



## Toronto East Quadrant Newcomer Settlement Strategy (DRAFT VERSION)

---

Funded by:

Financé par :



Citizenship and  
Immigration Canada

Citoyenneté et  
Immigration Canada

# Introduction

The Toronto East Quadrant's Regional Settlement Strategy is collaborative framework that is designed to support increased multi-sector coordination of settlement services, improve labour and economic outcomes as well as facilitate solutions for the successful social integration of newcomers while building the Scarborough Region's capacity to be a welcoming community. The Strategy's long-term vision is to identify and support the inclusion of newcomer needs within the community planning process as a means to enhance the settlement and integration of newcomers.

Our goal, through this Strategy, is working together for a diverse and inclusive community. The Strategy was developed through the Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) initiative. This initiative is funded by the Government of Canada through Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

## Toronto East Quadrant Local Immigration Partnership Background and Overview

The Toronto East Quadrant Local Immigration Partnership (TEQ LIP) was established following a request from CIC to merge the former 17 local Toronto neighbourhood LIPs into four Toronto Regional Quadrant LIPs as a means to create a more efficient way of implementing LIP related initiatives. The TEQ LIP aims to support the development of local collaborative partnerships and community-based planning around the needs of newcomers in the eastern part of Toronto, as known as Scarborough. The TEQ LIP was formed through a consortium of four previously existing Scarborough neighbourhood LIPs: Eglinton East-Kennedy Park, Northwest Scarborough, South Scarborough and Southwest Scarborough LIPs. As a regional LIP framework, the TEQ LIP consolidated the previous Scarborough neighbourhood LIP tables, while also expanding engagement with newcomer community groups and service providers in neighbourhoods that were not previously been involved or covered by LIPs.

The overall objective of the TEQ LIP initiative is to enhance the capacity of service providers to more effectively meet the current and emerging needs of newcomers in Scarborough by supporting an integrated and collaborative approach to effective service delivery.



Figure 1: Toronto East Quadrant LIP area

According to 2006 Census data, Scarborough is home to over 602,575 people with 345,878 immigrants making approximately 57.4% of the total population. It is also home to approximately 73,326 recent immigrants (less than 5 years in Canada). The catchment area in which the TEQ LIP will operate in is a vast area, stretching from Steeles Avenue to the north, Rough River to the east, Lake to the south, and Victoria Park Avenue to the west, and has the total area of 188 square kilometers (Figure 1). This area covers six priority neighbourhoods within the City of Toronto: Steeles/ L'Amoreaux; Dorset Park; Malvern; Scarborough Village; Kingston-Galloway and Eglinton East – Kennedy Park.

### Expansion Neighbourhoods

There are eight neighbourhoods in the Scarborough area that were not originally covered by the previous neighbourhood LIPs (Wexford, Maryland, Ionview, Bendale, Guildwood, Rouge, Centennial Scarborough, Malvern and Highland Creek). In an effort to create an effective and holistic Strategy, the TEQ LIP has included those eight neighbourhoods into the overall plan. Through a process of community consultations, service providers meetings, community stakeholder engagement and newcomer needs assessments, the TEQ LIP hopes to capture vital and important information that can be subsequently incorporated in to the development and implementation of the Regional Strategy. We will continue to work on engaging the new expansion neighbourhoods despite some challenges/barriers (no previous knowledge of LIP, reluctance to collaborate, building relationships, isolate community pockets, and merging existing established networks with newly incorporated ones).

## **The Importance of Agency Partnerships**

One of the key elements for success of the Toronto East Quadrant's Regional Settlement Strategy will depend largely on the collaborative effort between community agencies and their engagement with the broader community. TEQ-LIP understands that creating a diverse and inclusive community requires all community stakeholders to be involved. In order to establish a coordinated and holistic approach, agencies within Scarborough have worked in partnership in supporting the community engagement process as well as developing community leadership. As we proceed to move forward TEQ-LIP partner agencies will continue to support this process and carry on with engaging our various communities in order to better understand and address the settlement and integration needs of newcomers.

## **TEQ LIP Strategic Directions**

### **Development of a Regional Scarborough Settlement Strategy**

The development of a comprehensive and reflective approach to addressing the settlement and integration needs of Scarborough's diverse immigrant and newcomer populations requires the involvement of as many community stakeholders as possible. The Settlement Strategy for the Toronto East Quadrant Local Immigration Partnership (TEQ-LIP) is an inclusive collaborative process which incorporates analytical data gathered from statistical research, focus groups, community engagement activities, along with agency input from the former neighbourhood LIPs and other community stakeholders in Scarborough. The TEQ LIP builds upon the pre-existing accomplishments and research of the four former neighbourhood LIPs (Northwest Scarborough, South Scarborough, Southwest Scarborough, Eglinton East-Kennedy Park and Southwest Scarborough) and also includes new findings from the newly added neighbourhoods that were not previously engaged or participating in LIP related activities.

