Participant 9***

## What has been hard about moving to Canada?

Being a newcomer to Canada comes with many challenges and difficulties. Some of these challenges shared by participants included leaving behind family and friends, learning English and finding a job in order to afford to live in Maple Ridge:

***“Hard to leave behind friends and family.” – Participant 4***

***“The language was difficult.” – Participant 8***

***“Finding work and a job is difficult. Everything is expensive here. In my country everything is cheap, but here everything is expensive.” – Participant 10***

Specific to Maple Ridge, several participants identified a need for a driver’s license because the transit system is not adequate. It can be very challenging to obtain a driver’s license, which causes lots of stress:

***“Driving is difficult, still working on passing the driving test because the rules are different and getting a test date is challenging because of COVID. Without a car it is difficult to access everything because transit is not very good.” – Participant 6***

***“My concern was the shuttle bus, this is not good. Two times bus drivers made me cry. Just last week I got my license. It was so hard, I took lots of classes and spent a lot of money because I failed the road test many times. I think I had one week of depression, I couldn’t sleep, but I prayed a lot and finally I passed it and now I am happy.” – Participant 9***

Some participants also discussed experiences of racism and discrimination, which is difficult to manage and navigate, especially as a newcomer.

What do you think would make settling in Maple Ridge or Pitt Meadows easier for new immigrants?

The following ideas were shared to make settling in Maple Ridge or Pitt Meadows easier for new immigrants:

**1. Improve transit options:**

*“If shuttle busses were more frequent, every 30 minutes instead of every hour.” – Participant 9*

*“There is no sky train in Maple Ridge, which would be helpful. The bus can take hours to get to work, all work opportunities are far away.” – Participant 8*

*“Better transit. More frequent buses” – Participant 6*

*“Having more easy transportation” – Participant 3*

**2. Offer support services in more languages:**

*“It would be good to have more services in different languages” – Participant 1*

*“I recommend they have translators at Work BC because they help with finding work. If they have booklets in different languages that would help. Also the library could bring more books and pamphlets in different languages so that people can find services and access buses. More information available in more languages.” -Participant 9*

**3. Provide LINC classes in the evening, as some people work during the day and cannot attend daytime classes.**

Overall, participants were generally happy to be living in Maple Ridge and look forward to the community continuing to grow, develop, and welcome more newcomers. One participant left with this message:

*“Come to Maple Ridge, it is very nice, I have lived in Maple Ridge since coming to Canada, it is beautiful and not too crowded. Rent is not too expensive, it is reasonable, especially for newcomers.”  
– Participant 3*



## One-on-One Newcomer Engagement

### Background

To supplement the Newcomer Survey and focus groups, the consulting team partnered with ISS of BC to create a one-on-one engagement process that builds on the strength of existing relationships between clients and service providers.

Staff from ISS of BC reached out to their existing clients and conducted a brief, informal interview, using the same set of questions as were used to guide the larger focus groups. This engagement took place February 2021.

Overall, seven newcomers participated in the process. An overview of how long each participant had lived in Canada and in Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows is shown in Table 3 below. Time in Canada ranged from 1 to 5 years.

**Table 3: Overview of One-on-One Engagement Participants**

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Time in Canada</b>	<b>Time in Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows</b>
<b>Participant 1</b>	4 years	3 years
<b>Participant 2</b>	1 year	1 year
<b>Participant 3</b>	3 years	3 years
<b>Participant 4</b>	5 years	5 years
<b>Participant 5</b>	4 years	4 years
<b>Participant 6</b>	1 year	1 year
<b>Participant 7</b>	3 years	3 years

### What would you say to a friend who was considering moving to Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows from your home country?

Many participants described the area as beautiful and quiet. One participant noted affordable rent and many services. However, another participant noted that having to travel by bus to go shopping or see friends is “very hard”, especially as there are few buses on the weekend. Similarly, one participant noted you need a car to live in Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows.

### Thinking back to when you first came to Canada, what were the biggest surprises?

Participants gave many different responses to this question. Common themes include the weather and difficulty finding affordable housing. Other responses included the fact that “everything is online, and the system is very complicated” and “homelessness and drug addiction”.

