

Navigating the Newcomer Maze



A Community-Based Model Plan for New Westminster's Settlement Sector

Prepared for: Welcoming and Inclusive New West (WINS) Local Immigration Partnership,
funded by IRCC and hosted by Purpose Society

Prepared by: Jasmindra Jawanda, Urban/Community/Cultural Planner

December 2023



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to recognize, honour, and thank the Qayqayt First Nation as I am a visitor on their sacred lands working on this project.



Qayqayt First Nation

I also honour the unceded lands that I was born onto and presently live, work, create and breathe on belonging to the Songhees and SXIMEĒĒĒ (Esquimalt) Nations and the WSÁNEĆ (weh-saanich) peoples known today as WJOLEEP (Sart lip), BOKÉĆEN (PawKwaChin), STÁUTW (Say Out), WSIKEM (Sigh Come) and MÁLEXEĒ (Malahat) Nations.



THANK YOU'S

A special thank you to the WINS LIP members and their valuable contributions:

Amanuel Asgodom (MOSAIC); Chaplain Duku (ISSofBC); Chinu Das (Past City Councillor); Chris Koth (New Westminster Public Library); Claudia Freire (City of New Westminster); Erin Daly (Fraser Health Authority); Father Mykhailo Ozorovych (Holy Eucharist Cathedral) Isabel Dos Santos (New Westminster Public Library); Jane Li (SUCCESS); Jennifer Kuenzig (Douglas College); Jennifer York (ISS); John Stark (City of New Westminster); Kylie Vallée (Empower Me); Logan Shea (New Westminster Public Library); Maniya Rafiei (MOSAIC); Mariia Elsayed (WorkBC); Mark Batt (SUCCESS); Maylen Crespo (Family Services of Greater Vancouver); Natalie Johnston (Fraser Health Authority); Rick Bloudell (New Westminster School District); Sherman Chan (MOSAIC); Somi Park (Welcome Centre); Wazhma Wakil (Umbrella Health Coop).

A heartfelt thank you to the community members for “speaking their truths”, I am deeply grateful:

Chinu Das, Father Mykhailo Ozorovych, Kesis Frew Zegeye, Margaret Wanyoike, Mariia Elsayed, Monica Deng, Niloufar Sattari, Tanushree Pillai.

CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....	4
Introduction.....	5
Navigating the Newcomer Maze.....	5
IRCC + Settlement Sector.....	6
WINS LIP + New Westminster.....	8
Project Overview.....	9
Project Background.....	9
Project Partners.....	9
Project Objective + Deliverables.....	10
Project Evaluation.....	11
Environmental Scan.....	12
Settlement Landscape in New Westminster.....	12
Settlement Categories/Signposts.....	13
Sector Duplications + Gaps.....	14
Agency Interviews.....	15
Community-Based Model Plan.....	18
Community-Based Planning.....	18
Collaborative Hub Model: The Welcome Centre.....	21
Participatory Funding Model: Discretionary Community Fund.....	25
Community Interviews + WINS LIP Workshops.....	28
Challenges + Learnings.....	29
Recommendations.....	29
Conclusion.....	30

References

Appendices

Appendix A: Performance Measurement Framework
Appendix B: Environmental Scan Report
Appendix C: Database of List of Agencies + Signposts
Appendix D: Community-Based Analysis Table
Appendix E: Welcome Centre Calendar of Service
Appendix F: Collaborative Hub Model Outline

Appendix G: Community Interviews Responses
Appendix H: WINS LIP Workshops Responses
Appendix I: Letters of Support
Appendix J: List of Stakeholders + Organizations
Appendix K: IRCC Project Outputs + Elements Checklist

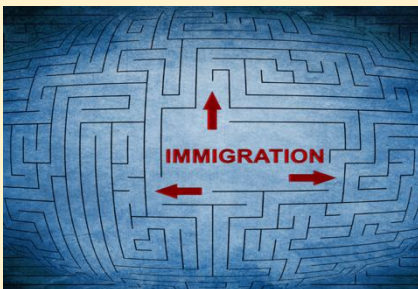
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Canada is hailed as a renowned leader on the global immigration stage as in 2021 it was deemed as the top 3rd country in the world who took in the most immigrants, with the United States and Germany at the top of this list. Canada also holds the prestigious title of being the most “immigrant friendly” country with one of the highest standards of living, thereby making it a desirable destination for many around the world. Last year, the federal government announced an ambitious plan to “take in 500,000 immigrants a year by 2025, with almost 1.5 million new immigrants coming to the country over the next three years.” With hundreds of thousands of immigrants and refugees arriving on these unceded shores, and into rural and urban communities across the country, there is also an urgent “Call to Settlement Action” to ensure that these newcomers live in peace, security, and dignity.

In 2021, census data revealed that 58% of new immigrants settled in Canada’s three largest cities — Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal. As a nearby municipality to Vancouver, the City of New Westminster is also welcoming diverse global footsteps into its communities and city especially as it is also a “Sanctuary City.” In fact, nearly 40% of New Westminster’s population (78,916) comprises of immigrants and refugees and with this large newcomer community, the settlement call to action is ringing loud and clear. Through the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) Settlement Improvement Delivery Stream, New Westminster has received funding to create a pilot Community-Based Model Plan and an innovative community funding model to ensure that an equitable and inclusive “suite of settlement services” is provided to newcomers in New Westminster, now and in the future. The literature review revealed that there are very few community-based models and community funding models for the settlement sector across the country.



For the past two years, the Welcoming and Inclusive New West (WINS) Local Immigration Partnership (WINS LIP) embarked on the development of a unique Collaborative-Based community project called “*Navigating the Newcomer Maze*.” This project involved an evidence-based approach by conducting an environmental scan; creating a settlement database of agencies and a community-based analysis table; conducting interviews with settlement agencies and settlement-serving agencies; engaging in interviews with community members; and setting up workshops with WINS LIP. The key findings from the project showcased the need for a coordinated Collaborative Hub Model for the settlement sector and newcomer community in New Westminster with all directions pointing to the **Welcome Centre** in New Westminster Secondary School as this collaborative hub model. The Welcome Centre will essentially be a “one stop shop” for settlement



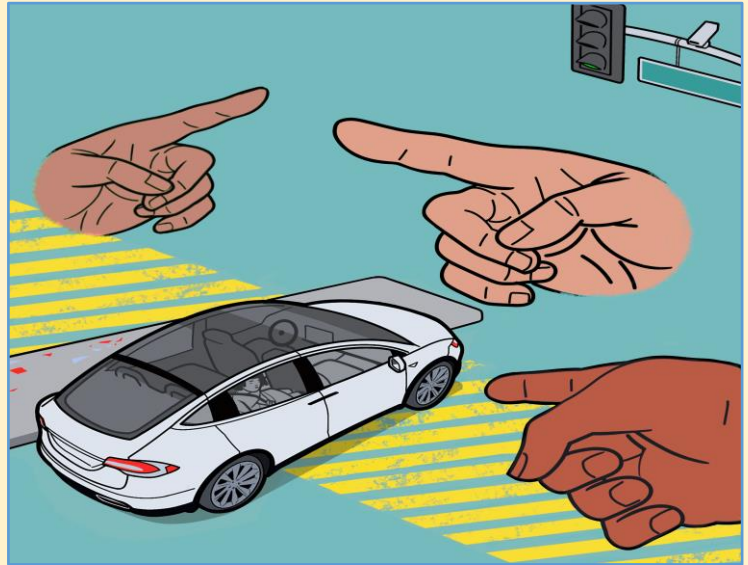
information and resources for newcomers (permanent residents and non-permanent residents) in New Westminster and its doors are in alignment with the principles of NWSS as a “Sanctuary School.” The main recommendation in this final report is for the settlement sector to ambitiously embark on an innovative funding model that involves cross-sectoral coordination amongst agencies and that meets the immediate and survival needs of newcomers in New Westminster with the creation of a Participatory Funding Model called the “**Discretionary Community Fund**.”

Weaved throughout the Navigating the Newcomer Maze project is the theme for newcomers in New Westminster to feel valued, safe and a sense of belonging in their communities with the settlement sector embedding anti-racism, anti-oppression and truth and reconciliation in its settlement work. Let us remember that: *Diversity is a fact, Inclusion is a choice, Equity is an action, and Justice is a Human Right.*

INTRODUCTION

Navigating the Newcomer Maze

When a newcomer arrives on the unceded shores of Canada and embarks on their settlement journey in a new city, where does the newcomer go? Who is guiding and supporting the newcomer? Where does the newcomer find settlement services, resources and organizations? At times, with fingers pointing out in all directions, the newcomer becomes lost in a daze, as they enter the newcomer maze where they try to safely meander their way through the settlement sector. To make the newcomer's settlement journey easier in New Westminster, a comprehensive and robust settlement sector roadmap needs to be created through a decolonizing, anti-racist and equitable lens.



(Source: Jason Schneider)

It is the intention of the *Navigating the Newcomer Maze* project to provide an inclusive, innovative and cooperative community-based model plan that can serve as a main roadmap and community resource to guide newcomers on their settlement journeys. By creating a community-based model plan that is collaborative and grass-roots based, the newcomer will be able to better access the multitude of settlement services, resources, and organizations available in New Westminster. With this clear roadmap in hand, the newcomer can then venture forth into the newcomer maze with clarity and confidence by following the settlement signposts along the way making their settlement journey easier and smoother.

In order to create a collaborative community-based model plan for the settlement sector of New Westminster, there needs to be many partners involved contributing their unique settlement strengths in order to have a **collective impact** on the settlement sector. With agencies tending to drive their own vehicles in the settlement sector led by their corporate agendas, it is highly important that agency members also get out of their driver seats and join others in a collective vehicle to have greater impact on the sector. For newcomers, they are eagerly looking for directions from these agency members that will lead them to meet their immediate everyday needs in respectful and dignified ways. This is why you will see the image of the car and other transportation modes throughout the Environmental Scan Report as well as this Final Report as a symbolism of how these different partners, agencies and newcomers, are working together, in individual and collective vehicles, to make the settlement service delivery and funding more collaborative and cooperative in New Westminster.



IRCC + Settlement Sector

Immigration Refugees, Canadian Citizenship (IRCC)



(Chinese Head Tax receipt)

The foundation of immigration in Canada was built on the notion of populating the country with immigrants from Europe, thereby representing a white supremacy mentality of migration and nation-building. An example of this exclusionary and discriminatory policy was the Chinese Head Tax. As part of the Chinese Immigration Act of 1885, Chinese migrants were obligated to pay a \$50 "entry" or head tax before being admitted into Canada. The Chinese were the only ethnic group required to pay a tax to enter Canada and the head tax was later raised to \$500 and continued until 1923.

In summarizing Canada's immigration policy until 1967, one can say that the policy divided the world's population into two parts: preferred immigrants, who were of British and European stock and white; and the rest of the world, largely composed of "people of colour" (George, 2002). It was Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau who pushed for landmark legislation with the Canadian Multiculturalism Policy in 1971 and the Immigration Act in 1976 that significantly "opened the door to immigrants from areas that for the past 200 years had been largely excluded: Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America and Africa" (George, 2002).

