

OUR IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

At its establishment in early 2014, the Surrey Local Immigration Partnership gave itself two years to devise an Immigrant Integration Strategy and Action Plan, which was finalized in March 2016. It formalizes our Vision, Mission Statement and the mandate of the organization, while laying out five strategic directions, each of which is accompanied by a single goal, supported by numerous objectives, for the 2016-2019 period.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1 Accessible Services

GOAL: Surrey has a robust and fully resourced settlement service infrastructure where immigrants and settlement stakeholders have ready access to the services, supports and information they need.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2 Engaged Community

GOAL: Surrey is a welcoming and inclusive city that supports all newcomer residents to belong, make community connections, and actively participate in all that Surrey has to offer.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3 Meaningful Employment

GOAL: Surrey has a vibrant economy where employers and businesses fully realize the benefits of immigration and immigrants are economically integrated.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4 Thriving Youth

GOAL: Surrey is an inclusive and supportive community in which all immigrant youth have the opportunity to thrive and grow, while enjoying adequate access to educational, labour market, recreational and family resources and opportunities.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 5 Sustainable Leadership

GOAL: The Surrey Local Immigration Partnership has the diversity of members, partners and resources to fully address immigrant integration issues within the community, sustain and expand its initiatives, and is recognized as a leader in immigrant community and workforce integration.

OUR VISION

Everyone in Surrey Belongs!

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The Surrey Local Immigration Partnership supports a coordinated and strategic approach to immigrant and refugee settlement and integration.

WHAT ABOUT REFUGEES?

In Canada there are about 50 Local Immigration Partnerships with a mandate similar to ours. Uniquely, we have chosen to draw up a separate strategy for refugee integration. Why have we done this? Because Surrey receives more refugees than any other B.C. municipality (about one quarter of the provincial total) at a time when changes in federal government intentions suggest that refugee numbers will be increasing. Meanwhile, refugees have unique needs that require specific strategies and approaches in the settlement process. Our Refugee Integration Strategy will be released in Fall 2016.

HOW THE IMMIGRANT STRATEGY WAS DEVELOPED

During the 2014–2016 period, the LIP engaged contractors to perform three distinct research projects, in addition to a project devoted to refugee settlement. Data and conclusions stemming from each project were taken into account in the development of our strategy. Crucial input was also received from the 30 organizations represented on our LIP Committee and 18 members of our Immigrant Advisory Roundtable, as well as consultations with many other stakeholders and members of the community.

PROJECT 1 Service Mapping Project

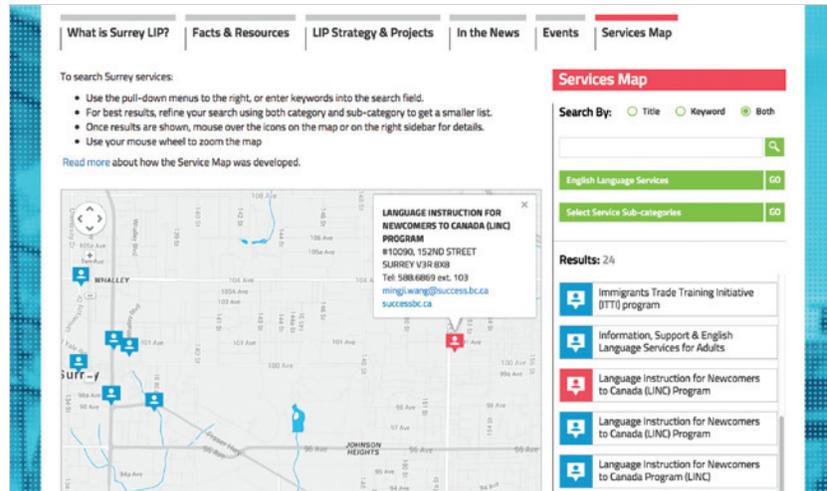
Who Was Consulted? More than two dozen service provision leaders responded to a survey, which was followed up with a forum attended by a dozen such leaders.

What Did It Do? Mapped 235 immigrant-specific settlement services in Surrey, while also identifying gaps and overlaps. We also developed an easily searchable directory of services, which can be found at SurreyLip.ca.

Some Good News Service providers are working hard to provide a wide variety of services.

Some Bad News Senior service infrastructure leaders deemed that 22 of 29 service types were inadequate. Most deficient: mental health services, alcohol and drug addiction services, and disability services.

Sample Objective “Develop, promote and disseminate information, tools and resources to enhance service coordination and assist both newcomers and stakeholders to navigate the continuum of programs and services.” (One of four objectives supporting “Accessible Services.”)



To learn about settlement services and programs in Surrey visit SurreyLip.ca

PROJECT 2 Immigrant Integration Research

Who Was Consulted? Through a telephone survey, focus groups and three public consultations, more than 500 Surrey residents, both immigrants and Canadian-born.

What Did It Do? Captured public attitudes and identified key strengths and weaknesses in our existing welcoming effort.

Some Good News Overall, Surrey is seen as a welcoming community by both immigrants and the Canadian-born.

Some Bad News People want to connect across cultures but struggle to do so.

Sample Objective “Encourage and support the delivery of programs, services and activities to assist immigrants to make connections with Aboriginal peoples, Canadian-born residents and longer-term immigrants.” (One of four objectives supporting “Engaged Community.”)

PROJECT 3 Immigrant Labour Market Research

Who Was Consulted? More than 175 employers, immigrant job seekers and immigrant service providers.

What Did It Do? Identified specifics of the Surrey labour market and how immigrants can better access it.

Some Good News Employers (more than 30% of whom proved to be immigrants themselves) said that immigrants work hard and make good employees.

Some Bad News Few employers seek out immigrants or make significant allowances for their unique situations. For immigrants finding suitable employment is an immense frustration.

Sample Objective “Establish partnerships with business, industry and government to promote the benefits of hiring immigrants, enhance workplace integration and ensure understanding of Surrey’s labour market and employment service needs.” (One of four objectives supporting “Meaningful Employment.”)

PROJECT 4 Youth Forums

Who Was Consulted? About 50 immigrants and refugees in their teens and 20s attended a day-long forum.

What Did It Do? Harvested some three dozen perspectives under the categories Education, Employment, Intercultural Connections and Family.

Some Good News Participants as young as 13 attended a day-long event focussing on public policy and, in many cases, expressed their interest in continuing to be engaged.

Some Bad News Many youth find themselves conflicted and not able to fit in or be accepted in the community due to their cultural values.

Sample Objective “Enhance supports and services for Surrey’s youth to address the intercultural and intergenerational differences they experience.” (One of four objectives in support of “Thriving Youth.”)