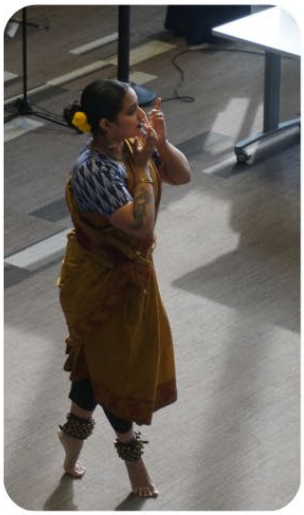
Building prosperity through **immigration**

IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP

Governance document



IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP
WATERLOO REGION

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This Governance Document is a living document.
It will be reviewed annually and revised as necessary by the Immigration Partnership Council.[1]

[1] Updated: January 2011; March 2013; November 2013; April 2014; December 2015; December 2016; November 2018; February 2021; September 2026.

Territorial Acknowledgment

The Immigration Partnership would like to begin this Governance Document with a territorial acknowledgment. A territorial acknowledgment is a way of recognizing the land on which we live and work, and the Indigenous Peoples who have stewarded and continue to steward these lands since long before the creation of Canada. It is also an opportunity to acknowledge the benefits that non-Indigenous people and institutions have gained through colonization, and to reflect on our shared responsibility to advance truth and reconciliation and build reciprocal relationships with Indigenous Peoples across Turtle Island.

We acknowledge that the land on which we live, work, and gather is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe, and Chonnonton Peoples. This territory, within the Haldimand Tract, is land promised to the Six Nations and extends six miles on either side of the Grand River. We recognize the enduring presence of the Indigenous Peoples with whom we share this region today and honour their deep and continuing connection to these lands. We also recognize the leadership, knowledge, and stories of Indigenous Peoples, whose cultures, teachings, and stewardship continue to strengthen communities across this region.

We are all Treaty people. As an organization that supports newcomers, we recognize that those who settle in this region also become part of these treaty relationships. We believe that learning about the Indigenous histories, rights, and responsibilities connected to these lands is an important part of building welcoming and inclusive communities. Our community is shaped by many histories and relationships to these lands, including Indigenous stewardship, migration, settlement, displacement, and the forced removal and enslavement of African peoples. We honour the ancestors and descendants of those who endured enslavement and recognize their resilience, contributions, and enduring impact on our communities today.

The Immigration Partnership is committed to publicly acknowledging the history of these lands. We recognize that our ability to live and work in Waterloo Region is connected to a history of Indigenous dispossession and colonial policies of expulsion and assimilation. We are committed to understanding and addressing the ongoing impacts of colonialism and systemic racism, and to contributing to reconciliation through continuous learning and meaningful relationships with Indigenous Peoples, Nations, and organizations.

A: Foundations and Philosophy

The Waterloo Region Immigration Partnership is a community-wide commitment to building community through immigration. The Immigration Partnership builds community capacity to support the integration process for immigrants.[2]

The Immigration Partnership is premised on the conviction that successful integration is a mutually beneficial process that involves both immigrants and the broader community engaging in a process of mutual learning and inter-relatedness. The Partnership is both an ethical and economic call to create a better and stronger community for everyone, together.

The Immigration Partnership is a diverse and inclusive initiative, committed to addressing racism[3] in Waterloo Region and making anti-racist practice a foundation of its work. See Appendix 2 for the full Anti-Racism Commitment.

The principles and processes set out in this Governance Document govern the Immigration Partnership's structure and work.

A1: Vision and Mission

Vision: Waterloo Region is a welcoming community where immigrants thrive and contribute to shared prosperity and growth.

Mission: We equip partners and community leaders to take action to enhance immigrant success and community prosperity through research, mobilization and influence.

A2: Goals

1. Facilitation of a multi-sectoral partnership to foster inclusive and non-discriminatory environments for immigrants.
2. Communication and advocate to stakeholders and the broader public to educate the community on the beneficial impact of immigration and increase positive perceptions of immigration.
3. Improve access to and coordination of services/programs that facilitate immigrant integration.

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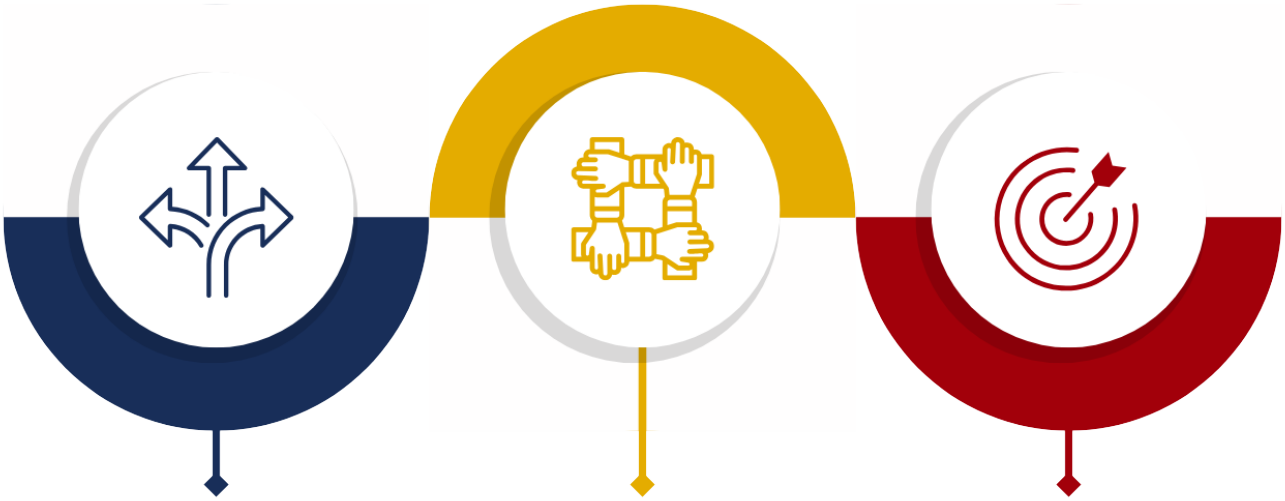
[2] For the Immigration Partnership, "immigrants and refugees" includes people living in Waterloo Region who were born outside of Canada and are now Canadian citizens, permanent residents, temporary residents or foreign nationals. See Appendix 1 for definitions.

