



Multicultural Mural on Canada Post Building in Downtown Vernon

Feasibility Study for a Multicultural Place in Vernon, BC

Community-Led Consultation

March 1, 2014

**Prepared For:
Social Planning Council of the North Okanagan
Vernon and District Immigrant Services Society**

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*This project is made possible through funding from the
Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia*

Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	3
Background Information	3
Overall Vision	3
2. KEY FINDINGS	4
3. POPULATION TRENDS	5
Statistics and Background Information	5
Where to Find Services in Vernon for New Immigrants	6
4. REVIEW OF MULTICULTURAL CENTRES AND OTHER FEASIBILITY STUDIES	7
Reviewed Multicultural Societies/Centres	7
Environmental Scan of Other Feasibility Studies	9
5. METHODOLOGY	10
List of Stakeholders/Individuals/Representatives/Potential Users	10
Recruiting Stakeholders	10
6. USERS INTERVIEWS/NEEDS/PARTICIPATION	11
Feedback from New Immigrants to Vernon, BC	11
Feedback from Multicultural Groups/Associations in Vernon, BC	11
7. COMMUNITY SNAP SURVEY	13
The Snap Survey Design	13
Survey Analysis	13
Comments by Survey Participants	14
Changes to the Snap Survey after it was posted	15
Limitations of the Study	16
8. REVIEWED PROPERTIES AND SITES	16
9. FUNDING RESOURCES	17
Conclusions about Funding Opportunities	19
10. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	20
11. APPENDICES	23
Appendix A	23
Appendix B	24
Appendix C	25
Appendix D	26
Appendix E	31
Appendix F	34
Appendix G	35
Appendix H	36
Appendix I	37
Appendix J	38
12. REFERENCES	39
Websites	39
Publications	42
13. LISTS	43
Tables List	43
Appendices List	43

1. INTRODUCTION

Background Information

In the fall of 2012, the Province of BC launched a program called Welcoming Communities with the purpose of creating welcoming and inclusive communities for new immigrants throughout BC. 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. It is important to support new immigrants and ensure they feel valued and part of local communities.

Social Planning Council for the North Okanagan (SPCNO) is the host agency for the Welcoming Communities Vernon Program and this feasibility study is one of seven projects that falls under the umbrella of this initiative. In January of 2013, a community consultation was held with over 30 participants attending to provide feedback into the development of a Welcoming Communities Action Plan. One of the key participants in the community consultation was Vernon and District Immigrant Services Society (VDISS) who identified the need for a Multicultural Centre where new immigrants could meet informally and connect with the wider community. It was agreed by the Steering Committee that a feasibility study for a Multicultural Center should be funded under the Welcoming Communities Vernon Program.

The purpose of the feasibility study was to engage stakeholders, identify the vision and goals for a Multicultural Centre in Vernon, and then further investigate if the necessary resources, partnerships and funding are available to move forward with the project. Given the potentially wide scope of the project, it was expected that there would be short, intermediate and long-term strategies for implementing the vision of a Multicultural Centre in Vernon.

During initial consultations with stakeholders, it was decided to call the Multicultural Centre a Multicultural Place in order to stay focused on a conceptual level rather than attaching the study to a physical structure. From henceforth, we will refer to it as a Multicultural Place. This study follows the definitions of the terms: “Culture”, “Multicultural Society in Canada”, and “Multiculturalism in British Columbia”, as stated by UNESCO and the Federal and Provincial Governments of Canada (refer to Appendix A for definitions).

Our team, Dr. Dalia Gottlieb-Tanaka and Mineo Tanaka, B.A., B.Arch., was appointed by the Social Planning Council for the North Okanagan as consultants to facilitate this feasibility study, to be submitted by March 1, 2014 (refer to Appendix C for consultant biographies).

Overall Vision

In consultation with stakeholders and community groups, the following vision began to emerge:

A welcoming and inclusive space where immigrants and the wider community can meet, learn about cultures, celebrate diversity and connect to multicultural events.

In addition, three broad goals were identified:

- Provide a welcoming drop-in space where new immigrants can meet and recreate in an informal setting.

- Provide multicultural groups access to space for workshops, events and festivities.
- Provide the wider community and immigrants opportunities to connect, learn about other cultures, and take part in multicultural activities and events.

Vernon and District Immigrant Services Society provides settlement services, employment services and English language classes to new immigrants. Many of Vernon's new immigrants have benefitted from their services and have been provided a place to connect with other newcomers and learn about their new community. VDISS has identified that more is needed to meet the social and recreational needs of their clients. Ideally, there should also be a drop-in space where one feels welcome, whether for checking the internet, meeting a friend for coffee or making new contacts and networking. In addition, new immigrants would have access to recreational activities and be provided opportunities to connect with the wider community.

Stakeholders, such as multicultural associations added to this concept and have identified a need for a gathering place that will celebrate cultural diversity through displays and demonstrations of visual and performing arts, such as art exhibits, theatre and dance. The Multicultural Place would provide ongoing opportunities for sharing ethnic culinary experiences, holding special events, such as the Fiesta celebration by the Filipino community, teaching languages and sharing customs.

In addition, new Immigrants and the wider community have voiced an interest in having a place where all citizens can come together and learn about each other's cultures. There is an appetite from both the multicultural associations as well as the general population to host multicultural events that are open to the entire community and build understanding and mutual respect between diverse community members.

2. KEY FINDINGS

- The immigrant population in Vernon is relatively small but significant. In the future, the Province of BC will be relying on immigration to meet a projected skills shortage and provide investment and entrepreneurship to ensure the social and economic health of our province. As a result, the City of Vernon will be competing with other communities to attract and retain newcomers to our municipality.
- Vernon and District Immigrant Services Society provides significant programs and services to immigrants and newcomers in our community. This organization has identified a gap in providing informal recreation and social opportunities for new immigrants to meet and connect with the wider community. This gap has been verified by the research conducted in this study.
- There are currently a number of active multicultural groups and associations that have need for space to host activities and events. However, there is not enough financial capacity at this time to pursue a standalone multicultural centre. This finding is verified when other similar sized communities with similar demographics are compared to Vernon.
- There is an interest from the wider community in taking part in multicultural activities and events. There is support for an identified multicultural place if financial considerations can be addressed.
- Partnerships are key in moving forward with the vision and goals of a multicultural place in Vernon. Potential partnerships, locations and funding sources have been identified as part of the results of this feasibility study.

3. POPULATION TRENDS

Statistics and Background Information

The aim of this feasibility study was to collect information to help determine whether or not there is a need and a desire to establish a Multicultural Place in Vernon. Statistics on Vernon's population were collected from Canada Census, with background information extracted from relevant studies and surveys conducted by the City of Vernon and hired consultants.

According to the *Economic Development Strategy* (2010) prepared by the City of Vernon, it was stated that Vernon was showing strong population growth with a predicated 40% increase, estimating Vernon's population at 54,000 by the year 2028. We extrapolated from the Canada Census (2006) that Vernon residents have a relatively high average of age; in 2006, the median age in the City of Vernon reached 44.5 years while BC's provincial median age was lower at 40.8 years. In the *Economic Development Strategy* (2010), it was predicated that in 2028, almost 1 in 3 people will be 65+ years and constitute 50% of the working age population.

The same study found the economic base of Vernon to be stable, entrepreneurial, and diversified. Measured by the BC province on health, income, crime rate and education, it was found that Vernon has a positive quality of life; however, there were concerns about the state of the forestry industry, the decline of the labour force and high housing costs.

Based on the Canada Census (2006), we found the following statistics on immigration to Vernon:

- Of the 35,944 people reported living in Vernon in 2006, 4,180 or 11.63% were immigrants
- 1,809 new immigrants arrived between 1996-2006

Since data from the Canadian Census (2006) was approximately 7 years old at the time this study was conducted, we turned to data from the *Welcoming Communities Action Plan* (2013). To access this background paper, which utilized data provided by the Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), please refer to the following link: www.socialplanning.ca

According to the above source, of the 200,000 immigrants who came to BC between 2005-2009, the majority of immigrants chose Mainland – Southwest as their initial destination. Of the remaining 10% of immigrants, half chose Vancouver Island – Coast and a quarter chose Thompson – Okanagan. As such, approximately 2,500 new immigrants settled in the Thompson-Okanagan area. Exact numbers of new immigrants who arrived in Vernon in recent years is hard to find; however, based on Canadian Census, we can conclude that the Thompson-Okanagan is not a major destination for new immigrants in BC.

New immigrants to Vernon by country of origin between January 1, 2001 and May 16, 2006, from Backgrounder, Social Planning Council of the North Okanagan, January 2013, were as follows:

- 125 new immigrants arrived from Asia and Middle East
- 90 new immigrants arrived from the United States of America
- 45 new immigrants arrived from Europe
- 90% of the 330 new immigrants spoke English
- 40% said English was their mother language

Different data was captured from different time periods but the overall data does show an increase of Newcomers. Canada census statistics outcomes are based on census responses. Newcomers could have been migrating from one Province to another or moving from one city to another which may not have been captured in the census. VDISS captures Newcomers and migration statistics by those who access settlement services.

