

# BOW VALLEY IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP

2015-2018 INTEGRATION STRATEGY

## CONTENTS

- 02. Introduction
- 03. Key Concepts
- 04. List of Abbreviations
- 05. Priority 1: Organizational Strength
- 06. Priority 2: Education & Language Learning
- 07. Priority 3: Employment
- 08. Priority 4: Social Integration
- 09. Priority 5: Civic & Political Participation
- 09. Priority 6: Housing
- 10. Acknowledgements



**BOW VALLEY  
IMMIGRATION  
PARTNERSHIP**  
*stronger together*

# Introduction

**The Bow Valley Immigration Partnership (BVIP)** is a collaborative community initiative dedicated to improving immigrant integration from Lake Louise to Kananaskis. BVIP is funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada to support a welcoming community and promote the participation of immigrants in the economic, social, and civic life of our community.

**BVIP's vision** is The Bow Valley values diversity and supports the inclusion and integration of all residents.

**BVIP's mission** is to educate, collaborate, and bridge community.

**BVIP partners** include: the Town of Banff, Town of Canmore, Bow Valley College, Canadian Rockies Public Schools, Banff Lake Louise Hotel Motel Association, Settlement Services in the Bow Valley, the Job Resource Centre, Alberta Health Services, Banff Ministerial Association, Parks Canada, Alberta Parks, and the Canmore Hotel and Lodging Association. Thirteen foreign-born volunteers from across the Bow Valley serve on a permanent advisory board to the BVIP Council, known as the Immigrant Advisory Group. Additional community organizations, governments, employers, and community members contribute to the thematic working groups that helped develop this strategy and will help carry out its implementation.

**BVIP became a Local Immigration Partnership (LIP)** in February 2014, following five years of informal collaboration. Beginning with a goal of ensuring the Bow Valley is a place where immigrants and newcomers are welcomed, valued, and participate fully in the community, BVIP partners set out to measure integration in 17 areas of community life. This assessment drew on data available from Statistics Canada, other community reports, and consultation with hundreds of Bow Valley residents. To learn more about BVIP's 2014 Integration Assessment, please view the Highlights from the Integration Assessment brochure or read the full length Integration Assessment at [www.bvippartnership.com/integration-assessment](http://www.bvippartnership.com/integration-assessment)

**Drawing on their own knowledge and experience**, the BVIP Council and Immigrant Advisory Group used the 2014 Integration Assessment to identify four thematic priorities for 2015-2018: employment, education and language learning, civic and political participation, and social integration. These priorities represent areas the Council and Immigrant Advisory Group consider to be the region's most pressing integration challenges as well as areas where BVIP partners can make the biggest impact. Housing was added as a fifth priority due to its urgency alone. A final priority area, organizational strength, encompasses the internal actions required to ensure the partnership's continued efficacy and sustainability.

**Although these strategies reflect BVIP's primary role** over the next three years, additional actions will be undertaken by new partners, external organizations, or by BVIP as needs arise in areas not listed here. Some additional needs BVIP may respond to in 2015-2018 include health, wildlife literacy and parks safety, and relationships with the police & justice system.

**Looking ahead**, BVIP will monitor integration in the Bow Valley and the effectiveness of these strategies through a yearly report to the community and an Integration Assessment every two years. The next assessment will be conducted in 2016.

**To learn more about BVIP, follow our progress, or get involved, please visit** [www.bvippartnership.com](http://www.bvippartnership.com)

# Key Concepts

## **Settlement**

The process of meeting short-term newcomer needs, such as employment, housing, food, education, and language training.

## **Integration**

The “gold standard of settlement” (Wilkinson 2013.) Integration is measured in terms of inclusion and participation in the civic and political, social, and economic dimensions of a community. Integration is often described as a ‘two way street’ because to be successful, both newcomers and established communities must adapt to one another.

## **Welcoming Communities**

The term ‘welcoming communities’ has been defined in a number of ways but each definition goes to the role communities can play in aiding newcomer integration and shares “...a common understanding...that a welcoming community is a healthy community” (Esses et al. 2010, 9) In the ‘two way street’ model of integration, both newcomers themselves and the established community must take steps to accommodate one another and help all residents to feel valued and included.