[3] The Merriam Webster dictionary defines racism as a belief that race is a fundamental determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race; the systemic oppression of a racial group to the social, economic, and political advantage of another; a political or social system founded on racism and designed to execute its principles. See: https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/racism.

4. Improve access to the labour market for immigrants.
5. Strengthened capacity to integrate immigrants in our community.
6. Build capacity to actively eliminate systemic and individual racism and racial discrimination in Waterloo Region and achieve equity.

A3: Guiding Values and Principles

We are:



RESPONSIVE
Striving to be flexible in adapting to the changing needs of immigrants and refugees through broad community consultation.

COLLABORATIVE
Working collectively in an inclusive, respectful, non-judgmental manner which follows consensus and builds on best practices and innovation while being transparent and accountable to the community.

RESULTS-ORIENTED
Taking action to efficiently achieve community-wide change to the systems and supports that impact immigrants and refugees.

We will:

- Amplify immigrant voices
- Help everyone do their part
- Foster mutual learning and interrelatedness among immigrants and others
- Work for equity
- Tailor community actions to unique immigrant journeys

A4: Purpose

The partners and stakeholders involved in the various committees are the Immigration Partnership. The purpose of the Immigration Partnership is to create and enhance partnerships to build community through immigration, support the integration process for immigrants and eliminate systemic and individual racism. This is done by creating and enhancing partnerships in a comprehensive Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) and implementing collaborative strategies – specifically through:

1. **Coordination and information sharing, which includes:**
    - Promoting and building partnerships
    - Planning and strategically setting priorities
    - Providing advice and direction on key initiatives
    - Seeking input from various groups/sectors and immigrants
    - Identifying and sharing the impacts of racism
    - Sharing between groups
    - Communicating to the broader community
    - Speaking as a partnership with a unified community voice

2. **Problem solving and implementing strategies for change, which includes:**
    - Problem solving about local immigrant issues
    - Advocating for needed changes to law, policy, systems and investment
    - Being a catalyst for collective and coordinated action
    - Seeking out resources
    - Public education to foster positive perceptions of immigration and address the impacts of racism and inequities

A5: History

At the beginning of the 1800s German Mennonite, Scottish and other pioneers settled what is now known as Waterloo Region, building industry and providing a haven to people fleeing persecution. Since then, their descendants and waves of new immigrants continued to build the community Waterloo Region is today alongside Indigenous communities. Recognizing the economic and social significance of immigration to regional communities, public, private and non-profit community leaders have worked together to support the success of immigrants for decades.

In 2005 hundreds of community leaders participated in a regional Immigrant Employment Summit and launched the Waterloo Region Immigrant Employment Network (WRIEN). Hosted by the Greater Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber of Commerce, WRIEN worked across sectors to help employers maximize immigrant talent potential, procuring significant investment from local business, area funders and upper levels of government.

Starting in 2008, community partners expanded these efforts to address the experiences of immigrants comprehensively. Investment was secured from the federal immigration ministry and the United Way to expand into one of Canada's first three Local Immigration Partnerships, which as of 2026 number 100 across Canada. Hosted by the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, the Immigration Partnership Council launched in 2010 and in 2011 WRIEN formally merged with the Immigration Partnership.

Since then, the organizations and community members that make up the Waterloo Region Immigration Partnership have been building one of Canada's most welcoming and inclusive communities. The Immigration Partnership convenes and supports a network of more than 70 settlement, health, education, housing, employment, social service, cultural, faith, grassroots, business, post-secondary, municipal and other organizations, to ensure that every immigrant family is able to thrive and contribute to shared prosperity for all.

Guided by successive regional immigration strategies, the Partnership supports the integration of around 10,000 new immigrants and thousands of temporary migrants annually, and community belonging and economic prosperity for the estimated 200,000 immigrants and 500,000 others in Waterloo Region. The Immigration Partnership has channeled over $2 million in community donations to local initiatives supporting the settlement, work and community belonging of immigrants, refugees and other migrants.

Over almost 20 years, the federal immigration ministry, Government of Ontario, Region of Waterloo and United Way Waterloo Region Communities have invested millions of dollars into the Immigration Partnership. They were joined in 2025 by the Waterloo Region Community Foundation and the City of Kitchener.

A more fulsome account of the Immigration Partnership's beginnings and history can be found online.[4]

A6: Advocacy Protocol

The Immigration Partnership Council (Council) recognizes that the ability to influence public policy, organizations and the community-at-large is a tool that may be used to achieve desired change for the success of immigrants and the wider community. As such, the Council will engage in advocacy on behalf of the Partnership as detailed below.

[4] See: *Waterloo Region Local Immigration Partnership Council (LIPC) Final Report.* Written by the Centre for Community Based Research, available here: http://www.immigrationwaterlooregion.ca/files/news/lipc_final_report_2010.pdf.
The Story of the Immigration Partnership: 10+ Years of Progress. Written by Susan Fish, available at: https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/IP_10th_anniversary_stories_by_susan_fish.pdf

The Immigration Partnership defines advocacy as "...the act of speaking or disseminating information, or convening or joining groups, intended to influence individual behaviour or opinion, corporate conduct, or public policy and law."[5]

Within the context of the Immigration Partnership, advocacy is appropriate at a system and/or policy/bureaucratic level:

- Systems advocacy refers to initiatives, strategies or actions taking place in the context of organizations or community that will influence *programs, practices, services and attitudes* to benefit immigrants, refugees and the broader community. When policies and practice in organizations interfere with the quality of life of immigrants or refugees, systems advocacy is required.
- Policy/bureaucratic advocacy refer to initiatives, strategies or actions which target changes to *policies, legislation and investments*. These advocacy initiatives seek to establish new policies, improve existing policies or challenge the development of policies that diminish resources and/or opportunities for immigrants and refugees. Policy/bureaucratic advocacy usually seek to engage various sectors and orders of government.