Almost 50 years later, in 2023, Canada is hailed as a world leader in immigration, laying out its humanitarian welcome mat and opening its international borders wide open to those seeking better lives and those fleeing from war, oppression and injustice. This is highly evident in the past 7 years with Canada's compassionate reputation on the global migration stage of taking in thousands of Syrian, Afghan, and Ukrainian refugees into urban and rural communities across Canada. Whether they are refugees, economic immigrants, international students or foreign temporary migrant workers, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) is the main gate for the arrival of these newcomers entering the country.



IRCC plays the pivotal role of providing protection to refugees and offering programming to newcomers to help them settle in Canada.

The *Navigating the Newcomer Maze* project is focused on the Settlement Program of IRCC's work which "aims to support newcomers' settlement and integration, so that they may fully participate and contribute in various aspects of Canadian life."

Settlement Sector

In the 2023–2025 Immigration Levels Plan, Canada aims to welcome from 410,000 to 505,000 new permanent residents in 2023, from 430,000 to 542,500 in 2024 and from 442,500 to 550,000 in 2025. These targets are incremental record highs for Canada and reflect the government’s belief that newcomers are instrumental in driving economic growth and building our communities. In 2022, Canada achieved its target to admit 431,645 new permanent residents, which represents the largest number of people ever welcomed in a year, in Canadian history.

With the recent federal government announcement of Canada opening its door to over **500,000 newcomers annually** over the next 3 years, it will be IRCC’s responsibility to make sure that adequate funding, staffing, and resources will be provided to the settlement sector in order to meet this surge of immigration. By ensuring sufficient settlement capacity is built across and within the settlement sector, this will promote the successful integration of present and future newcomers into Canadian society. According to IRCC, “the successful settlement and integration of newcomers benefits Canada by building a more inclusive, diverse and productive nation.”

Ultimately, the successful settlement journey of newcomers over the next three years will depend on the capacity of the settlement agencies and settlement-serving agencies to

provide and deliver the necessary amount of services and resources required for newcomers to succeed and thrive in their lives and communities. This is why the Immigration, Refugees and Canadian Citizenship department currently “funds more than 500 service provider organizations to assist immigrants, including refugees, to overcome barriers specific to the newcomer experience, both before arrival and after landing in Canada.”

The role of the IRCC-funded service provider organizations (SPOs) are to provide core settlement services such as needs and assets assessments and referral services, community connections, and information and orientation services. Settlement provider organizations tend to offer three types of services: 1) **Direct Service Delivery**; 2) **Support Services**; and 3) **Indirect Services**.

Other organizations and entities outside of traditional settlement service providers that have received Contribution Agreements with IRCC also offer indirect settlement services to newcomers. These entities range from community organizations, faith-based organizations and municipal agencies.

Indirect Services include projects that support the development of partnerships, capacity building, and the sharing of best practices among service provider organizations and other settlement serving entities. Examples of indirect services include community partnerships and networks for local planning and settlement coordination such as a **Local Immigration Partnership (LIP)**.

Local Immigration Partnership

A partnership network that aims to coordinate services for newcomers at the local level by bringing together various stakeholders outside of traditional settlement service providers, including employers, school boards, health centres and networks, boards of trade, levels of government, professional associations, ethno-cultural organizations, faith-based organizations, and the community and social services sectors.
(IRCC)

WINS LIP + New Westminster

WINS LIP

In New Westminster, the Local Immigration Partnership is the Welcoming and Inclusive New West (WINS) Local Immigration Partnership, also known as **WINS** or **WINS LIP**.

WINS LIP is a collaboration of over 50 representatives from a variety of sectors working together since 2007 to address issues faced by newcomers in New Westminster. WINS started to receive funding by Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) in 2014. This planning table partners with a multitude of sectors other than settlement, such as municipal government, education, health, settlement, employment, and social services, as well as interested community members. In addition, working groups have been established to address specific issues such as employment and poverty reduction, discrimination and racism, and creating a sense of inclusivity and belonging as newcomers settle into their new lives.

WINS LIP:

The aim is to strengthen the community's capacity to create a receptive, welcoming and inclusive community, and to meet newcomer's needs through agency collaboration and service integration.

New Westminster

New Westminster is western Canada's oldest city and with this unique reputation it has been the starting point for many diverse newcomers to begin their first settlement journeys in the province whether over a hundred years ago or today. In 2021, New Westminster's population was 78,916 and 37.5% of this population were immigrants which indicates that there are many immigrants and refugees navigating the newcomer maze in New Westminster. It is the settlement sector in New Westminster that is carrying out the responsibility to guide this large newcomer population into successful integration and settlement in their new communities.

With **approximately 40% of New Westminster's population consisting of immigrants and newcomers**, it is critical to ensure that the settlement sector, and other partnering sectors, are looking at **equity** when delivering culturally-appropriate and needs-appropriate services and programming to newcomers. With over a 700% rise of hate incidences towards East Asian

peoples in Vancouver during the beginning of COVID, the murder of a Muslim family going for a walk in London, Ontario, and the re-discovery of an initial 215 unmarked graves followed by hundreds of other unmarked graves of Indigenous children across the country, it is undeniable that racism exists, overtly and covertly, in every city across the nation. Racism daily impacts the lives of thousands of Indigenous, Black and People of Colour and their communities. Ultimately, racism and discrimination will negatively impact the lives and families of immigrants and refugees, and the newcomer community. Since the majority of newcomers are part of the racialized population, it is vital the settlement sector develops anti-racist and anti-oppressive resources, GBA+ analysis (Gender-Based Analysis Plus), and decolonial approaches to address discrimination and racism effectively and equitably for **"newcomers of colour"** in New Westminster.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project Background

The Navigating the Newcomer Maze project is funded by IRCC through the Settlement Improvement Delivery (SDI) stream within the Settlement Program department. This SDI path invests strategically in evidence-based projects that offer insights on program design and sector improvements that support future settlement programming. Throughout all stages, the Navigating the Newcomer Maze project centered an evidence-based and needs-based approach in designing a service delivery model in New Westminster that focuses on settlement sector improvements and efficiencies through the design of a collaborative-based community plan and an innovative funding structure. It is important to highlight that the foundation for the design of the community-based model plan and funding structure took into consideration IRCC's four CORE principles in project design: 1) *client-centered*; 2) *outcomes-driven*; 3) *responsive to need*; and 4) *effective use of resources*.

In line with IRCC's Settlement Program's Indirect Services theme, the Newcomer Navigating the Maze project is:

- Providing opportunities and resources that assist the newcomer community,



municipal governments, public agencies, community organizations, and educational institutions in New Westminster to engage in settlement and integration, foster connections with newcomers and encourage the participation of newcomers in all aspects of society.

- Recommending indirect supports and tools to ensure that the settlement sector provides innovative and coordinated services to newcomers.
- Developing creative models that can adapt settlement services in New Westminster to more effectively meet the specific needs of unique groups of newcomers or to the communities in which they settle.

The Navigating the Newcomer project has also incorporated a local and grassroots approach to indirect service delivery by streamlining the settlement service delivery to the unique requirements and needs of equity-deserving newcomer groups in New Westminster. WINS LIP plays a vital role in this indirect service delivery by offering a cross-sectoral approach where its membership and partnerships are involved in different capacities of delivering settlement services and resources to newcomers in New Westminster.

Project Partners

IRCC believes in building partnerships that lead to collaboration between different players to harness the collective skills and knowledge within the settlement, resettlement and other sectors. WINS LIP is an exemplary example of partnership-building as it comprises of partners from different sectors who purposefully come together to find ways to collectively improve the settlement services, resources and programming in New Westminster. One of the most powerful outcomes of WINS LIP is the engagement that takes place amongst the partners within WINS LIP as well as the

collaboration extended to community project partners. **WINS LIP = COLLABORATION.** However, the most important partners are the newcomers who represent diverse racial, ethnic and cultural communities and faith-based communities, and who are the ultimate beneficiaries of IRCC funded projects. These partnerships are vital in understanding how settlement delivery and funds can be better leveraged to improve the settlement sector and the lives of newcomers in New Westminster.

Project Objective + Deliverables



Project Objective

The main objective of the Navigating the Newcomer Maze project is:

To create a model community-based plan that utilizes an integrated and collaborative community-based approach to indirect service delivery and funding for settlement services in New Westminster.

The project will also assist and guide newcomers in how to navigate the city and its multitude of settlement agencies, services, resources and programming in a cross-sectoral approach thereby making it easier for newcomers to manoeuvre New Westminster's settlement sector. The intent of the project is to support IRCC's commitment to fund community-based plans "that support the understanding that newcomer settlement and integration occurs locally, and that decision-making at the local level may improve the effectiveness of service delivery."

A main goal of the Navigating the Newcomer Maze project is to set up newcomers for success by focusing on the strengths and assets that newcomers can bring from their home country to Canadian society, the workplace and community. One way of doing this is to go "beyond centring newcomers as clients, to centring newcomers as experts in understanding their needs and strengths, and sources of innovative solutions to meet those needs, regardless of whether they access formal settlement services or not" (Peace Geeks, 2021). This sets forth the powerful settlement mantra of (Ibid):

"empowering newcomers to be agents of change and drivers of their own settlement journeys".



Project Deliverables

1) Environmental Scan

The purpose of the environmental scan for the Navigating the Newcomer Maze project in New Westminster is to: 1) provide the baseline for the development of the community-based model; 2) scope out settlement resources, services and programming and key issues impacting newcomers; and 3) identify duplications, gaps, and unmet needs in the settlement sector. The scan took place from March 1st to December 31st, 2022 and involved: a literature review; interviews with agency representatives; the development of a settlement database comprising of a list of settlement resources, services and programs; and the creation of a community-based analysis table that highlights gaps and duplications in the settlement sector.

The literature review consisted of reviewing key documents and best practices related to community-based model planning, newcomer needs and issues, and the settlement sector in Canada and New Westminster. The stakeholder interviews were conducted with agencies and individuals represented on the WINS LIP table in New Westminster thereby comprising a variety of voices from different sectors interested in supporting newcomers. The database is essentially a comprehensive list of all settlement and settlement-serving agencies in New Westminster that deliver settlement services, resources and programming, captured under a series of distinct categories/signposts. The community-based analysis table provides a valuable snapshot into the settlement sector of New Westminster by highlighting which agencies are working in specific settlement categories thereby identifying gaps and also duplications in the settlement sector.

2) Community-Based Model Plan

The premise for developing this model community-based plan for the settlement sector in New Westminster is to illustrate to IRCC the importance of decentralizing settlement services, resources and programming into collaborative and cooperative structures that serve the needs of newcomers at participatory, grassroots community levels. To determine what type of collaborative model is best suited for the settlement sector in New Westminster, it was important to take a local and cross-sectoral approach to indirect service delivery and funding by involving different agencies throughout the project.

With newcomers in mind, “building community capacity” through community-based planning and participatory approaches was a constant theme when designing the community-based model for the settlement sector in New Westminster. Moreover, for WINS LIP it was very important to apply equity-based, culturally-appropriate and needs-appropriate lenses when creating the community-based model plan with the goal to enhance community capacity in setting up newcomers with settlement success in New Westminster. The Navigating the Newcomer Maze project is about creating an inclusive community-based model plan where the strengths and experiences of newcomers are considered assets which add value to the social capital of communities throughout New Westminster. WINS LIP plays a key role in generating community capacity and in highlighting the social capital within the newcomer community by developing a collaborative community-based model plan. In this plan, different organizations, sectors and community members will work together in making it easier for newcomers to access the boutique of settlement services and resources available in New Westminster.

