



**KINGSTON
IMMIGRATION
PARTNERSHIP**

Strategy 2010



Welcome

In the summer of 2010, new immigrants to Kingston were asked in a survey if they saw themselves in Kingston five years down the road: 40% expected to live elsewhere. That tendency is nothing new: about one-third of immigrants to Kingston in the 1990's had left our community by the time of the 2006 Census.

How can these trends be reversed to keep our community economically viable and vibrant? How can we identify and address the needs of our newest community members in order to keep them in Kingston?

We are fortunate to have representatives from settlement services, public institutions, community agencies, education and research institutions, health care providers, committed businesses, and economic development agencies sitting together at the Kingston Immigration Partnership Council table to work on strategies to attract a greater number of immigrants to Kingston, seek to understand their needs, and promote a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere in our community for the purpose of retaining new immigrants.

As co-chairs of the KIP Council we look forward to guiding the community-driven efforts of the Council, and encourage all community members to participate in KIP activities and offer their ideas and feedback. Remember, making immigrants a part of our community is in our long-term best interest – and thus is everybody's responsibility.

Sincerely,

Chander Datta and Monica Stewart

Co-chairs

Kingston Immigration Partnership Council

Table of Contents

Introduction	5
Context	6
Our Partnership	8
Planning Process	9
Strategic Action Plan	10
Guiding Principles	11
Employment	12
Education and Training	14
Information, Orientation and Welcoming	15
Racism and Discrimination	17
Language	18
Social Supports and Community Connections	19
Health and Wellness	21
Housing, Transportation and Family Services	22
Innovations	24
Recommendations	24
Implementation Framework	25

“I pointed out to them the site of their future metropolis, and gained for persecuted principles a sanctuary, for myself and followers, a home.”

– Captain Michael Grass

Introduction

Captain Grass spoke of refugees that fled their war-torn homes and journeyed to a new land. These refugees, their numbers greatly diminished since leaving home, arrived on Kingston's shores, and quickly joined in the making of Canada – all the way back in 1784.

What was true over two hundred years ago, as the Loyalist refugees made their way down the St. Lawrence, is true today, as newcomers make their way up the 401 – Kingston becomes a home to those who settle on its shores. The distances traveled have certainly increased over the years, while the globe seems to have gotten much smaller, but all the while Kingston has grown and changed with the settlement of each generation of immigrants. As we look to our future – metropolis or not – we must consider how Kingston will remain a welcoming home to immigrants. Our future depends on it.

Making Kingston home to the next generation of newcomers is the business of the Kingston Immigration Partnership. Built around the simple idea that making immigrants a part of our community is everybody's responsibility, this Partnership is connecting and coordinating efforts – both big and small – to attract, welcome, and integrate immigrants to our community.

This document is designed so that the whole Kingston community – newcomers, long-term residents, businesses, social services, government, and community groups - can learn about and contribute to making Kingston a welcoming and inclusive place for new Canadians. Informed by conversations and research with the diverse range of people and organizations in our city, the Strategic Action Plan consists of achievable goals and specific strategies and actions, grouped under eight themes:

Employment

Education and Training

Information, Orientation and Welcoming

Racism and Discrimination

Language

Social Supports and Community Connections

Health and Wellness

Housing, Transportation and Family Services

The partnership is coordinated through the work of the KIP Council, a multi-sector group representing the diversity of organizations and businesses in Kingston. For the plan to truly succeed, though, it needs the support of the full community. As you read through this document, think about what your role – as friend, neighbour, colleague, manager, teacher, healer, service provider, etc. – will be in this effort.



Context



20 years from now, 1 in 3 Canadians will be visible minorities.

What instruments we have agree: we have changed, we are changing. Canada continues to undergo a vast demographic transformation driven by immigration. The country from which originated the phrase “global village” is becoming just that: a culturally-diverse and globally-connected nation. In fact, Statistics Canada now predicts that 1 in 4 Canadians will be foreign born by the year 2031. In Canada’s largest city, Toronto, so-called “visible minorities” will be by then the overwhelming majority. With this change will come both opportunities and challenges for the Kingston community, as we try to thrive as a small city in a big, diverse world.

That same Statistics Canada study predicts both a significant change within Kingston and a growing diversity gap between Kingston and larger cities around Canada. The report predicts a small change in the number of foreign-born residents in the Kingston area (from 12% in 2006 to 14% in 2031), but a relatively large increase of visible minorities (from 6% in 2006 to 11% in 2031). While the overall number of immigrants will change very little, the ethnic make-up of our immigrants will change dramatically, as the European immigrants who arrived a generation or two ago are replaced by the next generation from Asia, Africa, and the Americas. However, that visible change in Kingston pales in comparison to the transformation of Canada’s larger cities – thus the gap. The differences in demographic make-up, and all that entails, between Kingston and cities like Toronto, Ottawa, or even

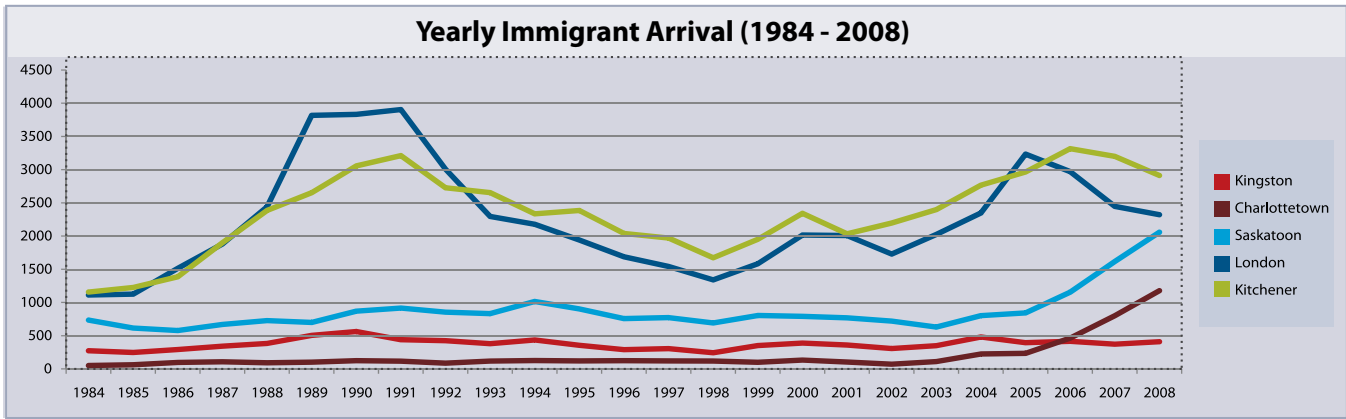
Waterloo and Windsor, will only increase – if the study holds true.

That “if” depends on us – and on the importance we place on attracting newcomers to join our community. Do we sit back and follow that path set out for us, or start now so as to make sure that Kingston is a part of this cultural shift – as a prosperous, vibrant, and diverse city?

Immigrant Populations

From the 2006 Census, approximately 14% of Kingston residents are immigrants. This percentage is lower than both Ontario (28%) and Canada as a whole (20%). According to Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Kingston receives approximately 380 new permanent residents per year: this number has remained more or less constant since 2000. In comparison, other small centres in Ontario such as Guelph and Peterborough have seen high growth in their immigrant populations over the past decade.

A large proportion of immigrants living in Kingston, almost every 3 in 4, arrived before 1991; comparatively, just over half of immigrants living in Ontario and Canada settled before that year. By country of origin, the largest immigrant community in Kingston continues to be from the United Kingdom. Other Western European countries such as Portugal, the Netherlands, Germany, and Italy are also well represented in the area, as are immigrants from the United States.



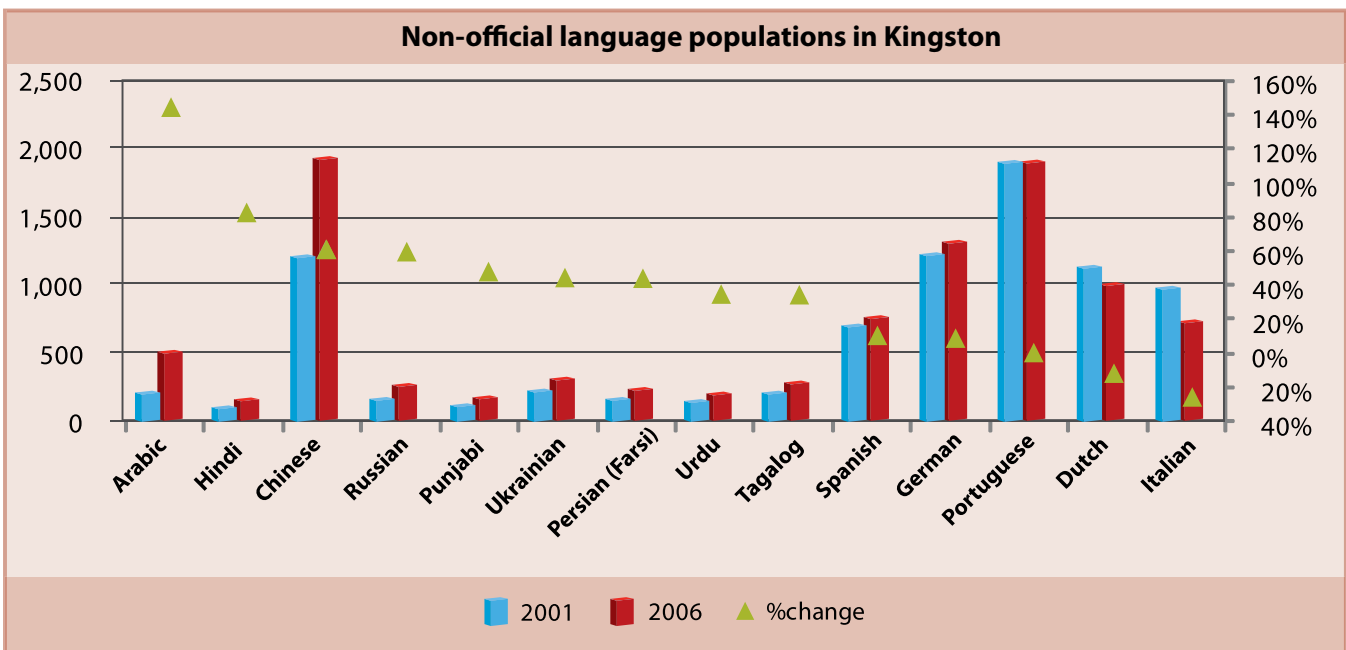
Changing Patterns

Examining the growth of immigrant communities presents a different story. The population base of most European-origin communities in Kingston has been at best steady or in decline, while more newcomers are arriving from Asia, the Middle East, and Central and South America. For the top fifteen countries of origin in the Kingston area, the only communities that showed a net growth between 1996 and 2006 were China, India, Pakistan, South Korea, El Salvador, Egypt and the United States. Immigrants continue to arrive in Kingston from Europe, but not to the same degree as was the case historically.

Data on Kingston residents' mother tongue further illustrates this shift. The most popular mother tongues

reported in 2006 (excluding English and French) were Chinese, Portuguese, German, Dutch and Spanish. Examining growth between 2001 and 2006, the fastest growing linguistic communities in Kingston include Arabic, Hindi, Chinese, Russian, and Punjabi.

In summary, immigrants in Kingston can be broadly divided into two main groups. The majority of immigrants arrived prior to 1991 and predominately came from Europe or the United States. The second group is much smaller but growing, and represents populations arriving from other areas of the world, especially Asia, the Middle East, and Central and South America. This demographic shift has important implications for providing services to newcomers and creating a welcoming community in Kingston.



Services for Newcomers in Kingston

Kingston currently has several agencies that provide services specifically for immigrants. Immigrant Services Kingston and Area (ISKA) and Association Canadienne-Française de l'Ontario – Mille-Îles (ACFOMI) both offer settlement services, including individual settlement counseling, group information sessions, and referrals, to help newcomers adjust to a new life in Kingston. KEYS Community Employment Services provides employment counseling and Job Search Workshops (JSW) for newcomers, and together with Kingston Literacy and Skills, hosts the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada program. Other government-funded ESL classes are provided by Limestone Community Education and Loyola School of Adult and Continuing Education,.

The City of Kingston recently launched an online information portal for newcomers to the city, available at www.immigrationkingston.ca. The site provides information on all aspects of immigrating to Kingston, including immigration procedures, settling in the community, and surviving the first Canadian winter.

Our Partnership

The Kingston Immigration Partnership is part of the Ontario-wide Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) program, a joint initiative of Citizenship and Immigration Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. Initiated in 2008, the overall purpose of the program is to support local communities in serving and integrating immigrants, through the creation of a community-built strategic plan and a collaborative local council representing multiple stakeholders.

Today there are over 30 LIP projects across the province of Ontario. Each LIP is at a different stage of developing their plan and reaching out to diverse stakeholders, but their impact has already been noticed: in March 2010, the House of Commons Standing Committee on

Citizenship and Immigration identified the LIP project as a “best practice” in settlement, and recommended continued support in Ontario and expansion to other provinces.

The Kingston Immigration Partnership was initiated by Kingston Community Health Centres (KCHC), KEYS Community Employment Centre and the Kingston Economic Development Corporation (KEDCO). These three partners recognized the need to begin a conversation between businesses, government, and community organizations around the issue of immigration to Kingston, in order to build sustainable partnerships and launch innovative actions to make Kingston a welcoming community. Together, they successfully applied for funding under the Local Immigration Partnership program, with the official launch of the KIP taking place on September 30, 2009 in the City of Kingston’s historic Memorial Hall.

KIP Council

The Kingston Immigration Partnership is guided by a Council made up of 12-16 representatives from KIP member organizations. Its mandate is to provide leadership to the Kingston community in its efforts to welcome and integrate immigrants.

The Council is selected to represent a broad cross-section of the community.

Representatives serve for a two-year term; each year, half of the Council is replaced by new representatives. The Council meets up to six times a year, at least one of which is an open public assembly.

KIP Member Organizations

All organizations in Kingston, be they businesses, social services, non-profit organizations, faith groups, ethno-cultural associations, government bodies or any other type of group, are invited to show their support for the KIP by signing up as a Member Organization. KIP member agencies are listed on our website and are eligible to join the KIP Council.

Planning Process

From the beginning of this Partnership, we have worked to build a plan for settlement that was driven from start to finish by the community. Through a participatory planning framework, the community planted seeds at our very first Assembly that grew and evolved into the plan we have presented here.

At the Assemblies, community members identified the challenges of settlement and immigration, then organized them into themes, and then proposed goals for our plan. From there, we brought various stakeholders together at planning tables to identify strategies and actions that would help us achieve those goals, and form the Strategic Action Plan.

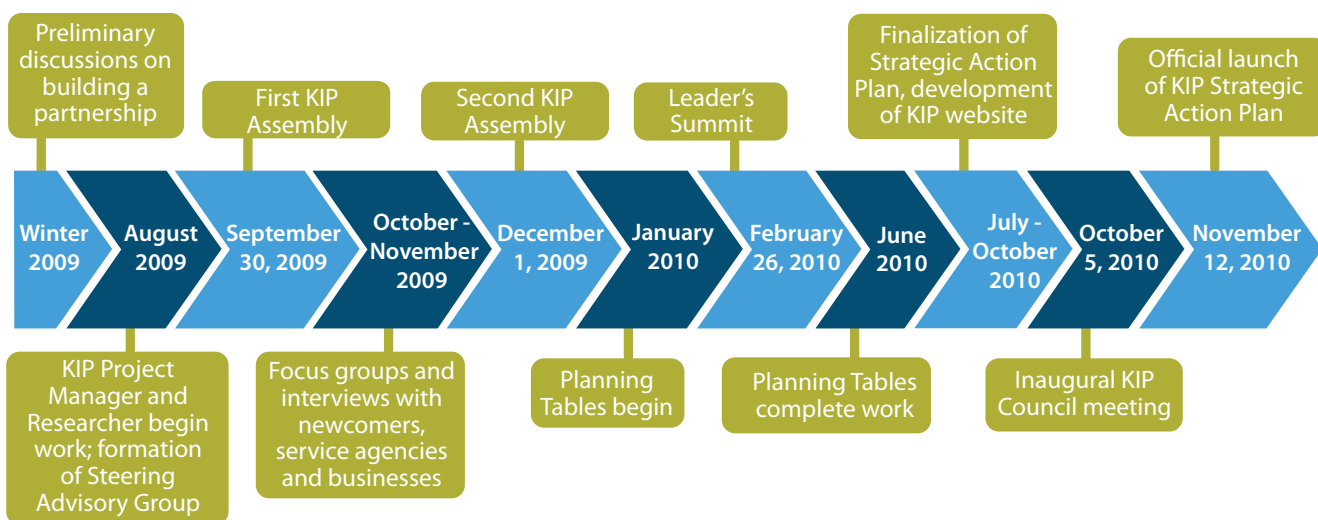
Two public assemblies were held in Fall 2009, one at the end of September and the second in December. Attendance at both events was high, with over 150 at the first (split between morning and evening sessions) and 120 at the second (one session); participants included newcomers, settled immigrants, long-term residents, and representatives from local government, businesses, community organizations, and service agencies. Along with introducing the KIP to the community, the goal of these assemblies was to learn from the community, through facilitated small-group discussion and activities to engage participants and offer the opportunity for feedback on our work.

During Fall 2009, fourteen focus groups were held with a wide range of people and organizational representatives, including different groups of newcomers (working immigrants, women, youth, Francophone immigrants), and representatives from service agencies, the business community and local ethno-cultural associations. The focus groups were co-hosted with the City of Kingston for the development of their Newcomers Web Portal and generally focused on newcomers' impressions of Kingston and the challenges they faced on arrival. Interviews were conducted in Fall 2009 with 15 key informants, including local politicians, service providers, and leaders of local charities and businesses.

Based on the feedback from the first assembly and findings from the focus groups and interviews, the KIP generated a list of 32 common needs and challenges that newcomers face in Kingston. At the second assembly, participants were asked to group these needs into common themes and generate ideas on how to address these challenges.

Based on these themes, three planning tables consisting of representatives from 14-20 local organizations and businesses were convened in Winter 2010. These tables met three times to review the ideas brought forward from the community and create achievable strategies and actions for the Strategic Plan.

Timeline



Recent Developments

Time does not stand still while a plan is developed. During 2009-2010, as the KIP worked to bring diverse stakeholders together to build the strategy and create a local partnership council, momentum was building. The following are some of the community's accomplishments over the planning period that have made us a more welcoming community for immigrants.

Launch of the Newcomer's Web Portal by the City of Kingston

Organization of the first annual Internationally Educated Professionals Conference by KEYS

ISKA moved to a more central location in mid-town Kingston

ACFOMI launched a new settlement service in Kingston's west end

City Council voted to join the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination

The successful organization of the Kingston Multicultural Arts Festival



Strategic Action Plan

The Strategic Action Plan is the centerpiece of the KIP Strategy. Based on feedback from focus groups, interviews and public assemblies, the KIP identified eight themes representing common areas of challenge for newcomers to Kingston:

Employment

Education and Training

Information, Orientation and Welcoming

Racism and Discrimination

Language

Social Supports and Community Connections

Health and Wellness

Housing, Transportation and Family Services

Each theme consists of several goals that demonstrate where Kingston as a welcoming community should be; each goal, in turn, is made up of strategies and actions that tell us how the goals can be achieved.

The Strategic Action Plan focuses primarily on initiatives that can be reasonably accomplished in Kingston within the five-year time-frame of our Strategy. However, the KIP also recognizes the importance of including new ideas and innovative approaches in the plan as a source of inspiration. Also, some challenges that newcomers face represent broader issues that also affect long-term Canadian residents in Kingston or newcomers in other cities; while the KIP cannot tackle these problems on its own, it can provide recommendations that advocate for larger-scale change. The Strategic Action Plan thus

includes both Innovations and Recommendations. As you go through this section, keep in mind that the different aspects of newcomer settlement are all connected. We expect that each proposed strategy and action will likewise have an impact on multiple needs: for example, supporting newcomers to participate in local organizations, projects and events (a strategy within the Social Supports and Community Connections theme) can help newcomers practice their language skills and build networks to find employment, as well as build the connections with Canadian-born residents that help reduce racism and discrimination. For simplicity and clarity, though, in our Plan each action belongs to only one strategy, which belongs to only one goal, which belongs to only one theme.

Guiding Principles

The work of the Kingston Immigration Partnership is guided by the ten following principles:

Settlement by all:

As a community, we will welcome newcomers; making newcomers a part of the community is everyone's responsibility.

Building on our strengths:

We will attract newcomers to build on our existing and emerging strengths in the fields of education, health care, green economy, and research & development.

Attraction by reputation:

We will attract newcomers through the opportunities and support that we offer to immigrants, international students and temporary residents already present in our community.

Waste not, want not:

We will not accept underemployment as suitable employment, and will strive to ensure that immigrants find work related to their field of expertise.

Growing our social capital:

We recognize and support the familial and social networks of newcomers and immigrant communities, and will work to integrate them with existing formal and informal community networks.

Including-by-doing:

We will create opportunities for inclusion by encouraging the hiring of newcomers, including newcomers in boards of directors, committees, and decision-making processes, and actively including newcomers in professional and social networks.

Coordinate, then innovate:

We will check with the community for potential partnerships and shared goals when planning new initiatives, and we will work for their continuity through those partnerships.

Learn from the best:

We will seek out best practices in settlement and newcomer integration, and adapt them to the Kingston context.

Tearing down barriers:

We will build better relations among the distinct communities of Kingston, and enable the community as a whole to support and integrate immigrants.

Sharing and celebrating diversity:

We will work to create opportunities for the wider community to share in, learn from, and value the myriad cultures of our newcomers and established immigrant communities.



Employment

One of the biggest challenges facing newcomers to Kingston is finding meaningful employment. Difficulties in gaining Canadian work experience and accessing the “hidden” or informal job market can limit newcomers to low-paying “survival jobs” during their initial time in Kingston. Employers may not be aware of the challenges that newcomers face, or how to best support immigrant employees in the workplace. Newcomer entrepreneurs may also have difficulty in finding the information and resources they need to start their own business.

Goal 1: *Employers, immigrant-serving agencies and community stakeholders in Kingston will work together to ensure that employers are supported in creating high-quality opportunities for newcomers.*

Strategy	Action
<p>Support the preparation for successful “first job in Canada” experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placement Program including Enhanced Language Training and Socio-cultural Competency • Support workplace practice opportunities (such as practice firms) in recruiting newcomers, and expand the set of training positions offered • Utilize the range of services available through Employment Ontario to assist in securing first jobs
<p>Inform employers of the benefits of hiring immigrants and of the supports available</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach Program for employers – Hire Smart program • Annual Internationally Educated Professionals Conference • Settlement workers and advocates for immigrants engage in business networking • RDEE Bonne Affaire program to encourage hiring francophone immigrants • Promote KIP membership to businesses as a source of information and support for hiring newcomers
<p>Build capacity in the workplace for successful integration of newcomers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for HR professionals (covering: foreign credentials equivalency, policy for diverse workplaces, creating a welcoming workplace, understanding common challenges faced by newcomers) • General workplace training and awareness-building activities • Share experiences and best practices through relevant websites and communications
<p>Recognize and celebrate success stories</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and award employers that strive to support newcomers in the workplace • Identify and publicize successful transitions to the Canadian workplace in KIP Council’s communications

Goal 2: *Information systems and community networks ensure that newcomers and newcomer families have access to the local job market.*

Strategy	Action
Improve newcomer access to job postings and hiring information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to job postings • Include training on new job posting systems in job search workshops for newcomers • Improve communications between employers and service providers to ensure that opportunities are made available to skilled immigrants
Provide employment networking opportunities for newcomers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Mentorship Program for newcomers • Employment-related networking for groups working with newcomers (service agencies, ethno-cultural groups, faith groups, etc.) • Networking for Francophone newcomers to connect with employers with bilingual needs • Regular networking events for newcomers • Involve HR professionals in job search workshops for newcomers

Goal 3: *Newcomers to Kingston find the support needed to start their own businesses*

Strategy	Action
Ensure potential entrepreneurs receive relevant information and sound advice for starting a business or investing in an existing business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops on entrepreneurship in Canada • Networking for entrepreneurs • Entrepreneur-oriented mentorships as part of the Professional Mentorship Program • Newcomer entrepreneur support circle
Connect potential entrepreneurs with the local resources and expertise to successfully initiate and grow their businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Enterprise Facilitation Project to newcomers • Include newcomers and leaders from ethno-cultural groups in the resource board of the Enterprise Facilitation Project

Education and Training

Newcomers to Kingston are generally well-educated but may face difficulties in having foreign credentials and experiences recognized, as well as learning about Canadian work culture. At the same time, international students at local post-secondary institutions can greatly benefit our community if the supports are in place for them and their families.

Goal 1: *Newcomers with international training, credentials, and experience find opportunities for a faster and more effective transition to Canadian employment.*

Strategy	Action
Provide information and guidance to obtain certification of foreign credentials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish information to immigrant-related websites (e.g. Newcomers Web Portal, settlement services websites) • Organize sessions to explain certification processes and bridging program options
Provide alternative and transitional educational qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote educational upgrading options at St. Lawrence College to newcomers • Promote and expand adult education options for newcomers
Develop and deliver bridging programs in Kingston for newcomers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer CARE for Nurses Program in Kingston • Build an engineering & technology program, beginning with enhanced language training • Offer distance learning opportunities for programs available elsewhere
Offer mentorship opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support employers in creating workplace-based mentorship and job shadowing programs • Professional Mentorship Program for newcomers

Goal 2: *International students at local educational institutions find the support and opportunities needed to work and live in Kingston*

Strategy	Action
Provide local work-related experiences for international students while in school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote volunteer and job fairs, and existing internships • Listing of organizations with volunteer opportunities suitable for international students available on KIP website • Summer job program for international students • Job shadowing program for international students
Assist the transition of graduating international students to working Kingston residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote availability of international students to employers, especially those already hiring graduating students • Create employment networking opportunities for international students • Mentorship Program for graduating students
Ensure students and their families receive the supports required to become part of the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote settlement services and newcomers social groups to international students and their families • Offer settlement services through elementary and high schools (SWIS), in order to support student families with children • Create a support group for accompanying spouses

Goal 3: *Service agencies and employers offer workplace integration training for newly-hired immigrants.*

Strategy	Action
Create and promote employment-related language training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create targeted language learning opportunities in the workplace • On-the-job support and language training for francophones in bilingual positions • English and French Conversation Circles / Job seeker support circles for workplace language practice and mutual support
Create and promote programs for learning Canadian work culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up work culture learning opportunities in the workplace • Offer socio-cultural competency training on Canadian work culture • Include work culture education in existing language programs, orientation sessions, and social group activities

Information, Orientation and Welcoming

Whether arriving directly from another country or migrating from another city in Canada, all immigrants to Kingston go through an arrival process. By strengthening and promoting local settlement services and including the full community in the process, Kingston can become a welcoming community for all newcomers from the moment they arrive. Goals

Goal 1: *Settlement services are well-known and accessible, serving as welcoming centres for all newcomers. Goals*

Strategy	Action
Promote settlement services to newcomers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a joint marketing plan and campaign for KIP and all CIC-funded settlement providers • Hold open houses at settlement service locations for service agencies, cultural associations and other community institutions that work regularly with newcomers • Create a joint marketing plan and campaign for KIP and all CIC-funded settlement providers
Facilitate cooperation among settlement service providers to continuously improve the services available to newcomers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a settlement provider working group to coordinate service provision, information sharing and research • Cooperate to improve intake and referral procedures • Coordinate funding proposals to work towards the availability of a full suite of services in Kingston
Build towards a Welcome Network for newcomers to Kingston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase joint program development and delivery • Create a working group to investigate co-location, welcoming centre options, or a “settlement cluster” in Midtown Kingston • Increase itinerant settlement services to better reach newcomers throughout the community

Goal 2: *The broader Kingston community cooperates to ensure that newcomers are informed of, guided to and received by required services and community connections*

Strategy	Action
Build awareness of settlement services in the broader community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate service providers, frontlines workers, employers, and community groups about settlement services available • Organize community events that will build the profile of settlement services
Create a network of community connections for outreach to newcomers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain, expand and promote the City of Kingston's Newcomers Web Portal • Create "Settlement in Kingston" map using existing on-line tools • Provide resources and information packages for community organizations to help them reach out to newcomers • Seek out Ambassadors / Champions across Kingston to help connect newcomers, services and the community • Build and expand relations between agencies and the institutions and businesses that recruit internationally
Create welcoming and orientation opportunities for newcomers across the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build partnerships between settlement services and community organizations (e.g. cultural associations, faith groups) • Create welcome signs in multiple languages for businesses and service providers • Community organizations to host open houses & information sessions for newcomers • Organize welcome tours of the city • Create a welcome lunch program in partnership with settlement agencies

Goal 3: *Kingston is recognized as a welcoming and diverse community*

Strategy	Action
Increase immigration to Kingston by welcoming refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the Refugee Coalition • Work with CIC and private sponsors to bring refugees to Kingston • Apply to CIC for creation of a Refugee Assistance Program
Promote Kingston to potential immigrants and promote our efforts to support newcomers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and Expand Newcomers Web Portal • Promote Kingston through media in other cities • Present Kingston's innovative approaches to settlement at conferences and other information-sharing events • Involve newcomers in promotion to their networks in Canada and overseas
Promote Kingston's cultural diversity to the broader community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing campaign to promote the benefits of immigration and cultural diversity • Annual Multicultural Festival

Racism and Discrimination

While movements have been made towards creating a community where all are valued and treated equally, it is a sad reality that community members still face racism and discrimination. These issues require a community-wide response from individuals, groups, organizations, and businesses

Goal 1: *The Kingston community acknowledges the racism and discrimination faced by visible minority immigrants and Canadian citizens, and is committed to fight it openly and as a community*

Strategy	Action
Promote a community response and dialogue on issues of racism and discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a community-wide forum for discussion on these issues • Build partnerships of organizations and individuals willing to speak out against racism and discrimination
Build connections between the Canadian-born community and newcomers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek out Ambassadors / Champions across Kingston to help connect newcomers, services and the community • Organize cultural events that offer opportunities for cross-cultural learning

Goal 2: *Educational institutions, public institutions, service agencies and employers have clear anti-discrimination policies, practices and programs.*

Strategy	Action
Provide resources, information and training for employers and employees regarding discrimination issues in the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate workplace diversity training and educational materials • Create neutral third-party support for employers and employees to provide information and informal advice • Encourage workplace-based informal dialogue opportunities
Promote cross-cultural understanding and support in the education system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer the Passages to Canada program in schools, to build awareness and understanding of immigration • Encourage professional development workshops for teachers • Implement a Settlement Workers in School Programs in all four school boards • Expand human rights education throughout the school system
Encourage governments and community organizations to actively seek out newcomer involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and support newcomer participation in planning groups, steering committees, boards of directors, etc • Promote consultation events to newcomers through settlement services, language classes and cultural groups • Provide information about the different levels of government to newcomers in multiple languages

Language

Learning one or both of Canada’s official languages is an essential task for newcomers in order to successfully settle and integrate. This theme builds on the language services already in place to ensure that newcomers are able to access language learning that meets their needs.

Goal 1: *Language program providers coordinate their services to improve and diversify the learning options available to newcomers.*

Strategy	Action
Improve coordination between language and settlement service providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include language instruction providers in settlement working group
Coordinate for the delivery of French language instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer French language instruction for newcomers through the CLIC program
Make language instruction more accessible through alternative learning and supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase on-line and distance learning • Develop after-work language tutoring drop-in • Create language learning opportunities in the workplace • Create an ESL program for restaurant and other shift workers that is tailored to their schedules and needs

Goal 2: *Occupation-specific language training is available as bridging for newcomers*

Strategy	Action
Increase access to bridging programs with language-learning components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer language course for nursing • Offer language course for engineering and technology • Identify other priority areas and existing programs that could be offered in Kingston, including on-line and video-conferencing options
Create on-the-job language learning opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers set up workplace language training opportunities, with the support of language training providers.

Social Supports and Community Connections

Successful settlement is more than just finding a place to live and securing a job: it also includes a sense of belonging in the community. Collaborative work between newcomers, immigrant-serving agencies, and community organizations will help newcomers feel welcome.

Goal 1: *Newcomers are encouraged and supported in their efforts to actively participate in the community*

Strategy	Action
Encourage the involvement of newcomers in community, recreational and cultural activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote community activities through settlement providers, language classes and cultural groups • Promote the Municipal Assistance Program and other grants and bursaries to newcomers for recreational activities • Support and encourage recreational and cultural groups to reach out to newcomers through open houses, targeted programming and multilingual materials
Support newcomers in participating in local organizations, projects and events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop for newcomers on volunteerism and civic involvement • Advertise events through settlement providers, language classes and cultural groups • Assist agencies, organizations and institutions in actively seeking out newcomers • Promote inclusion of immigrants on boards of directors, steering committees, and community governance • Promote volunteering with Correctional Services • Awards to recognize contributions and potential of newcomers to Kingston

Goal 2: *Immigrant communities are able to access ethno-cultural specific needs here in Kingston*

Strategy	Action
Facilitate initiatives that allow newcomers to meet their needs (cultural-specific food, clothing, entertainment, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a directory of existing ethnic businesses and services • Assist newcomers in creating new businesses and services to meet their needs • Improve multicultural and multilingual resources and activities in the library system
Support ethno-cultural associations in meeting the needs of their communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build partnerships between ethno-cultural associations and settlement providers • Capacity-building workshops and training sessions for ethno-cultural associations

Goal 3: *Social supports reach all newcomers, to ensure they become part of the community.*

Strategy	Action
<p>Reach out to newcomer seniors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a healthy living program for immigrant seniors • Create seniors' social groups • Include immigrant seniors in existing seniors' activities
<p>Create opportunities for accompanying spouses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer programming at An Clachan Residence • Create a projects fund for accompanying spouses of internationally-recruited faculty • Create social groups for spouses
<p>Work to create welcoming and positive spaces for LGBTQ newcomers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the creation of positive spaces within settlement services and immigrant communities • Connect LGBTQ newcomers with LGBTQ community in Kingston
<p>Create and promote recreation and social activities for newcomer youth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote existing community activities through youth groups, language classes and cultural groups • Create and promote activities to include newcomer youth • Support and encourage community youth programs to reach out to newcomer families
<p>Connect international students with the community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach to homestay families • Organize International Students' Day • Organize events and outreach for international students and their families

Health and Wellness

Health and well-being – physical, mental, emotional, and relational – are important aspects of life for all of us. This theme focuses on ensuring that newcomers have equal access to care and that health organizations are able to meet their needs.

Goal 1: *Newly-arrived immigrants have equal access to health and dental care*

Strategy	Action
Reduce financial barriers to health and dental care for newcomers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Settlement workers and health care social workers will cooperate to identify health providers or clinics willing to provide pro bono or reduced-cost urgent care and emergency services to newcomers on a case-by-case basis during the three month waiting period for OHIP • Promote awareness of the need to acquire health insurance before arriving in Canada via the Newcomers Web Portal and other communication channels • Identify dentists or dental hygienists willing to provide pro bono or reduced cost service to newcomers • Promote and expand the Dental Treatment Assistance Fund
Ensure that newcomers find an accessible, culturally-aware healthcare system in Kingston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer workshops to introduce and explain the healthcare system (including health promotion) to newcomers • Provide information on the healthcare system in multiple languages • Promote understanding of cultural differences and newcomer health issues among healthcare providers, through outreach and training workshops • Provide healthcare services with feedback from newcomers on their experiences in the healthcare system
Create programs for newcomers and immigrant communities to promote healthy living and preventative health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a self-management for chronic disease prevention program specifically geared to immigrant communities • Link with other provider agencies on specific health promotion programs • Hold health promotion workshops for newcomers • Promote community gardens to newcomers

Goal 2: *Mental health, individual and family counseling services, settlement service providers, and other community groups coordinate to address the psycho-social challenges of newcomers.*

Strategy	Action
Build capacity in the community to address the needs of newcomers around psycho-social issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a forum for agencies that work with immigrants to learn about these issues and the services available • Coordinate service provider response to individual cases • Educate mental health service providers about the needs of newcomers • Create opportunities for dialogue between ethno-cultural associations and service agencies
Build awareness in the newcomer community of psycho-social health issues and the community supports in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide education for community groups that interact regularly with newcomers • Translate and culturally adapt existing resources for dissemination in newcomer communities • Create opportunities for mental health and counseling services to build awareness with newcomers through language classes, cultural gatherings, etc.

Housing, Transportation and Family Services

Services like housing, transportation, childcare, and schools are essential for the settlement of newly-arrived immigrants, particularly families. While there are on-going community-wide challenges to address on these issues, there are also opportunities to better connect newcomers to these vital services.

Goal 1: *Newcomer families with young children find the support and services they need.*

Strategy	Action
Newcomers find childcare that is affordable and meets their needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post a directory of childcare providers on settlement service provider websites • Offer workshops for newcomers on child care in Canada • Educate childcare providers on the needs of newcomer families
Newcomers receive appropriate pre- and post-natal health-care and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and create support groups for expecting parents and new families • Educate healthcare and service providers on newcomer needs and cultural perspectives on pregnancy and child rearing
Newcomer families and their children are aware of and able to access recreational and social activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote community activities through settlement service providers, language classes and cultural groups • Support and encourage recreational and cultural groups to reach out to newcomers families • Promote the City of Kingston's P.R.O. Kids and SPARK program to newcomer families
Newcomer parents understand parenting, child care, and schools in the Canadian context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parenting circles for newcomers • Info-sessions on daycare and schools for newcomer parents • Children's Aid Society outreach to newcomers and ethno-cultural associations regarding child abuse and duty to report

Goal 2: *Newcomer youth feel welcome in the school system and receive the support they need to excel*

Strategy	Action
Provide the support needed for youth to integrate into the Canadian classroom setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a Settlement Workers in School (SWIS) program • Place immigrant youth in appropriate school settings through systematic and culturally-sensitive scholastic and language assessments • Improve and diversify language learning options • Academic support programs as part of the SWIS program • Socio-cultural orientation to the Canadian education context for students
Create a welcoming school environment for newcomer youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate teachers and administrative staff on newcomer youth issues at PD events • Expand and promote anti-bullying initiatives • Incorporate diversity / multiculturalism / inclusion in the curriculum • Create peer-support and mentorship programs for high school students • Promote newcomer youth involvement in extra-curricular activities
Help parents get involved in their children's education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation sessions for parents to improve understanding of the school system and educational options • Settlement workers work with both parents and teachers to improve communication on education • Involve parents in the Passages to Canada program

Goal 3: *Newcomers to Kingston find a friendly, understandable and effective transit system.*

Strategy	Action
Ensure newcomers have opportunities to become familiarized with the local transit system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a transit information package for newcomers in multiple languages • Host transit orientation sessions and tours through settlement services • Translate the online trip planner into multiple languages
Work towards a local transit system that is affordable and meets the transit needs of newcomers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide free passes or rides to newcomers through welcome packages • Promote and/or expand Municipal Assistance Program (which includes reduced-cost transit passes) to newcomers • Actively seek newcomer involvement and feedback in Kingston Transit public planning sessions
Ensure that Kingston Transit promotes an inclusive environment and is safe for newcomers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold workshops for transit staff on inclusiveness and cultural diversity • Provide feedback to transit staff from newcomers on their experiences riding Kingston Transit

Goal 4: *Newcomers, particularly families, are able to meet their short- and long-term housing needs.*

Strategy	Action
Improve newcomer access to short-term / interim housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a volunteer hosting program to provide accommodations for the first few days after arrival • Offer workshops to newcomers on how to find housing • Inform and support newcomers on how to gather and provide references and documentation (e.g. ability to pay, credit history, etc.) • Create a housing registry specifically for newcomers and/or promote existing general housing registries
Improve newcomer access to low-cost housing options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize information sessions and packages to promote existing subsidized options • Provide information to landlords on newcomers and their housing needs • Encourage landlords to ensure that quality housing options are being made available fairly to newcomers
Support newcomers in finding housing options that meet their long-term needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and promote real estate and financial and legal services that are available in multiple languages • Create information packages and sessions for newcomers looking to purchase a home

Innovations

- Getting that first job in Canada without Canadian experience is difficult. We hope to develop a “First Canadian Experience” internship program, where local employers offer fixed-period internships to internationally-educated professionals.
- Sometimes newcomers don’t have the language or workplace skills required to find employment, but need an income to support themselves and their families. We could create a social enterprise that allows newcomers facing barriers to employment to gain immediate work experience.
- Access to credit and workspace is a challenge to any entrepreneur, but often more difficult to some one new to Canada and Kingston. We could create incubation spaces and micro-loan programs for newcomers to start their own businesses.
- Some newcomers arrive with the intent to buy or invest in existing business. Meanwhile, local business owners, looking to move on, need to plan their succession. Kingston could recruit potential entrepreneurs and business class immigrants to invest in our community.
- Create a “Every door is the right door” approach to serving newcomers
- Newcomer youth are facing both growing up and becoming Canadian and are always in need of somewhere to feel they belong. We could create a Drop-in Space for them to learn, share or simply hang out.
- Build towards a “multicultural library” that provides materials, programs and services for Kingston’s diverse communities.
- We know that the three-month waiting period for OHIP coverage is a challenge to newcomers, and a concerted effort to cover that gap would raise our profile as a welcoming community. We could create a subsidized health and dental insurance program for those first three months.
- Schools are often a doorway into the community for immigrant families, and the number of newcomer students attending our schools is on the rise. The school boards, with support of settlement services, could create Welcome Centres for newcomer students and their parents.

Recommendations

- Many professional newcomers arrive in Canada expecting to practice their profession in their new country – only to find out how difficult and complex the certification process can be. Citizenship and Immigration Canada and the Department of Foreign Affairs should make stronger efforts to fully inform immigrants, before arriving in Canada, of the challenges of credential recognition.
- The Provincial Government provides wage subsidies to create employment opportunities. While our employment agencies ensure those funds go as far as they can to create opportunities for newcomers, sometimes those funds run short for the people that could benefit greatly from that first job in Canada. The Province of Ontario should guarantee access to Employment Ontario funding for newcomers.
- Newcomer grandparents are often at home caring for their grandchildren, and miss out on opportunities to participate in the community. CIC should allow grandparents and other family members caring for children to access child-minding services, so that they can participate in language instruction classes and other settlement activities.
- Kingston City Council recently voted to join the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination. The Kingston community should support the City of Kingston as it follows through on its commitment to join the Coalition and create an anti-racism program.
- The City of Kingston needs to play a role in settlement of newcomers, as well as in the work to create a welcoming community free of discrimination. The City of Kingston should appoint or hire a staff person as Diversity Officer for the City of Kingston.
- We need to welcome our newcomers from the very first day. The Province of Ontario should remove the three-month waiting period to access OHIP.
- Newcomers, like many Canadians, struggle with the high cost of childcare – municipal, provincial, and federal governments should make childcare more affordable.

- Newcomers are more likely to depend on the transit system – particularly in their first year in Kingston. Increased immigration should go hand and hand with increased transit service (coverage, frequency, and service hours).

Implementation Framework

The value of any strategic plan is in its “follow-through”. The KIP has engaged the community in the identification of needs and in the generation of ideas, and has built up broad support for this Partnership and this plan; now these words must be translated into deeds.

This document is a community plan – meaning the responsibility for reaching the goals we have set out for supporting immigrants is shared by the whole community. This collaborative approach to planning creates opportunities for cooperation and partnership, but also poses a threat we must be mindful of – because the plan is owned by all, we run the risk that it will be owned by none. No one organization is wholly responsible for the implementation of this plan, so we must create a framework that creates a sense of shared responsibility for the implementation of the plan. In short, the “Settlement by all” principle must guide the implementation of this plan.

The Role of the KIP Council

The Council brings together representatives of a wide array of local organizations, institutions, and businesses, all of which are important to the successful settlement and integration of new immigrants. The KIP Council’s role is to coordinate community efforts to serve and support newcomers, particularly through coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan.

Given that the Strategic Action Plan is a multi-year vision of what the Kingston community plans to do in order to make Kingston more welcoming and inclusive to immigrants, the Council will need to set annual priorities for the implementation of the plan,

and then report back to the community at the end of each year.

Planning Cycle

The goals, strategies and actions of the Strategic Action Plan have been designed to provide direction to the Kingston community over the next five years. During that time period, the KIP Council may add or modify strategies and actions in response to changing needs and priorities, as well as ongoing research and feedback. A complete update of the plan will be undertaken at the end of the five year cycle.

The Strategic Action Plan offers a comprehensive approach to settlement – covering jobs, language, community involvement, education, health, and more. This complexity means that as a community, we will have to approach the implementation one step at a time – and will have to set our priorities as we move through the various actions in the plan.

On an annual basis, the KIP Council will set priority strategies, which KIP staff will then facilitate with community partners. These priorities will constitute the annual KIP Agenda. At the end of the annual cycle, the KIP Council will present its Report Card, which will evaluate the implementation of that year’s Agenda as well as the overall Strategic Action Plan. The Report Card will also make recommendations for future action.

To mark the end of one annual cycle and the beginning of another, the KIP will hold an Assembly as an open community meeting. At this Assembly, the Council will present its Report Card for the outgoing year, the Agenda for the incoming year, and the incoming members of the KIP Council.

For More Information

The KIP website (<http://www.kipcouncil.ca>) serves as the focal point for our efforts to create a welcoming community. In addition to the information found in this document, the website includes:

- **Resources for newcomers, community members, organizations, and businesses**
- **Updates on the progression of the plan, including the Annual Agenda and Annual Report**
- **Research reports on immigration to Kingston, best practices in settlement, and feasibility studies**
- **Online form to provide feedback on the plan**

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KIP Steering Advisory Group: Sipho Ibeakanma, Emad Hassouneh, Ann Lukits, Andria King, Hersh Sehdev, Michael Harris, Christie Scales, Jeff Gouveia, Kristina Sutton, Annie Thibault, Samia McFee, Nathalie Diez, Paul MacLatchy, Monica Stewart

KIP Planning Tables: the 40+ organizations involved

Employment and Training: 1000 Island Workforce Development Board, Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario – Mille-Îles (ACFOMI), Assurant Solutions, Chinese Canadian Association of Kingston and District, City of Kingston, Empire Life, Islamic Society of Kingston, KEYS Community Employment

Centre, Kingston Chamber of Commerce, Kingston District Human Resources Professionals Association, Kingston Economic Development Corporation (KEDCO), MCF Practice Firm, Novelis, Ontario Ministry of Government Services, Queen's University, RDEE, St. Lawrence College Employment Service, StarTek

Welcoming and Orientation: City of Kingston, First Baptist Church, Immigrant Services Kingston and Area (ISKA), India-Canada Association of Kingston, Islamic Society of Kingston, Kingston African Caribbean Collective, Kingston Area Race Relations Association, Kingston Frontenac Public Library, Kingston Literacy and Skills, Limestone Community Education, Limestone District School Board, Loyola School of Adult and Continuing Education, Queen's School of English, Queen's University International Centre, Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Kingston, St. Lawrence College, Service Canada, TESL Kingston, Welcoming Communities Initiative

Essential Services Table: Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board, Canadian Diabetes Association, Children's Aid Society, Chinese Canadian Association of Kingston and District, City of Kingston Community and Family Services, Correctional Services Canada, Home Base Housing, Hotel Dieu Hospital, Kingston Community Health Centres, Kingston Family YMCA, Kingston General Hospital, Kingston Interval House, Kingston Transit, Pakistan-Canada Association of Kingston

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Welcoming Communities Initiative team at Queen's University

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And special thanks, in memoriam, to Carolyn Davies – for believing in us and for believing in this community

킹스톤에 오신 것을 환영합니다!

TO KINGSTON SAS KALOSΩRIZEI! ¡Kingston le da la bienvenida!

Benvenuti alla città di Kingston! 京士頓歡迎您!

کنگسٹن آپ کو خوش آمدید کہتا ہے! **Kingston dá-lhe as boas-vindas!**

কিংস্টোন তে আপনাকে সাধর সম্ভাশন।
کینگسٹون ترحب بکم!



Kingston welcomes you!

**Kingston vous souhaite
la bienvenue!**

Добро пожаловать в Кингстон!

金斯顿市欢迎您!

به شهر کینگسٹن خوش آمدید!

Herzlich willkommen in Kingston!

Kingston Üdvözli Önt!

Binabati kayo ng mga taga Kingston! Maligayang Pagdating!

किंगस्टन में आपका स्वागत है!

IKingston Iyalamukela!

キングストンは皆さまを歓迎します

Idolobha laseKingston Liyanemukela!



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