Advocacy Criteria

Council recognizes that there is a level of risk involved in undertaking advocacy activities. Council will assess risk when deciding whether to engage in advocacy. Further, advocacy will be:

- Timely
- Related to the Strategic Plan or issues where the Immigration Partnership can have impact
- Framed with community solutions in mind

The Immigration Partnership will engage in partnership activities that attempt to find common ground for change that will have a positive impact for immigrants. It will not engage in advocacy activities that contravene its legal obligations to its government funders or other contracts, or advocate on an individual's behalf.

Advocacy Activities

The Immigration Partnership may engage in the following advocacy activities:

- Supporting actions identified in the Strategic Plan
- Convening or joining community collaborations or dialogue sessions
- Inviting officials to participate in Immigration Partnership events
- Initiating innovative partnerships
- Mobilizing the community to make decisions about how to address needs and implement change

[5] From *Working Together: A Government of Canada/Voluntary Sector Joint Initiative and United Way of Kitchener-Waterloo.*

- Supporting public positions taken by other organizations
- Meeting with organizational leaders or public officials
- Leveraging resources
- Influencing public policy
- Writing letters or policy briefs directed at public officials and/or elected officials
- Conducting research and releasing reports

Decision-Making

Advocacy issues may be identified through the Council or Steering Groups. The Immigration Partnership Council will follow the decision-making process outlined in Appendix 5 to make decisions about when and how to engage in advocacy.

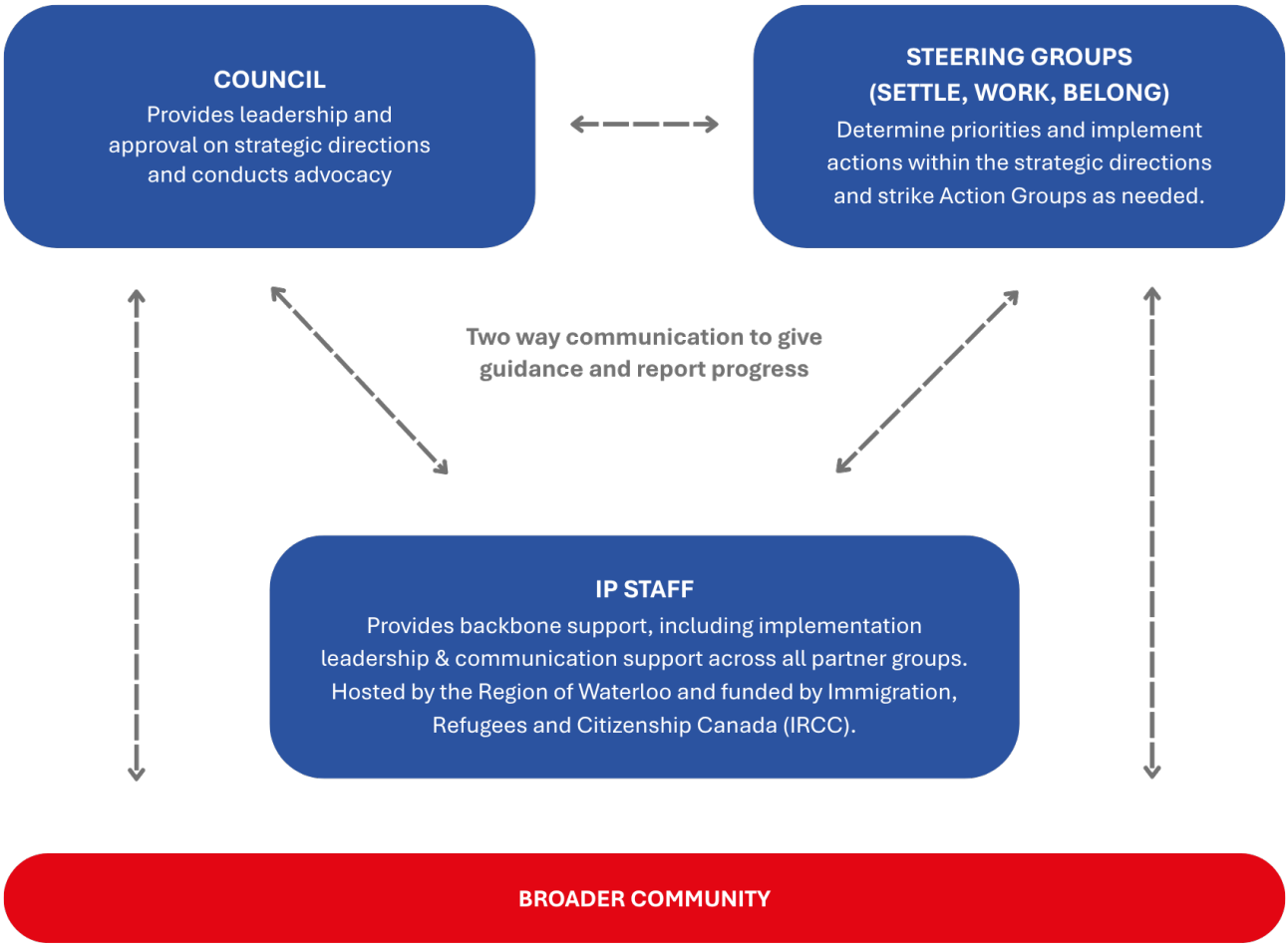
B: Governance Framework

Within this governance framework, all stakeholders involved in the Immigration Partnership are committed to communicating openly to ensure there is a right balance between shared decision-making and organizational leadership. Immigration Partnership governance will be reviewed annually to determine effectiveness in implementing the Strategic Plan.

