



York Region Immigration Settlement Strategy lays groundwork for community collaboration

NEWMARKET - York Regional Council today endorsed the York Region Immigration Settlement Strategy which includes a long-term vision to support the overall well-being of both newcomers and long-term residents.

The strategy builds on York Region's reputation as a welcoming and inclusive community and identifies priorities to help newcomers fully integrate into the community economically, socially, culturally, civically and politically.

"The fact York Region is a chosen destination for so many newcomers is a testament to the good work that takes place in our communities," said York Region Chairman and CEO Bill Fisch. "The York Region Immigration Settlement Strategy is well positioned to make a meaningful difference in the successful integration of this growing and skilled segment of our population."

The strategy is a focal point for collaborative action involving newcomers, service providers, community organizations, businesses and government. Recognizing successful integration of newcomers is a two-way street, the strategy promotes the rights and responsibilities involved in encouraging newcomers to actively engage in the community. It also includes a list of priorities to guide a three-year action plan.

"Immigrants bring so much to our community in terms of education, international networks and global perspectives," said Markham Deputy Mayor Jack Heath, Chair of the Region's Community and Health Services Committee. "Helping them secure meaningful jobs, participate fully in their new communities and learn about Canadian culture enhances quality of life in York Region for all residents."

The strategy was developed under the advice of the Community Partnership Council, comprised of up to 25 representatives from various sectors, including community organizations, school boards, employer planning tables, local municipalities, police services and all three levels of government.

"This is a 'made-in-York Region' strategy. We appreciate the valuable input of all those who worked together to form a meaningful plan for improving lives," said Town of Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti, Co-Chair of the Community Partnership Council. "Key to our ongoing success will be continued collaboration and commitment to action from the entire community."

"The Strategy reflects the first-hand experiences of almost 2,000 stakeholders who participated in the consultation process," said Stephen Lam, Director, Immigrant Services and Community Programs of Catholic Community Services of York Region and Co-Chair of the Community Partnership Council. "It leads change for a stronger community."

Today, York Regional Council was also provided with Changing Landscapes: Recent Immigrants Living in York Region. The report, based on data from the 2006 Census, provides research and information on the social and economic characteristics of people who arrived in York Region between 2001 and 2006. Developed under the direction of the Community Reference Group (CRG), the report's findings were instrumental in the creation of the York Region Immigration Settlement Strategy.

"Recent immigrants to York Region in general are young families who are well educated, highly skilled and contribute significantly to the Region's communities," said Town of Newmarket Mayor Tony Van Bynen,

Co-Chair of the Community Reference Group. "The information contained in Changing Landscapes will help us find the right balance of services and programs necessary to continue to support their successful integration."

"York Region is home to more than 1 million residents, including a growing number of immigrants expected to represent 55 per cent of our population by 2031," said Daniele Zanotti, United Way of York Region CEO and Co-Chair of the Community Reference Group. "It will take the efforts of a broad range of stakeholders to respond effectively to the opportunities and challenges ahead."

The York Region Immigration Settlement Strategy was developed as part of the York Region Local Immigration Partnership initiative, funded by the Government of Canada through Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

Online versions of the [York Region Immigration Settlement Strategy](#) and the [Changing Landscapes: Recent Immigrants Living in York Region](#) report are available at www.york.ca

- 30 -

Media Contact: Kim MacGillivray, Corporate Communications, York Region
1-877-464-9675, ext. 1209 • Cell: 905-251-6412 • kim.macgillivray@york.ca

Founded in 1971, The Regional Municipality of York is made up of nine municipalities and provides services to more than one million residents, 29,000 businesses and 495,000 employees.

For more information visit us at www.york.ca

Follow us on :  [York Region](#)  [@YorkRegionGovt](#)

[Back to top](#)