### What has been easy about moving to Canada?

Several respondents cited government support and newcomer services, including free English classes and the Resettlement Assistance Program, as things that were easy about moving to Canada. However, some participants also noted that moving to Canada was *not* easy.

### What has been hard about moving to Canada?

There were several common themes in newcomers’ descriptions about what has been hardest about moving to Canada. These themes include finding work, continuing education, finding child care, the language barrier, and high rent and cost of living. One respondent mentioned difficulties accessing health care, including long wait times at the hospital and shortage of doctors.

Another common theme was the challenge of being apart from family and community, as well as difficulties sponsoring family members:

**“Moving to Canada is a hard and difficult journey and you can’t help the rest of your family to come to Canada” – Participant 5**

**“Leaving home country is never easy.” – Participant 6**

### What do you think would make settling in Maple Ridge or Pitt Meadows easier for new immigrants?

Participants had several suggestions for actions that would make settling in Maple Ridge or Pitt Meadows easier for new immigrants. These included more shopping options, more affordable housing, Skytrain access, more educational institutions including online school, and more job opportunities.

**“It’s a good city. I love it. But if the MPs or MLs and the Councils could think on how to improve immigrants live in these cities that would be better.” – Participant 7**

## Appendix A: List of Interviewees

Name	Organization	Role
Anna Kim	SUCCESS – SWIS	SWIS Worker, School District 42
Elaine Yamamoto	School District 42 & Community Literacy Committee	Trustee & Literacy Outreach Coordinator
Heather Treleaven	Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows Katzie Seniors Network	Coordinator
Jean Ireland	ISS of BC	Manager of LINC/Settlement
Judy Kharma-Morale	ISS of BC	LINC Registrar, Settlement Worker
Katy Kitainik	Douglas College – Career Path for Skilled Immigrants	Career Facilitator
Kim Abram	ISS of BC	Case Manager – Job Quest
Latifa Jawansheer	ISS of BC	Settlement Worker
Michael Morris	WorkBC	Marketing and Community Liaison
Petra Frederick	City of Maple Ridge – Parks and Recreation	Community Engagement Coordinator
Sarah Jost	Fraser Valley Regional Library – Maple Ridge Branch	Librarian
Susan Foster	MCFD & Ridge Meadows Community Children’s Table	North Fraser Early Years Community Developer
Yves Chinnapen	Ridge Meadows Multicultural Society	President

## Appendix B: Key Informant Interview Guide

### Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows, Katzie Local Immigration Partnership Research Project

#### Key Informant Interview Guide

#### Section A: Background Information

**Organization Name:**

**Interviewee Name:**

**Interviewee Role/Position:**

**Time and Date of Interview:**

#### Section B: Organizational Perspective

- 1. Please briefly describe your organization's role in providing services to newcomers in Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows, and Katzie. What kinds of services do you provide?**

- a) Do you provide your services in any languages other than English? If so, which ones?**

- b) Approximately what percentage of your clients are newcomers (i.e. people who have lived in Canada for less than 5 years)?**

- c) Does your organization offer any training to staff or volunteers to work more effectively with newcomers (e.g. trauma informed practice, mental health, cultural competency, etc.)?**

**2. What are your organization’s greatest successes in working with newcomers?**

**3. What have been your organization’s greatest challenges in working with newcomers?**

**4. What would most help your organization handle these challenges?**

**Section C: Community Perspective**

**5. How would you describe the overall state of the services you are most familiar with for newcomers?**

**a) From your perspective, which services are most available and accessible to newcomers? What is working well?**

**b) From your perspective, where are there gaps in services? Are there barriers to accessing services?**

**c) What is unique about the newcomer experience in the Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows local context?**

d) Have there been any major changes in Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows in the past 3-5 years that have impacted services for newcomers in the City?

6. Are there particular challenges for certain newcomer populations (e.g. by visa type, gender, age, etc.?)

7. What are the biggest challenges for newcomers resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic?

**Section D: Priorities for Action**

8. What would you say are the top three to five priorities for improving services for newcomers in the community?

9. What do organizations need to serve newcomers more effectively during the COVID-19 pandemic?

10. Do you have any additional comments you would like to share?

**Thank you for your participation!**

## Appendix C: Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows, Katzie Nations Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) Research Project: Focus Group Guide

Name of Focus Group Moderator:

Time and Date of Focus Group:

Thank you to everyone for being willing to take part in this. I especially appreciate you giving up some time in what I know is a very unusual and busy time with COVID 19.

The Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows, and Katzie Local Immigration Partnership has recently received funding to do research on the needs and experiences of newcomers in our community. The most important part of this research work is hearing directly from new immigrants like you. Any information or suggestions you can share will help the entire community better welcome and support newcomers in Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows, and Katzie.

Participating in this conversation is entirely voluntary. You may skip any question you do not want to answer, and you may leave the conversation at any point. I should also mention that we will not identify you - we will be pulling ideas only.

We also know that the pandemic may have changed your experiences and needs in the last few months. We ask that when you answer these questions, try to acknowledge if your answer would be different before COVID-19.

We will be in touch soon after this focus group to provide a \$20 honorarium to each of you to say thank you so much for participating.

Before we begin, I would like to take the time to establish some ground rules for this focus group:

1. Be respectful of others while they are speaking
2. There are no right or wrong answers
3. Try to stay on topic
4. Make space for everyone to contribute to the conversation equally
5. Protect the privacy of others by not discussing this conversation outside of this group

## **Interview Questions**

- 1.** How long have you lived in Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows? How long have you lived in Canada?
- 2.** What would you say to a friend who was considering moving to Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows from your home country?
- 3.** Thinking back to when you first came to Canada, what were the biggest surprises?
- 4.** What was easy about moving to Canada?
- 5.** What was hard about moving to Canada?
- 6.** What do you think would make settling in Maple Ridge or Pitt Meadows easier for new immigrants?

**Thank you for your participation!**



## Appendix D: Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows, Katzie Nations Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) Research Project: One-on-One Engagement Guide

### Section A: Instructions

**Goal of this work:** To support the Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows & Katzie Nations Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) and other community stakeholders to better understand and address the needs of newcomers in their communities.

**How:**

1. Community (agency/organization) Staff, who have current relationships with newcomer populations will use the interview guide to gather feedback through one-on-one telephone or safe in-person dialogues.
2. A sample introduction statement is included at the top of the interview guide. It is important the person you are speaking with knows that the process is **voluntary** and that their responses are completely **anonymous**.
3. The interview guide can be completed in bullet form (does not need to be word for word).
4. The interview does not need to be formal – it is a conversation.
5. Send completed interview guides ASAP to Monica Petek – [mpetek@sparc.bc.ca](mailto:mpetek@sparc.bc.ca)
6. If you have any questions, please contact either Monica Petek or Carolina Echeverri [msc@familyed.ca](mailto:msc@familyed.ca)

Thank you for your help with this important work!

## Section B: Background Information

Name of Agency Interviewing:

Time and Date of Interview:

## Section C: Introductions

Thank you so much for agreeing to talk with me. I really appreciate your giving your time.

The Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows, and Katzie Local Immigration Partnership, which is a group of organizations in the community who work together to support newcomers, has received some funding to do research on the needs and experiences of newcomers in our community.

The most important part of this research work is hearing directly from new immigrants like you. Any information or suggestions you can share will help the entire community better welcome and support newcomers in Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows, and Katzie.

Participating in this conversation is entirely voluntary. You do not have to participate if you do not want. You may skip any question you do not want to answer, and you may end the conversation at any point. I should also mention that we will not identify you – your responses are anonymous and we will be pulling ideas only.

We also know that the pandemic may have changed your experiences and needs in the last few months. We ask that when you answer these questions, try to acknowledge if your answer would be different before COVID-19.

## Section D: Interview Questions

1. How long have you lived in Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows? How long have you lived in Canada?
2. What would you say to a friend who was considering moving to Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows from your home country?
3. Thinking back to when you first came to Canada, what were the biggest surprises?
4. What was easy about moving to Canada?
5. What was hard about moving to Canada?
6. What do you think would make settling in Maple Ridge or Pitt Meadows easier for new immigrants?

**Thank you for your participation!**

Forward completed interview guides ASAP to Monica Petek – [mpetek@sparc.bc.ca](mailto:mpetek@sparc.bc.ca)