B1: Organizational Structure

The Immigration Partnership is a multi-faceted partnership initiative made up of over 110 public, private and non-profit partner organizations and community members. The Immigration Partnership Council is the umbrella coordinating and leadership group for the Partnership. The Immigration Partnership has three Steering Groups - Settle, Work, and Belong – the strategic Pillars of the Immigration Partnership.

Immigration Partnership decision-making framework



Strong two-way communication exists between each of the Steering Groups and the Council. Other ad hoc Action Group are created by the Council and/or the Steering Groups to facilitate specific projects.

Council

The Council provides strategic leadership to the Immigration Partnership in Waterloo Region. The Council is responsible for enabling system and strategic planning, approving the Strategic Plan and ensuring outcomes are achieved. It provides governance and oversight of the Partnership, advocates for system, policy and investment change, strengthens cross-sector partnerships and keeps community voice at the centre of the Partnership's work to enable collective action and change.

Further detail is provided in Appendix 3: Council Terms of Reference and Appendix 5: Council and Steering Group Processes.

Steering Groups

The three Steering Groups - Settle, Work, and Belong – are responsible for working in collaboration with community partners to carry out the actions established by the Partnership and supported by the Council. The Steering Groups will be catalysts for broader community action and will develop plans related to Strategy Plan priorities for their focus area. Steering Groups will carry out initiatives and report to the Council on Strategic Plan progress, supported by Immigration Partnership staff.

Further detail is provided in Appendix 4: Steering Group Terms of Reference and Appendix 5: Council and Steering Group Processes.

Sub-Committees

The Council and Steering Groups will convene sub-committees as required. They will be the catalysts for specific actions and implement work plan activities. They may be sector or activity based and their work may be time limited. They will include Council and/or Steering Group members plus other stakeholders as needed. Each sub-committee will be unique in how they are established and function. They will report to the Council and/or Steering Group on progress of the activities they have been formed to implement. Where possible, sub-committees will have a Chair or Facilitator that will report to the Council and/or Steering Group.

B2: Code of Conduct

Members of the Immigration Partnership commit to:

- Conduct themselves in accordance with the philosophy, mission and principles of the Immigration Partnership.
- Work for the well being of all immigrants and other residents of Waterloo Region.
- Not use their membership for personal advantage, or the advantage of other individuals or organizations.
- Work with other members in a spirit of diversity, inclusion, respect, openness and co-operation in spite of differences that may arise during discussion.
- Not divulge confidential information that they may obtain in their capacity as an Immigration Partnership member.

If there is a failure to comply with Code of Conduct guidelines, or if a member cannot otherwise fulfill their commitment to the Council, Steering Groups or Sub-Committees, the Council or Steering Group Chair, as appropriate, will be responsible for addressing the issue with the member, and may request their resignation.

C: Administrative Framework

C1: Immigration Partnership Host

The Immigration Partnership is a region-wide, community-driven initiative that is not separately incorporated. Following an extensive community consultation and exploration, the Region of Waterloo became the preferred host for the Immigration Partnership in 2010. It is signatory to Immigration Partnership funding agreements. The Immigration Partnership is accountable, through its Executive Director, to the Region of Waterloo for the financial, legal, and administrative requirements of those agreements.

Further detail is provided in Appendix 6: Role of the Host.

C2: Immigration Partnership Staff Team

The Immigration Partnership staff team provides strategic and operational leadership and support to the Immigration Partnership. Under Council and Steering Group direction, the staff team supports and facilitates the collective of individuals and organizations that make up the Immigration Partnership, by enabling their collaborative processes, initiatives and Strategic Plan implementation. Immigration Partnership staff are employed by the Region of Waterloo as host of the Partnership.

Further detail is provided in Appendix 7: Role of the Immigration Partnership Staff Team.

C3: Communications Protocol

Public engagement is an important feature of the Immigration Partnership's work to build support for immigration. This includes media engagements.

Media inquiries should be directed to the Executive Director (or other staff designate) who will consult with the Chair, if required, regarding a response to a media request. It is the responsibility of the Chair and/or Executive Director to speak on behalf of the Immigration Partnership Council. The Executive Director will also review and approve all media releases and ensure that appropriate funder or other approvals are obtained prior to release. The Executive Director will inform Region of Waterloo leadership of media engagements per Region policy.

Together with the Executive Director, the Region of Waterloo, as host agency, will speak on behalf of the Immigration Partnership with respect to administration of agreements with the federal and provincial governments etc. The Commissioner of Community Services or designate will determine who is the spokesperson from the Region of Waterloo, as per the Region of Waterloo's communication protocol.

If it is anticipated that negative publicity may occur that would impact the Immigration Partnership and its Council, the Executive Director will inform the Chair and Commissioner of Community Services who will then follow Region of Waterloo protocols for ensuring that Region of Waterloo senior staff are aware. The Chair will follow Immigration Partnership Council protocol. In the event the Chair is not available then the Vice Chair would be informed, who would then inform the Leadership Team.

C4: Reporting

The Executive Director will provide regular reports on the strategic and operational aspects of the Immigration Partnership and Strategic Plan implementation as part of the Council meeting documentation. Steering Group Chairs will provide regular reports to and seek input from Council based on their Strategy implementation plans. The Executive Director and Steering Group Chairs will speak to their reports at Council meetings.

The Immigration Partnership will report annually to the community through a community forum and annual report.

The Immigration Partnership strives to provide regular reports to Regional Council and all area municipal councils on immigration and the work of the Partnership.

Other reporting will be completed as per funding agreements, as described in the contracts.

C5: Funding

Since 2008, the Immigration Partnership has been funded by the federal government, together with important financial contributions from the Region of Waterloo, United Way Waterloo Region Communities and the provincial government.