### **Objectives of a Scarborough Regional Settlement Strategy**

The Scarborough Regional Immigration Settlement Strategy is intended as a focal point for collaborative action with the following objectives:

1. To perform a visioning exercise that determines the focus of the Quadrant's Partnership Council given its larger geographic area.
2. Establishment and expansion of local and regional partnerships and effective service delivery in prioritized areas.
3. To establish a Regional Settlement Strategy that builds upon key themes identified in the Local Settlement Strategies completed by the neighbourhood LIPs.
4. To implement the priorities identified in the Settlement Strategy through Action Plans (key activities, roles, outcomes, required resources & timelines to implement the strategy).
5. To achieve improvements in regional service coordination, service provision, consultation and an effective system for information dissemination
6. Strengthen awareness and capacity of local service providers to integrate new immigrants.

## **Principles of Developing Scarborough Region Settlement Strategy**

---

There are three guiding principles that are central to the TEQ LIP's planning, development and implementation of a Regional Settlement Strategy; it is from this lens that the Strategy's strategic direction and priorities are developed:

### 1) Service Coordination:

The TEQ LIP acknowledges that the successful settlement and integration of newcomers is dependent on a multitude of factors such as health conditions, legal status, occupation, culture and education levels, therefore working with a diverse range of stakeholders in the community is fundamentally important. Consulting and collaborating with all relevant stakeholders who are effectively able to influence policy, program and service delivery changes is imperative to gaining traction on issues and leveraging resources, skills and expertise to address identified areas of concern within the community.

### 2) Newcomer Engagement:

Ensuring newcomers actively participate on LIP initiatives within the LIP framework increase opportunities for comprehensive, reflective and participative outcomes within the community. Given the diversity of Toronto East's immigrant populations and the accountability of the LIP initiative to newcomers, their engagement and involvement at various stages of planning, implementation and evaluation is essential.

### 3) Access to Information

The TEQ LIP has an underlying commitment to promoting openness in all activities related to the project, while exemplifying transparency and accountability to its stakeholders, fostering informed dialogue and increase awareness of and input on issues.

## **Phases of Regional Strategy Development and Implementation**

The development of the TEQ LIP's Settlement Strategy consists of four phases:

Phase 1: Assessment (November 2011- March 2012) – With the announcement of an amalgamation of the neighborhood LIPs in November 2011, Scarborough's neighborhood LIPs initiated the Scarborough Inter-LIP network in anticipation of the change. The former neighbourhood LIPs compiled their existing data, strategies, accomplishments, areas for improvement, lessons learned, and implications (positive and negative) with regards to their involvement and operations at the neighborhood level. In addition, the lead agencies of the neighborhood LIPs began exploring operational approaches that would increase the effectiveness and positive impact of all community stakeholders within a regional framework. Through monthly meetings, data on commonalities, best practices, priority issues and approaches were identified, as well as the preliminary plans of a regional operational model were developed.

Phase 2: Scoping (April 2012-May 2012) – With pre-existing data obtained from the previous neighborhood LIPs serving as the basis to transition into a regional LIP structure, further information regarding the aim, direction and deliverables still remained unidentified. Over a period of two months, Partnership Council members provided input and recommendations through meetings to determine the most effective approach to their involvement and participation within the new structure. An Immigrant Council comprised of newcomers and immigrants from all across Scarborough was also established in order to provide feedback and ensure that the process was inclusive and reflective of their needs. As a result, the scoping phase provided agencies and newcomer residents with an opportunity to provide considerable feedback on what the priorities and focus areas for the TEQ LIP should be.

Phase 3: Strategic Planning (June 2012-October 2012) - Through a thorough analysis of data and materials presented, the TEQ LIP was able to categorically determine the priority areas of the Regional Settlement Strategy. Using various strategic planning tools, templates and exercises, and with the establishment of action groups, community stakeholders throughout Scarborough were given the opportunity to actively participate in clarifying the goals, objectives and methods for measuring success of the TEQ LIP while also identifying and allocating resources and responsibilities to the issues and initiatives outlined.

Phase 4: Implementation and Evaluation (October 2012- March 2013) – Community stakeholders will undertake the initiatives outlined in the Regional Settlement Strategy and the developed action plans; allocating resources and engaging internal and external stakeholders in addressing the identified objectives through the processes specified, with some iteration along the way. In addition, the evaluation component involves assessing and documenting the TEQ LIP's progress towards achieving the set goals through a series of community meetings.

