

WELCOMING COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

AN INTRODUCTION



WHY THINKING ABOUT BEING A WELCOMING COMMUNITY IS IMPORTANT

- ▶ Population decline in rural communities
- ▶ Urbanization
- ▶ Demographic shift
- ▶ Aging communities
 - ▶ Canadian Average Age (2016) – 41.0
 - ▶ PEI Average Age (2016) – 42.7
 - ▶ Several rural communities exceed the Provincial and Canadian Average

WHY THINKING ABOUT BEING A WELCOMING COMMUNITY IS IMPORTANT

	2006	2011	2016
Total Population	1232	1173	1053
Population Change	-1.1%	-4.7%	-10.2%
Average Age		47	47.8

REVERSING THE TRENDS

Population growth and retention are vital to PEI's sustainable economic growth and the future success of rural communities. We need to:

- ▶ Encourage the retention of all residents including youth and seniors
- ▶ Attract and retain immigrants and other new or repatriating residents
- ▶ Become more welcoming communities

WHAT IS A WELCOMING COMMUNITY?

- ▶ An active network of organizations, individuals, businesses, and government engaged in
 - ▶ Activities or other actions to assist new residents to integrate into the community
 - ▶ Promoting the inclusion of new residents

A Welcoming Community is an area where that makes an effort to be welcoming to new residents! New residents feel valued and their needs are being served.

GOALS OF THE WELCOMING COMMUNITIES PLAN PROGRAM

- ▶ Provide all communities with additional resources and tools to continue or commence their welcoming efforts;
- ▶ Enable communities to take the initiative and ownership in creating a welcoming and inclusive environment;
- ▶ Remove barriers for current and new residents to stay in their community;
- ▶ Assist communities in showcasing the benefits of their communities; and
- ▶ Recognize achievement for communities who demonstrate a prescribed level of effort and success.

WHERE CAN YOU START

1. Understanding why it is needed for your community and the benefits
2. Educating your community leaders about the need, to get buy-in
3. Understanding what makes a community welcoming to new residents
4. Develop a Welcoming Community Plan
5. Implementing the plan

CRITERIA OF A WELCOMING COMMUNITY

1. Inclusiveness
2. Integration
3. Accessible Information
4. Education and Understanding
5. Creating Connections
6. Economic Opportunity
7. Welcoming Spaces
8. Leadership

DEVELOPING THE PLAN

PEI WELCOMING COMMUNITIES PLANNING GUIDE AVAILABLE AS TEMPLATE TO GUIDE YOUR COMMUNITY

1. Phase 1: Plan Development Process
2. Phase 2: Actions and Welcoming Components
3. Action Planning Tool
4. Phase 3: Keep Track and Evaluate Success
5. Resources

PHASE 1: PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

STEP 1: Assemble a Working Committee

STEP 2: Develop your Rational

STEP 3: Develop a Vision Statement

STEP 4: Define your Community

STEP 5: Conduct a SWOT Analysis

STEP 6: Seek Support from Local Council

STEP 7: Build Relationships

STEP 8: Plan Activities

STEP 9: Document the Process

PHASE 2: ACTIONS AND COMPONENTS

1. Inventory and Assess Current Policies, Services, Programs and Activities
2. Develop Targeted Events
3. Enhance Existing Events
4. Bring your Message to the Community
5. Encourage Others to Become Involved
6. Create a Community Ambassador Program
7. Provide New Resident Orientations

PHASE 2: ACTIONS AND COMPONENTS (CONTINUED)

8. Remove Barriers
9. Provide Transportation Assistance
10. Encourage Civic and Community Participation
11. Create Partnerships
12. Offer Diversity and Inclusion Training
13. Create Welcoming Spaces
14. Involve the Local Business Community

ACTION PLANNING TOOL

- ▶ **SMART: Specific, Measurable, Agreed upon, Realistic, Time-based**
- ▶ Create and describe your action
- ▶ Assign relevant criteria
- ▶ Assign possible outcomes
- ▶ Create a realistic budget
- ▶ Look for partners
- ▶ Create a timeline
- ▶ Plan the steps
- ▶ Record the successes or challenges

PHASE 3: KEEP TRACK AND EVALUATE SUCCESS

- ▶ Plans are meant to be simple, free-flowing, and constantly evolving documents
- ▶ Plans should be enhanced by discussing, tracking, and capturing: success stories and testimonials, challenges, lessons learned, key partners, outcomes achieved, successful events, training provided, and changes in the community atmosphere

RESOURCES

- ▶ Welcoming Activates and Initiatives in PEI
 - ▶ PEIANC Friendship Hour
 - ▶ Eastern Kings Welcome Baskets
- ▶ Other Useful Toolkits
 - ▶ 17 Characteristics of a Welcoming Community
 - ▶ Community Immigrant Retention in Rural Ontario Guidebook
- ▶ Additional Resources & Funding Opportunities
 - ▶ PEI Immigration Partnership Website
 - ▶ Welcoming Communities New Zealand
- ▶ Funding Opportunities
 - ▶ Inclusive Communities Program

Inclusive Communities Program

- ▶ Purpose: Cultivate inclusiveness and support population retention rates by promoting a culture where newcomers feel they belong and their skills are valued.
- ▶ Eligible Activities:
 - ▶ **Welcoming events for newcomers** – To introduce newcomers to a community's culture, services, and members.
 - ▶ **Newcomer networking and business mixers** – to connect newcomers to a community's business leaders.
 - ▶ **EAL/FAL conversation-based projects** – To facilitate conversations and community connections between native speakers of English/French and newcomers who speak English/French as an additional language (EAL/FAL).
 - ▶ **Diversity and inclusion training and workshops** – To develop diversity and inclusion capacity.
 - ▶ **Conferences, presentations and seminars** – To promote inclusive conversations and discussion.
 - ▶ **Professional services to translate community information** – To make community information accessible in multiple languages (video, websites, print material, etc.)
 - ▶ **Professional services to develop promotional material** - To create and print material that provides information to support settlement services (website content, other media content, etc.)
- ▶ Max Contribution: up to 50% \$2500



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