In late 2024 the Immigration Partnership Council struck a Funding Committee to develop a diversified funding strategy. This strategy seeks to reduce reliance on federal funding by building local investment to sustain the work of the Partnership in the long term. Through a public-private partnership model, the Council seeks to maximize federal and provincial government investments while increasing local municipal, private and philanthropic contributions, and implementing a Voluntary Partner Contribution Model as approved in 2026.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Definitions

Canadian citizen: A person who was born in Canada or became a citizen through the naturalization process in Canada (i.e., they were a permanent resident before they became a citizen). People who became Canadian citizens through the naturalization process are within scope for the Immigration Partnership's work.

Permanent resident: A person with citizenship of another country who has been given permanent resident status by immigrating to Canada but is not a Canadian citizen. Refugees who are resettled from outside of Canada become permanent residents on arrival in Canada through the Government-Assisted Refugee Program or the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program.

Temporary resident: A person who is legally authorized to enter and live in Canada on a temporary basis as a visitor, student, worker or resident permit holder. This includes refugee claimants.

Foreign national: A citizen of another country who is present in Canada with an intent to stay but who has not been granted permanent or temporary residence in Canada.

Appendix 2: Anti-Racism Commitment

In July 2020, the following commitment was penned and approved by the Immigration Partnership Council. In a subsequent governance review, it was embedded within the Immigration Partnership's Governance Document.

July 2020

The Immigration Partnership has witnessed the recent police-involved deaths of Ejaz Ahmed Choudry, Regis Korchinski-Paquet, George Floyd and others. We express solidarity with Black, Indigenous and racialized community members in Waterloo Region and the tens of thousands of residents that recently marched in Kitchener and Cambridge to affirm that Black Lives Matter.

For more than 10 years, the Immigration Partnership has been a collaboration of over 60 community service, business, municipal and post-secondary organizations and Waterloo Region residents working together so immigrants reach their full potential and contribute to creating and sustaining a thriving, prosperous community for everyone. Immigrants living in Waterloo Region have told us that racism and racial discrimination negatively impact their experiences and opportunities here. In the past, the Immigration Partnership has brought awareness to those experiences and called organizations and residents across Waterloo Region to take action to end racism and racial discrimination in our community.

We need to do more. Addressing racism and discrimination in Waterloo Region through a regional Anti-Racism strategy is now a goal in our Community Action Plan 2020-2025. We affirm the Immigration Partnership's commitment to helping eliminate systemic and individual racism and racial discrimination in Waterloo Region. We will do this primarily by looking inward as a Partnership, with a focus on our own accountabilities and action. We will immediately mobilize to create a concrete action plan, which will include:

1. Reviewing, at least annually, our governance and membership with an anti-racism and equity lens, to ensure we are representative of the community and centre the voices of immigrants in our work.
2. Listening to the experience and calls to action of racialized immigrant and other community members and continuing to create and consider disaggregated data that provides insights into racism and systemic barriers in Waterloo Region as it relates to immigrants, as the foundation of our work.
3. With our Leadership Council and partners, establishing parameters for engagement in anti-racism work across our Partnership and elaborating accountability mechanisms.
4. Working with and supporting our community service, municipal, business and post-secondary partners to confront racism.
5. Using our voice and platform to advocate for long-needed systems change to redress systemic racism.
6. Working with and supporting others who are engaging in this collective work towards the development of a regional anti-racism strategy.

Our work in this area will be grounded in our guiding principles, which focus on having community-driven impact by being responsive, collaborative and results-oriented.

Appendix 3: Council Terms of Reference

The Immigration Partnership Council (Council) provides strategic leadership to the Immigration Partnership in Waterloo Region. The Council is responsible for ensuring Strategic Plan outcomes are achieved, championing the work of the Immigration Partnership, enabling system and strategic planning, advocacy, and governance of the Immigration Partnership. The overall objective of the Council is to promote shared awareness and leadership and create enabling environments for collective action.

Council Roles and Responsibilities

<u>Strategy, Governance and Sustainability</u>

- Provide governance and oversight
- Participate in development of and approve the Immigration Partnership Strategic Plan

- Monitor Strategic Plan implementation by reviewing progress reports, and address issues raised by the Steering Groups and/or the Executive Director
- Seek out resources for the Immigration Partnership to ensure sustainability

Community Leadership

- Champion for the Immigration Partnership and actively engaging community leadership
- Develop strategic relationships to improve outcomes for immigrants in Waterloo Region
- Provide leadership to the progressive transformation of public and community service systems
- Uphold visionary leadership in the achievement of a caring, inclusive, equitable and anti-racist community where everyone thrives
- Conduct advocacy on selected immigrant issues related to the Strategic Plan
- Advise on needs and gaps to funders and policymakers

Composition of Council

The Council will strive for diverse representation of members, with at least one third of members being immigrants. This includes racially diverse representatives from multiple sectors, geographies, immigrant groups and differing opinions. Council will be made up of between 15 and 18 members representing a combination of: immigrants, community sector representatives (health, education, social services, justice, ethno-cultural groups, etc.), employers/business, local funders, municipalities and immigrant service providers.

As immigrant service partners, the YMCA Immigrant Services and the KW Multicultural Centre shall be permanently represented. If either agency ceases to operate or for other reasons determined by Council, another agency with the same or similar mission that is active across all three Pillars may assume one of these places at Council's discretion.

Members ideally have multiple connections to groups involved in the Immigration Partnership (i.e., an individual could be connected to a community organization, work for a local funder and be an employer of immigrants). Individuals are asked to bring all their experience to discussions. Council Members are expected to connect with all their groups and circles of influence, locally and beyond, to bring various perspectives to Council and take information back to the community. Members who are immigrants will bring their experience and perspective as an immigrant, and will represent broader ethno-cultural or immigrant groups, seeking to bring those perspectives to Council.