Table 2. Visible Minority Population Characteristics in Comparison to Vernon’s Total Population

Total Population	35,145*	Total Visible minority	1,605
Chinese	330	South Asian	710
Black	125	Filipino	55
Latin American	60	Southeast Asian	60
Arab	10	West Asian	50
Korean	20	Japanese	165

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census
 Note: Not all visible minorities are immigrants

Table 3. Countries of Client Visits to VDISS (2011-2013)

Countries of Client Visits to VDISS (2011-2013)			
India Punjabi	102	Germany German	87
Philippines Tagalog	76	China Mandarin Cantonese	58
Russia Russian	42	USA English	42
UK English	32	Japan Japanese	29
Pakistan Urdu/Punjabi	24	Mexico Spanish	20
Holland Dutch	19	Columbia Spanish	16
Ukraine Ukrainian	10	Vietnam Vietnamese	5

Source: VDISS

Where to Find Services in Vernon for New Immigrants

New immigrants looking for assistance in the Vernon area can turn to the following organizations:

The Vernon and District Immigrant Services Society (VDISS)

The VDISS provides immigrant settlement and adaptation services as follows:

- English as a Second Language services
- National Assessment Centre: Canadian Language Benchmark Placement Testing site
- Beginner, intermediate and advanced classes
- English as a Second Language Tutor Instruction: one to one and group sessions
- Basic interpretation and translation services
- Information and orientation: provides guidance and information to newcomers required to meet everyday needs, housing, banking, shopping, access to social and health services, their rights and obligations in Canada, assistance with adjustment into the community, assistance with filling out forms and applications, information about community services and education
- Employment supports for job search, resumes and cover letters, career planning and employment counselling, foreign credential recognition processes, labour market information and interview skills, skills development and training
- Workshops include Life in Canada, Canadian Citizenship instruction, basic computer instruction, employment, life-skills and education
- Field trips and orientation to local community
- Intercultural, interfaith, family and recreational activities, cultural celebrations
- On-site licensed childcare for clients accessing services

www.vdiss.com

NexusBC (formerly 'North Okanagan Employment Enhancement Society')

NexusBC offers *Skills Connect for Immigrants Program*, which:

- Helps navigate an unfamiliar labour market
- Helps overcome barriers in finding jobs to match immigrant current skills, qualifications and experience
- Is designed for landed immigrants who have been in Canada for approximately five (5) years or less and have moderate to strong English language ability

www.nexusbc.ca

4. REVIEW OF MULTICULTURAL CENTRES AND OTHER FEASIBILITY STUDIES

Reviewed Multicultural Societies/Centres

An online search revealed numerous multicultural facilities. We selected ten Multicultural Societies/Centres in BC, ON and California and reviewed their space requirements and the kind of services provided. For this feasibility study, four Canadian Multicultural Centres were studied (refer to Appendix D for further details).

- 1) The Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre, Kitchener, ON
- 2) The North Bay and District Multicultural Centre, North Bay, ON
- 3) The Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society, Nanaimo, BC
- 4) Richmond Multicultural Community Services, Richmond, BC

The first three examples were selected as they were situated in communities similar in size to Vernon. They were reviewed for their programs, services and building layout. It was observed that these three Centres rent or lease storefront in shared spaces within existing buildings.

The fourth Centre, in Richmond, BC, was selected for its wide variety of programs and services. In addition, it showed that even in a larger community, the offices are rented and services/events are spread out in other locations.

All four Centres share a common approach to absorption and settlement of new immigrants into Canada, which is also reflected in the official policy of the Government of Canada:

- Break down barriers to full participation of new Canadians and help them integrate in the community
- Assist clients with their specific needs
- Collaborate with other agencies who can provide additional assistance to clients
- Be a safe place where individuals can express concerns and ask questions
- Understand, strengthen and celebrate multiculturalism
- Work to eliminate racial discrimination and all other forms of exclusion and oppression
- Provide language interpretation to enable communication with non-English speaking clients
- Install a Family Outreach Program to assist low-income families with basic needs and to access information on resources available in the community
- Provide a Multicultural Placement Program to assist students for placement opportunities in colleges and universities
- Initiate the Healthy Lifestyle Ambassador (HLA) Programme as an initiative for multilingual youth aged 15 to 18.

From this information, it was concluded that VDISS provides similar services. Most do not have space for major recreational and special events to host them within their facilities. They have to go out into the community to obtain larger spaces that have the capacity to hold large numbers of people. It appears that these Centres and the official policy of the Government of Canada do not provide for a drop in space for informal social gathering in a relaxed atmosphere.

Table 4. List of Reviewed Multicultural Societies/Centres

List of Reviewed Multicultural Societies/Centres								
Name	Address	Website	Space	Meeting	Education	Recreation	Events	Programs
British Columbia								
Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society	101 - 319 Selby Street, Nanaimo, BC V9R 2R4	www.cvims.org	rent	✓	✓	×	×	×
Immigrant & Multicultural Services Society	1270 - 2nd Ave., Prince George, BC V2L 3B3	www.imss.ca	rent	✓	✓	×	×	×
Kamloops Multicultural Society	P.O. Box 1515, Kamloops, BC V2C 6L8	www.kamloopsmulticulturalsociety.ca	P.O. Box	×	×	□	□	×
Penticton & District Multicultural Society*	508 Main Street, Penticton, BC V2A 5C7	www.soics.ca	rent	✓	✓	×	×	×
Richmond Multicultural Community Services	210 – 7000 Minoru Blvd., Richmond, BC V6Y 3Z5	www.rmcs.bc.ca	rent	✓	×	×	×	×
Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society	3rd Floor - 637 Bay Street, Victoria, BC V8T 5L2	www.vircs.bc.ca	rent	✓	✓	×	×	✓
Ontario								
North Bay & District Multicultural Centre	100 Main Street East, North Bay, ON P1B 1A8	www.nbdmc.ca	rent	✓	✓	×	×	×
Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre	102 Kings St., W., Kitchener, ON N2G 1A6	www.kwmc.on.ca	rent	✓	✓	×	×	×
Timmins & District Multicultural Centre	12 Elm St., N., Timmins, ON P4N 6A1	www.timminsmulticultural.ca	rent	✓	✓	×	×	×
California								
Skirball Cultural Centre**	2701 N. Sepuleda Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90049	www.skirball.org	own	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Legend: ✓ = space is provided x = space is outsourced □ = Japanese Hall in Kamloops

*The South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services (SOICS) is an operating arm of the Penticton & District Multicultural Society.

**The Skirball Cultural Centre is an example to work towards.

There is not a clear definition between multicultural activities and immigration services in the above table of organizations.

Environmental Scan of Other Feasibility Studies

An environmental scan was conducted of community initiatives and/or municipal policies that are relevant towards the creation of a Multicultural Place. Given that partnerships are key to the success of this project, it is important to understand how the concept of a Multicultural Place fits into existing amenities and future initiatives.

The following documents were reviewed for their data collection methodology, survey delivery, analysis of programming, and best practices:

- 1) Feasibility Study for a Beaverton Multicultural Center, Beaverton, Oregon (August 30, 2011)**
Beaverton is a suburb of Portland, Oregon. Although the population there is approximately 100,000 people, which is double the population in Vernon, this study was selected for its community-led approach to social projects within communities.

This study is for a full service Multicultural Centre, serving 25 community groups and includes a gymnasium, theater, wellness facilities, offices, training, and meeting rooms. In addition, a business incubation space, youth activities area and classrooms are proposed.

- 2) The Public Market Feasibility Study and Business Plan for Vernon, BC (October 2011)**
This study was reviewed for its detailed background information on the City of Vernon and for any synergies between the public market concept and a Multicultural Place in Vernon.

The public market concept includes plans for a commercial kitchen, café, restaurant and public space to complement the anchor businesses and market stalls for local growers. The project was of particular interest due to the recommendation that a non-profit society be engaged to run the public space. For the public market to be a success, the public space needs to be vibrant, active and engaging. Multicultural food fairs, art exhibits and workshops could compliment the goals for the public market.

- 3) The Vernon Public Art Gallery Feasibility Report (November 27, 2013)**
This report is especially valuable for its extensive study, descriptive history of past cultural centre initiatives in Vernon and potential synergies with this feasibility study for a multicultural place in Vernon.

Although the current plans for the Vernon Public Art Gallery (VPAG) to build a new facility in the downtown core precludes a formal partnership (the VPAG will not have additional space to rent), there could be other opportunities to collaborate. For example, there are grants available for multicultural projects with the arts that include a partnership between immigrant serving agencies and local art galleries.

For more information on the above feasibility studies and report, please refer to Appendix E.

In addition, research was conducted to better understand what the municipal and regional perspective may be on the concept of a multicultural place and how this might fit into future planning.

According to the goals of the *Economic Development Strategy* (2010), the following principles were found to fit well with the overall vision of a Multicultural Place. In addition, it also supported the goals of the *Welcoming Communities Action Plan* (2013). The goals of the City of Vernon relevant to our study were:

- The revitalization of Downtown Vernon with “showcase developments”

- A cultural community with a strong sense of place
- A learning environment that values creativity and innovation
- A public market to complement the existing Farmer’s Market, conference and convention centre and promote tourism
- A place to promote immigrant entrepreneurs
- The use of under-utilized sites that are still valuable
- A place in downtown Vernon to fulfill the needs for arts, culture and heritage function

In addition, the *Review of the Regional District of North Okanagan Greater Vernon Advisory Committee Meeting Report of Thursday, December 5, 2013* provided important information. This report covered in detail the history of previous initiatives that were submitted since 2005 to the City of Vernon in an effort to gain support of Council for the establishment of a Cultural Centre in Vernon. It contains important issues that will shape this feasibility study and the potentiality of a Multicultural Place in Vernon. The report also includes Council’s decisions over time regarding these initiatives and the role of the public at large in this process. We extracted relevant points to our feasibility study and they are described in the following list:

- The City of Vernon is aware of the interest in creating “a cultural hub/district/place” in Vernon
- The City of Vernon is supporting in principal the creation of a cultural hub in downtown Vernon
- The City of Vernon is clear about its wish to see collaboration amongst potential partners of complementary needs
- To date, two referendums failed to secure public support for the establishment of a cultural centre in Vernon

In conclusion, a Multicultural Place could have a role to play in the future planning for a cultural hub or district. This concept has complimentary goals and objectives to other projects that are currently proposed and could potentially provide value added programing and resources for future initiatives.