Project Evaluation



The primary tool used for project evaluation throughout all phases of the Navigating the Newcomer Maze project is the Performance Measurement Framework (PMF). The PMF measures how this project is meeting its outcomes, indicators, baseline, and targets along with status reporting and timeline completion. Please see Appendix A for the Performance Measurement Framework. This type of evaluation process provides IRCC with the necessary information required to effectively evaluate and measure the successes and challenges in the development of the community-based model plan and the innovative funding structure proposed in this report.

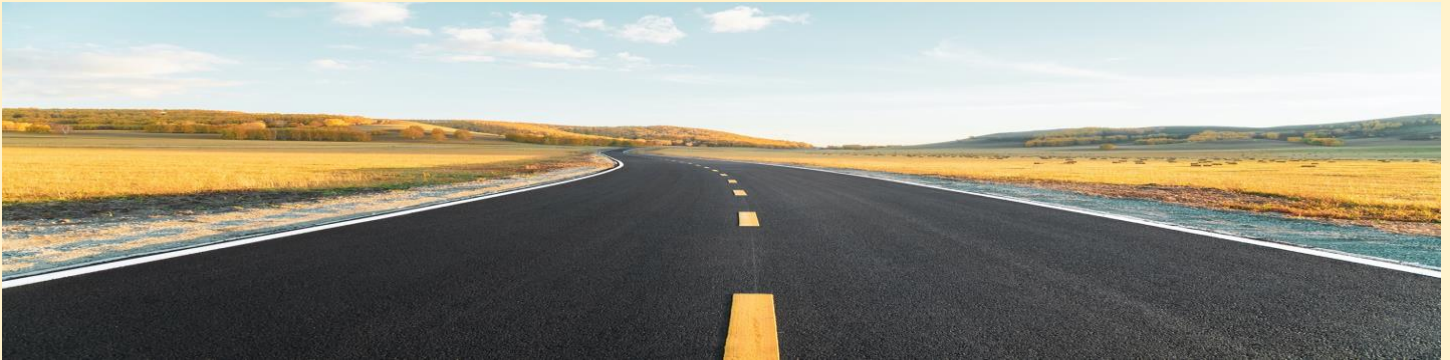
Project evaluation was also evidence-based by collecting, analyzing, and synthesizing quantitative and qualitative data in the form of a cross-sectoral community-based comparison table which categorized agencies and their work in different settlement areas, as well as a settlement sector database consisting of all of the agencies in New Westminster offering a potpourri of settlement services, resources and programs. The Consultant and Project Lead met continuously throughout the project to evaluate the project tasks, make any updated changes, and ensure the completion dates were met while maintaining an adaptive change management process. The Project Lead also updated the IRCC point person on the PMF throughout the project and informed WINS LIP members at regular meetings on the activities and completed tasks for the Navigating the Newcomer Maze project.



Project evaluation will continue after the deliverance of the Final Report to IRCC in the format of WINS LIP meetings where members will discuss how to implement some of the recommendations in the Final Report with a focus on innovative community funding models.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Settlement Landscape in New Westminster



With a continuous swell of immigrants and newcomers arriving in New Westminster, the demographic tides are constantly changing, and the question arises of who is rolling out the settlement carpet for newcomers entering New Westminster and its schools, workplaces, public spaces and diverse neighborhoods. The environmental scan revealed the settlement landscape in New Westminster to be one of thriving activity and identified the following 17 organizations that are currently delivering settlement and settlement-related services to newcomers in New Westminster:

Organizations Providing Settlement & Settlement-Related Services

Settlement Services

Immigrant Services Society of BC

MOSAIC

Pacific Immigrant Resources Society

S.U.C.C.E.S.S.

Umbrella Health Coop

Settlement-Related Services

Century House

City of New Westminster

Defyne Development

Douglas College

Family Place New Westminster

Family Services of Greater Vancouver

Fraser Health Authority

Lower Mainland Purpose Society

New Westminster Public Library

New Westminster School District

Welcome Centre

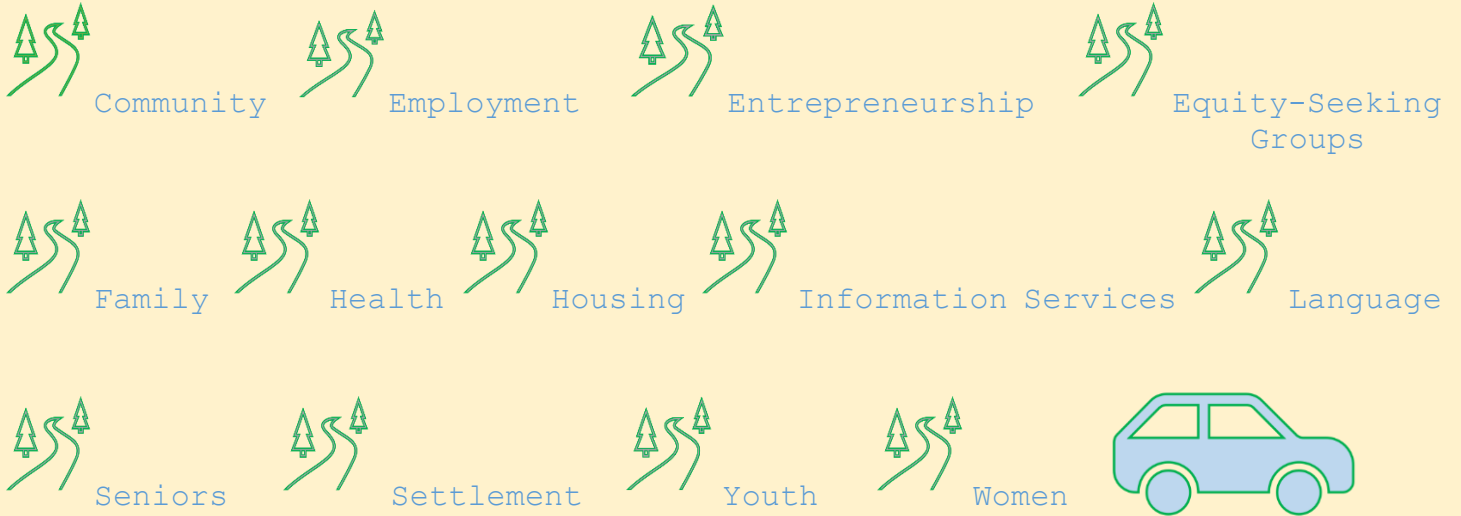
WorkBC

*Please see Appendix B for full Environmental Scan Report

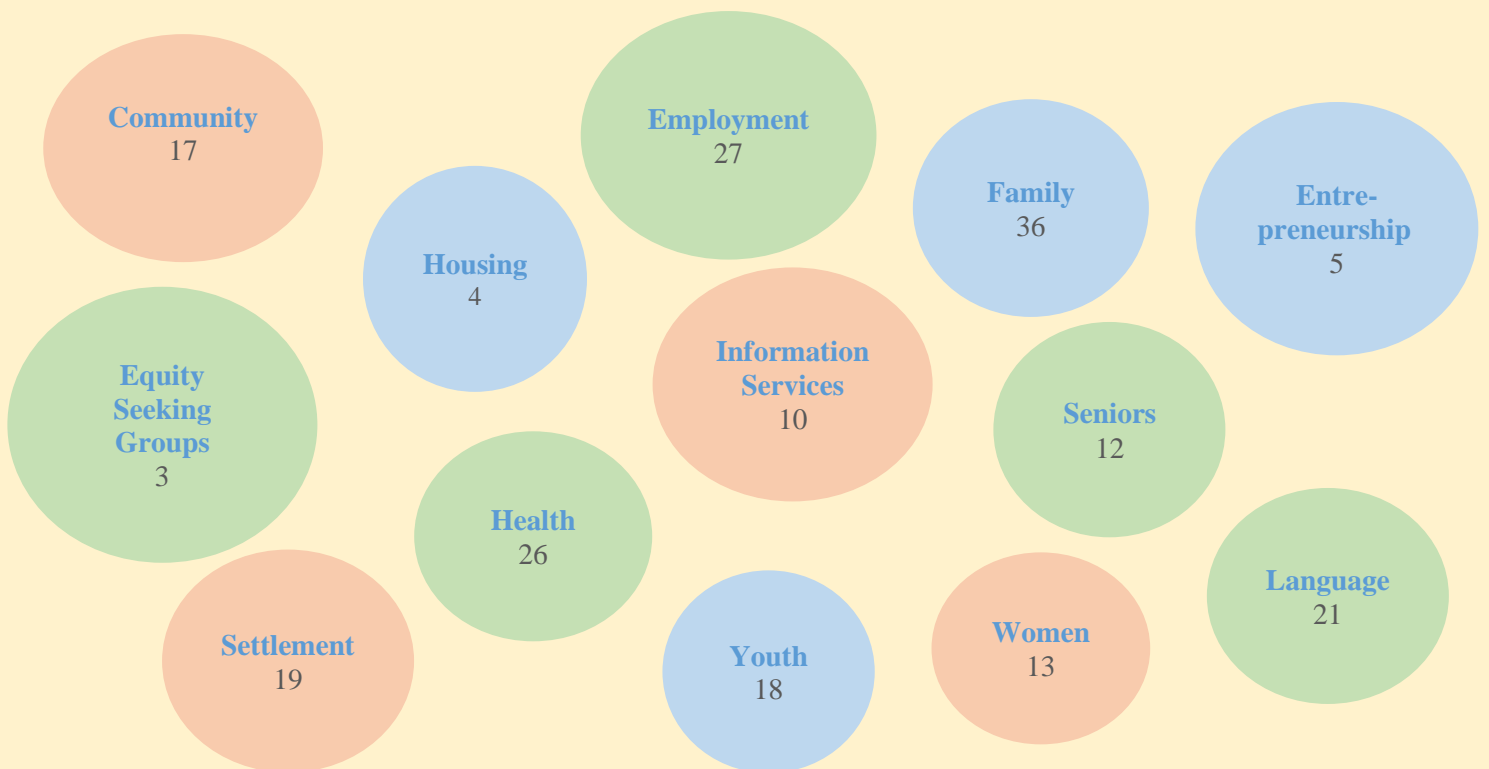


Settlement Categories/Signposts

A central part of the development of the community-based model plan was to create a series of categories/signposts to help newcomers navigate and choose the right services, resources and programs required to set themselves up for successful integration into society. The following 13 categories were identified as areas where newcomers are seeking more information and assistance to guide them in meeting their direct and indirect settlement needs in New Westminster.