Council candidates will be selected based on specific skills and experience required, and will fit the following Council characteristics and composition criteria:

- Committed to the Immigration Partnership mandate, values, principles and goals, including the July 2020 Anti-Racism Commitment (see Appendix 2)

- Responsible and respected community leaders and change agents who are connected across the community, and could bring a community-wide focus to Council
- Understand and be committed to partnerships, collaboration and collective impact
- Committed to relationship development and contributing to shared learning for mutual understanding
- Are passionate about the Waterloo Region community and embrace the many benefits of a vibrant diverse population
- Able to commit to and contribute fully at Council meetings and other Council responsibilities
- Able to respond promptly to Council meeting invitations, review all pre-circulated documents and information, and attend Council meetings

The Council can invite individuals or groups to regularly or occasionally attend Council meetings (e.g., Ministry representatives or other funders, researchers, etc.). These individuals would not be voting members.

Federal and provincial funder representatives are invited to Council meetings as ex-officio members. From time to time, there may be a need for closed meetings where they are not invited. This will happen at the discretion of the Council Chair.

Council Leadership Team

The Council has a leadership team which includes the Chair, Vice Chair, Pillar Chairs (Settle, Work and Belong), Past Chair and the Executive Director. Under the leadership of the Vice-Chair, this team will act as the Council membership selection committee, a support team for the Executive Director on matters that require urgent feedback or decisions and come together on an ad-hoc basis as required throughout the year, to address items determined by the Council. The Past Chair will lead the process of recruiting and selecting new Council members, with support from the Executive Director. From time to time the representative from the host agency may be a guest.

The Immigration Partnership aspires to, and creates opportunities for, diverse racial and immigrant participation and leadership on the Council and Steering Groups.

Meeting Schedule

Council will meet a minimum of five times a year, with some work between meetings as required and the option to call additional meetings as required. The Chair and Vice Chair will meet with the Executive Director between Council meetings to develop agendas and support the Executive Director as required. Council sub-committees will meet as needed.

Council minutes will be recorded and circulated to members after the meeting for Council for review. Council will approve the final minutes at the next Council meeting. Once approved, they

will be uploaded to the Immigration Partnership website. Meeting agenda's, updates, reports and other meeting documentation will be sent for review one week prior to each Council meeting.

Council Chair and Vice Chair

The Council will have a Chair and Vice Chair. The Chair is responsible for the effective functioning of the Council in its role of governing the Immigration Partnership. The Chair and Vice Chair require skills in involving and engaging others in dialogue, and motivating members.

Every other year, Council will vote on a new Vice Chair. They will fulfill their term as Vice Chair for a period of two years, at which time they will then assume the role of Chair for the next two years. Any voting member of Council can be considered for the role of Vice Chair, and subsequently Chair.

Responsibilities of the Chair are to:

- Provide direction and oversight to the development and execution of Council's strategic directions as referenced in the Strategic Plan
- Lead, facilitate and Chair meetings of the Immigration Partnership Council
- Ensure Council follows the Governance Document including the agreed code of conduct, decision-making, conflict of interest and general Council responsibilities
- Ensure discussion content at meetings is related to issues of which the Council has the power and authority to make decisions or act
- Serve as public spokesperson for the Council**,** in conjunction with the Executive Director
- Work closely with the Executive Director to prepare Agenda's and other support as required
- Work with the Executive Director's host supervisor to participate in annual performance development of the Executive Director. This will include an annual check-in, will follow the guidelines for staff performance development according to the Host agency, and cover additional areas of assessment as determined by the Council as a whole.

Responsibilities of the Vice Chair:

- Work closely with the Council Chair and Executive Director to prepare agendas and provide other support as required to execute the responsibilities noted above
- Chair of the Council Leadership Team
- Assume responsibilities of the Chair as required.

Council Member Term and Selection Process

Council members will have a term of two years, renewable for up to two additional terms (four years) by application through expression of interest.

The YMCA and KW Multicultural Centre, or another agency with the same or similar mandate which assumes one of these places at Council's discretion, may provide for periodic rotation of their representative at their discretion or in discussion with Council leadership. Council membership renewal will be staggered to ensure a balance of continuity and refreshed Council membership.

Each year, when vacancies are anticipated or vacancies otherwise arise, expressions of interest will be sought from the Immigration Partnership stakeholders and broader community. When reviewing upcoming end of term vacancies, Council may, at its discretion, consider extending individual members' maximum terms on a case-by-case basis, if Council determines that member's perspective to be needed and there is no alternative candidate who could provide it. Any said extension would be for a one-year period, when it would be reviewed in accordance with regular selection procedures.

Recruitment will include open calls and targeted outreach to stakeholders to address existing gaps or desired directions of Council. The Executive Director will issue a public call for expressions of interest, via channels determined with the Leadership Team. The Past Chair and other members of the Leadership Team will work with the Executive Director to develop a short-list of potential stakeholders and reach out directly.

The Leadership Team will act as the Selection Committee and will review expressions of interest and approve new members. The Executive Director will be part of this committee to provide recommendations but is not a voting member. New members approved by the Leadership Team will be recommended and appointed to Council via motion of the Council at the meeting following the Leadership Team's approval.

Staff Support

The Executive Director and Program Assistant will provide strategic and operational support to the Council. They will be available to support Council initiatives as required and be responsible to develop, execute and monitor, in partnership with Council, development and implementation of the Strategic Plan.

Appendix 4: Steering Group Terms of Reference

The Immigration Partnership has three Steering Groups: Settle, Work, and Belong. The Steering Groups provide leadership and guidance for their specific area of focus.

Settle Steering Group: The Settle Steering Group focuses on the services, information and community connections immigrants need during their early years in Waterloo Region. The emphasis of this Pillar includes the enhancement of services provided by settlement, other community services and private sector organizations.

Work Steering Group: The Work Steering Group brings together industry leaders, employers, immigrant employment specialists, and newcomers to support access to skilled global talent, pathways to employment, professional growth, and inclusive workplaces, with a focus on employers and immigrant job seekers. It is committed to developing relationships with employers to increase their capacity to hire and retain immigrants.