5. METHODOLOGY

List of Stakeholders/Individuals/Representatives/Potential Users

Over 40 people and organizations were interviewed in this feasibility study whether as potential partners, representatives of governmental offices, directors of art galleries or as private citizens (refer to Appendix I for the list of organizations). Most of the contacts were obtained by word of mouth and through interviews. The purpose of the interviews was to check the readiness and capacity within the community and especially within the various minority groups for the establishment of a Multicultural Place in Vernon. During the interview process, we discovered that people used the terms cultural centre and multicultural centre interchangeably even though they are different concepts. This was important to note and efforts were made to ensure that there was clarity on the multicultural focus of this feasibility study

Recruiting Stakeholders

In addition to the extensive interview process, a call for interest from the general public (refer to Appendix F for the call invitation) was delivered by word of mouth, personal invitation, phone calls and media publication. On September 22, 2013, a short article and an open invitation to the community were published in the local newspaper, *The Morning Star*, announcing an open meeting at the Vernon

Branch of the Okanagan Regional Library. Concurrently, a leaflet from the SPCNO in partnership with VDISS was sent out to targeted potential interest groups and individuals within the Vernon Community.

On September 25, 2013, the first meeting took place at the Okanagan Regional Public Library. Fourteen people registered on the sign-in sheet that day. Five of them were representing the City of Vernon and VDISS. The rest were individual residents of Vernon. The following are examples of their comments (refer to Appendix G for the full list of comments shared by participants):

- A need for a gathering place where they could congregate with their countrymen
- A place to practice their customs such as cultural festivals
- A place to provide ethnic food and cooking
- A place to dance
- A place to show films
- A place to feel safe and comfortable. To relax and meet others instead of meeting in shopping malls or on the streets

Although a follow up meeting with the group was arranged, it was noted that the response from the general public was low and did not reflect a wide variety of perspectives. In light of the small number of participants, it was recommended by the members of the group to shift the focus to a public survey (refer to Appendix H for the public survey). This way, more input could be gathered from a wider number of respondents.

6. POTENTIAL USER INTERVIEWS/NEEDS/PARTICIPATION

Feedback from New Immigrants to Vernon, BC

In the Welcoming Communities Public Spaces Audit Report new immigrants in Vernon confirmed the gap that VDISS had previously identified regarding the need for a more informal, recreational place to meet combined with an interest in multicultural events and connecting with the wider community. The following points were raised at a focus group (with 40 participants) held at VDISS in June 2013:

- A safe, clean, organized place to socialize (not necessarily a designated space for new immigrants) and be a part of the happening
- Outdoor, open space, green space and friendly layout of street furniture to encourage communication with everyone
- To be included in events such as food festivals, art exhibitions, fashion, workshops
- Create an international garden that will including international food festivals and cooking
- Provide a place and opportunities for foreign film nights
- Feeling safe and welcomed
- Child minding

Feedback from Multicultural Groups/Associations in Vernon, BC

The following table is based on five identified cultural groups who were interviewed to be potential partners. Most representatives were asked the following questions: How many people are in their organization, how many times they congregate in one year, how big the events are, are they open to the public at large, what happens in each event, do they need a stage to perform, if the answer is yes, how much space they may need for the performing act, storage for costumes and decorations and dressing rooms, would a commercial kitchen be needed, do they need administration offices and

whether they need to be private or could be shared with another organization, and would they mind sharing the place with other groups.

We did ask about their financial situation and if they would be able to commit to a monthly payment. At this stage of the study, we did not ask for commitment since most would have needed to take the idea of a Multicultural Place to their respective community for approval. The leaders expressed a keen interest in combining their efforts to make this project happen. However, in order to secure a financial commitment, each leader would need more information such as: potential venues; rental information; space availability; renovation needs, and the amount of funding required for start up costs.

The Japanese Cultural Society and the First Nations Friendship Centre were interviewed. Both declined to be full time partners because they have their own facilities, however, they expressed interest in participating in community events.

Other groups were identified: the Okanagan Indian Band, the Spallumcheen Indian Band, the Metis Community Services Society, the Sen'Klip Native Theatre Company, the Zirka Ukrainian Dancers, and the Ukrainian Rock Band. Interviews with these groups were not conducted as not all responded in time for the publication of this report.

Table 5. Multicultural Potential Partners and Their Needs

Multicultural Potential Partners and Their Needs																		
Uses	Assembly		Offices			Computer		Kitchen			Storage		Wellness	Studio			Overall Space Req	Comments
	Small	Larger	Private	Open	Shared	Training	Surfing	Staff	Commer	Small	Larger	Fitness	Exhibit	Art	Dance			
Vernon and District Immigrant Services Society (VDISS)	y	100	Y	Y	Y	5 working stations	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	M	M	7,000 sq.ft min	2 small offices, a reception/ waiting area, space for about 20 workstations for staff, child minding for 10 children, area for ESL instructions, Storage for furniture, cleaning equip and products, Small library (now 6'X10'), display area for information materials.	
Vernon Filipino Heritage Society	150	450			Y			Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	U	Need for large area for gathering. Community at large is attracted. Limited by the lack of commercial kitchen and no permanent home.	
Sadok Ukranian Dancers		500	Y					Y	Y		40' X 40'				40' X 40'	U	Need for large area for gathering. Community at large is attracted. Limited by the lack of commercial kitchen and no permanent home. Need for a large stage, storage area and for audience to sit.	
Vernon Punjabi Heritage Society		450			Y				Y		Y		Y	Y	Y	U	Need room for about 20 students in language school. Large stage for performances. They currently prepare food at homes or order from Vancouver. Would like to do more for the food bank. Dancers need costume storage.	
Kalamalka Highland Pipe Band		U	U								U					U	Interested but require more information on facility and operations.	

Legend: Y = Yes, it is desired M = Maybe U = Unknown

7. COMMUNITY SNAP SURVEY

The main aim of the Snap Survey was to harvest responses from the public at large whether or not there was support in principle for the establishment of a Multicultural Place in Vernon.

The Snap Survey Design

- The survey went through 3 different discussion groups before it was launched: input was received during a meeting with the Advisory Group on November 7, 2013, input from Annette Sharkey, Executive Director, Social Planning Council for the North Okanagan (see Appendix I) and Carol Wutzke, Executive Director at Vernon and District Immigrants Services Society, and suggestions during a meeting with the Welcome Community Steering Committee.
- Early on, it was decided the survey needed to be short (less than 5 minutes to fill in), easy to reply to, anonymous and basically designed to capture a general feel within the public whether or not there was support for such a project.
- Automatic start and end date of the Survey Form were assigned between November 25, 2013 and December 15, 2013 at midnight.
- The survey data was also collected centrally and could be exported into various formats (xls, txt, csv) at the end of the survey period.
- A Graphic report was generated to help with the evaluation of the data collected.
- The form was designed to be responsive and therefore could work on any Smartphone or other devices.

Survey Analysis

- 82 responses were delivered on hard copy forms and 66 came from on-line responses. In total, 148 responses were collected. The survey on-line and the hard copies contained the same questions; although, graphically, they did differ from each other.
- Hard copies were collected at the Schubert Centre, at the VDISS office and from individuals who were approached randomly. Since the on-line survey did not identify the source of the sender, we could not tell where they came from. Hard copies on the other hand, did have more information because of direct contact with the interviewees.
- Participants were not restricted to one response only. The number of people who supported it measured the importance of each item. It was then tabulated in a list showing which item got the most votes.

Table 6. Summary of Snapshot Survey Form Responses

Question	# of Yes	# of No	# of Unsure	# left blank	# of Forms Submitted
Are you interested in a space where immigrants and community members can meet, learn about other cultures, and connect to culture events?	92	10	19	27	148

Table 7. Number of People Expressing Interest

Background/Demographics	
Interested in attending multicultural events (performances and festivals)	81
Interested in learning about other cultures (speakers, workshops)	72
Resident of Greater Vernon	100
Belong to a Multicultural group/association	19
Immigrated to Canada (less than 10 years ago)	15
Immigrated to Canada (more than 10 years ago)	26

Table 8. Type of Activity Arranged by Ranking Vote

List of Priority	Type of Activity	# in Support
1	Food Fairs	81
2	Festivals	70
3	Cooking Classes	62
4	Art Shows	61
5	An informal place to meet, get informed, have coffee and connect with new immigrants	53
6	Attend workshops and speakers	52
7	Seniors Activities.	50
8	Family Activities	47
9	Dance Classes	45
10	Dances	44
11	Art Classes	40
11	Exercise Classes	40
12	Language Classes	32
13	Youth Activity	23
14	Child Care	15

Table 9. Distribution by Age, Gender and Family Status (after the changes to the survey)

Less than 19	19-29	30-45	46-65	65+	Male	Female	Single	Family
0	1	16	24	6	7	36	5	29

Comments by Survey Participants

On-line comments:

- “So many of these (surveys, requests) in the past have been well meaning attempts, but ultimately they fizzle out. Figure out how to keep it alive, maybe with the public market concept.”
- “Would be wonderful to have a place like this one where all can meet and learn from each other”.
- “It would be nice to see a facility that can host both day programs specific to meeting multicultural needs and events/activities that invite in the broader community, as well as accommodate the need for individual cultural groups to have their own "space".”