## **Emerging Strategic Settlement Priority Areas for Scarborough LIP**

The identified common focus areas by the previous neighbourhood LIPs in Scarborough formed the basis upon which an amalgamated Scarborough LIP strategy would be developed. Acknowledging that a new Scarborough wide strategy was to include the input and consideration of newly incorporated areas ( i.e. Rouge, Malvern etc.,) a community launch of the Scarborough LIP was held in early April 2012 to gain further input from community and service providers and other community stakeholders from across Scarborough. Although community members and service providers in attendance were in agreement of the continuation of efforts in the five core areas identified by the neighbourhood LIPs, there was a need to provide further support and/or conduct initiatives in the following areas:

- Consolidating the employment, education and training priorities - Understanding that building the capacity, skills and knowledge of newcomers through education and training increases their chances for greater employment opportunities commensurate to their skills and education, the Partnership Council decided to consolidate the focus areas into one.
- Establishing the health, housing and legal service priorities - Considering lack of resources, limited number of service providers in Scarborough and the systemic issues related to health, immigration and settlement process, an adequate focus should be given on the health services, housing and legal services as individual priorities.
- Creating settlement and family support groups - With the feedback gathered, and strong arguments towards broadening the focus of the TEQ LIP given geography and demographic composition of service providers and immigrants, the LIP stakeholders suggested establishing priorities that addresses specific needs of youth, seniors and women in Scarborough.

The three new identified focus areas along with the common focus areas of the previous neighbourhood LIPs were incorporated in to the LIP priorities and presented to the TEQ LIP Partnership Council table in order to consolidate the focus area into manageable groups which along with further discussion and planning would assist in developing a Scarborough wide strategy.

Based on the review of all the materials and considerations presented, the TEQ LIP Partnership Council determined the following final strategic priorities considerations for the Scarborough LIP:

- Ensuring that the service coordination, newcomer/civic engagement and information and access to space and resources form the basis of all activities related to the LIP project - As a community based project geared toward creating mutually beneficially opportunities for service providers as well as newcomer and immigrant residents, the Partnership Council decided that gains will not be made unless a collaborative approach amongst service providers is established and that newcomers are given opportunities for input at all stages of the planning and evaluation process.

## **Formation of Strategic Focus Action Groups, Developing Focus Areas and Expected Outcomes**

---

In June 2012, TEQ LIP established four Action Groups to develop and implement strategic recommendations and an Action Plan that will foster collaboration and enhance the newcomer settlement experience in the Scarborough Region. The Partnership Council decided that rather than establishing groups to work specifically on the topics of service coordination and newcomer engagement, it would be more beneficial to establish these items as guiding principles and ensure that they are embedded at all levels of TEQ LIP's work.

Based on the feedback from the Partnership Council, TEQ LIP established four Action Groups focused on four major thematic areas. While the member agencies in the Partnership Council have appointed their agency staff to different Action Groups based on expertise and interest to contribute on selected topics, invitation was extended to the community at large where settlement agencies, newcomer service providers, main stream services, other community stakeholders and Immigrant Council members to be members of different Action Groups. Following the analysis of service needs and challenges faced by newcomer community in accessing different services, each Action Group conducted a visioning exercise to create mandate, objectives and expected outcomes. It was agreed by all the Action Groups to ensure service coordination, enhanced access to information and community engagement were established as crosscutting themes of all the work of each Action Group.

## **Toronto East Quadrant LIP Settlement Strategies**

Fundamental to the TEQ LIP Settlement Strategy, has been developing an understanding of what successful integration translates to in real life – by understanding the needs of newcomers, we can support the creation of welcoming communities that promote the inclusion of newcomers. This Strategy aims to help newcomers integrate and contribute to every element of life – economic, social, cultural and political and reflects the values of diversity, equity and inclusion. The aim of the Scarborough Regional Strategy is to address the barriers, identify supports as well as opportunities that can diminish the settlement challenges which newcomers face with successful integration.

### **Employment, Education and Training**

---

Newcomers face many barriers to employment. A lack of avenues to acquire Canadian experience, barriers to access navigate and secure beneficial employment opportunities, low paying jobs, and a lack of confidence of potential employers of newcomer's skills are some examples of the obstacles that affect newcomer's successful economic integration.

Mandate: To enhance awareness and knowledge of newcomer employment related issues and promotes educational and training opportunities that best support newcomer professional in accessing the labour market.

