

THIS ISSUE
Meet the new
Surrey LIP
Governance
structure

A look back
at the Surrey
Welcoming
Communities
Project

Interview
with the
co-chairs

LIP steering
committee
member
organizations

GET
INVOLVED!

NEXT ISSUE
Newcomers
and the City
of Surrey

ISSUE NO.

01

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SURREY LIP NEWSLETTER

Engaged & Inclusive



INTRODUCING The New Surrey Local Immigration Partnership

As of 2014 Surrey is home to one of British Columbia's first Local Immigration Partnerships, otherwise known as a LIP. Our mandate is to build community-wide capacity to attract, settle and integrate immigrants. This mandate is fulfilled collaboratively by more than two dozen >

> LIP partners through three activity streams: collective planning, collaborative leadership and coordinated action.

Okay, But What's A LIP And Why Do We Have One?

Previously in British Columbia, organizations with this kind of mandate were coordinated through the provincial government and took the form of Welcoming Communities Projects (WCP). Surrey's was called, in fact, the Surrey Welcoming Communities Project. Earlier this year, responsibility reverted to the federal government, the primary funder, which already fulfilled this function in most of the rest of Canada. In Ontario especially, LIPs have been operating for several years and have a proven track record.

So How Does The Surrey LIP Differ From The Surrey WCP?

The similarities are more apparent than the differences. As with the Welcoming Communities Project, the lead agency is the City of Surrey, and as with the WCP, the LIP draws together representatives from more than two dozen agencies to act as a steering committee. The mandates of the WCP and LIP are therefore very similar.

The Welcoming Communities Project did a wonderful job of gathering agencies that had been operating in close proximity yet often knew little about each other and how they could better coordinate among themselves. It also tackled a lot of specific issues, raised community awareness and achieved some important goals.

However, as the name suggested, the Welcoming Communities Project was primarily project-based—it identified specific initiatives and then helped fund and organize them. By comparison the LIP is meant to be more strategic. It supports a coordinated, comprehensive and strategic approach to immigration, settlement and integration that works for Surrey.

What Is This LIP Doing?

Well, during our first few months we've mostly been getting ourselves organized and instigating a lot of research. We have a steering committee, two co-chairs, a project management team and various working groups, and we are planning to start an immigrant advisory roundtable. All of these are already in operation or in the process of being organized.

Meanwhile, the research element is essential if we're to develop a comprehensive and strategic approach to immigration. We're currently canvassing and engaging the community in order to develop a Surrey Immigrant and Refugee Settlement Strategy and Action Plan. The Strategy will identify the priority areas for the community to act upon in order to make Surrey a more welcoming and inclusive city for newcomers. The Action Plan will contain specific, measurable and time-bound activities to implement the Strategy. You'll begin to see these two things and the activities that stem from them in 2016.

Interested in finding out more or joining us? See the back page of this newsletter for contact information.





Councillor Judy Villeneuve



Anita Huberman

QUIZZING THE CO-CHAIRS

Surrey's new Local Immigration Partnership is co-chaired by Councillor Judy Villeneuve and Anita Huberman.

A second generation Indo-Canadian, Anita Huberman is CEO of the Surrey Board of Trade and the first South Asian to head a board of trade anywhere in Canada. Councillor Judy Villeneuve has been a Surrey Councillor for 25 years, and Chair of the Surrey Social Policy Advisory Committee for 15.

Judy, the City of Surrey also led the Welcoming Communities Project. Why are initiatives like these important to the City? More than 40% of Surrey residents are immigrants, and about 1,000 people are moving here every month. We want to make sure that people get connected, that they get educated, that they get the services they need, that they feel they're part of the community. It fits with Surrey's public safety agenda too, because we know that if people aren't connected within the community they'll have a higher health risk or a higher risk to commit crime. As well, we have a special interest in refugees. Surrey is a major destination for refugees, and the largest recipient of government-assisted refugees in B.C.

Anita, you were previously co-chair of the Surrey Welcoming Communities Project. How is the Local Immigration Partnership different? The Welcoming Communities Project created a foundation of

collaboration, and it showcased the various elements of newcomer support. This will take it to the next stage, ensuring continuity, but emphasizing progression. It's not only about the provision of personal supports. It's about remaking Surrey as a place where newcomers can be successful—a place where they can live, work and play.

Judy, it's early but what kind of things are you looking forward to with LIP?

The agreement is that we bring people to the table and together develop a plan that fits the unique needs of Surrey. Sixty-five percent of the growth in the Vancouver region is designated to take place south of the Fraser, so we know that people are going to continue to come. We have to make sure that there are lots of opportunities for them to participate and contribute to the community.