- “When and where will the results be published?”
- “It would be great to NOT have a costly space, but to rent space for events from churches etc.”
- “There are many adults in this community that are neither part of a family unit nor a senior. This needs to be considered when planning programs.”
- “Already have Immigration Services and there is never any monies available to do anything bigger. Anything constructed just costs more to upkeep and more admin costs.”
- “We are in desperate need of more programs and opportunities to teach and learn about other cultures in this area. I have found that when it comes to diversity, Vernon likes to pretend it welcomes it when inside the community people are actually very ignorant and racist when it comes to cultures and ways of life different from the Judaeo-Christian norm. We need to promote opportunities for open mindedness and fellowship with vigour and really, truly create a welcoming community. Thank you for doing this work!

Hard copy comments:

- “I would love have a place where we could meet each other to practice sport, exercise”
- “An interchange of cultures. I am very interested.”
- “Asking to include demographics”
- “When and where will be the results be published?”
- “Canada needs to stop bringing in people and start taking care of her own. These immigrants are treated 100% better than CANADIANS”
- “Fantastic idea. Actually, a must!!”
- “Learning other cultures would help others to understand and comprehend one another.”

Changes to the Snap Survey after it was posted

The survey questions went through changes as it was designed and input was sought from various stakeholders. Some changes were implemented after the survey was posted on the websites, thus producing some results that were not included in the first 58 responses. In particular, including demographic information such as age, gender and family status. It was decided to go ahead with the changes since the additional questions were important to the background information of the interviewees.

Table 10. Survey Findings: Total of 148 Responses

Question	# of Responses (out of 148)	% of Responses (Based on # of Responses)	Comments
Affiliated with a multicultural group or a specific association	19	14.72	Mostly left unanswered
Immigrated to Canada within the last 10 years	15	11.28	Mostly left unanswered
Liked the idea of having a space where immigrants and the community at large could meet	92	76.03	Strong support for the idea of having a multicultural place
Opposed the idea of having a designated space	10	8.26	Only few opposed to the idea
Unsure about having a space where immigrants and the community at large could meet	19	14.72	Only few were unsure

Supported seniors' activities	50	33.78	Strong support for seniors' activities
Supported child care amenity to be included in such a place	15	11.28	Low support for child care
Food Fairs (1)	81	54.72	Top desired activity in a multicultural place
Festivals (2)	70	47.29	Second desired activity
Cooking Classes (3)	62	41.89	Third desired activity
Art Shows (4)	61	41.21	Fourth desired activity

Comments made by some participants revealed a concern for the potential cost of such a development if tax payers were expected to contribute. However, the majority of the comments were in support of establishing a place for new immigrants and the community at large where they could meet.

Limitations of the Study

It is understood that a survey this size provides a snapshot of opinions and that the results cannot be used conclusively due to the small number of responses. It can be challenging to engage community members in these types of surveys and it would take more resources and time to survey a wider sample. In addition, the demographics show a gap in responses from youth and from men. The majority of people who took part were over the age of 30 and predominately female. Despite these limitations, the results did reveal significant support for the concept of a multicultural place from those who took part and provided an indication of the types of events and activities residents find interesting and would like to see offered in the community.

8. REVIEWED PROPERTIES AND SITES

Numerous existing buildings and sites were inspected for building area size to see if they can accommodate offices, meeting rooms, educational and recreational spaces, large area for special events, additional programs and storage, distance from Polson Greenway and Downtown Vernon, and whether they are privately or publically owned. (refer to Appendix J for a list of reviewed properties and sites).

As has been noted, there is not enough user group demand and financial capacity at this time to establish a stand-alone centre that will meet all the current goals for a multicultural place. Instead, the review of properties focused on how to increase Vernon and District Immigrant Services capacity to provide recreational and social opportunities for new Immigrants and perhaps rent space to multicultural groups for smaller events and activities.

At this point in time, Vernon and District Immigrant Services has maximized their current space for their existing programs and services. They currently have a reception area, computer lab, offices for settlement services and employment counselling, a small kitchen, handicapped accessible washrooms,

two classrooms for ESL classes and a licensed child minding room. In order to expand recreational and social opportunities, the agency would need to find space that provides all the previously listed amenities plus: a larger kitchen/drop in space; an extra classroom that could potentially be rented out to multicultural groups; and preferably easy access to green space and/or recreational amenities.

The new location would need to be rented at a similar cost as the old location as there are few funding sources that would provide ongoing support for additional rent. VDISS would not be able to meet the needs of the multicultural groups for a larger space for dances or festivals but may be able to provide smaller spaces for other activities such as workshops, meeting space and language training. Although there may be some additional rental income from other multicultural groups who use the space, it is not clear that there would be a continuous monthly rental source for additional funding.

A number of locations were explored, including city owned property, but the initial renovation costs were too high to make a move viable. One location with interesting potential was the West Vernon facility (owned by the North Okanagan Child Care Society), which will soon have classrooms available for rent and is located next to green space and a community garden. However, the West Vernon facility is outside of the downtown core (unlike VDISS's current location) and the rental rates are not known at this time.

9. FUNDING RESOURCES

We divided funding resources that supported community initiatives into five categories: 1) federal; 2) provincial; 3) municipal; 4) private; and 5) corporate foundations. This list is based on agencies we checked for their relevance to this study. Each agency may change their policy and eligibility requirements from one call to another.

In regards to federal financial support, it was stated in the *Welcoming Communities Action Plan* (p. 9) that for "all jurisdictions outside of Quebec, funding for settlement services is allocated based on the proportion of immigrants in each jurisdiction." As such, federal funding opportunities from now on will depend on the number of new immigrants arriving in the Vernon area. While writing this report, plans to transfer the management of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) from the provincial government of British Columbia and Manitoba back to the federal government were already underway and many uncertainties came into play.

The website (<http://grantconnect.ca/Home/Info/1>) is an excellent source of information of numerous grant agencies. Any serious grant seeker will find it very valuable. The website (<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/annual-report-2012/section4.asp>) is another comprehensive list. However, some websites turned out to be faulty or discontinued. We extracted relevant websites for potential grant applications:

Table 11. Relevant Funding Organizations

Relevant Funding Organizations						
Name of Organization and Website	Federal	Provincial	Municipal	Private Foundation	Corporate Foundation	Amount
Citizenship and Immigration Canada http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/multiculturalism/funding/index.asp	✓					
Ministry of Social Development and Minister Responsible for Multiculturalism http://www.gov.bc.ca/sdsi/	✓					
Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training, Immigrant Integration Branch http://www.gov.bc.ca/jtst/	✓					
Interior Health Authority http://planh.ca/training-support/health-authority-support/interior-health-authority		✓				
Provincial Employees Community Fund http://www2.gov.bc.ca/myhr/content_hub.page?ContentID=bfced40f-9cb3-f638-9181-d7d99653a420		✓				
The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation http://www.eia.gov.bc.ca/social-innovation/index.htm		✓				
Royal Bank of Canada http://www.rbc.com/community-sustainability/apply-for-funding/					✓	
City of Vernon http://www.vernon.ca/services/finance/documents/CouncilDiscretionaryGrantApp.pdf			✓			
United Way http://unitedwaynocs.com/contact				✓		
University of BC https://news.ok.ubc.ca/2007/10/26/deepak-binning-foundation-creates-250000-scholarship-endowment-at-ubc-okanagan/					✓	
Okanagan College http://www.castanet.net/news/Campus-Life/102109/Okanagan-College-Foundation-hands-out-thousands-of-dollars-to-Vernon-students					✓	
India Canada Cultural Association http://www.iccavictoria.com/				✓		
BC Gaming http://www.gaming.gov.bc.ca/grants/		✓				
Telus Community Board http://about.telus.com/community/en/donations/					✓	
BidBC http://www.bcbid.gov.bc.ca/open.dll/welcome		✓				
National Bank Canada http://www.altamira.com/bnc/cda/productfamily/0,2664,divId-2_langId-1_navCode-18168,00.html					✓	
Max Bell Foundation http://www.maxbell.org/					✓	
Bombardier Foundation http://csr.bombardier.com/en/supporting-communities					✓	
The Samuel and Saidye Bronfman Family Foundation https://chimp.net/charities/the-samuel-and-saidye-bronfman-family-					✓	

foundation						
Air Canada Foundation http://www.aircanada.com/en/about/community/foundation/index.html#.UqbcEssWLIU					✓	
Canadian Tire http://corp.canadiantire.ca/EN/MAD/Pages/default.aspx					✓	
Coast Capital Savings https://www.coastcapitalsavings.com/About_Coast_Capital_Savings/Helping_Communities/					✓	
Columbia Institute Foundation http://www.columbiainstitute.ca/about-us/columbia-foundation					✓	
Community Foundation of the North Okanagan http://www.cfno.org					✓	
The Donner Canadian Foundation Awards http://www.donnerawards.org/main/index.php					✓	
Maytree for Leaders for Change http://maytree.com/					✓	
The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation http://www.mcconnellfoundation.ca/en/granting				✓		
The Mclean Foundation http://mcleanfoundation.ca/applications.html				✓		
Novell http://www.novell.com/company/cr/corporate_giving.html					✓	

An online search discovered an additional website with a comprehensive list for grant seekers in BC. The search can be adjusted to each initiative needs (https://thefundingportal.com/searches/list_search).