Strategic Area 1: Enhance newcomer's access to labour market information and employment supports through knowledge-sharing amongst service providers on current labour market services and resources to support effective referrals and facilitate newcomer's access to the labour market.

Objectives:

1. Improve access and availability of employment-related information resources and visibility of existing services
2. Advocate for enhanced employment supports
3. Campaign and educate employers on the benefits of hiring newcomers

Strategic Area 2: Facilitate coordination and partnerships with key stakeholders to supports newcomers interested in self-employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.

Objectives:

1. Work with stakeholders to support small businesses and entrepreneurs
2. Work with service providers to enhance availability of skill development programs for newcomer entrepreneurs

Strategic Area 3: Enhance awareness and access to education and training supports for newcomers in Scarborough interested in upgrading their educational qualifications.

Objectives:

1. Promote access to training, coaching and employment opportunities for newcomers through existing networks and subject matter experts
2. Increase newcomer awareness about educational pathways
3. Support more access to employment related language training programs

Expected Outcomes:

- Increased collaboration and information sharing amongst newcomer service providers and small businesses and entrepreneurs to support newcomer employment and training.
- Stronger relationships between service providers and universities and colleges.
- More resources available for training and employment access supports (i.e. childcare) More awareness among diverse service providers about existing programs and resources, seamless referral processes in place.
- Increased information available for front-line staff on language and training supports for newcomers (i.e. through knowledge-sharing sessions, workshops).
- Identify and promote opportunities for highly skilled professionals in volunteering, placement and mentoring roles for newcomer adults.

## Health

---

Studies show that newcomer's health deteriorates over time after immigrating to Canada. This is in part due to some challenges that newcomers face while trying to navigate the health care system, which can lead to significant implications. Newcomer health within this context is understood to be socially determined and holistic to the settlement and integration experiences of newcomers.

Mandate: Enhance and promote the overall health of newcomer residents in Scarborough, while aiming to reduce health inequalities.

Strategic Area 1: To enhance newcomer's access to health related information on programs, resources and services in their community, increasing their ability navigate services and make informed decisions on individual and family related health issues.

Objectives:

1. Provide greater clarity, understanding and consistency on health, mental health and wellness related definitions and messaging, to alleviate stigmas, stereotypes and barriers associated to services available to newcomers.

2. Improve access and navigation of health related services and programs, acknowledging the distinct circumstances, rights and cultures of recent immigrants in the community.

Strategic Area 2: Promote collaboration and knowledge sharing between health practitioners, researchers, community groups and service providers to increase the service delivery sectors effectiveness to meet the unique needs of Scarborough's diverse newcomer population in a coordinated and streamlined approach.

Objectives:

1. Promote effective communication and knowledge sharing between service providers regarding innovative ideas and best practices in addressing health related issues and trends of ethno-specific immigrant groups.
2. Mobilize leadership and foster collaboration between mainstream and unconventional stakeholders to strengthen the responsiveness of contributors to the health care service delivery system.

Expected Outcomes:

- Increased awareness of and timely access to services for newcomers through greater collaborative efforts in information and referral efforts amongst service providers.
- Develop diverse approaches to addressing health needs of specific and emerging newcomer groups approaches such as LGBTQ newcomers, refugees and undocumented workers to assessing health service in an equitable and effective manner.
- Build strong partnerships with local, regional and provincial networks to champion policy changes aimed at equitable health service reforms and innovative approaches to service delivery at all levels.
- Greater understanding and effective mechanisms to assess and alleviate settlement stressors to newcomer settlement and integration process i.e. job stress, loans, cultural obligations etc.

## **Housing and Legal Supports**

---

Understanding that the settlement experience is difficult to navigate upon arrival, there needs to be more initiatives focused on assisting newcomers with housing and legal related matters and on ensuring newcomers are aware of services and resources that are more affordable efficient and affordable while adjusting to life in Canada.

Mandate: To work together in developing and implementing strategies through service coordination and collaboration to enhance availability and accessibility of housing, legal support and related services for newcomers in Scarborough

Strategic Area 1: Improve service providers' awareness and access to housing-related information and resources through effective communication, service coordination and collaboration amongst housing service providers, settlement agencies and other stakeholders.

Objectives:

1. Support effective communication and knowledge sharing among service providers on emerging issues that affect newcomer housing, including funding, policy and other changes and find ways to collectively address them
2. Increase sustainable agency collaboration & partnerships to support newcomer's access to housing



Strategic Area 2: Support newcomer's access and ability to maintain affordable housing in Scarborough by enhancing awareness and navigation of different housing options through relevant information and tools.