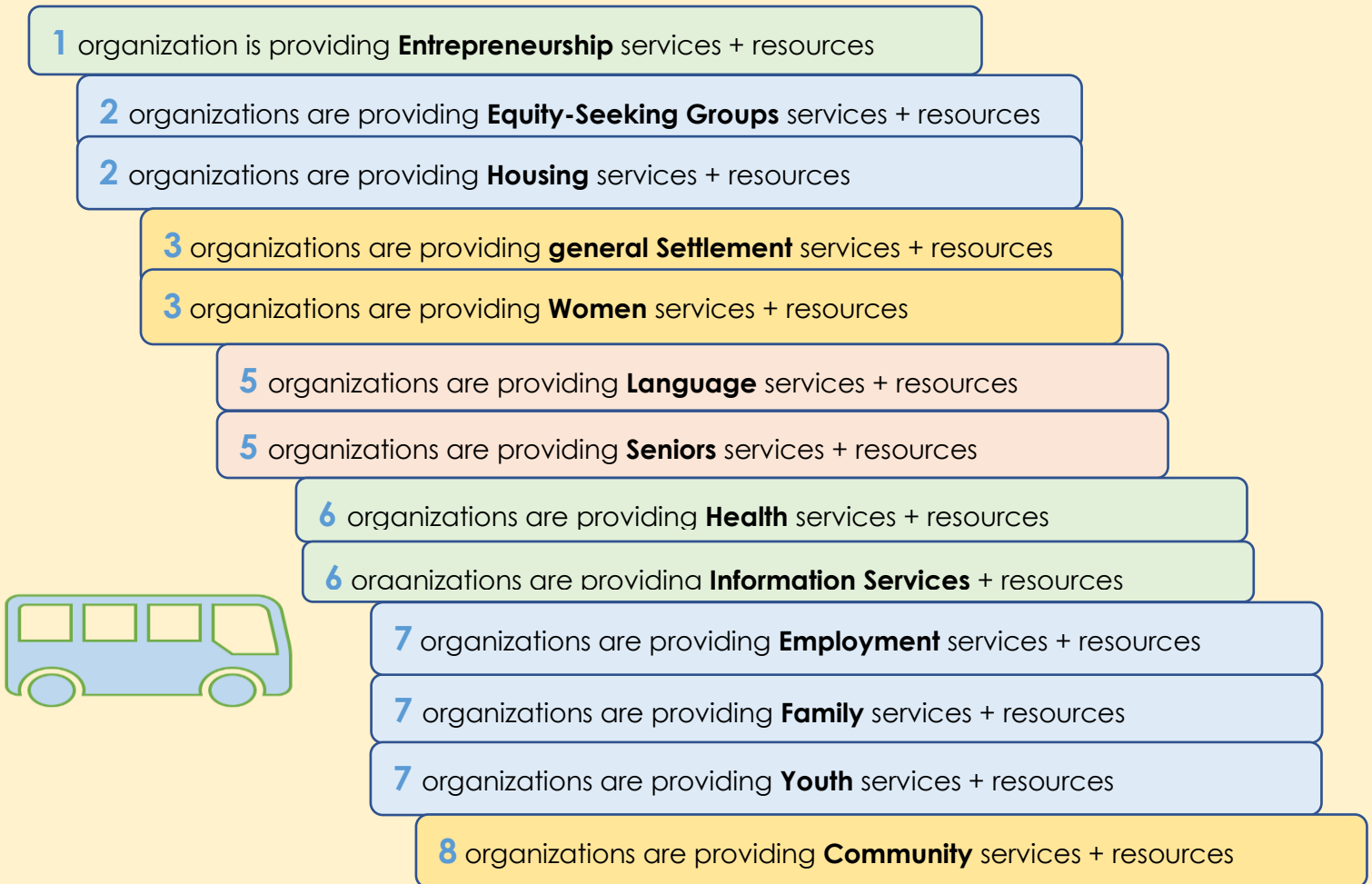
With 17 organizations throughout New Westminster offering a bouquet of settlement services, resources, and programs, it was important to catalogue which organizations are offering these specific 13 settlement categories so that staff and newcomers can easily access this information in a comprehensive settlement sector database called “[List of Agencies + Signposts.](#)” Please refer to Appendix C for this database. Overall, the findings from an evidence-based data analysis reveal that this database, at this time, identifies **over 210** settlement services, resources and programs currently being offered to immigrants and refugees in New Westminster, as illustrated below:



With over 200 settlement services and resources available to newcomers to help them navigate the settlement sector in New Westminster, it is important for newcomers to not get lost nor overwhelmed in the settlement maze by wisely choosing the necessary services and resources that will best support them on their settlement integration. Let us remember that the “*newcomer is the expert*” on their settlement journey and needs to be in the driver seat.

Sector Gaps + Duplications

As part of the environmental scan, it was important to identify the gaps and duplications of the settlement sector in order to develop a more innovative, streamlined and cost-effective approach to settlement planning in New Westminster. By creating a **Community-Based Analysis Table** which cross-references organizations and their work in specific categories, this provides a snapshot view of where the gaps exist and in which settlement categories there seems to be duplications in services, resources and programs. Please refer to Appendix D for the Community-Based Analysis Table. Essentially, this Table captures a *visual cross-representation of the whole settlement sector in New Westminster* and hence is an extremely valuable tool for organizations to refer to when designing settlement programming. A quantitative data analysis of the Community-Based Analysis Table provides the following key findings for the settlement sector in New Westminster:



The Environmental Scan findings further conclude that:



The **least** amount of settlement services, resources or programs are in the categories of **entrepreneurship, equity-seeking groups, housing, and women**, which highlights **GAPS** in the provision of these settlement areas in New Westminster's settlement sector.



There are a few settlement services, resources and programming in both the **language** and **seniors** categories.



The **majority** of settlement services, resources and programs are in the categories of **health, information services, employment, family, youth, and community** which showcases **possible DUPLICATIONS** in these settlement areas by different organizations in New Westminster's settlement sector.

Overall, the Environmental Scan findings highlight that there are a total of 17 settlement agencies and settlement-serving agencies providing over 210 services, resources and programs to the newcomer population in New Westminster. With the *List of Agencies + Signposts* and the *Community-based Analysis Table* in hand, newcomers will now be better able to navigate the 13 signposts/categories in the newcomer maze of New Westminster's settlement sector.

Agency Interviews

The environmental scan consisted of a series of hybrid interviews (in-person and zoom) with 12 stakeholders representing 9 diverse agencies who are supporting newcomers and working formally and informally in the settlement sector of New Westminster. These agencies are represented as symbols of red markers on the newcomer's roadmap, providing clear directions to the doors and services of these agencies that are there to make it easier for newcomers to navigate the maze.



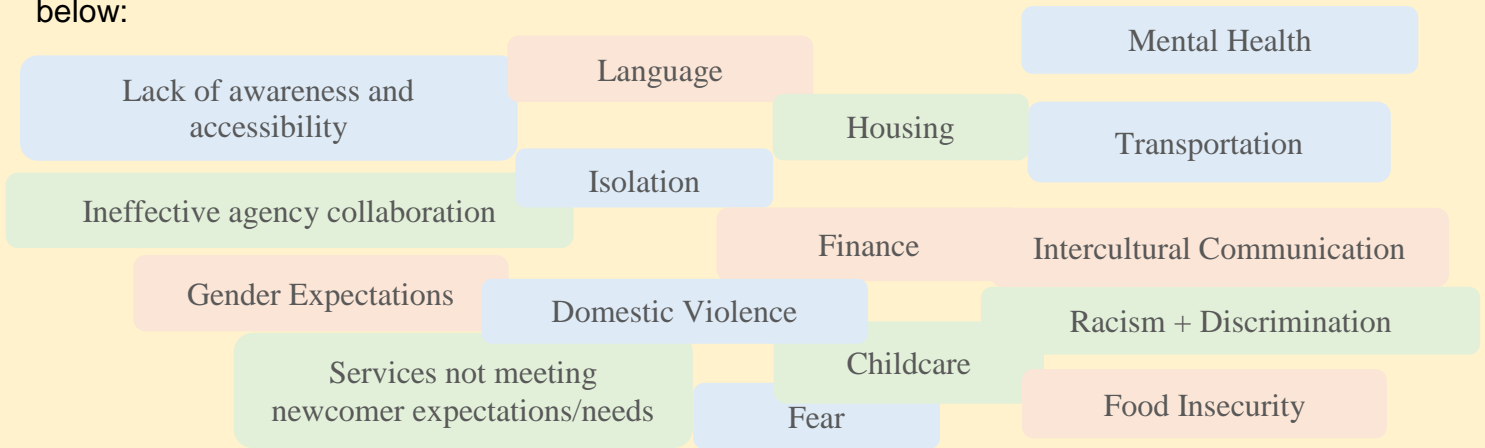
Six main questions were posed to the agency interviewees with the **key findings** being summarized in the following sections below (please refer to Environmental Scan for questions).

1) Settlement Categories: There were more settlement categories identified during the agency interview process that organizations are offering newcomers in New Westminster, keeping in mind that these categories can also fit under some of the main 13 categories:

- Case Management
- Childcare
- Citizenship
- Community Kitchens
- Community Services
- Counselling
- Digital literacy
- Diverse learning materials
- Education
- English language classes + LINC + conversation circles
- Employment
- Financial Literacy
- Food Security
- Health
- Housing
- Info. Services
- Intercultural Festival/Info.
- Law/Legal
- Mental Health
- Parenting + Families
- Racism + Anti-Racism
- Seniors
- Settlement
- Social Connections
- SWIS (Social Workers in Schools)
- Transportation
- Ukraine Response Working Group
- Victim Services

According to the agency interviewees, the settlement services, resources and programs that are considered in **“most demand”** in New Westminster are: *Case Management, Childcare, Community Kitchens, Counselling, Digital Literacy, Employment, English Language Learning and Classes, Financial Literacy, Food Security, Health, Housing, Parent Programs, Welcome House/Information Sharing, and Women*. In contrast, the settlement services, resources and programs that are considered as being in the **“least demand”** in New Westminster are: *Community Services/Engagement, Digital literacy, Employment, Financial Literacy, Housing, Language, Law (legal supports), LGBTQ2S+, and Youth*. However, you will notice that there is a duplication in some of the services, resources and programs being classified in both the “most” and “least” demand categories (e.g., Employment) and this is due to the varying perspectives on which settlement services and resources are in most or least demand according to each agency’s specific priorities.

2) Barriers - According to one agency interviewee, **“Only about 30% of newcomers are accessing settlement services in New Westminster, where are the other 70%?”** In response, agency interviewees explained that the rest of these newcomers are not able to access these services and resources due to the multitude of barriers that exist for newcomers in New Westminster, as illustrated below:



3) Key Gaps, Barriers + Unmet Needs

Gaps

- Not enough childcare services available as the demand in this area is very high.
- Lack of community engagement in reaching out to newcomer seniors.
- More funding for language supports especially in-person learning and first language services.
- Need pre-arrival education programming in home countries to educate and inform newcomers about services/resources before newcomers enter Canada and New Westminster.
- Need more mental health supports and culturally safe training for equity-seeking groups.
- Housing shortage and housing affordability issues experienced by newcomers.
- Due to structural barriers, there are only a few streamlined services, resources and programs available to address the needs of racialized newcomers.
- Funding is undercapitalized as there is a mismatch between the realities of agencies and newcomer needs.
- Needs to be more collaboration and cohesion amongst settlement agencies.
- Environmental scans should be regularly updated especially for equity-seeking groups.
- Need for social inclusion to bring newcomers together and create a sense of belonging.
- Need more mentoring and job shadowing opportunities in medical fields.
- Newcomer students are requesting more physical and mental health supports.