Conclusions about Funding Opportunities

An in depth search on-line for relevant grant agencies revealed numerous potential opportunities for financial help, yet in reality, the competition is great and the ratio number of successful applications is low. In addition, most funding tends to be project based, short term and onetime only. Very few cover ongoing operating costs such as rent and/or full time staff positions.

As has been previously noted, VDISS could only likely provide additional recreational opportunities if they can expand their current space without incurring additional rental costs. Although there may be some rental income if some of their space can be rented to multicultural groups, there is not enough of a projected cash flow to guarantee an increase in rent. The most likely option is to find a location that offers non-profit rental rates and/or partner with other organizations for shared use of recreational amenities.

10. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The City of Vernon is growing and so are the needs of its residents. By helping new immigrants or newcomers, we, as a society, invest in ourselves. Governmental literature and academic research claim that in order to become a prosperous society it is essential to assist new immigrants to integrate into our society.

In researching information for this feasibility study it was realized that none of the existing Immigrant serving societies and/or multicultural associations in smaller communities had an ideal situation. However, they manage to bring an essential service to people who need support to make a successful transition into their new community. In addition, multicultural places do not just cater to new immigrants. Many seek to engage the wider community and act as a bridge for people to connect and learn about other cultures.

The following conclusions are based on information collected from the survey, interviews with individuals and key players in various organizations in Vernon, discussions with new immigrants as well as with old time residents, a review of historical documents, reports, other feasibility studies as well as an understanding of the financial limitations of VDISS and other multicultural groups and associations. Creative thinking is a key element in trying to bring together energies, knowledge, funding, and collaborations.

New Understandings

- We learned from the survey and from interviews that there were no objections to the creation of a multicultural place in Vernon. Close to 80% who responded to the survey were in favour. However, there were concerns about the potential cost of such a development if tax payers were expected to contribute.
- All of the interviewees expressed a desire to continue to open up to the community at large and invite anyone who would like to share their traditions. This would go well with the survey responses where the top 3 popular activities, with a fourth right behind (food fairs, festivals, cooking classes and art shows) were items of interest that would attract the community at large to those festivities.
- We did find new immigrants to be very resourceful, community oriented, and having a keen interest in being a Canadian while at the same time preserving their heritage and sharing it.
- There is a strong desire of ethnic groups (Punjabi and Filipino), as expressed by their elected leaders, to have a place they could congregate and celebrate their customs. Yet, the response to the survey was very low and thus did not reflect those desires which were expressed strongly during eye-to-eye interviews. To access the broader ethnic communities we recommend conducting personal interviews, hosting small group gatherings, or attending board meetings if possible.
- Excitement was generated during interviews when the idea of a public market came into the conversations. The idea of amalgamating similar and complementary groups under one inclusive project seemed to stir energy and intense interest.

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been made based on the identified vision and goals for a multicultural place in Vernon:

Vision

A welcoming and inclusive space where immigrants and the wider community can meet, learn about cultures, celebrate diversity and connect to multicultural events.

Goals

- Provide a welcoming drop-in space where new immigrants can meet and recreate in an informal setting.
- Provide the multicultural groups access to spaces for workshops, events and festivities.
- Provide the wider community and immigrants opportunities to connect, learn about other cultures, and take part in multicultural activities and events.

1) Short/Intermediate Goals

- Vernon and District Immigrant Services Society run multiple programs from their current location and have maximized the use of their existing space. Should VDISS consider moving location, they may be able to expand the recreational and social aspect of their programs. In addition to what VDISS's current location already provides (classrooms, offices, licensed child-minding room, small kitchen), a new location would ideally also have a large drop-in space with expanded kitchen facilities, more classroom space that could be rented to groups in the evening and be close to green space and/or other community recreational services.
- With a new expanded location, VDISS would be able to provide space for multicultural associations to hold activities such as workshops, meetings and language training. This could provide additional rental income for VDISS but it is not clear that there would be a continuous monthly income source; therefore, the new location would need to be rented at a similar cost as the old location. The additional recreational space, however, could lead to other opportunities and a chance to explore social enterprises.
- A number of locations were explored including the West Vernon facility (owned by the North Okanagan Child Care Society) which will soon have classrooms available for rent and is located next to green space and a community garden. This site has some interesting potential due to the existing recreation amenities. However, the West Vernon facility is outside of the downtown core (unlike VDISS's current location) and the rental rates are not known at this time.
- There are a number of multicultural activities and events that already take place in Vernon. It seems that for the time being, multicultural associations will continue to depend on existing rental facilities to host larger events. In order to highlight existing events, it would be beneficial to have a multicultural calendar of events hosted by Vernon Tourism, the Morning Star's community calendar and/or by the Welcoming Communities website.
- Reviving or establishing a Multicultural Society in Vernon would serve well in future endeavors. This could be a standalone society or part of VDISS as a presiding society. Currently, individual multicultural groups and associations are organizing and marketing their events and activities separately. An umbrella society could assist in building relationships between multicultural groups and increasing capacity through partnerships and shared resources. A Multicultural Society could take a leadership role in partnering with other organizations to host multicultural events (for example, the Vernon Public Art Gallery, Performing Arts Centre, Vernon Winter Carnival, Downtown Vernon Association) and raise the profile of multiculturalism in the wider community.

2) Intermediate/Long Term

- Partnership with the City of Vernon is highly desirable. Ideally, the concept of a multicultural place will be included in the long term planning for the City Centre Neighbourhood in particular with any plans to create and/or expand a cultural district or hub. Currently, there is no evidence to support a stand-alone multicultural center; however, the vision outlined in this study could serve a valuable component of future cultural initiatives.
- The proposed public market in the City Centre was researched extensively as a potential location for a multicultural place. The recommended amenities for a future public market include: a commercial kitchen; café and restaurant; and a public space for community activities and events. These amenities would work well for the multicultural activities and events that have been identified in this report.

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A

Definitions

What is the definition of “Culture”?

UNESCO’s Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity: “Culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyle, ways of living together, value systems, tradition and beliefs” (UNESCO, 2001. Retrieved from: ADD LINK).

What is the definition of “Multicultural Society in Canada”?

The concept of Canada as a “multicultural society” can be interpreted in different ways: descriptively (as a sociological fact), prescriptively (as ideology) or politically (as policy). As a sociological fact, multiculturalism refers to the presence of people from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. Ideologically, multiculturalism consists of a relatively coherent set of ideas and ideals pertaining to the celebration of Canada’s cultural diversity. At the policy level, multiculturalism refers to the management of diversity through formal initiatives in the federal, provincial, territorial and municipal domains (Dewing, 2009. Retrieved from: <http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/LOP/ResearchPublications/2009-20-e.htm>).

What is the definition of “Multiculturalism in British Columbia”?

2.4.1 British Columbia. British Columbia adopted the *Multiculturalism Act* in 1993. It requires the government to “generally, carry on government services and programs in a manner that is sensitive and responsive to the multicultural reality of British Columbia.” In order to promote understanding of diversity, in 2008 British Columbia launched EmbraceBC. With support from the provincial and federal governments, this program provides information resources as well as funding for community-based anti-racism and multiculturalism projects (Dewing, 2009, Retrieved from: <http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/LOP/ResearchPublications/2009-20-e.htm>).

Appendix B

List of stakeholders that collaborated on the *Welcoming Communities Action Plan*

Social Planning Council for the North Okanagan (SPCNO) Annette Sharkey, Executive Director
Vernon and District Immigrant Services Society (VDISS) Carol Wutzke, Executive Director
Vernon Chamber of Commerce (VCC) George Duffy, General Manager
City of Vernon Kevin Poole, Economic Development
Community Futures North Okanagan Norm Metcalf
North Okanagan Employment Enhancement Society (NOEES) (NexusBC) Lynne Belsher, Executive Director
North Okanagan Youth and Family Services (NOYFSS) Lisa Krushen
North Okanagan Family Resource Centre (FRC) Jan Schulz, Executive Director
Okanagan College, Vernon Campus (OC) Jane Lister, Regional Dean
Downtown Vernon Association Louise Delaney, Executive Director
City of Vernon Juliette Cunningham
Public Audit and Implementation (SPCNO) Brigitt Johnson
Cultural Centre Feasibility Study (SPCNO) Dalia Gottlieb-Tanaka
Cultural Events Audit and Pilot (VDISS) Brigitt Johnson
Live Work Play Print and Web Resource (VCC) Kim Bourke, Events Coordinator
Diversity Training Feasibility Study (NOEES) Pam Myers
Public Art Project (DVA) Susan Richards
School Inclusionary Teams (School District #22) Jackie Kersey, Principal

Appendix C

Consultant Biographies

Dalia Gottlieb-Tanaka, PhD

Dalia Gottlieb-Tanaka earned her PhD from the University of British Columbia (UBC) in 2006 in the Institute of Health Promotion Research and the Interdisciplinary Studies Program. In 2011, she completed a Post Doctorate Fellowship with the Department of Psychology at UBC. In 1976, she graduated from the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem, Israel, and in 1980, she received a Master's in Architecture from UBC. After working in architecture for about 30 years and raising a family, Dalia returned to school to pursue a new direction in Gerontology, specifically in the study of creative expression, dementia and the therapeutic environment. The Creative Expression Activities Program she conceived and developed for seniors with dementia won an award from the American Society on Aging and the MetLife Foundation. She continues to deliver presentations and workshops demonstrating the program and her research work in the US, Canada, Israel and Europe. Dalia founded the Society for the Arts in Dementia Care in British Columbia and is the moving force behind the annual international conferences and workshops on creative expression, communication and dementia (CECD).

