

# CONSULTATIONS WITH NORTH SHORE LEADERS

## SUMMARY REPORT

THE NORTH SHORE IMMIGRANT INCLUSION PARTNERSHIP

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Funded by:

Financé par :



Citizenship and  
Immigration Canada

Citoyenneté et  
Immigration Canada

## CONTENTS

Executive Summary .....	3
Introduction .....	5
Engagement Synopsis.....	6
Themes Of Convergence .....	6
Themes Of Divergence .....	11
Next Steps .....	11
Appendix A – Notes From June 24 <sup>th</sup> West Vancouver Leaders’ Forum (Barriers).....	12
Appendix B – Notes From June 24 <sup>th</sup> West Vancouver Leaders’ Forum.....	13
Appendix C – Vision Boards – June 24 <sup>th</sup> Forum .....	15
Appendix D – Notes From September 16 <sup>th</sup> North Vancouver Leader’s Forum.....	17
Appendix E – Vision Boards – September 16 <sup>th</sup> Forum .....	26
Appendix F – Attendees – June 24 <sup>th</sup> Forum.....	28
Appendix G – Attendees – September 15 <sup>th</sup> Forum.....	29



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The North Shore Immigrant Inclusion Partnership (NSIIP) is the North Shore's Local Immigrant Partnership, a Citizenship and Immigration Canada-funded initiative, aimed at supporting the development of community-specific strategic plans to support immigrant and newcomer integration. NSIIP represents the City of North Vancouver, the District of North Vancouver and the District of West Vancouver, and the contract holder is the North Shore's immigrant settlement service provider, the North Shore Multicultural Society.

In June and September 2015, as part of a comprehensive engagement strategy, NSIIP engaged leaders on the North Shore to better understand their perspectives around the barriers, opportunities and future priorities that should be addressed in the Strategic Plan. The engagement with North Shore leaders was one of a number of engagements, which included employers, immigrants and service providers. Through the engagement process, a leader was defined as an individual who is well positioned to enact or initiate change. More than 40 North Shore leaders were engaged in the NSIIP Strategic Plan engagement process and they provided thoughtful, community-specific and experience-based feedback that will directly inform the Strategic Plan.

North Shore leaders recognized numerous barriers that immigrants face. Those that are most apparent to them are the complexity of Canadian systems, such as health care and government; housing affordability; recognition of foreign professional credentials; and lack of interaction with resident populations.

There is a clear recognition among leaders that lots of good work and meaningful programs are in place on the North Shore and they are having a positive impact in the lives of newcomers. There is also, however, a recognition that seeking opportunities for collaboration, communications campaigns,

promoting cross-cultural training and leveraging resources for translation, for example, can help North Shore-based organizations move beyond welcoming and move towards supporting inclusion.

Based on the input provided by North Shore leaders there are five broad priority areas which emerged. These include:

**Civic Education and Communications Campaign:** building awareness of how to access, participate and effectively navigate municipal, first responder and other community-based services.

**Sport and Recreation:** identifying opportunities to bring people together based on sport and fun.

**Events:** seeking proactive ways to be more inclusive at community events, increasing NSIIP presence at community events, and facilitating more ethno-cultural events.

**Representation:** recruiting and supporting immigrant representatives on Boards, committees, PACs and other community-based groups.

**Advocacy:** identifying issues and opportunities to engage their federal representatives to ensure they are well aware of the challenges and opportunities facing the North Shore.

These potential strategic priorities represent the input and perspectives of many North Shore leaders, however, it is important to note that this input needs to be considered in the context of input from other stakeholder groups so that strategic priorities are truly reflective of the entire engagement process, best practices and research conducted in support of the Strategic Plan.





## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the North Shore leaders' forums was to support the development of NSIIP's Strategic Plan. The goal was to work directly with the public and stakeholders on the North Shore, to collect information and receive suggestions so that NSIIP can develop a strategic plan that will improve settlement and integration outcomes for immigrants and support a more inclusive and prosperous North Shore for everyone.