Duplications

- One stakeholder commented that “it’s about meeting the newcomer demands” and if there is more demand in one area with many agencies offering similar services then complementary do not equate to duplication as newcomers needs are being met in this high demand area.
- Similar timing of some of the youth programs in New Westminister and Burnaby.
- The work of Cross-Cultural Health Brokers in social determinants, similar to the work done by Caseworkers in settlement agencies.
- According to a stakeholder, there are not many duplications in the services of the settlement sector in New Westminister due to the fact that agencies are trying to complement one another’s services and to also fulfill IRCC’s priority area of collaboration amongst agencies.

Unmet Needs

- One stakeholder commented, “seniors are not an investment when it comes to government funding” indicating that the government is not investing in services for newcomer seniors as it does not see an economic return from these seniors. Seniors are the “forgotten ones”.
- Critical need and request to look at creating settlement services that are looked through “equity, decolonizing, intergenerational, and intersectional lenses.”
- Queensborough neighborhood is a fast growing area with young families moving in and there is a large need for childcare services (2x much) in this area of New Westminister.
- Need more supports and safer spaces for LGTBTQ2S+ and IBPOC students.

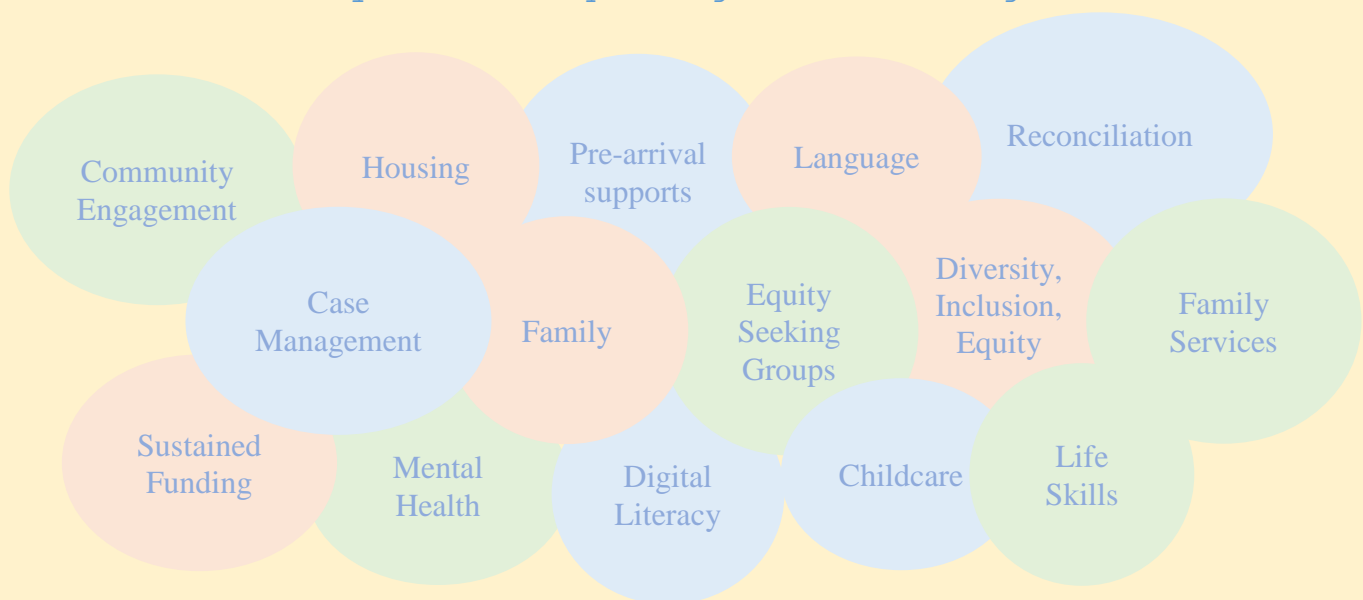
4) Funding Allocation

The majority of agency interviewees stated that the funding allocation their departments receive for their settlement delivery is in the range of \$50,000 – \$99,000, closely followed by others stating the range of \$100,000+, and a few commenting over the \$800,000+ allocation range.

5) Funders

The majority of agency interviewees commented that the main funder for their settlement service delivery was the federal government, followed by provincial government funding, then Foundations, and a handful receive municipal funding.

6) Service Delivery Areas Requiring More Funding



COMMUNITY- BASED MODEL PLAN

Community-Based Planning

One of the most effective ways to address the needs of the newcomer community is to apply community-based planning approaches that take into consideration and center the local voices of newcomers in New Westminster. According to the Planners Network:

“a central tenet of community-based planning is building and strengthening communities and developing local leadership. The sense of empowerment and community identity generated through active involvement and self-determination will help to sustain community development efforts and strengthen civil society in general.”

Community-based planning empowers newcomers to become involved in settlement sector decision-making processes at a local grassroots level with a bottom-up community development mindset. One of the aims of the Community-Based Model Plan for the New Westminster settlement sector is to encourage newcomers to actively participate in identifying newcomer needs and recommendations through the community-based planning approaches of participatory planning and social capital.

The Community-Based Model Plan will take a participatory planning approach in ensuring that newcomers in New Westminster are provided with mics and platforms to speak their truths about what changes need to transpire in order for transformative change to take place in the settlement sector.

Participatory Planning

For a community-based plan to incorporate justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) lenses and a gender-based analysis, it is imperative to conduct culturally appropriate and needs appropriate community development

through the process of participatory planning. Essentially, “participatory planning is a way of doing planning that puts community residents at the centre of decision-making in their community where the community feels ownership over the process and the results and where they see their hard work reflected in a community vision that gets built because of their involvement” (Planner’s Network). The Navigating the Newcomer Maze project engaged in participatory planning through: 1) community engagement processes and; 2) interviews with newcomers to provide the newcomer community with opportunities to co-create innovative ways to solve their issues, reach their settlement goals and create a community vision. Simply put, participatory planning is a process of “for the people, by the people.” In this project, it can be seen as “for the newcomers, by the newcomers.”

Social Capital

Building social capital for communities refers to establishing mutually respectful relationships, strong connections and trust-based networks amongst community members and agencies. By understanding that “people are social capital”, this provides a better understanding of how newcomers can provide critical knowledge and skills to the settlement sector in New Westminster. For the Community-Based Model Plan, social capital can be replaced with “newcomer capital” where agencies and communities appreciate and utilize the capital and immense value that newcomers bring to the settlement sector in New Westminster.



Justice, Equity, Diversity + Inclusion (JEDI)

Anti-Racism

With the rise of racism and violence globally and locally, it is imperative, and a moral obligation, for cities and communities working in the settlement sector to develop and implement newcomer policies, plans, and projects with human rights at the center through decolonial lenses of justice, equity, diversity and inclusion (JEDI). IRCC is aware of the magnitude of racism and discrimination that immigrants, refugees and newcomers are facing in their home countries, in their migration crossings, and in their resettlement and settlement journeys in Canada. To address these realities, IRCC has launched the **Anti-Racism Strategy 2.0** (2021-2024) in July 2022 to eradicate systemic racism internally within its structures and also externally in its service delivery:

“Strategy 2.0 steps up the initiatives to advance racial equity in the Department and support equitable integration of immigrants and refugees into Canadian society, with the ultimate outcome of maximizing the benefits of IRCC’s programs to Canadians and newcomers through the elimination of racism in policies, programs, service delivery and people management.”

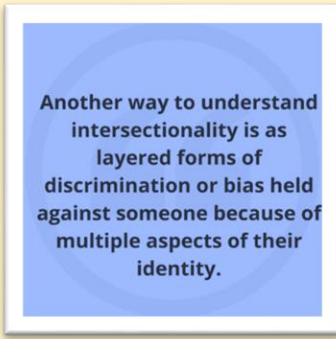
WINS LIP understands the critical importance of applying an anti-racism lens to the development of this Community-Based Model Plan and the need for its settlement agencies and settlement-serving agencies to actively engage in anti-racism initiatives that deliver transformative change to racialized immigrants and newcomers. Fortunately, for the past few years, WINS LIP has already embarked on a series of anti-racism work projects that involved newcomers of colour and the IBPOC (Indigenous, Black, People of Colour) community. In 2021 and 2022, WINS LIP received funding from the ResilienceBC Anti-Racism Network to develop specific anti-racism projects which resulted in the reports of

“*Checking the Pulse*” and “*Rising Up!*” that identified the needs, barriers, and best practices to addressing discrimination and racism in New Westminster.

By actively engaging in IRCC’s Settlement Delivery Improvement projects, such as the Navigating the Newcomer Maze, WINS LIP is committed to dismantling racism and addressing systemic inequities in settlement policies, programs, and service delivery in New Westminster. The lenses of “equity” and “diversity” were both applied to this community-based model plan through the development of the settlement database called “List of Agencies + Signposts”. This was achieved by creating a specific settlement category called “**Equity-Seeking Groups**” to identify which settlement agencies have programming that focuses on the needs of *diverse newcomer groups*, such as racialized newcomers, 2SLGBTQI+, and disability communities. In addition, the Community-Based Analysis Table reveals that presently there are two settlement agencies in New Westminster focusing on the specific needs of equity-seeking groups. The Community-Based Analysis Table also identified that there are five agencies working on Seniors programming, and seven agencies focusing on youth programming.

Gender-Based Analysis Plus

Embedding an “intersectionality” foundation in anti-racism work in the settlement sector is very important in order to uncover the *multitude of barriers to access* which a newcomer faces due to their identity. IRCC is committed to “intersectionality settlement programming” that aims to meet the needs of newcomers with disabilities, racialized newcomers, and 2SLGBTQI+ individuals.



Another way to understand intersectionality is as layered forms of discrimination or bias held against someone because of multiple aspects of their identity.

For the development of the Community-Based Model Plan, WINS LIP incorporated a GBA+ analysis to address the gaps for diverse newcomer groups in settlement planning and programming in New Westminster's settlement sector. According to IRCC:

“GBA Plus is a tool for understanding how multiple factors, such as race, ethnicity, gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation, education, income, language, indigeneity, and age shape health, social, and economic outcomes for people and influence access to programs and services. It is used in the design and implementation of policies, programs, and other initiatives so that they are more inclusive and responsive to the different needs of people.”

Gender-Based Analysis Plus was originally created to ensure “gender equality” and “gender equity” for women were embedded in policies, plans and programming. In the development of this Community-Based Model Plan, WINS LIP applied a GBA+ analysis by creating a specific settlement category of “women” in the database of “List of Agencies + Signposts” to identify which agencies are addressing the specific needs of this group. The Community-Based Analysis Table indicates that there are three settlement agencies who are providing settlement services, resources and programming to newcomer women in New Westminster.

Truth and Reconciliation

Newcomers to Canada

93. We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with the national Aboriginal organizations, to revise the information kit for newcomers to Canada and its citizenship test to reflect a more inclusive history of the diverse Aboriginal peoples of Canada, including information about the Treaties and the history of residential schools.

IRCC is committed to implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples by working in partnership with Indigenous peoples to advance their rights. Nationally, the Department is responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action 93, which focuses on educating newcomers on the history of Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

For the past few years, WINS LIP has taken steps to establish relationships with the Qayqayt First Nation in New Westminster and First Nations organizations to engage in policies, plans and projects that center truth and reconciliation and the rights of Indigenous peoples. Presently connected to the WINS table through ResilienceBC Anti-Racism projects is a representative from the Spirit of the Children Society in New Westminster and, as a result, WINS LIP has been “invited in” to participate in truth and reconciliation events.