Mineo Tanaka, BA., B.Arch., Principal mta Mineo Tanaka Associates

Mineo Tanaka completed his Bachelor of Arts at the University of British Columbia (UBC) in 1972. In 1975, he graduated from the School of Architecture at the UBC. Mineo participated in the Architectural Studies Abroad Program at the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design and The Technion University, Israel. He has an extensive 35-year career in the field of community, commercial and residential architectural projects, including day-to-day client liaison and correspondence, through to completion, as well as post-construction services. For 23 years, he held a senior position as Faculty Member at BCIT, presenting lectures in Architectural Detail Design to graduating students in the Architectural Program. Born in Kelowna, BC, Mineo has been a Member of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada since 1976 and the Architectural Institute of British Columbia since 1979. Currently, he is project architect for a residence in Vancouver that will incorporate sustainable design, of which solar energy utilization will be one of the components. Mineo studied solar energy in Israel with Dr. Baruch Givoni at the Technion in Haifa. His work includes the Japan Pavilion for Expo 86 and the award-winning BCIT Child Care Centre.

Appendix D

Four Examples of Multicultural Centres

1) **Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre**
102 King St W, Kitchener, ON, Canada

“The Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre exists for the purpose of fostering the diversity which exists in this community and of facilitating the full participation of all residents in the life of the community.”

The KWMC’s greatest strengths are its open-door policy and community-based approach to understand diversity.



Mandate

Their mandate is to break down the barriers to full participation of New Canadians in the Kitchener-Waterloo Community and surrounding areas to:

- Assist clients with their specific needs;
- Work with all new Canadians to help them become full participants in the community;
- Collaborate with other agencies who can provide additional assistance to clients;
- Be a safe place where individuals can express concerns and ask questions;
- Understand, strengthen and celebrate multiculturalism;
- Work to eliminate racial discrimination and all other forms of exclusion and oppression.

Settlement

- Support the integration of newcomers in the community;
- Integration is a two way process that requires adjustments for both newcomers and receiving communities;
- To assist clients with issues encountered in adapting to their new environments and ensuring services are accessible;
- Language Interpreter Services enable service providers to communicate with, support and provide high quality services to their limited or non-English speaking clients.

Projects

- Family Outreach Programme assists low-income families with basic needs and provides information on resources in the community;
- The Multicultural Placement Program has been offered to students for placement opportunities to colleges and universities;
- The Healthy Lifestyle Ambassador (HLA) Program is an exciting initiative for multilingual youth aged 15 to 18.

2) **North Bay and District Multicultural Centre**
100 Main Street East, North Bay, ON, Canada

History

The North Bay & District Multicultural Centre evolved from the work of the North Bay Newcomer Network (NNN), spearheaded by the Mayor's Office of Economic Development. It became a reality January 1, 2008 and is a reflection of the changing face of the city. The need to create immigrant support services in the city was strongly identified as a necessary component to the city's immigration strategy. In 2011, they opened a second office in Timmins, the Timmins & District Multicultural Centre.



In addition to the support of the immigrant policy in Canada, this centre provides:

- Information and referral services for all aspects of immigrant support
- A computer, photocopier, telephone and fax service for immigrants wanting to do their own research
- Interpretation by volunteers and translation based on a service fee
- Consumer and community information
- Assistance in completing government forms
- Community connections to help adult newcomers and their children adjust and integrate successfully into Canadian society
- Recruiting, screening and training volunteers as mentors to assist with language or employment
- Leadership in group activities for clients and volunteers
- Northeastern Ontario with encouragement to consider immigration as one of the major tools available for economic development

International Business

- Maintain a relationship with the Team Northern Ontario Trade Network
- Assist in the expansion of an existing export business
- Advise in the creation of a new business

Anti-Racism Activities

- Publishes the Young People's Press which has a long history of leading anti-racism projects
- Created a partnership in 2008 with Carleton, Ryerson, Concordia Universities, the University of Regina & the University of King's College, to increase minorities serving in Canadian newsrooms

Welcoming Communities Initiative

The project devised strategies to create welcoming communities for newcomers. It involved university researchers and Local Immigration Partnerships across the province. This was an Ontario-wide project hoping to go nation-wide in 2012.

Sports Integration Strategy

A cricket demonstration event was held in partnership with the Parks and Recreation Department of the City of North Bay and the Ontario Cricket Association in 2011. This attracted players from all over the world and created sporting connections among the participants and the North Bay & District Multicultural Centre.

Media and Branding

A priority to be seen as a professional organization and have actions establish community credibility. Their initial expenditures included exterior and interior signs, a brochure, a pop-up banner stand, stationery and business cards. Later on a website, display table banners, and a back-lit sign at the North Bay Airport were added.

3) **Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society**
 101 – 319 Selby Street, Nanaimo, BC, Canada

This Society is a registered charity organization that provides services to immigrants such as English language classes, assist in employment finding and settlement. It is a community-based agency that works with individuals and organizations to ensure that all those in their diverse community have equitable access to its services and opportunities. They are client-driven and committed to being accessible and responsive.



Each year the Immigrant Welcome Centre at the Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society welcomes hundreds of new immigrants from over 50 countries around the world. With specialized programmes, services and supports for newcomers, they help make the transition to a new life in Canada a little easier.

The Society aims:

- To ensure that immigrants and diverse peoples flourish in this community
- To be leaders in providing services for immigrants, promote inclusion and respect for all peoples in their community
- To demonstrate commitment to the values of equity and diversity

English Programme at the Centre

- Provides free government approved English language classes
- Uses the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) national standard
- Teaches English for day-to-day life
- Provides new skills for job finding
- Provides computer instructions
- Provides information about housing, work, banking, and other important issues
- Teaches about Canadian culture

Employment

- Help with employment needs
- Available to all unemployed individuals eligible to work in Canada
- Encourage diverse hiring practices that are beneficial business practices, and gives companies a competitive edge
- Link between employers with skilled and motivated employees

Diversity

The diversity programme promotes the value of differences by developing community initiatives that emphasize fairness, respect and dignity for all. The Centre is part of the Welcoming Communities initiative and includes activities such as:

- Multicultural Speaker Series
- Workplace Training

- Diversity Resources
- Arts Engagement Project
- Harmonies of Faith – Special Event
- Interfaith
- Community Dialogues
- Safe Harbour Program
- CHLY Radio – Changes: Diversity podcasts
- Diversity Partnership
- Diversity Program Staff

4) **Richmond Multicultural Community Services**
190-7000 Minoru Blvd, Richmond, BC, Canada

Vision and Objectives

RMCS provides a variety of services to immigrant and refugee communities in Richmond. It plays an important role in settlement, education, and integration. It assists with initial settlement needs such as language development, job search skills and networking skills within the community. Its vision is for a harmonious and inclusive society that values equality and diversity, to foster intercultural harmony through leadership, collaboration, and quality service delivery. The centre hosts a wide range of programmes and community events that promotes multiculturalism, diversity, and inclusiveness. The objectives of the Richmond Centre are in line with the Canadian Government policy for immigrants:



The centre hosts a wide range of programmes and community events that promotes multiculturalism, diversity, and inclusiveness. The objectives of the Richmond Centre are in line with the Canadian Government policy for immigrants:

- Foster a welcoming and inclusive community for all by promoting multiculturalism and diversity
- Support newcomers in identifying and utilizing resources
- Provide and refer newcomers to various programs and services
- Encourage dialogue and education within the community to break down barriers including racism, stereotypes, and cultural misconceptions
- Liaise with the community of Richmond to raise awareness of the issues and challenges newcomers face
- Foster intercultural harmony through leadership, education, collaboration, and superior service delivery.

Staff and Volunteers

RMCS is run by an Executive Director and by highly qualified of about 25 staff and over 250 committed volunteers. The volunteer program provides opportunities for meeting newcomers, practice English and gaining Canadian work experience in office and event settings.