The definition we use combines those of the National Working Group on Small Centre Strategies’ Attracting and Retaining Immigrants: A Toolbox of Ideas for Smaller Centres and The Characteristics of a Welcoming Community: “A place where there is a strong desire to receive and include newcomers in community life.” (National Working Group on Small Centre Strategies 2007, 65) To be a welcoming community, a location must also have the capacity to “...meet the needs and promote inclusion of newcomers” (Esses et al. 2010, 9).

This definition conveys the equal importance of attitude and capacity. Although welcoming attitudes are important, it is not enough for a place to be free of discrimination and inviting of newcomers if policies, programs, and processes are not in place to help new residents become active members of the community.

## Sources:

Esses, Victoria, Leah K. Hamilton, Caroline Bennet-AbuAyyash, and Meyer Burnstein. Characteristics of a Welcoming Community. Report prepared for the Integration Branch of Citizenship and Immigration Canada. 2010. <http://p2pcanada.ca/library/characteristics-of-a-welcoming-community-report/>

National Working Group on Small Centre Strategies. Attracting and retaining immigrants: A tool box of ideas for smaller centres. 2007. <https://work.alberta.ca/documents/attracting-and-retaining-immigrants-toolbox.pdf>

Wilkinson, Lori. “Introduction: Developing and Testing a Generalizable Model of Immigrant Integration.” Canadian Ethnic Studies 45, no. 3 (2013): 1-7. Wilkinson, Lori. “Introduction: Developing and Testing a Generalizable Model of Immigrant

# Abbreviations Used

AP	Alberta Parks
BLLHMA	Banff Lake Louise Hotel Motel Association
BVC	Bow Valley College
BVHC	Bow Valley Housing Corporation
BVLC	Bow Valley Learning Council
CBT	Canmore Business Tourism
CHLA	Canmore Hotel Lodging Association
CRPS	Canadian Rockies Public Schools
IAG	Immigrant Advisory Group
JRC	Job Resource Centre
LLHRC	Lake Louise Human Resources Committee
LLSRC	Lake Louise Sports & Recreation Centre
MDB	Municipal District of Bighorn
OLS	Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Academy
PC	Parks Canada
SSBV	Settlement Services Bow Valley
TFWSS	Temporary Foreign Worker Support Services
TOB	Town of Banff
TOC	Town of Canmore
WG	Working Group
YWCA	Banff YWCA

# Priority 1: Organizational Strength

## Goal 1: Sustainability

*BVIP remains viable for as long as it is needed through long term planning for funding & careful maintenance of membership structures & processes.*

- 1.1 Support strong partnerships.
- 1.2 Source reliable funding.
- 1.3 Adapt & innovative.

## Goal 2: Inclusiveness

*Broad-based membership & consistent community consultation ensure BVIP initiatives are representative of local realities & perspectives.*

- 2.3 Support organizational/group culture of inclusion.
- 2.1 Provide frequent meaningful community engagement opportunities.
- 2.2 Expand BVIP membership.

## Goal 3: Efficacy

*BVIP is action-oriented, results-driven, and accountable.*

- 3.1 Deepen knowledge & stay current about local integration needs & best practices.
- 3.2 Prioritize, measure, share results.

## Goal 4: Community Recognition

*BVIP initiatives are highly visible in the community. BVIP is widely recognized as a source of expertise and an inclusive, accountable, sustainable changemaker.*

- 3.1 Communicate consistently & strategically.

## 2015-2016 Key Actions

- 3 year funding request
- Additional funding research
- Expand working groups
- Annual planning workshop
- Revise scorecard

## 2016-2017 Key Actions

- Anniversary event
- Needs assessment
- Annual planning workshop
- Funding requests
- Annual planning workshop

## 2017-2018 Key Actions

- Funding requests
- Annual planning workshop

# Priority 2: Education & Language Learning



## Goal 1: English Language Fluency

**Young English language learners access year-round language instruction. Adult English language learners access appropriate language courses. (See Goal 3 for strategies)**

- 1.1 Partner with school boards to plan K-12 English language support.
- 1.2 Identify funding opportunities & partners for school break language programming.
- 1.3 Communicate need for provincial & federal English Language Learner support funding.