WINS LIP has also established a connection with a representative from the Qayqayt First Nation office, Stacey Ferguson, through ResilienceBC Anti-Racism projects. It is the aim of WINS LIP, in the future, to co-create newcomer settlement resources and projects with both the Spirit of the Children Society and the Qayqayt First Nation that educate newcomers in New Westminster on the Calls of Action for truth and reconciliation.

Through the lenses of anti-racism, Gender-Based Analysis Plus, and truth and reconciliation, WINS LIP is actively promoting settlement services, resources and programs based on justice, equity, diversity and inclusion for newcomers in New Westminster. Ultimately, newcomers need to feel safe, secure, and a sense of belonging in their communities and city. Only by addressing the “white elephant” in the room, which is racism in all its forms, and by co-developing anti-racism programming with the newcomers and the settlement sector can newcomers and IBPOC feel safe, secure, and a sense of belonging in New Westminster. This need and “[right to belong](#)” is beautifully shared in the following video by spoken word artist Christopher Tse called “Eyes Open: An Anti-Asian Racism PSA: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AGQtaCyp8f8&t=1s>

Collaborative Hub Model: The Welcome Centre

The Welcome Centre

All directions coming from the settlement sector, WINS LIP, and newcomers are pointing towards the **Welcome Centre** as the ultimate destination for a **collaborative hub model** and a “one stop shop” for coordinated settlement information and resources in New Westminster. Furthermore, it is clear that the findings from the *Environmental Scan, Agency Interviews, Settlement Database of “List of Agencies + Signposts,” Community-Based Analysis Table, Community Interviews, and WINS LIP Workshops* are all making it easier for immigrants and refugees to navigate the newcomer maze in New Westminster. **The Welcome Centre is a core service and should be funded as one.** (See Appendix F Collaborative Hub Model Outline)

The story of the Welcome Centre began in 2007, when a Community Partnership Table of settlement and other service providers applied for provincial funding and started the initial discussion about a Welcome and Integration Centre. In 2014, they applied for Local Immigration Partnership funding and included a specific activity to “engage in initial research and planning for establishment of a ‘Welcome and Integration Centre’ in New Westminster.” This was followed by a LIP community visioning session in 2015 where a focus group of newcomers agreed that some kind of welcome centre would be of great benefit; and the graphic artist incorporated this idea as a “Welcome House” in the above info-graphic.



This was followed by a LIP community visioning session in 2015 where a focus group of newcomers agreed that some kind of welcome centre would be of great benefit; and the graphic artist incorporated this idea as a “Welcome House” in the above info-graphic.

Through participatory planning and valuing newcomer capital, the power of **community visioning** cannot be underestimated as in this case, the dream of the Welcome House turned into the reality of creating a **Welcome Centre** as a community hub in 2021, located in New Westminster Secondary School (NWSS). The Welcome Centre is funded by New Westminster School District No. 40, and the Community Navigator position is funded by City of New Westminster until 2025. The School District presently covers the ongoing operating costs. The Centre includes a reception area, a resource library, flex offices and multi-purpose spaces, as well as facilitates access to classrooms outside of school hours. The Welcome Centre offers the following core services (Welcome Centre website):

- **Central Registration Team:** Enrolling new families joining our School District, and connecting them with supports they may need.
- **Community Navigator:** In partnership with The City of New Westminster, the Community Navigator can help connect people to local service providers, programs and events happening around our city.
- **Settlement Services:** In-house we have MOSAIC ready to provide services and support to newcomers in our community. Other settlement service agencies also use the space to provide workshop/meetings.
- **Qayqayt First Nation:** Host space for the Qayqayt First Nation, and look forward to opportunities this will create as we continue to learn and strengthen our connections in community.
- **Multipurpose Room:** Perfect for workshops, meetings, training and other programs, that will be available to community partners for a wide range of uses.
- **Calendar of Services/Events** of what’s happening at the Welcome Centre.

The City of New Westminster also funds a “subsidized access program” that supports cultural and ethnic groups and organizations to access and utilize spaces in the Welcome Centre if they are not able to pay the non-profit rental rate.

Sustained funding for the Welcome Centre is a key part of this model.

In addition to the Welcome Centre, the [Wellness Centre](#) “supports and promotes healthy living, in a way that’s centred around connection and care for students and families in New Westminster.” Some of the core services are: *Mental Health Supports, Grief and Bereavement Care, Community Health and Primary Care, Support for Students at Middle and Elementary schools, and Prevention & Health Promotion.* The Wellness Centre offers its wellness and health resources and services to newcomers, and works with the Community Navigator on settlement-related and newcomer wellness initiatives.

Community Navigator



Presently, the Welcome Center acts a “community hub” with a **Community Navigator** directing newcomers to various settlement agencies and settlement-serving agencies for their settlement needs and information in New Westminster, as well as surrounding cities. According to the City: *“More specifically, the Welcome Center serves Indigenous peoples, recent immigrants, refugees, and temporary residents, and the Community Navigator position assists these populations to access essential information; to connect with services and supports; to feel part of the community; and to more quickly integrate and settle in New Westminster. This is the only resource which specifically addresses the needs of newcomers, which, given the city’s increasing diversity and multiculturalism, addresses an important need both now and into the future.”*

The Community Navigator position plays a central role in the success of the Welcome Centre. Long-term sustainable funding for this position is crucial.

As a key resource, the Community Navigator assists newcomer families and individuals by connecting them to resources in the community and helping them navigate services and supports with the ultimate *goal of fostering connection and belonging.* Currently, the role of the Community Navigator is:

- Communicating issues and related barriers and needs for newcomers to the City, the School District and the WINS LIP Council, and assisting in removing these barriers.
- Meeting with settlement agencies and other organizations to identify trends, as well as gaps and duplications in services facing newcomers.
- Facilitating social clubs to reduce social isolation and provide a sense of connection and belonging.
- Connecting newcomers with various services, including but not limited to settlement, childcare, education, employment, language and recreation programs, as well as local events and festivities.
- Organizing programs and workshops on subjects, including but not limited to anti-racism, childcare, early years parenting, employment training, language learning, social connections, and tutoring.
- Ensuring that there is follow-up after initial contact with newcomers through a monthly e-mail newsletter.
- Working in collaboration with other service providers and community partners to ensure effective access to newcomer services and supports.
- Facilitating with community organizations and cultural/ethnic groups to deliver programming in the Welcome Center, thus creating a hub of activity.
- Promoting understanding and embracing of cultural differences and local Indigenous history.
- Planning and hosting the annual Intercultural Festival and Information Fair.

Since its doors opened, the Welcome Centre has been extremely successful in serving the information and referral needs of many newcomers in New Westminster. This is substantiated by the City of New Westminster stating that: *“Since 2010, New Westminster has experienced increasing immigration and the community has become more diverse. For recent immigrants and refugees, navigating available services, including ones that serve but are not located in New Westminster, is challenging. The Welcome Centre is **successfully** addressing these and other issues, while enabling settlement organizations to better collaborate and coordinate their services.”*

Between October 2021 and December 2022, the Welcome Centre hosted 48 workshops accounting for 470 hours and involving 627 participants. This does not include the support provided to community members on a daily basis through drop-ins and referrals.

The City of New Westminster has outlined to Mayor and Council that the Welcome Centre and the Community Navigator are effectively addressing newcomer needs, while at the same time enabling settlement organizations to better collaborate and coordinate their services through the following successful activities:

- *Facilitating connectedness, integration and social inclusion for Indigenous persons, recent immigrants, refugees and temporary residents.*
- *Creating a welcoming, inclusive and safe place for newcomers to New Westminster.*
- *Providing one-stop access to information and referral to a range of services to meet the diverse needs of newcomers.*
- *Providing opportunities for newcomers to learn about their new community and positively interact with service providers.*
- *Providing opportunities for social interaction, relationship building and involvement in all facets of community life.*
- *Hosting the annual Intercultural Festival and Information Fair.*
- *Facilitating service coordination and collaboration, as well as networking opportunities.*

The journey of this two year pilot project, *Navigating the Newcomer Maze*, has ended with all directions pointing to a successful Community-Based Model Plan based on the collaborative hub model of the Welcome Centre in New Westminster Secondary School. It is the hope of the settlement sector in New Westminster that this Welcome Centre, and the Community Navigator, will continue for many years to offer a “one stop shop” of settlement information and resources to the many immigrants, refugees, and newcomers who depend on this service for their “survival” as they navigate a new city, and country. **In order to provide a secure future for the Welcome Centre and the Community Navigator, it is critical and imperative that School District No. 40 and the City of New Westminster enter into a Memorandum of Understanding to ensure that this space remains open to serve the large newcomer community in New Westminster for many years to come.**



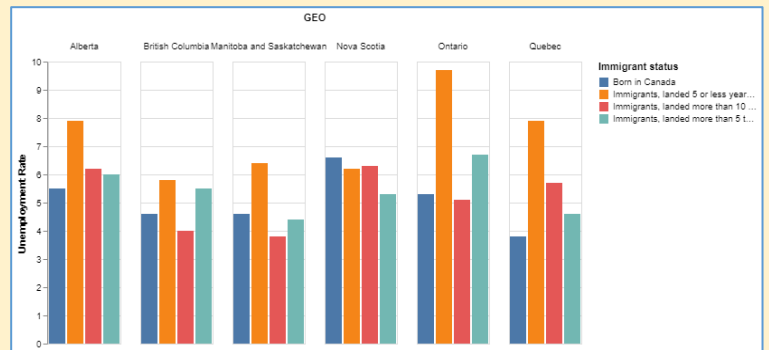
Let us celebrate and significantly note that this Welcome Centre is the first of its kind in New Westminster and the Lower Mainland, making it a highly “innovative and successful hub model” for other municipalities and settlements sectors to admire and follow.

Other Settlement Navigators

It was determined through both the agency and community interviews, and WINS LIP workshops, that there is a dire need for the positions of other settlement navigators to be created in order to meet the critical demand of settlement services and resources in the categories of [Employment](#) and [Housing](#).

Employment Navigator

With the expected continued arrival of 500,000 newcomers annually for the next few years, Canada will need to create employment services and resources specifically for the settlement sector to ensure the successful integration of newcomers into their chosen professions and the labour market. Nationally speaking, “data from *Statistic Canada’s 2023 labour force survey* said that the unemployment rate of recent immigrants was 8.2 per cent, immigrants landed more than five to 10 years earlier was 5.8 per cent, immigrants landed more than 10 years earlier was 5.1 per cent, and that of people born in Canada was 5 per cent in 2022. The numbers have always been the worst for recent immigrants.” This chart provides a provincial breakdown of unemployment rates. It is important to note that in British Columbia, immigrants who have been here more than 10 years have a lower unemployment rate than those born in Canada. However, the highest rates of unemployment in BC are still experienced by *recent immigrants*.



Through the Environmental Scan and the development of the Community-Based Model Plan, it was **identified by agencies and newcomers that an “Employment Navigator” position be created to serve the present and future employment needs of the newcomer community.** It was highly recommended that an Employment Navigator be located in the Welcome Centre for some hours each week where they can hold regular employment sessions and information workshops for newcomers in New Westminster.