Culture/Values

- Encourage the values of Responsiveness, Openness and Friendliness
- Move forward with Flexibility, Respect for clients and employees
- Face to face interaction
- Inclusive and Accessible
- Welcoming diversity and proactively
- Provide a place that feels like Home
- Programmes and Services
- Assisting immigrants and refugees with settlement, integration need and multicultural/ diversity training

- Orient, refer, interpret and translate
- Answer to Women's needs and challenges
- Helping seniors adapt better
- Empowering young adults by special programmes
- Encourage understanding of multiculturalism and diversity by welcoming people into Richmond and it's unique cultural mix

Appendix E

Environmental Scan of Other Feasibility Studies

1) The Beaverton Multicultural Center Feasibility Study (August 30, 2011)

The consultants:

Delta Studios, Robert G. Hayden, Principal 3344 NE 25 Avenue Portland, Oregon 97212

Barry R. Smith, P.C., Architect, 715 SW Morrison St, Portland, Oregon 97205

Centre for Intercultural Organizing, (CIO), 700 N Killingsworth, St, Portland, Oregon 97217

Methodology

This was a community-led study that was based on the following steps:

- Identifying and contacting as many potential user groups as possible
- Interview the users groups to determine the likelihood of their participation in a Multicultural Center and, if they were likely to participate, exactly what their needs would be
- Conducting a survey concurrent with interviewing potential user groups
- Creating a program based on the information from the surveys
- Analyzing various site amenities, types and sizes of physical spaces needed as well as desired locations
- Visiting appropriate sites to be analyzed according to essential parameters of the building.
- Determining the site
- Development cost estimates of planning and construction

This study also explored the impact of a Multicultural Center on the community, identified financing strategies and significant precedents in other cities that could inform regarding best operating practices and best financial practices.

Key Findings:

- Over 80% of Beaverton residents surveyed responded that they would use a Multicultural Centre located in Beaverton
- A full-service Multicultural Center, serving as many as 25 community user groups
- Users would have liked to include a gym, a theater and a wellness facility
- The centre would require 50,000 square feet of Construction and would cost approximately \$165/square foot (2011 costs)

Potential user groups identified the most important space types as:

- Office
- Training, meeting and classroom
- Business incubation
- Youth activities
- Wellness
- A Multicultural Center will also provide services to the general public—not just immigrants and refugees
- Potential appropriate locations include sites with and without existing buildings
- Depending on location, a Multicultural Center has the potential to strengthen Beaverton's City Center

2) Public Market Feasibility Study & Business Plan for Vernon, BC (October 2011)

The consultant: **Lochaven Management Consultants**, 102B 3105 33 Street, Vernon, BC

Objectives

The purpose of this study on behalf of the City of Vernon was to:

- Determine whether there was a market for a public market in Vernon
- Explore various public market models/scenarios and define those that were the most efficient/viable in terms of: (a) governance; (b) location; (c) products and services; (d) human resource requirements; (e) information technology; and (f) procurement
- Explore and define the relative challenges and opportunities in respect to whether and how a properly functioning public market can best meet the needs of consumers and vendors
- Assess the financial realities associated with the proposed public market (business model) and outline tactics for financial sustainability

Methodology

Based on exploratory investigation and in-depth descriptive research of both qualitative and quantitative factors. In terms of scope, the research effort included the collection and assessment of both secondary and primary data. Secondary research investigations were utilized first as a means to identify data deficiencies and key issues from which the subsequent primary investigations were logically premised, i.e. the formulation of interview questions and the identification of notable interviewees. While extensive, this overall research approach was deemed the most appropriate in recognition of the significant risk accruing to the City of Vernon as a consequence of project outcomes/recommendations in respect to ownership, governance and operation of a public market.

The research sought to comprehensively address three key objectives:

- To ascertain the apparent level of demand/need by the business community to participate as vendors within the context of a proposed public market;
- To identify, develop and articulate the most appropriate operational and marketing approach for such a market (premised on local circumstances and best practice norms); and,
- To determine and assess the financial implications associated with the development and operation of a public market.

Conclusions

- This feasibility study concluded that there was a feasible “operational” option for such a facility in Vernon and recommended the following five specific business units:
- Small public market for high quality/unique “North Okanagan” products
- Commercial kitchen and food processing teaching area
- Restaurants with locally sourced menus
- Community event area
- Vernon and North Okanagan Tourism and Visitor’s Centre

Recommendations

- Establish the Market as the recognized premier location for North Okanagan products (agriculture and arts/crafts)
- Give strong emphasis to the development of competitive capabilities
- Provide adaptability and flexibility in order to respond to changing market conditions
- Solidify and strengthen the facility’s market position over time
- Focus on enhancing customer value by fulfilling market-driven needs
- Purposeful differentiation, emphasizing the development of functional operation strategies
- Encourage early market acceptance, adoption and diffusion

- Structured as a not-for-profit enterprise governed by a volunteer Board of Directors
- The financial goal of the proposed market should be self-sustaining

3) The Vernon Public Art Gallery (VPAG) Feasibility Report. (Edited) (November 27, 2013)

The consultant: **Hanscomb Limited**, Suite 140 - 475 West Georgia Street Vancouver, BC

Background Information

The Vernon Public Art Gallery is a not- for- profit, charitable organization committed to fostering an appreciation of the visual arts for the 55,000 people that call Greater Vernon home. Its mandate is to exhibit, collect and preserve local, regional, national and international art of the highest possible standards; to promote visual arts in the broader community; to provide information, education; to challenge and inspire; to encourage appreciation of and participation in the visual arts; and to provide a meeting place for the benefit of the citizens of Greater Vernon. The current size of this facility is just over 6,000 square feet. It is anticipated that the new purpose- built facility will be 18,000 square feet. Earlier initiatives that supported the establishment of a cultural centre including an art gallery, are described in a report to Vernon’s Council meeting submitted by Kim Flick, Director of Community Development on November 29, 2012.

Recent History

Back in August of 2012 the VPAG completed a Business Case that proposed the construction of a new Category A art gallery to be located at the corner of 31st Street and 31st Avenue in the City of Vernon. This is well suited to meet the Gallery’s vision statement: *“The Vernon Public Art Gallery will broaden its connections within the community and become a critically acclaimed regional art gallery.”*

Identified Needs and Limitations of the Existing Location:

The Vernon Public Art Gallery (VPAG) is a valuable community asset. For many years now VPAG has been operating out of the ground floor of the large civic parkade structure. It is too small and not an ideal location to house an art gallery with a valuable collection. The Board of the Gallery expressed a number of primary concerns:

- The current space does not have appropriate storage facilities for the existing collection
- Existing building infrastructure (mechanical and electrical systems) are not at all suitable
- It is problematic in properly securing valuable art from theft or vandalism
- Challenged in handling existing programs or expanding them
- No appropriate space for receiving and calming art, workshops or long-term secure storage
- The parkade vibrations regularly shift the artwork about on the walls raising concerns of piece falling from the walls and sustaining damage
- The existing location is not located near enough to the recognized cultural centre of Vernon, Like Spirit Square
- The existing location has a poor public profile for an art gallery
- The existing space layout is poorly formatted for a workable art gallery
- There is no capacity to house visiting exhibitions which now must go elsewhere taking their tourism dollars with them

The proposal explored options to energy usage, cleaning, maintenance and general operations that would reduce operational costs and which are known as Net Zero buildings. The proposal also suggested the development of a roof top patio to expand opportunities for uses, entertainment, exhibition area and source of revenue.

Appendix F

Call for an Information Meeting on September 25, 2013

WHAT WOULD A
MULTI-CULTURAL
CENTRE IN
VERNON LOOK
LIKE?



As part of a Welcome BC initiative, the Social Planning Council is working in partnership with Vernon and District Immigrant Services to conduct a feasibility study to investigate short, intermediate, and long-term opportunities for a multi-cultural centre in Vernon. Community representation is being sought to help advise the project.

You're invited to an information meeting:

Wednesday, September 25th, 9 – 10:30am

Okanagan Regional Library, Vernon Branch

Meet the consultants and find out more about this exciting project!

Please RSVP your attendance by Friday, September 20th to the Vernon and District Immigrant Services Society at 250-542-4177 or email vdiss@shaw.ca

Appendix G

Multicultural Centre Feasibility Study Information Meeting on September 25, 2013

Questions:

- What is your understanding of the term “multicultural”?
- What are your thoughts on a Multicultural Place?
- What would it look like?
- Do you have comments on the proposed phases?

Discussion Notes – as paraphrased from participant comments:

- Multicultural – best place where different cultures and nationalities can go to find what they need to stabilize themselves.
- Very excited and passionate about the topic. Wanted to educate others and help them understand each other. Wasn’t able to find a “course”. Wanted to be a teacher. People was my accent as a barrier and didn’t understand.
- Multicultural facility is a must. It will pave the road for the next newcomers. Train others to support them.
- Interfaith group needs a safe, neutral place to come. I envision a large meeting room for large groups, with break-out into smaller rooms
- Vernon can be “cliquey”. ELS classes form their own community. There can be 13 countries represented in one class. They want a space to socialize after class.
- Also need to meld with community and integrate with others
- As a newcomer from Israel we can expect to see more groups arriving and they tend to segregate. Challenge will be integration – learning to recognize differences while understanding the basics of the new culture. A centre is the only way to accomplish this. More challenging in Vernon as fewer immigrants, less visual. Location in downtown important. City is interested in hearing from you.
- Vernon can be cliquey, but also very welcoming
- International House at UBC – a bunch of little spaces with a resident caretaker. Also need offices for services to help link. Suggestion to take newcomers to volunteer orgs as guests.
- Great idea! Nice to have a plan B for gatherings – i.e. weather
- Temporary foreign workers don’t know where they can meet. Also need a place for Filipinos to meet
- Would be great to have a facility for events (i.e. Filipino Fiesta). Need a place to rehearse
- Great idea. Multicultural Facility is terribly important. Would like to be involved and chronicle so it can be seen via media
- Host for private instruction, services, skill building, an open vault of activities – hasn’t been tapped

Appendix H

Snapshot Survey Form for a Multicultural Place

Survey for a Multicultural Place

Deadline for submission December 15, 2013

The Social Planning Council and Vernon Immigrant Services are exploring the need for a space to host multicultural activities and/or events. We would like to hear from the general public as well as immigrants, and multicultural groups - what types of multicultural activities would you like to see in Vernon? **The survey will take less than five minutes to complete.**

Thank you for your participation!