The first North Shore leaders' forum took place on June 24, 2015 and was in West Vancouver. All 20 attendees represented West Vancouver and while the feedback was community-specific it was understood that all feedback would be consolidated and evaluated in the broader North Shore context. The second North Shore leaders' forum was held September 16, 2015 at the City of North Vancouver School District Conference Centre, with participants representing both the City and the District of North Vancouver. Organizations represented at the forums included:

- Elected officials from the municipality
- Staff from all three municipalities (including library staff)
- Staff from the two school districts
- One provincial MLA
- First responder services (including fire and police)
- Staff from Vancouver Coastal Health
- Representatives from the Parent Advisory Councils
- Candidates in the upcoming federal election (West Vancouver only)
- Leaders from the private sector (Park Royal)
- Community organizations

During the two-hour workshop, leaders were specifically asked to provide feedback on the following three areas:

1. Challenges and barriers to inclusion
2. What's working well and could be built on?
3. What should be the priorities for the Strategic Plan?

Contained within this report is a summary of the feedback provided. All notes and infographics have been included in the appendices and readers are encouraged to consult the appendices for direct input.



## ENGAGEMENT SYNOPSIS

Two North Shore leaders' forums took place; one on June 24 and another on September 16. More than 40 leaders participated and the format was consistent across both; however, in the second workshop there were more participants so in lieu of whole-group discussion the first two topics were discussed in small groups and then the discussion on priorities took place as a whole group.

The forums took place from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. and began with a welcome, brief introduction and overview of key census data and then an outline of the workshop format.

## THEMES OF CONVERGENCE

The following section outlines areas where there is convergence and, broadly speaking, consensus amongst leaders on the North Shore.

### Barriers and Challenges

While a multitude of potential barriers and challenges were identified by leaders, there was a consistent interest in better understanding of the immigrant's perspective on what the barriers and challenges really are. Based on their experience, they articulated a number of topics that they believe would pose a significant challenge to integration. Across both forums, there were five broad categories of barriers/challenges identified.

1. **Professional Credentials:** Recognizing that it is not within the scope of municipalities to support recognition of foreign credentials, leaders spoke of the challenge of having highly-skilled immigrants working in fields that are far below their level of education, skills and experience.

They articulated that not only did this increase the financial barriers to settlement, but that it also contributes to feelings of isolation and an inability to effectively settle.

2. **Affordability:** Directly linked to the barrier of professional credentials recognition is the barrier of affordability. The North Shore is not an affordable place to live and the reality is that many immigrants are facing significant financial burdens when it comes to settlement, supporting their family and often, supporting extended family in their country of origin.
3. **Perceptions of Government:** For some immigrants, the perception of government is that it is something to be avoided as it may be corrupt. Moreover, amongst some immigrant communities there is a perception that your neighbour might report you to “the government” for wrong-doing. As a result of this negative perception, immigrants may face challenges in navigating different government systems or bureaucracies and may avoid engagement with government. This may, in part, explain the lack of civic engagement, and limited representation on Councils, boards and committees by immigrants.
4. **Expectations of Canadian Processes/Systems:** First responders, health officials, school board officials and municipal officials all spoke about the challenge related to immigrant expectations of the “Canadian system”. For example, there is a strong belief that everything in the medical system is “free” and so there is confusion at getting a bill in the hospital or having to pay for prescriptions. Another example is a lack of appreciation for the quality and value of public schools as some immigrants perceive them as being poor in quality.
5. **Loneliness:** Participants recognized that not being racist is not the same as being inclusive. There were a number of discussions around the fact that people don’t generally say hello at the line-up in the grocery store, chit-chat at the bus stop or formally welcome you to the neighbourhood. A less outwardly welcoming community, coupled with language barriers, potential financial burdens and a misunderstanding of Canadian norms can lead to extreme loneliness.