Belong Steering Group: The Belong Steering Group brings together community organizations, public sector partners, cultural and faith groups and the broader public to strengthen inclusion, reduce barriers, and support meaningful connection for newcomers. It focuses on cross-cultural connections, addressing racism and discrimination, building welcoming and inclusive communities and supporting long-term belonging.

Belonging is a longer-term process that involves both immigrants and the broader community engaging in a process of mutual learning and inter-relatedness. The Belong Steering Group defines belonging as "an essential human need to be accepted and valued by others to reach one's full potential in connecting, participating, integrating and thriving within the life of the community."

Roles and Responsibilities

Steering Groups contribute to the development and implementation of the Immigration Partnership's Strategic Plan. They develop implementation plans related to identified priorities, carry out initiatives and report to the Council on progress, supported by Immigration Partnership staff. Additional roles and responsibilities of the Steering Group include:

- Raise systemic issues and barriers to Council for advocacy, policy development, and strategic influence. Provide leadership, direction, and oversight to sub-committees, serving as sector-specific experts and decision-makers.
- Foster collaboration, information sharing, and coordinated service delivery among community partners.
- Identify and advance opportunities for collective action, public education, and training.
- Research, gather information, and develop strategies to address emerging challenges and support group priorities.
- Take action to address racism and advance equity.

Steering Group Composition

Steering Groups will strive to ensure at least one third of their members are immigrants. The Steering Groups will determine their membership to allow for effective decision making and accomplishment of tasks.

Steering Group Member Characteristics:

- Committed to the Immigration Partnership mandate, values, principles and goals
- Understand partnerships and committed to collaboration
- Passionate about the Waterloo Region community and embrace the many benefits of a vibrant and diverse population
- Committed to contributing fully at meetings

- Invested in facilitating change within their sphere of influence to achieve the Immigration Partnership mandate

Most **Work Steering Group** members will be employers. There will be up to four employment service representatives, including staff from immigrant-specific employment programs (i.e., mentorship, connector, pre-employment, etc.) and one Employment Ontario representative.

Chair and Vice Chair Roles and Responsibilities
Each Steering Group will have a Chair and Vice Chair, who will be responsible for the effective functioning of the group.

The Greater Kitchener Waterloo Chamber of Commerce will permanently Chair the Work Steering Group. If the Chamber ceases to operate or for other reasons determined by Council, another agency with the same or similar mandate may assume this role at the Steering Group's discretion.

In the Settle and Belong Steering Groups, Chairs and Vice Chairs will be nominated by Steering Group members and will require skills in involving and engaging others in dialogue and motivating members. The Chair will have a maximum two-year term. After their term, the Vice Chair will become the Chair.

Role of the Chair:

- Provide direction and oversight to the development and execution of the Steering Group's strategic directions as referenced in the Strategic Plan
- Attend and contribute to Immigration Partnership Council, Council Leadership Team meetings and provide updates from the Steering Group
- Represent the Council at the Steering Group and provide updates from Council
- Work with the staff person to create meeting agendas
- Help create a welcoming environment conducive to dialogue
- Provide leadership to the group and ensure overall meeting direction by following the agenda and staying focused
- Encourage group members to participate in meetings
- Ensure the group follows Immigration Partnership governance processes
- Support orientation of new Steering Group Members

Role of Vice Chair:

- Work closely with the Steering Group Chair and staff to prepare agendas and other support as required to execute the responsibilities noted above.
- Assume responsibilities of the Chair as required.

Term of Membership
Steering Groups will determine ongoing membership as appropriate.

Meetings
Steering Group meetings will be held a minimum of quarterly. Agendas will be set by the Chair in conjunction with staff. Minutes will be taken by staff and approved by the Steering Group. The agenda package will be sent to Steering Group members one week before each meeting.

Accountability
The Steering Group is accountable to the Council for implementation of its work plan in support of the Strategic Plan.

Staff Support
A Community Engagement Coordinator will provide strategic and operational support to each Steering Group through project management, community engagement, administrative and planning support. Staff will work closely with the Chair and Steering Group members as required to implement work plan activities.

Appendix 5: Council and Steering Groups Processes

Vice Chair Selection Process
To select a Chair and/or Vice Chair, the Executive Director will ask Council for volunteers to take on the Vice Chair role for 2 years and assume the Chair role for the following 2 years. Individuals will respond via email to the Executive Director by a nominated date. The Executive Director will notify all Council members of the name/s of volunteers for the role of Chair and/or Vice Chair. Council Members will cast a vote (for each role if required). The Executive Director will count the votes and identify the individual with the highest votes and recommend them for the role of Chair or Vice Chair respectively. In the event of a tie, the Council will be asked to revote. If still tied, the Council leadership team will vote. If still tied, a coin toss will determine the next Vice Chair. Council will approve by motion the Vice Chair at its meeting directly following the vote.

Steering Groups will follow a similar process, under the leadership of their Chair and applicable staff member.

Decision making
All members of Council or Steering Group are equal voting partners for decision-making, and all members should have their perspectives heard. For an Immigration Partnership Council or Steering Group meeting quorum to be achieved, 50% + 1 voting members (including a Chair or their alternate) must be present at the meeting. If there are less than 50%+1 members, any voting will be deferred. Decision making is sought based on consensus. Where needed, the Chair will seek consensus decisions from those present based on the following process:

- Ask members to identify a number between 1-5 regarding their thoughts on a decision
- Levels 1 – 4 = Consensus
    1. Fully Support
    2. Support with reservations

3. Acceptable
4. Will not block it; can live with it
5. Need more information / discussion
6. No, cannot accept it

- If a member indicates a 5 or a 6, individuals will be asked to explain their questions, concerns or alternatives. It will be discussed further to reach a decision. In some cases, a decision may need to be moved to another date to allow further discussion.
- Where a decision needs to be made to ensure work progresses, and if consensus cannot be reached, a vote will take place with the final decision made by majority rule.