Survey Questions:

1. Which of these describes you? (Check as many as you want)

- Interested in attending multicultural events (performances, festivals etc)
- Interested in learning about other cultures (speakers, workshops etc)
- Resident of Greater Vernon
- Belong to a Multicultural group/association
- Immigrated to Canada (less than 10 years ago)
- Immigrated to Canada (more than 10 years ago)

2. Are you interested in a space where immigrants and community members can meet, learn about other cultures, and connect to cultural events?

- Yes No Unsure

3. If yes, which type of activities interests you most? (Select as many as you want. Please use X)

Category	X	Function	Category	X	Function
Informal		A place to meet, get information, have coffee and connect with new immigrants	Events		Dances
					Festivals
Educational		Attend workshops and speakers	Programs		Art shows
		Language classes			Food fairs
Recreational		Cooking classes			Child care
		Dance classes			Youth activities
		Exercise classes			Family activities
		Art classes			Seniors activities

4. We need some demographic information. Please check (X) the box next to the applicable age:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Less than 19 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	19-29 years old	<input type="checkbox"/>	30-45 years old	<input type="checkbox"/>	46-65 years old	<input type="checkbox"/>	65+ years old
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- Male Female Single Family

5. Additional Comments and/or Additional Functions

For more information, please contact
Vernon and District Immigrant Services
at vdiss@shaw.ca
Or call 250-542-4177

Appendix I

List of Stakeholders/Organizations

Representatives of Organizations	
Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Services Agencies of BC	Multicultural Health Coordinator
City of Kelowna	Cultural Services Manager
City of Vernon	Real Estate Manager
City of Vernon	Planner
City of Vernon (COV)	Economic Development
Diversity Training Feasibility Study (Nexus)	Consultant
Downtown Vernon Association	Executive Director
Kal Tires	Communication Coordinator
Okanagan College, Vernon Campus (OC)	Regional Dean
Parks, Recreation and Culture, Regional District of North Okanagan	Community Development Coordinator
Public Audit and Implementation (SPCNO)	Consultant
Rotary Centre for the Arts	General Manager
Royal LePage	Realtor
School Inclusionary Teams (School District #22)	Principal
Tolko Industries	
VDISS	Executive Director
VDISS	Settlement
VDISS/Interfaith Board	Project Coordinator
Vernon and District Immigrant Services Society (VDISS)	Executive Director
Vernon and District Performing Arts Centre	Executive Director
Vernon Museum and Archives	Archivist
Vernon Public Art Gallery	Executive Director
Ethnic Groups	
Ukrainians Rock Band	
Sadok Ukrainian Dancers	Artistic Director
Vernon Filipino Heritage Society	President
Zirka Ukrainian Dancers	President
Vernon Punjabi Heritage Society	President
First Nations Friendship Centre	
Vernon Japanese Cultural Society	President
Kalamalka Highland Pipe Band	

12. REFERENCES

Websites

Grants resources

<http://grantconnect.ca/Home/Info/1>

Grants resources

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/annual-report-2012/section4.asp>

Grants resources

https://thefundingportal.com/searches/list_search

The Grantsmanship Center

<http://www.tgci.com/canada>

Survey service

<http://www.emailmeform.com>

Vernon and District Immigrants Services Society

<http://www.vdiss.com>

Municipal Funding Resources:

City of Vernon

<http://www.vernon.ca/services/finance/documents/CouncilDiscretionaryGrantApp.pdf>

District Funding Resources:

Community Foundation of the North Okanagan

304 - 3402 - 27th Avenue, Vernon BC V1T 1S1

Contact: Dave Fletcher, Executive Director, Board Chair: Mike Tindall

Tel: 250-542-8677 Fax: 250-542-8655

E-mail: info@cfno.org, <http://www.cfno.org>

Provincial Funding Resources:

Age-friendly BC

www.gov.bc.ca/agefriendly

BC Gaming

<http://www.gaming.gov.bc.ca/grants/>

BC Healthy Communities

<http://bchealthycommunities.ca/localgovernmentfunding>

BidBC

<http://www.bcbid.gov.bc.ca/open.dll/welcome>

EmbraceBC

<http://www.embracebc.ca/embracebc/funding/index.page>

Interior Health Authority

<http://planh.ca/training-support/health-authority-support/interior-health-authority>

Ministry of Advanced Education, Innovation and Technology and Minister Responsible for Multiculturalism

<http://www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/2013/01/bc-multiculturalism-grants-support-cultural-diversity.html>

Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training, Immigrant Integration Branch

<http://www.gov.bc.ca/jtst/>

Ministry of Social Development and Minister Responsible for Multiculturalism

<http://www.gov.bc.ca/sdsi/>

Provincial Employees Community Fund

http://www2.gov.bc.ca/myhr/content_hub.page?ContentID=bfced40f-9cb3-f638-9181-d7d99653a420

The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

<http://www.eia.gov.bc.ca/social-innovation/index.htm>

WelcomeBC:

http://www.welcomebc.ca/local/wbc/docs/communities/immigration_trends_2010.pdf

Federal Funding Resources:

Canada Council for the Arts

<http://canadacouncil.ca/en/council/grants-and-prizes/find-grants-and-prizes/grants/artists-and-community-collaboration-program-accp>

Citizenship and Immigration Canada

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/multiculturalism/funding/index.asp>

City of Vernon. Community Infrastructure Improvements Fund (CIIF). Federal Funds 2012-2014.

<http://www.wd.gc.ca/eng/13771.asp>

Private Foundations:

Columbia Institute Foundation

<http://www.columbiainstitute.ca/about-us/columbia-foundation>

Curling BC

<http://www.curlbc.ca/funding-available-for-multicultural-projects/>

First West Foundation

<http://firstwestfoundation.ca/>

India Canada Cultural Association

<http://www.iccavictoria.com/>

Max Bell Foundation
<http://www.maxbell.org/>

Okanagan College
<http://www.castanet.net/news/Campus-Life/102109/Okanagan-College-Foundation-hands-out-thousands-of-dollars-to-Vernon-students>

The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation
<http://www.mcconnellfoundation.ca/en/granting>

The Mclean Foundation
<http://mcleanfoundation.ca/applications.html>

The Samuel and Saidye Bronfman Family Foundation
<https://chimp.net/charities/the-samuel-and-saidye-bronfman-family-foundation>

University of BC
<https://news.ok.ubc.ca/2007/10/26/deepak-binning-foundation-creates-250000-scholarship-endowment-at-ubc-okanagan/>

Corporate Foundations:

Air Canada Foundation
<http://www.aircanada.com/en/about/community/foundation/index.html#.UqbcEssWLIU>

Bombardier Foundation
<http://csr.bombardier.com/en/supporting-communities>

Canadian Tire
<http://corp.canadiantire.ca/EN/MAD/Pages/default.aspx>

Coast Capital Savings
https://www.coastcapitalsavings.com/About_Coast_Capital_Savings/Helping_Communities

Maytree for Leaders for Change
<http://maytree.com/>

National Bank Canada
http://www.altamira.com/bnc/cda/productfamily/0,2664,divId-2_langId-1_navCode-18168,00.html

Novell
http://www.novell.com/company/cr/corporate_giving.html

Royal Bank of Canada
<http://www.rbc.com/community-sustainability/apply-for-funding/>

Telus Community Board
<http://about.telus.com/community/en/donations/>

The Donner Canadian Foundation Awards
<http://www.donnerawards.org/main/index.php>

United Way
<http://unitedwaynoocs.com/contact>

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13. LISTS

Tables List

Table 1	Table of Contents
Table 2	Visible Minority Population Characteristics in Comparison to Vernon's Total Population
Table 3	Countries of Client Visits to VDISS (2011-2013)
Table 4	List of Reviewed Multicultural Societies/Centres (November 2013)
Table 5	Multicultural Potential Partners and Their Needs
Table 6	Summary of Snapshot Survey Form Responses
Table 7	Number of People Expressing Interest
Table 8	Type of Activity Arranged by Ranking Vote
Table 9	Distribution by Age, Gender and Family Status (after the changes to the survey)
Table 10	Survey Findings: Total of 148 Responses
Table 11	Relevant Funding Organizations

Appendices List

Appendix A	Definitions
Appendix B	List of stakeholders that collaborated on the Welcoming Communities Action Plan
Appendix C	Consultant Biographies
Appendix D	Four Examples of Multicultural Centres
Appendix E	Environmental Scan of Other Feasibility Studies
Appendix F	Call for an Information Meeting on September 25, 2013
Appendix G	Multicultural Centre Feasibility Study Information Meeting on September 25, 2013
Appendix H	Snapshot Survey Form for a Multicultural Place
Appendix I	List of Stakeholders/Organizations
Appendix J	List of Reviewed Properties and Sites July 2013