Objectives:

1. Promote awareness of available affordable market rent and subsidized housing as well as tools and resources that address newcomer housing access
2. Support improvements to newcomer's access to and ability to maintain affordable housing
3. Improve tenants education and capacity building to address safety and other challenges

Strategic Area 3: Enhance awareness of and access to legal information, services and resources through community awareness and collaboration amongst legal service providers, settlement agencies and other stakeholders.

Objectives :

1. Improve newcomer's and service provider's awareness of legal issues, available resources and legal services in Scarborough
2. Facilitate sustainable collaboration among legal service providers and other key stakeholders
3. Increase newcomer's access to legal services and support by bring more resources and services to Scarborough

Expected Outcomes:

4. Newcomers, including vulnerable and low-income groups are more aware of and have access to services and resources that assist them to have access to affordable, safe and healthy housing options and the ability to maintain these in the long-term
5. Affordable, safe and long-term housing leads to improved physical and mental health for newcomers
6. Immigrants have more information about legal issues and have barrier free access to legal support services when they need them
7. Service providers in Scarborough are more aware of resources and equipped with information of newcomer's housing and legal services needs and work collaboratively to address them
8. Improved service coordination and collaboration among housing/ legal service providers and settlement service organizations

## **Settlement and Family Supports**

Newcomers can face many barriers to accessing programs and services. These barriers include a lack of information and awareness, language barriers, eligibility requirements, mobility issues, location of services and costs. Additionally, the needs, priorities, and experiences of newcomers differ between specific demographic groups (i.e. women, seniors, youth, etc.), which can hinder their involvement in or access to programs and service respectively. Settlement and family supports play a fundamental role in how newcomers integrate and the provision of developing culturally appropriate programs and services in the languages of Scarborough's main immigrant groups can also assist in a smoother integration process.

Mandate: To strengthen availability and accessibility of settlement and family supports for newcomers through facilitating enhanced service coordination and knowledge sharing among organizations, and greater community engagement in Scarborough.

Strategic Area 1: Strengthen the availability and accessibility of settlement and family supports for newcomers by enhancing newcomer and service provider knowledge and access to settlement related information, resources, and support.

Objectives:

- Develop and support newcomer's awareness of and timely access to information and services that support successful settlement
- Support effective service coordination and knowledge sharing among service providers, faith institutions, and community groups

Strategic Area 2: Create a platform to address the settlement needs of specific newcomer groups and family units in Scarborough.

Objectives:

- Improve awareness of and access to services and supports for newcomer seniors
  - Empower newcomer women by enhancing awareness of and access to services and supports
  - Support newcomer youth empowerment and social integration
- Strategic Area 3: Enhance interpretation services and information in different languages of Scarborough's main newcomer demographics.

Objectives:

- Improve the capacity of service providers to offer information and services in different languages
- Increase the availability and access to culturally relevant written materials offered in different languages

Expected Outcomes:

- Newcomers, service providers, and faith-based and cultural institutions are more knowledgeable and better able to access settlement related information, resources, and supports
- Greater awareness among service providers of the needs of specific newcomer groups (including newcomer seniors, women, youth, LGBTQ newcomers, and refugees) and how to best address them
- Reduced barriers that allow all newcomers to access programs that are relevant to their needs and interests, and that enable them to participate in the community in a meaningful way
- Enhanced newcomer awareness of and timely access to information and services in their first language

## Next Steps: Putting Strategy into Action

The Toronto East Quadrant LIP is moving towards the next phase of our Strategy-implementation. This implementation phase will consist of identifying actions and creating an Action Plan that will yield the best results towards achieving our goal towards creating diverse and inclusive communities that facilitate newcomer settlement and integration. The purpose of the Action Plan to be implemented is to decipher substantial changes in the newcomer settlement and integration process in Scarborough.

The TEQ LIP will establish quantitative and qualitative baseline measurement indicators to be incorporated into actions that will then be identified to be implemented on a short-term, mid-term and long-term basis. These indicators will assist in identifying the progress made by the TEQ LIP. Within the first six months of the implementation phase, the TEQ LIP will implement short-term actions, initiate selected mid-term actions and prepare to implement long-term actions in order to support member agencies to collectively make best use of their resources.

Throughout this process, we will continue to conduct outreach and engage organizations, community stakeholders, residents and newcomers to participate in the newcomer settlement process. The Partnership Council will continue to identify and support member agencies to develop program based partnerships, cross-sectoral partnerships and long-term collaborations. By taking this approach, we hope to achieve our overall goal of establishing a supportive and coordinated system that improves outcomes for newcomer settlement and integration in Scarborough neighbourhoods over the years to come.