The Council will speak with one voice. Once a Council decision has been made, if a member has a dissenting opinion, the member should state Council's position on the issue and re-direct inquiries to the Chair or Executive Director. Should a member find themselves with a dissenting opinion that cannot be resolved, they have the option of resigning from Council.

Conflict of Interest
Members are expected to declare any conflict of interest for any agenda item in which they, or an organization/group that they may represent, would have a direct financial or vested interest in a specific outcome. In the event of a declaration of a conflict of interest, the member will not actively take part in the discussion or the final decision for that agenda item. At the Chair's discretion, they may be asked to leave the room for the discussion.

Attendance
Council and Steering Group members are expected to attend all meetings and to send their regrets when they are unable to attend. Attendance will be tracked, and reports will be provided to members at each meeting with the agenda and previous meeting minutes. After two consecutive absences, members will be requested to confirm continued interest/involvement.

If a Steering Group member who is representing an organization is unable to attend a meeting, they should designate someone to replace them. The designate, where possible, should be the same person for each absence for consistency.

Appendix 6: Host Role and Processes

The following outlines the role of the host for the Immigration Partnership. Specifically, the role of the Region of Waterloo and the Executive Director are described. This document should be considered with respect to the overall governance of the Immigration Partnership and the Executive Director's job description.

Role of Region of Waterloo (Host)
In partnership with the Immigration Partnership Council, the Region of Waterloo will employ the Immigration Partnership staff team and will provide office space, staff supervision, back-office support and administrative logistics. Immigration Partnership staff work according to the bylaws, policies and procedures of the Region of Waterloo and applicable collective agreement. Hosting will be contingent on funding sources being available. As a signatory to contribution agreements with funders, the Region of Waterloo will be responsible for any matters related to the agreements. The host of the Immigration Partnership will be represented as a voting member of the Council. As host, the Region will be as flexible as possible to assist the Council in achieving its goals and objectives.

In addition to the host, there may be situations when other partners also hold funding resources for the Immigration Partnership. In these circumstances, the Region of Waterloo will work with the partner to ensure funding is allocated and reported on within contractual agreement specifications.

Role of the Executive Director
The Executive Director will report to the Immigration Partnership Council for all activities of the Immigration Partnership. The Council, through the Chair, will provide guidance to the Executive Director regarding Immigration Partnership activities. The Executive Director will have an administrative link to the Region of Waterloo and will connect with the Commissioner of Community Services, providing regular updates as necessary.

The Executive Director will have the following key roles:

- Provide overall strategic direction to the Partnership and Council, and represent the Partnership locally and nationally
- Provide expertise and advice on immigration matters to the Partnership, Regional and area Councils, funders and others
- Develop excellent public, private and non-profit partner and government relations
- Support the Council and subcommittees in planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the Strategic Plan
- Ensure communication and information flow across Council, Steering groups and the wider community
- Liaise with funders, seek funding, and ensure overall financial accountability
- Hire and provide leadership to Immigration Partnership staff
- Per Council direction, contract outside consultants as needed

Financial Planning and Processes
The function of financial planning is to apply available financial resources as advantageously as possible to the accomplishment of the objectives and priorities of Council and described in the

Strategic Plan. Financial planning shall reflect a reasonable balance between the resources likely to be available and the levels of expenditure necessary to meet goals, objectives and priorities.

The Council's role in fiscal management is to seek out resources for the Partnership to ensure sustainability. The Executive Director is responsible for operational financial oversight of the Immigration Partnership, in accordance with Region of Waterloo policies and procedures.

The Immigration Partnership receives operational support from various departments in the Region of Waterloo. The Executive Director will establish working relationships with those staff for ongoing support as necessary.

The Council will only accept the sponsorship of organizations including corporate sponsors, which have the potential to support the Council's values or can be expected by members of the public to support the Council's values. The Executive Director will consult the Council Funding Committee on financial sponsorship and regularly advise the Chair and Council about sponsorships.

Human Resource Processes

The Council Chair, along with the Executive Director's host supervisor (Region of Waterloo, Commissioner of Community Services), will participate in annual performance development of the Executive Director. This will include an annual check-in, will follow Region guidelines for staff performance development, and cover additional areas of assessment as determined by the Council.

In alignment with Region of Waterloo and Immigration Partnership governance policies, and specifically the anti-racism commitment, the Executive Director directly supervises Immigration Partnership staff, with full responsibility for interviewing and selection, training and orientation, development and performance management. The Executive Director will include a member of Council on Immigration Partnership staff hiring committees.

The Executive Director selects, assigns work and oversees non-Region staff, such as consultants, volunteers, or students. Further detail is contained in the job description.

Term and Termination

On March 24, 2010, a Community Forum was held with over 200 people participating, to review the proposed Immigration Partnership structure, where the Region of Waterloo was selected and agreed to be the Partnership's host. Since that time, the Immigration Partnership and the Region have enjoyed a strong, productive, and mutually beneficial partnership. If at any time Council determines that there is no longer a net benefit, the Region will work with the Council to transfer host responsibilities to another entity as determined by the Council.

Appendix 7: Role of the Immigration Partnership Staff Team

The role of the Immigration Partnership staff team is to provide strategic and operational support to partners and the Partnership. They support Council and Steering Group initiatives as required and develop, execute and monitor, with partners, the Strategic Plan. More specifically, the role of the staff team is to:

- Offer opportunities for learning and dialogue (Educate)
- Be the "go-to" hub for information, knowledge and planning support, especially with respect to how the system works (Inform and Facilitate)
- Engage with the community, especially in reaching out more broadly to stakeholders at all levels (Engage)
- Develop and distribute communication, advocacy and other materials (Communicate)
- Develop expertise and focus on immigration policy issues (Influence and Advocate)
- Provide concrete tools and resources that support immigrant settlement, work and belonging (Educate)
- Establish relationships, links and connections at all levels to facilitate the work (Connect)

For further details on the Immigration Partnership staff team roles and responsibilities, refer to the job descriptions.