Anita, how do you convince businesses and the business community to get onside?

That won't be difficult. The business community is going through a transformation. It has labour shortages and skills shortages. Businesses know that they need to make use of the human capital: the right people with the right skills and the right attitude. There needs to be a way for our newcomer community to play a bigger role. LIP will help make that happen.

Tough Act To Follow

The Surrey Local Immigration Partnership follows in the footsteps of the Surrey Welcoming Communities Project; which ran from 2012 to 2014. These are a few of the projects that were undertaken:

Service Provider Events Hundreds of people work at dozens of agencies geared to helping newcomers. Through this project they gained an understanding of the big picture, and met their counterparts in complementary organizations.

Welcoming Spaces Trained newcomers fanned out across the city to analyse how aptly dozens of Surrey places and organizations meet their needs. They identified best practices and, equally important, areas where there is room for improvement.

Dialogues Inspired by Cooking and Food The fastest way to Surrey's heart proved to be through its stomach: a series of demonstration dinners that introduced community leaders to the welcoming effort.

Youth Engagement Projects Exactly 50% of newcomers are 24 years or under upon arrival. These projects helped them determine the supports and outlets they need, then helped deliver them.

Employer and Business Education and Awareness Focussed presentations to more than 700 business leaders. Message: Newcomers are young, well-educated and want to work. They are your future.

Refugee Myth-Busting Campaign This multi-pronged effort successfully cleared up myths and misconceptions about Surrey's refugee population. How successfully? A report on its achievements was delivered to a plenary session of the United Nations Refugee Agency.

Resources produced by the project are available at www.surrey.ca/lip

QUICK LIP FACT



March 2014

City of Surrey signed a 2-year Contribution Agreement with Citizenship and Immigration Canada



A variety of community sectors is represented

- Employers & Professional Associations
- Community Services
- Education & Skills Training
- Health Authorities
- Police
- Immigrant/Refugee Serving Agencies
- Newcomers
- Faith Organizations
- Municipal Government

Steering Committee Member Organizations

These are the organizations that provide leadership direction to the Surrey Local Immigration Partnership.

- 1** City of Surrey **2** The Surrey Board of Trade **3** Alexandra Neighbourhood House **4** ASTTBC **5** City of Surrey, Human Resources **6** City of Surrey Social Planning (Contract Manager) **7** City of Surrey, Surrey Parks, Recreation & Culture **8** Surrey Libraries **9** DIVERSEcity Community Resources Society **10** Training Group at Douglas College **11** HRMA **12** Fraser Health Authority: Population and Public Health **13** Fraser Health Authority: Primary Health Care **14** Immigrant Employment Council of BC **15** Immigrant Services Society of BC **16** Kwantlen Polytechnic University **17** Oak Avenue Neighbourhood Hub Society **18** Options Community Services Society **19** Pacific Community Resources Society **20** Progressive Intercultural Community Services **21** Semiahmoo House Society **22** SFU Surrey **23** S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Surrey Delta Service Centre **24** Surrey School District #36 **25** Surrey RCMP **26** Sources Community Resources Society **27** Surrey Interfaith Council **28** Umoja Operation Compassion Society **29** Vancity **30** YMCA

OUR GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

We have been organized to produce extensive measurable results in a short period of time while involving a broad spectrum of the community. Here are some of our key elements:

The City of Surrey manages the project and is responsible for its deliverables. It supplies the project staff: the LIP Coordinator and a Senior Social Planner, who report to the Steering Committee. The Mayor and Council and Social Policy Advisory Committee are regularly updated.

The Steering Committee draws representatives from approximately two dozen organizations and sectors. It is co-chaired by Councillor Judy Villeneuve, representing the City, and Anita Huberman, elected by the Committee. The co-chairs provide leadership to the Committee and liaise between the Committee and project staff.

Additional services and input are provided by ex-officio members and working groups.

QUICK LIP FACTS

MARCH 2016
Completion of Surrey LIP Immigrant and Refugee Settlement Strategy and Action Plan

\$606,014
Surrey LIP 2-year funding

30 Members in the Surrey LIP Steering Committee

1/2 One of two BC municipalities to be a LIP contract holder



A unique approach to strategic planning, focussed on two newcomer categories: immigrants and refugees

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

Let us answer with a word that sums up a lot of what we're about: **Welcome!**

There are many ways to get involved with the Surrey Local Immigration Project, whether as an organization or as an individual. Surrey LIP will host city-wide community consultations and everyone is welcome to join. You can also request to be on our Surrey LIP stakeholder list and receive updates on a regular basis.

Please contact **Olga Shcherbyna**, Surrey LIP Coordinator, for more information.
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