

Vernon Local Immigration Partnerships Council

Quarterly Activity Report

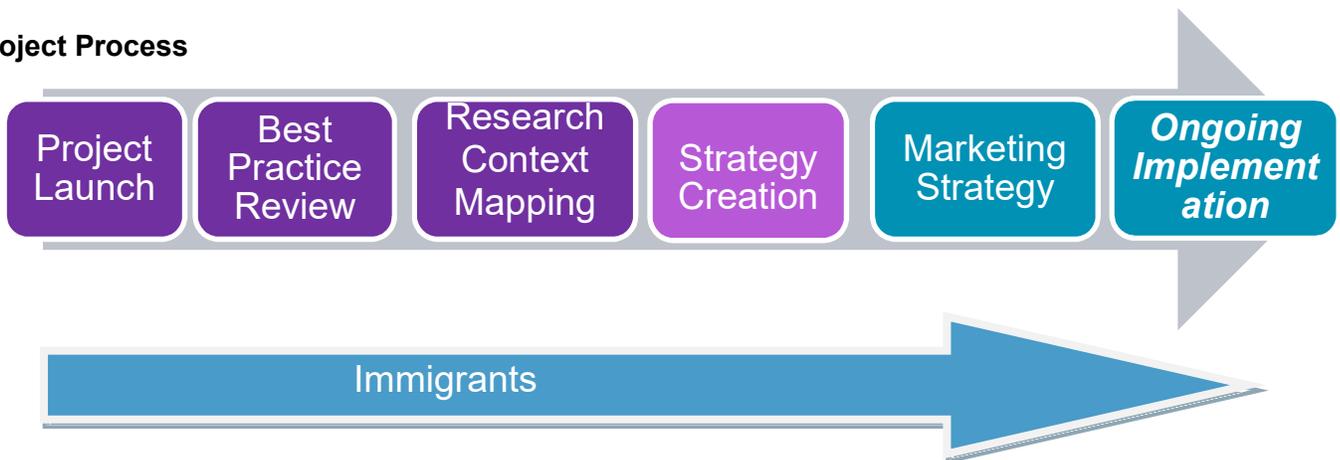
Jan-Mar 2016

A. Project Overview

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

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

B. Project Process



C. Quarterly Highlights

1. Final Immigration & Settlement Strategy: The completed Immigration & Settlement Strategy has been circulated and reviewed. The complete document is available through the Social Planning Council website at www.spcno.ca

The vision statement is: ***Vernon is a diverse and welcoming city where we collaborate to build and share a future of meaningful opportunities.***

The four strategic priorities are:

- Target and promote immigrant/newcomer engagement in opportunities that enhance economic and investment circumstances locally.
 - Ensure Vernon is a welcoming community that supports inclusion and engagement of all newcomers.
 - Support newcomers and local citizens at large in their collective efforts to create a healthy and resilient community.
 - Promote and foster enhanced newcomer attraction and retention within the Vernon area.
2. Implementation Model: Implementation will follow the model used successfully in the community since 2008 by Partners in Action. The Vernon LIPC will act as a backbone or coordinating committee that

identifies and prioritizes action items, and coordinates smaller action teams drawn from the wider community. The action teams will be formed to address specific problems or action items identified in the strategy or subsequently. Once a solution is implemented, the action team will be disbanded.

3. Implementation Plan: The implementation plan included in the strategy has a three year time horizon. Action items aligning with the four strategic priorities have been identified and prioritized by the LIPC. Existing action items already in progress in the community. Planned items are part of an organizational mandate but not yet completely resourced. Desired items represent gaps the LIPC has identified.
4. Resources: LIPC members have made offers of resources including staff time, meeting rooms, grant writing, and some financial resources. The LIPC Coordinator has created a matrix of grants organized by the four strategic priorities that can be pursued by action teams. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada has provided funding towards development of a marketing strategy and a public education campaign.
5. Community Connections Mapping: A list of all the professional and personal associations, organizations and other groups LIPC members belong to is included in the final document. It helps to identify the group's sphere of influence locally, regionally, provincially, nationally and internationally. LIPC members have the opportunity to reflect their knowledge of and experience with immigrants through these connections, and bring these connections to bear on implementation of the strategy as it moves forward.

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