Housing Navigator

A critical question arises of “*where will we house the 500,000 newcomers arriving annually into Canadian communities and cities?*” With a looming housing shortage and many people living with “housing insecurity”, IRCC is paying close attention to the need of providing more housing services and supports to settlement agencies and their newcomer clients. The results from the Navigating the Newcomer Maze project indicate that many newcomers are facing the following housing challenges: *lack of knowledge about processes related to finding immediate housing creates enormous stress for newcomers and their families; newcomers are shocked when referred to shelters as this is not appropriate housing for their needs; and a lack of support in understanding the legalities of renting, the rights of tenants and how to negotiate with landlords to mitigate future challenges.*

Based on the findings from the Environmental Scan and Community-Based Model Plan, it is evident that newcomers in New Westminster are struggling in locating appropriate housing resulting in a need to **create a Housing Navigator position** to support and direct newcomers to equitable housing options. The Housing Navigator position could also be situated in the Welcome Centre for some hours each week to provide regular housing information sessions and supports to newcomers and to settlement service providers needing support in finding housing for their clients. According to one interviewee, “[housing is a human right](#)” to live dignified lives, wherever you are in the world.

Participatory Funding Model: Discretionary Community Fund

Community-Based Funding

As part of the Environmental Scan, it was discovered that there are only a handful of Participatory Funding Models, such as Community-Based Funding (CBF), across the country that focus on the settlement sector working directly with newcomers on collaborative funding models. To develop a participatory funding model specifically for the settlement sector and newcomer community in New Westminster, it was important to look at the practice of grassroots community-based funding. Far too often “traditional funding models in Canada have typically incorporated a top-down approach and not involved communities in the decision-making process on funding allocations (Social Research & Demonstration Centre, 2022). In contrast, **Community-Based Funding** “is generally a community governance structure comprising of local stakeholders, who coordinate funding and service delivery at a local level to better respond to local community needs while avoiding gaps and duplications in funding coordination and service delivery” (Parriage Group, 2020).



Participatory Funding

It was important to provide background information on different participatory funding processes/structures, such as participatory grant-making and participatory budgeting, in order for WINS LIP to create the type of funding model that is best suited for the settlement sector and newcomer community of New Westminster.

Participatory Grant-making

One form of participatory funding which centers community in the participation of deciding and distributing funds is called Participatory Grant-making, which is further explained below:

- *Funding priorities can be determined by community members, in which the community identifies strengths and challenges, and thereby determining an area of focus for funding. Then, the Foundation either alone or together with the community, makes the final funding decision. (Candid Learning for Funders, 2018)*
- *Participatory grant-making cedes decision-making power about funding – including the strategy and criteria behind those decisions – to the very communities that funders aim to serve.” (Gibson, 2018)*

Participatory Budgeting

Participatory budgeting has become an important tool in municipal decision-making for community funding and according to the City of Victoria, “*Participatory Budgeting is an innovative, democratic process that gives the entire community the opportunity to participate and decide how to invest a portion of the City budget.*” The City of Vancouver is also a strong proponent for participatory budgeting highlighting it to be “*a process used in cities around the world to involve citizens in government spending decisions that impact or benefit them.*”



Participatory Funding Model

Discretionary Community Fund

Through a series of WINS LIP workshops, stakeholders agreed that **a participatory funding model with discretionary funds is an innovative and suitable community-based funding model for the settlement sector of New Westminster.** Most importantly, the newcomers interviewed for the Navigating the Newcomer Maze project expressed interest in creating flexible and collaborative funding structures which center the needs of newcomers, especially those from equity-deserving groups. As a result, it was decided that **a *Discretionary Community Fund* be created** for the settlement sector and the newcomer community of New Westminster. The Discretionary Community Fund will enable newcomers alongside agencies to **co-decide how to distribute discretionary funds for community-based projects throughout New Westminster.** To ensure that equity, transparency, and accountability are built into this proposed participatory funding model, there were four distinct groups suggested who can all play a vital role in the successful integration of newcomers in New Westminster:

Newcomers Voices Network (NVN)

- 5-10 Community Members representing diverse newcomer communities and organizations.

WINS LIP Funding Working Group (WLFWG)

- Members of WINS LIP will form this Funding Working Group, with a revolving membership.

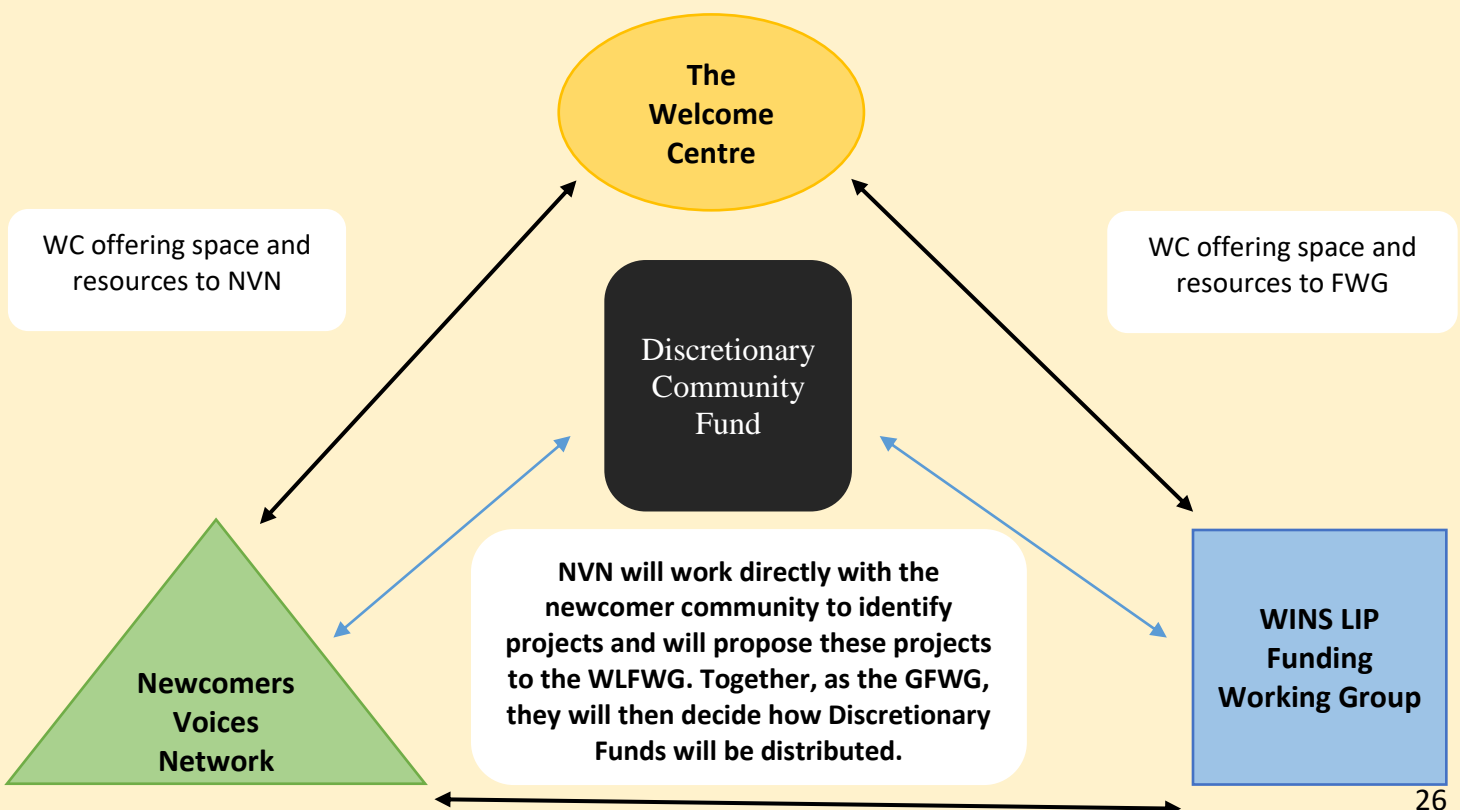
Governance Funding Working Group (GFWG)

- The NVN and the WLFWG will jointly form the Governance Funding Working Group.

The Welcome Centre (WC)

- The Welcome Centre will provide a base and home for the NVN, WLFWG, and GFWG by allowing these groups to hold meetings and use the space and resources at the Centre.

The diagram below explains the relationships and roles between all of these groups with reference to the Discretionary Community Fund.



WINS LIP Workshop: Participatory Funding Model

The premise of creating an innovative participatory funding model with a Discretionary Community Fund is to ensure that funds are readily available to meet the immediate needs (e.g., employment, housing, food, mental health) of newcomers in New Westminster. In a sense, the Discretionary Community Fund also acts like an “emergency fund” to serve those newcomers who are in precarious situations, such as those who are fleeing war, oppression and genocide in their home countries. A WINS LIP workshop was organized to specifically discuss the proposed Participatory Funding Model with a Discretionary Community Fund amongst the stakeholders with an IRCC representative in attendance. The following question was considered and discussed at this meeting with a series of important responses from participants:

What are your thoughts on this “participatory funding” model in New Westminster with WINS LIP and Newcomers co-deciding where and how a Community Discretionary Fund should be distributed to meet newcomers needs in New Westminster?

- A requirement for this funding model is that at least two settlement agencies be part of the WINS LIP Funding Working Group.
- The Welcome Centre should be considered a “core service” and receive funding for the Community Navigator position as well as other Settlement Navigator positions.
- The City of New Westminster held discretionary funds from the Province through WINS in the past and created a community charter and community projects for newcomers. It was complex from an administrative point of view.
- This proposed model should be flexible and sustainable with multi-year funding.
- Transparency must be key in the decision-making of discretionary funds.
- The “role of reconciliation” should be considered with Indigenous partners working with newcomers on community projects.
- “Newcomers voices” are integral to the success of this participatory model.
- Participatory funding can eliminate the competitive nature of funding structures.
- Need to create a Terms of Reference for this model and for discretionary community funding, as well as a specific communications plan into the model.
- The Newcomers Voices Network can engage in advocacy work with newcomers.
- A discretionary community fund can be implemented faster than a provincially funded initiative and can serve the immediate needs of newcomers.
- Important to involve School District No. 40 in this proposed participatory model.
- There must be a long-term commitment with the City of New Westminster and the School District by entering a Memorandum of Understanding to ensure the secure placement of the Welcome Centre as a vital collaborative hub model for the settlement sector and newcomer community.
- IRCC should be a key funder of this participatory funding model by providing core funding to the Discretionary Community Fund.

Below is a table outlining key funding and a budget request for priority areas of service delivery.

Budget Request for Discretionary Community Fund (3 Year Funding)

Participatory Funding Model: Priority Areas	IRCC	City of New Westminster	School District No. 40	Province of BC
Discretionary Community Fund	\$100,000 x 3 years = \$300,000			Apply for funding
Settlement Navigator Positions: 1 Full-time (Community Navigator) 2 Part-time (Employment + Housing Navigators)	\$75,000 + \$35,000 + \$35,000 x 3 years = \$435,000	\$75,000 x 3 years = \$225,000 (Community Navigator: 2023, 2024, 2025)	Provides operational + maintenance costs	Apply for funding
TOTAL (3 Years Funding)	\$735,000			

Community Interviews + WINS LIP Workshops

Community Interviews

A true community vision and collective impact can only be created when newcomers feel safe in expressing their truths and when a bridge of trust has been built between the newcomer community and the settlement sector in New Westminster. This trust can be established by hiring Consultants who conduct needs-appropriate community engagement and engage in respectful interviews with the newcomer community. Essentially, a Consultant can play the important role of a “neutral bridge” between the settlement sector and the newcomer community. For the Navigating the Newcomer Maze project, the Consultant interviewed 8 community members from the newcomer community representing diverse cultural, ethnic, racial and faith-based communities with members from Ethiopia, India, Iran, Kenya, South Sudan, and the Ukraine. These community members represent a good mix of newcomers with some coming years ago and others just arriving six months ago. These 8 community members also expressed interest in becoming part of a “Newcomers Voices” Vehicle”, if future funding became available,

where they will have the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes that influence and impact the settlement sector. Eight questions were posed to the newcomer interviewees by the Consultant and these interview responses are summarized in Appendix G.