## Goal 2: Post-Secondary Success

**Immigrant secondary students successfully transition to post-secondary education & employment.**

- 2.1 Partner with academic institution & school boards to assess needs & barriers for students arriving in grades 10-12.
- 2.2 Identify promising practices & funding opportunities for programs that improve immigrant high school completion rates & post-secondary success.



## Goal 3: Adult Language Learning & Career Path Support

**Adult learners access appropriate language learning, training, bridging & career, & credential recognition programs.**

- 3.1 Conduct adult learner needs assessment focused on language learning & career development needs
- 3.2 In partnership with Employment Working Group, inform & advocate for employer support for language learning & workplace development.
- 3.3 Support employee self-advocacy for learning needs.

### 2015-2016 Key Actions

- School break programming
- Gather secondary school stats
- Employment standards outreach & education
- Employer outreach -business case for training
- Inclusivity Charter development

### 2016-2017 Key Actions

- Inclusivity charter implementation - building employer support for education
- Needs assessment: grades 10-12 students
- Needs assessment: adult learners (language, career development focus)

### 2017-2018 Key Actions

- Support for ELL funding proposals - sharing needs assessment results
- Explore new or expanded student mentorship program

# Priority 3: Employment

## Goal 1: Inclusive Workplaces

**Employers demonstrate a commitment to a shared vision of fair & inclusive workplaces.**

- 1.1 Develop shared vision & action plan for inclusive workplaces with employer partners.
- 1.2 Celebrate exemplary employers through inclusion charter certificate & advertising campaign.
- 1.3 Identify or develop & utilize workplace inclusion evaluation tools.



## Goal 2: Empowered Staff

**Staff have the knowledge & capacity to advocate for their employment rights & interests.**

- 2.1 Assess current employment standards adherence & training.
- 2.2 Create education campaign designed to inform staff of their employment rights, remedies, & protections.
- 2.3 Investigate public education campaign to improve community awareness of employment standards.

## Goal 3: Stable Workforce

**Inclusive practices & support for career development leads to an improvement of regional staff retention.**

- 3.1 Gather statistics on current retention rates.
- 3.2 Research promising practices including: bridging programs, essential skills training, cultural fluency training.
- 3.3 Support Education Working Group's adult learning needs assessment.
- 3.4 Support Education Working Group's advocacy for foreign credential education & workforce development.



### 2015-2016 Key Actions

- **Inclusivity charter/certification process development**
- **Employment standards education campaign**

### 2016-2017 Key Actions

- **Inclusivity charter implementation**

### 2017-2018 Key Actions

- **Inclusivity charter review & expansion**
- **Bridging, FQR support**



# Priority 4: Social Integration



## Goal 1: Welcoming Attitudes

*The established community values & welcomes immigrants & newcomers.*

1.1 Launch public education campaign to share resident stories & address myths, misconceptions, & stereotypes.

## Goal 2: Social Connections

*Community events, activities, & groups actively include immigrants & newcomers in planning, programming, & outreach.*

2.1 Promote inclusive programming & outreach for existing community events & activities.

2.2 Investigate options for community supported arrival services, community orientation, or newcomer matching program.

2.3 Support & celebrate accessible & inclusive new community events.

2.4 Support social integration of parents & students



### 2015-2016 Key Actions

- **#meetthelocals** campaign
- **Communications plan** development
- **Newcomer orientation/** matching program development
- **Event planner outreach**

### 2016-2017 Key Actions

- **Canmore ambassador program** review
- **'Become a local'** initiation program development

### 2017-2018 Key Actions

- **Multicultural event** development

# Priority 5: Civic & Political Participation

## Goal 1: Representative Leadership

*The leadership of our community reflects the diversity of our population.*

- 1.1 Partner with Employment & Education Working Groups to craft leadership capacity development strategy.
- 1.2 Facilitate pathways to access higher level leadership.
- 1.3 Help community groups connect with immigrant volunteers.