For detailed notes on barriers and challenges, please see the appendices.

## What’s working well?

Building on what’s working well now, NSIIP asked North Shore leaders to take an appreciative inquiry approach, meaning to ask: How do we get more of what’s working?

Again, a wide array of feedback was collected and has been consolidated into five broad headings.

1. **Events:** Leaders recognize the strength and value in bringing people together for fun, food and enjoying shared passions. Whether it’s Harmony Arts in West Vancouver, the Shipyard Night Market in the City or the Summer Concert Series in Lynn Valley, leaders identified that vibrant, active and fun community events bring everyone together and that perhaps more could be done to support culturally-focussed events such as Caribbean Days.
2. **Libraries:** The Library Champions program was noted as a highly successful program aimed at promoting the library to newcomers. Building on the framework of that program, leaders asked what else could be done to support libraries as free, open, accessible and inclusive spaces in each

community. It was also suggested that the program be considered as a model that other institutions could adopt.

3. **School Districts & Parent Advisory Councils:** There are a number of programs in schools to support immigrant students and their parents. Moreover, PACs often have a welcoming ambassador who welcomes new families into the school community. In addition to programs, settlement workers in schools are a wealth of information and could provide greater insights into immigrant youth engagement and identifying the specific challenges and barriers they face.
4. **Collaborative Partnerships:** Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) has facilitated orientation workshops on the health care system in recreation and community centres. The purpose is to provide newcomers with an orientation to the health care system, including how to find a doctor versus when to go to emergency. By hosting the workshops in a recreation centre there is the opportunity to speak to health and wellness more broadly and communicate the various programs and services that are available in the community centre. By co-delivering workshops, presentations and outreach activities generally, the delivery is more streamlined and it makes it easier for newcomers to receive information. In addition, many participants spoke of the good work being done by the North Shore Multicultural Society and sought to learn from them and leverage their existing programs, including the tours of municipal hall.
5. **No or low cost opportunities for inclusion:** It was recognized that many immigrant women do not feel comfortable swimming with men. Because of this, an under-utilized time in the pool was identified and a women's-only swim session was identified and promoted. The women's-only swim has become a popular session at the pool with both immigrants and established residents. By seeking out opportunities to achieve diverse needs, win-win solutions can be identified at no or limited cost.

For detailed notes on what's working, please see the appendices.

## Priorities for the Strategic Plan

In identifying priorities, there is a delicate balance that needs to be struck. On one hand, the North Shore is comprised of three unique communities, each with their own immigrant and established resident community profile, challenges, opportunities and hot-button issues. On the other hand, NSIIP is developing one Strategic Plan to serve the entire region. This means that priorities need to provide value and return on investment to each community. The list below articulates the priorities that North Shore leaders articulated and on which we believe there would be broad consensus.





1. **Civic Education and Communications Campaign:** A two-way education and communications campaign targeting immigrants and the receiving community. The focus would be on identifying areas of priority – likely to include municipal affairs, first responders and health – and developing a campaign to provide information to immigrants on how to navigate the system and the resources they need. The campaign would be developed in collaboration and would seek opportunities to deliver outreach and communications initiatives in collaboration. In addition, a secondary campaign would be developed to myth-bust and provide fact-based information to the receiving community. The information would include who is settling in their community, the value of effective settlement, things they can do to make immigrants feel welcome and other fact-based resources to support the receiving community.
2. **Sport and Recreation:** The power of sport, fun and recreation was identified as an area that could be expanded. At the far end of the spectrum was the dream of bringing a soccer or other sports team to the North Shore. At the other was keen interest in having community centres and recreation facilities, such as the Gleneagles Golf Course, reach out to immigrant communities in a targeted way. The important role of leisure-access counselors was identified as was the need for more resources for such portfolios. “We all need more Vidas” (a leisure-access councillor in the District of North Vancouver).
3. **Events:** As identified earlier in this report, the opportunity that community events present is significant in that they are an informal, fun and usually free way of bringing people together. Leaders support events and, specifically, are interested in exploring opportunities to expand cultural events as well as conduct direct outreach to immigrant communities to encourage their

participation. In addition, leaders support a more active NSIIP in being present and participating in events in order to distribute information and be accessible to all community members.