WINS LIP Workshops

For the Navigating the Newcomer Maze project there were a series of discussions and workshops with stakeholders to co-imagine and co-develop the Community-Based Model Plan and the Participatory Funding Model. In total, the Consultant conducted three formal workshops in 2023 with each workshop consisting of a series of working sessions with specific questions posed collectively to the stakeholders. The key questions and collective answers from two of these workshops which informed the development for the Community-Based Model Plan are located in Appendix H.



Conclusively speaking, all of the newcomer interviewees, stakeholders, and WINS LIP members unanimously stated that both the collaborative hub model of the **WELCOME CENTRE** and the participatory funding model of a **DISCRETIONARY COMMUNITY FUND** would **greatly benefit** the settlement sector by creating a **coordinated and collaborative approach** to delivering settlement information and resources for newcomers in New Westminster.











CHALLENGES+ LEARNINGS

For newcomers navigating the maze, there will be unexpected bumps and dips on the roads travelled, and it is the aim of the settlement sector to provide the necessary roadmaps and signposts along the way to make the journey smoother for all newcomers entering the city of New Westminster. Along the way of developing the Community-Based Model Plan, there were key challenges and learnings encountered which ultimately provide WINS LIP with clearer directions in creating a safer and more equitable settlement sector in New Westminster for the years to come.

- Transforming the settlement sector from a “silo” approach of delivering services and resources to a more collaborative and community-based model centering the voices of newcomers.
- Only a handful of agencies are receiving large amounts of settlement funding for newcomer programming.
- Newcomers expressed that there is ineffective funding as funding does not meet the needs of the newcomers.
- Unhealthy competition between larger and smaller agencies for IRCC funding proposals.
- Settlement funding can be precarious and there is a critical need for long-term, multi-year and sustainable funding.
- IRCC should work with service providers/settlement agencies to undertake a disaggregated data analysis to ensure that an equity and GBA + lens is applied to newcomers needs and inclusive settlement programming.
- Require more evidence-based approaches based on newcomers lived experiences and their settlement integration.
- Considerable effort was required to seek out and engage newcomers to participate in community interviews.
- Ensure that honorariums are provided to community members for their participation in interviews and workshops.
- Partnerships with the private sector should be explored with a focus on funding newcomer and settlement projects.
- Further research needs to be conducted to see how newcomers served in the Welcome Centre by the Community Navigator, and non-IRCC staff, can be included in the recording and outcomes measurement of iCARE reporting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are key recommendations to ensure newcomers will have a “suite of settlement services” readily available to them to make their settlement integration a successful one in New Westminster.

-  *Secure long-term funding for the Welcome Centre and its Settlement Navigator positions to continue to provide newcomers with a “one-stop shop” for their settlement needs in New Westminster.*
-  *Navigators and other community service providers would fill in a “wallet size” common referral form which newcomers could then provide to the referred services in different agencies.*
-  *Housing and employment navigators would play a key role in the retention of newcomers as lack of housing and employment are often why newcomers resettle in different communities. The navigators would keep assessment and outcome tracking. Navigators would not provide intake as this takes place within agencies.*
-  *Navigators would use iCARE to track and indicate referrals and newcomer demographic information.*
-  *Disaggregated demographic information could be disseminated to the LIP table and other stakeholders. Language and other demographic information (family make-up, racialized newcomers, seniors, youth, single parents, etc.) would be invaluable to indicate needs and direction for future activities, as well as program/service planning.*
-  *Create a Discretionary Community Fund where funds will be available for community projects that meet the immediate needs of newcomers especially those fleeing wars and genocide. Governance of this fund would comprise of 5-10 newcomers and LIP stakeholders, of which at least two would be from settlement agencies.*
-  *Engage in updating a “Community Map” (created by the City of New Westminster) identifying the locations of settlement and other agencies, as this is another roadmap and community resource for newcomers.*
-  *Deliver EDI training to staff at settlement and settlement-serving agencies so they recognize and understand how microaggressions, unconscious bias, white supremacy, and racism impacts the lives of newcomers on a daily basis.*
-  *Settlement-serving agencies can provide more resources that support non-permanent residents such as international students and temporary residents - as “international students are the future of immigration.”*
-  *IRCC needs to have a more realistic lens on what is happening at the community level with newcomers needs versus creating programming that suits IRCC’s internal processes through “newcomer needs assessments.”*

CONCLUSION

With the predicted arrival of over 500,000 immigrants and refugees annually in the next few years, Canada and the Department of Immigration, Refugees Citizenship Canada will have the tremendous task of ensuring that the settlement sectors across the country are well-equipped to provide the necessary settlement supports to ensure the successful integration of these newcomers into their new communities and cities. Immigration is essential to Canada's growth as it "currently drives 82% of Canada's population growth" and "will account for 100% of labour force growth over the next five years" (Conference Board of Canada, 2023).



The City of New Westminster has become a desirable beacon of immigration with approximately 40% of its population comprising of immigrants and refugees who are settling into ethno-culturally diverse enclaves throughout the city. With this large immigrant population base, New Westminster's settlement sector is highly aware for the need to provide continued settlement supports, resources and programs to the present newcomer community and the future stream of immigrants entering the city. The good news is that New Westminster is ahead of the settlement game with many players already on board in creating a "suite of settlement services" across the city. This is evident from the findings of the *Navigating the Newcomer Maze* project which indicates that there are 17 settlement and settlement-serving agencies providing over 210 settlement services, resources and programs to immigrants and refugees in New Westminster.

As a result of the Navigating the Newcomer Maze project, WINS LIP and the newcomer community are excited to embark on transformative change in the settlement sector by creating a cross-sectoral and cooperative community-based hub model and an innovative community funding model that will enhance and embolden settlement planning and programming throughout the settlement sector. The proposed community-based hub model is essentially the **Welcome Centre** at New Westminster Secondary School which will further act as a "one stop shop" for settlement information, resources and directions for newcomers in New Westminster. In this collective vision, the Welcome Centre is becoming the "heartbeat" of the settlement sector in New Westminster. WINS LIP and newcomers are also envisioning a collective impact in funding by creating a unique participatory funding model called a "**Discretionary Community Fund**" in New Westminster where newcomers will be in the driver seat of proposing community projects that fulfill the needs of newcomers; an empowering process where the mantra of "*for the newcomer, by the newcomer*" rings loud and clear.



(Ali Tawfiq)

For a newcomer riding through the communities of New Westminster, they can take great pride in knowing that the City of New Westminster was the first municipality in Canada to officially apologize to the Chinese community for the head tax and the racism this community experienced. And we hope that equity and inclusion are part of every newcomer's journey. When a newcomer is provided with a clear roadmap and distinct signposts and directions guiding them in and out of the settlement maze, this will ultimately make their settlement journey safer, smoother and more equitable. With this in mind, let us hope that:

*As every newcomer embarks on their unique immigration journey in Canada,
let their steps be supported by compassion, dignity and justice.*

References

- Cockram, L., Veronis, L., Gabriel, C., Mesana, V., (2021). "Structures of governance and the role of Canada's federal government in immigration and settlement." *York University*, https://bmrc-irmu.info.yorku.ca/files/2021/08/2020_08_19-Structures-of-governance-final_LV.pdf?x51438#:~:text=Immigration%20in%20Canada%20is%20a,of%20the%20Constitution%20Act%2C%201867
- "Community-Based Funding in the Settlement Sector Research Findings Report FINAL." *ParriagGroup*, 24 February, 2020.
- "Community-Based Planning and Participatory Planning." *Planners Network*, <https://www.plannersnetwork.org/tag/participatory-planning/>
- "Fostering community through participatory budgeting." *City of Vancouver*, <https://vancouver.ca/your-government/participatory-budgeting.aspx>
- George, Usha. "A needs-based model for settlement service delivery for newcomers to Canada." *Sage Publications*, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/00208728020450040501>
- Gibsons (2018). "Deciding Together: Shifting Power and Resources Through Participatory Grantmaking." *Candid Learning for Funders*, <https://learningforfunders.candid.org/>
- "Growing Roots: A Newcomers Guide to Vancouver." *City of Vancouver*, 2014, <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/growing-roots-newcomers-guide-vancouver.pdf>
- "Immigration." *The Conference Board of Canada*, <https://www.conferenceboard.ca/focus-areas/immigration/>
- "Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada Departmental Plan 2023-2024." *Government of Canada*, <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/departmental-plan-2023-2024/departmental-plan.html>
- "Literature Review: Community-Based Funding." *Social Research and Demonstration Corporation*, 22 August, 2022.
- "Participatory Budgeting." *UK Local Government Association*, <https://www.local.gov.uk/topics/devolution/devolution-online-hub/public-service-reform-tools/engaging-citizens-devolution-5>
- "Service Delivery Improvement." *IRCC Canada*, www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/partners-service-providers/funding/settlement-funding-2024/service-delivery-improvement.html.
- "Settlement 3.0 Project: Innovation is in our Dna – Final Recommendations to IRCC." *PeaceGeeks*, August, 2021.
- "Settlement Services Delivery Models: What Works." *Open Education Alberta*, <file:///Users/jasmindra/Desktop/New%20Westminster/WINSLIP%20Project/Research/Settlement%20>

Services%20Delivery%20Models_%20What%20Works%20%E2%80%93%20Canadian%20Settlement%20in%20Action_%20History%20and%20Future.html

“Statistics Canada: Community Profiles” *Statistics Canada*. <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E>

Talati, Shlok. “Unemployment numbers still the worst for recent immigrants.” *New Canadian Media*, 10 February, 2023. <https://www.newcanadianmedia.ca/unemployment-numbers-still-the-worst-for-recent-immigrants-despite-being-skilled-workers/>

“Truth and Reconciliation: Calls to Action.” *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/indigenous-people/aboriginal-peoples-documents/calls_to_action_english2.pdf

Tse, Christopher. “Eyes Open: An Anti-Asian Racism PSA”, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AGQtaCyp8f8&t=1s>

“Welcome Centre.” *New Westminster Schools*, <https://newwestschools.ca/programs-services/family-and-community/welcome-centre/>

“Welcome Centre Update and Funding Request.” *John Stark - City of New Westminister Climate Action, Development, Planning*. 29 May, 2023.

“Welcoming and Inclusive New Westminister: Community Partnership Development Charter.” *John Stark - City of New Westminister*.

“Welcoming and Inclusive New Westminister Local Immigration Partnership – Backgrounder.” *John Stark - City of New Westminister*, 4 March, 2019.

“Who is Succeeding in the Canadian Labour Market? Predictors of Career Success for Skilled Immigrants.” *World Education Services*, 2019, <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED602857.pdf>.