## Goal 2: Inclusive Planning

*Governmental & other civic focused organizations include immigrants in planning & decision making.*

- 2.1 Promote inclusive practices through outreach to governance bodies.

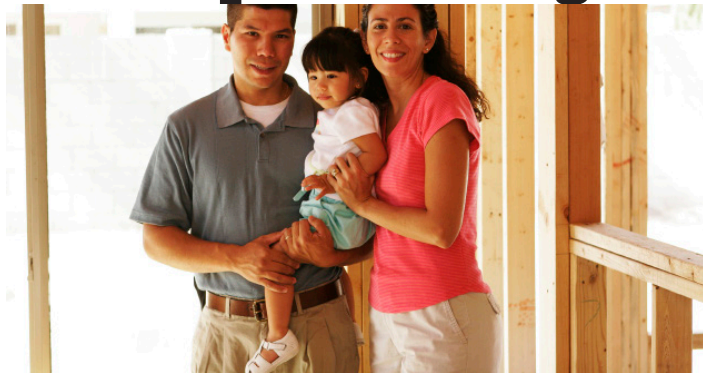
## Goal 3: Community Recognition

*Contributions of immigrant volunteers & leaders are recognized & celebrated.*

- 3.1 Support Social Integration Working Group's public education strategy to share stories & celebrate immigrant contributions.
- 3.2 Identify & nominate immigrant leaders for community awards that recognize civic contributions.



# Priority 6: Housing



*Availability & affordability of housing are challenges that affect immigrants & non-immigrants alike. BVIP's primary role will be to provide information to organizations currently addressing these challenges.*

## Goal 1: Accessible information

- 1.1 Research housing information needs of immigrants; work with municipalities to improve information sharing as needed.

## Goal 2: Informed Planning

- 2.1 Meet regularly with housing planners to share information about the needs & concerns of immigrants.

### 2015-2016 Key Actions

- #meetthelocals campaign - community recognition
- Leadership training
- Municipal government workshop
- Outreach to housing planners

### 2016-2017 Key Actions

- Municipal voting rights review

### 2017-2018 Key Actions

- Multicultural event development Newcomer award launch (TBC)

# Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to the many groups and individuals whose work to ensure the Bow Valley is a welcoming area includes and extends beyond the development and implementation of this strategy. Without the commitment of individuals from every sector, this strategy would not be possible. In particular, the authors would like to acknowledge:

The volunteer members of the BVIP Immigrant Advisory Group

Alberta Health Services

Alberta Parks

Banff Lake Louise Hotel Motel Association

Banff Ministerial Association

Banff YWCA

BanffLife

Banff Springs Hotel

Bow Valley College

Bow Valley Learning Council

Canmore Folk Festival

Canadian Rockies Public Schools

Canmore Hotel and Lodging Association

Caribou Properties

Helena Artmann

Job Resource Centre

Kim Bater

Lake Louise Recreation Centre

Municipal District of Bighorn

Parks Canada

Rimrock Hotel

Rocky Mountain Ski Lodge

Settlement Services in the Bow Valley

Soulafa Al-Abbasi

Temporary Foreign Worker Support Services

The Banff Centre

Town of Banff

Town of Canmore

Yuka Ozawa

Additional thanks is due to everyone who attended community forums on the draft strategy in Banff and Canmore, as well as those who submitted online comments on the draft strategy.

Many others contributed to the research that supported this strategy. For a complete list, please visit: [www.bvipartnership.com/integration-assessment](http://www.bvipartnership.com/integration-assessment)

The Bow Valley Immigration Partnership is made possible by Citizenship & Immigration Canada.

Funded by:

Financé par :



Citizenship and  
Immigration Canada

Citoyenneté et  
Immigration Canada



110 Bear St., Banff, Ab. T1L 1A1.



Phone: +1 403 431 0705



Email: [bvip@banff.ca](mailto:bvip@banff.ca)



[www.bvippartnership.com](http://www.bvippartnership.com)