4. **Representation:** A proactive and active campaign, or commitment, to recruit and support immigrant representatives on Boards, committees, PACs and other community-based groups was identified as an important step in engaging the broader immigrant community. If immigrants don't see their interests being represented on Council, or the Police or Library Boards, why would they engage? North Shore leaders support efforts that could be undertaken to diversify the representation on community boards and councils.
5. **Advocacy:** While there is a very clear recognition that immigration is under the jurisdiction of the federal government, North Shore leaders want to ensure there are clearly identified issues and opportunities to engage their federal representatives to ensure they are well aware of the challenges and opportunities facing the North Shore. Particular topics of interest include funding for settlement services as well as work being done to expedite recognition of foreign credentials.

The areas identified above are general in nature and will require that both a regional and community approach are considered when it comes to implementation.

## THEMES OF DIVERGENCE

Often during an engagement, areas of divergence or polarized perspectives arise. This was not the case during the engagement of North Shore leaders. There was generally broad consensus and a keen interest on the part of leaders to learn directly from immigrants so they better understand the challenges and opportunities immigrants face.

In lieu of divergence, there is likely one area where there are different realities and that is around the economic reality of immigrants and how this plays out differently in West Vancouver versus the City of North Vancouver (less so the District of North Vancouver).

In West Vancouver, many immigrants are affluent and temporary. They have invested in property, their children may be attending private school and the economic realities for many (not all) are that employment, foreign credentials and integration are not a priority or a necessity. This is not as commonly the case in the City of North Vancouver. The challenge of affordability, having credentials recognized, and working towards saving for a home may be a more likely reality. The issue of class and economic self-determination becomes a variable that can, in some instances, minimize the challenges faced by affluent, investor immigrants.

This uniqueness is not universal between the two communities, as there are immigrants facing economic challenges in West Vancouver and conversely affluent immigrants in North Vancouver. However, it is a unique factor worthy of consideration when it comes to implementation of specific strategic initiatives.

## NEXT STEPS

During the fall and winter, NSIIP will complete its engagements and begin to develop its Strategic Plan, which will be completed by early spring 2016. The Strategic Plan will be supported with an implementation plan that will serve as the work plan for the NSIIP membership.

The goal of the engagement was to involve stakeholders early and often and this will remain the goal through implementation, monitoring and reporting on activities and achievements.

The Strategic Plan will be in place from 2016 to 2019 and will work to directly, positively support effective settlement on the North Shore so that immigrants are able to achieve success in their new home and so that the receiving communities are socially and economically resilient for years to come.

## APPENDIX A – NOTES FROM JUNE 24<sup>TH</sup> WEST VANCOUVER LEADERS' FORUM (BARRIERS)

- Inclusion vs. being included
- Govt offices are not safe places; you don't leave govt office
- Make info available in public places; in non-English lang.
- Foreign credential recognition; arduous task.
- Fear of the unknown; lack of acceptance; understanding cities is complex; do I need to love trees?
- Lots of emphasis on how long you live here
- Children without parents or just one; left alone in houses; alone in big houses
- Large lots; hard to know your neighbour
- Restrictive - 2003 - convent; perception of the idea West Van resident; to be within the inner circle better be born here (WASP)
- Boards do not equal community demographics
- Norooz permits; enforcement of permits = calls of discrimination
- Existing housing stock being replaced with affluent houses
- Built environment is changing
- English speaking people define the reality for the parents
- Media attention of housing stock
- Concepts of volunteerism (Dollar sign and 'not equal to' sign next to the words)
- Type of people immigrating - are they invested? Do they want to integrate?
- Children want to integrate; parents are ok with it?
- