



Community Plan 2025-2028

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Introduction

Members of the Central Okanagan Local Immigration Partnership (COLIP) participated in two strategic planning sessions on July 4th & October 23rd, 2025. The purpose of the facilitated sessions was to complete a comprehensive environmental scan in order to establish renewed strategic directions for the collaborative.

The planning events provided an opportunity to review the following areas:

- Vision, Beliefs, Context, and Role
- Strengths & Competencies
- Achievements
- Challenges Impacting the Coalition
- Opportunities & Priorities
- Identifying New Strategic Directions (themes)

To support the development on this Community Plan, an online survey designed to gather anonymous input from COLIP members was administered. In addition, interviews were conducted between the COLIP Coordinator and partners to gain background information regarding strengths, challenges, and opportunities. This input was utilized during the planning sessions and is also referenced in this document.

The Partnership

KCR Community Resources received funding from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to provide coordination of work towards making the Central Okanagan a community that supports and embraces cultural diversity through a Local Immigration Partnership (LIP). The Central Okanagan LIP has been active since 2014.

LIPs are community-based partnerships that:

- Foster a systematic approach to engage Service Provider Organizations (SPOs) and other institutions to integrate newcomers;
- Support community-based knowledge-sharing and local strategic planning; and,
- Improve coordination of effective services that facilitate immigrant settlement and integration.

LIPs deliver indirect services to newcomers that provide a collaborative framework to facilitate the development and implementation of sustainable solutions for the successful integration of newcomers that are local and regional in scope.

Vision, Beliefs, Context, and Role

COLIP VISION:

“We are committed to the further development of a Central Okanagan region as an inclusive, welcoming, and vibrant community where immigrants can realize their full potential, racism is eliminated, and cultural diversity is valued and celebrated.”

BELIEFS:

Immigrants coming to the Central Okanagan are a significant asset to our community. They:

- Bring talents and skills needed for employers and businesses
- Add to the vibrancy of neighbourhoods and enrich the cultural mosaic
- Benefit from coordinated community action that supports inclusion, belonging, and full participation

CONTEXT:

Immigrants coming to the Central Okanagan face a number of challenges, including:

- Lack of access to information, support, and mainstream services
- Lack of access to employment and skills development opportunities
- There are opportunities for existing community organizations to mobilize and partner to address these issues.

COLIP ROLE:

COLIP's role is to operate in the spaces in between organizations, services, businesses, and service providers by:

-  **Connecting**– interested organizations and individuals with one another and with newcomers.
-  **Hosting/Educating** – conversations, dialogues, and workshops that promote shared understanding and opportunities to better meet newcomer and *community* needs (*multidirectional learning opportunities*).
-  **Communicating** – ensuring the services, supports, and opportunities offered by COLIP members to meet newcomers' needs are highlighted and promoted.

Environmental Scan

The following reflects the high-level results of a comprehensive scan of COLIP's internal and external operating environment. The scan helped identify strategic opportunities and directions (or themes). The scan includes information gathered through input from the planning events.

Strengths & Competencies

Understanding and reflecting on areas of strength provided affirmation of the successes achieved by the coalition to date and helps steward future opportunities. This review focused on:

- Overall organizational strengths
- Achievements

Strengths

The members of COLIP emphasized that the coalition is regarded as valuable by the partners and is able to increase community capacity to welcome newcomers. Feedback also identified the following strengths, including:

- Strong, diverse membership; good representation of leading, well connected, public and non-profit organizations represented at the table
- Inclusive and welcoming culture within the council and its practices
- Able to leverage the success COLIP has experienced to date and promote greater awareness and be a positive voice within community; progress and change is occurring.
- A lot of experience around the table, both professional and lived experience represented and backed by resources.
- Creative ideas and inclusive processes – hearing from everyone at the meetings provides ideas on potential, collaborative programs/services
- Members that believe there is a better future for newcomers and the community.
- Diverse groups have come together for a shared purpose, meet, and work together.
- Leveraging of resources and connections to meet the needs of clients
- Shared values and alignment of similar objectives

Achievements

These strengths have contributed to several achievements which were highlighted by the members including:

- Enhanced organizational understanding of the needs of newcomers
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) training open to the community free of cost twice a year
- Connection for newcomers to service and community leadership/advocacy – community leadership
- Participation in and leadership on anti-racism initiatives
 - Hosted 'Community Breakfast: Meet and Mingle' in support of community members who have experienced instances of discrimination and racism.
- Connection and ongoing collaboration in support of participants in need of legal aid for One Year Window of Opportunity (OYW) application.
- Bridges have been built – there is a better understanding of the ecosystem that supports newcomers
- Participation in research and data gathering practices to further understand the ground-level work and needs of community members and partners
- Advocacy and awareness have been enhanced

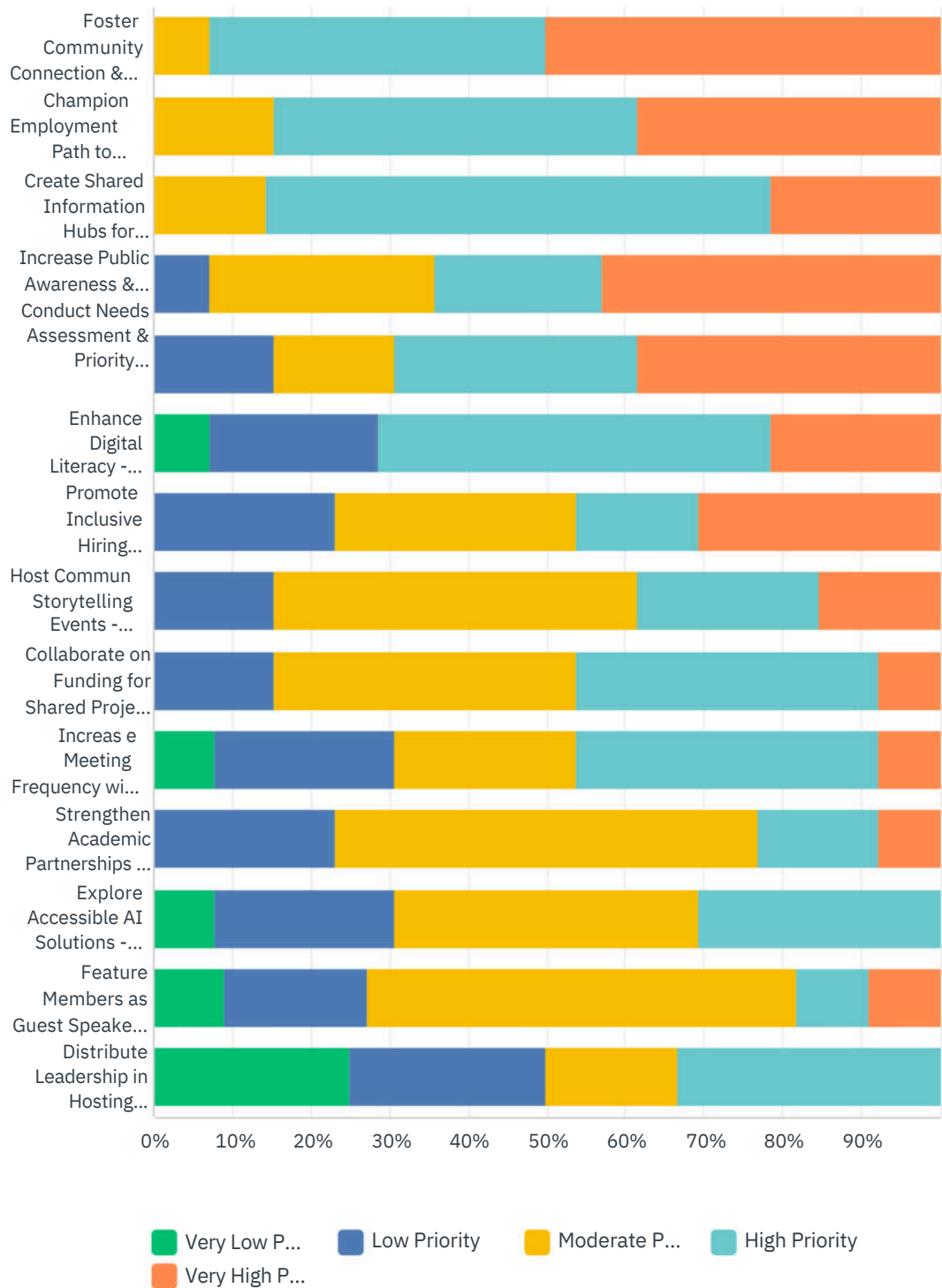
Challenges

Despite the achievements, work remains to meet the overall purpose of COLIP which is to further the development of the Central Okanagan as an inclusive, welcoming and vibrant community where immigrants can realize their full potential, racism is eliminated, and cultural diversity is valued and celebrated. The following feedback was provided regarding challenges facing COLIP:

- Capacity constraints and priorities
- Limited (finite) resources to implement bolder plans
- High turnover challenges continuity
- Mixed focus and program duplication
- Limited public visibility
- Limited data on demographic we serve
- Hardship to connect with employers and business community.
- The aims are big and wide, so it is difficult to measure success.
- Reaching those beyond (our circle) that aren't automatically interested.
- Challenge in communication among partners and sharing of resources/events information.

Opportunities & Priorities

As part of the strategic planning process, the COLIP council participated in a survey with the purpose of assigning a priority level to each of the objectives brought up in the first planning session on July 4th, 2025. The results were as follow:



	VERY LOW PRIORITY	LOW PRIORITY	MODERATE PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	VERY HIGH PRIORITY	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Foster Community Connection & Belonging - Develop strategies to promote social integration and inclusive environments.	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	7.14% 1	42.86% 6	50.00% 7	14	4.43
Champion Employment as a Path to Belonging - Emphasize employment opportunities as key to inclusion and identity.	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	15.38% 2	46.15% 6	38.46% 5	13	4.23
Create Shared Information Hubs for Newcomers - Develop common web links, maps, and QR codes to simplify access to key resources.	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	14.29% 2	64.29% 9	21.43% 3	14	4.07
Increase Public Awareness & Perception - Build broader community understanding and support through targeted outreach efforts.	0.00% 0	7.14% 1	28.57% 4	21.43% 3	42.86% 6	14	4.00
Conduct Needs Assessment & Priority Setting - Use data collection to understand newcomer needs and guide planning.	0.00% 0	15.38% 2	15.38% 2	30.77% 4	38.46% 5	13	3.92
Enhance Digital Literacy - Support newcomer ability to navigate digital systems effectively.	7.14% 1	21.43% 3	0.00% 0	50.00% 7	21.43% 3	14	3.57
Promote Inclusive Hiring Practices - Advocate for equity in recruitment by collaborating with HR leaders and institutions .	0.00% 0	23.08% 3	30.77% 4	15.38% 2	30.77% 4	13	3.54
Host Community Storytelling Events - Replace traditional meeting speakers with community-led storytelling to elevate lived experiences .	0.00% 0	15.38% 2	46.15% 6	23.08% 3	15.38% 2	13	3.38
Collaborate on Funding for Shared Projects - Pool financial resources to maximize impact and efficiency.	0.00% 0	15.38% 2	38.46% 5	38.46% 5	7.69% 1	13	3.38
Increase Meeting Frequency with Virtual Options - Use virtual formats to sustain engagement and momentum.	7.69% 1	23.08% 3	23.08% 3	38.46% 5	7.69% 1	13	3.15
Strengthen Academic Partnerships - Engage with educational institutions for research, support, and collaboration.	0.00% 0	23.08% 3	53.85% 7	15.38% 2	7.69% 1	13	3.08
Explore Accessible AI Solutions - Investigate newcomer-friendly AI tools to improve services and outcomes.	7.69% 1	23.08% 3	38.46% 5	30.77% 4	0.00% 0	13	2.92
Feature Members as Guest Speakers - Spotlight Table members and their experiences in meetings and events.	9.09% 1	18.18% 2	54.55% 6	9.09% 1	9.09% 1	11	2.91
Distribute Leadership in Hosting Meetings - Share the responsibility for planning and facilitating group sessions .	25.00% 3	25.00% 3	16.67% 2	33.33% 4	0.00% 0	12	2.58

Strategic Themes & Objectives

Based on the survey results and planning session discussions, the following strategic themes and objectives were developed.

- **Strategic Direction 1: Cohesion & Integration** - Increase cohesion and integration of the community response to immigrant needs.
- **Strategic Direction 2: Economic & Community Involvement** - Strengthen economic and community participation opportunities for immigrants.
- **Strategic Direction 3: Anti-Racism & Advocacy** - Build community capacity to challenge and eliminate racism and champion immigrant inclusion.

Strategic Theme One:

Cohesion & Integration - Increase cohesion and integration of the community response to immigrant needs.

Objectives:

1.1 Enhance access to coordinated, accurate information for immigrants

Suggested Actions:

- Develop KCR-hosted COLIP website
 - Live COLIP website with centralized resources, interactive map, and events calendar
- Maintain shared resource database
 - Up-to-date searchable regional service database

1.2 Improve coordination, communication, and shared learning among COLIP partners

Suggested Actions:

- Establish two-way communication system
 - Functional collaboration platform and communication protocol
- Host sector-specific meetings
 - Determine priority sectors (e.g. Employment, Anti-racism, Indigenous-Newcomer Advisory and connections, etc.), schedule meetings and develop action plans

1.3 Strengthen data-informed planning and advocacy

Suggested Actions:

- Inventory existing data collection
 - Survey partners, map indicators, and identify gaps and overlaps to build shared data inventory and priority indicators
- Develop shared data tools
 - Annual data summary informing planning and advocacy

Strategic Theme Two:

Economic & Community Involvement - Strengthen economic and community participation opportunities for immigrants.

Objectives:

2.1 Increase employer engagement and inclusive workforce participation

Suggested Actions:

- Conduct employer outreach and forums
 - Increase employer connections, organize employer engagement sessions and develop summary reports
- Develop and distribute employer Diversity Equity and Inclusion toolkit
 - Adapt existing DEI and hiring resources, review with employers, and publish digitally

2.2 Improve coordination of employment and economic initiatives

Suggested Actions:

- Coordinate job fairs and employment events
 - Align calendars, co-host events, and share promotion responsibilities with partners in employment sector

Strategic Theme Three:

Anti-Racism & Advocacy - Build community capacity to challenge and eliminate racism and champion immigrant inclusion.

Objectives:

3.1 Increase public awareness and challenge discrimination

Suggested Actions:

- Host two Community Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) training sessions
 - In partnership with KCR Community Resources and United Against Discrimination (UAD)
- Facilitate ethical storytelling and media engagement
 - Develop storytelling guidelines and increased positive media coverage
- Host community dialogues and learning events
 - Collaborate with community organizations to magnify diverse voices and practices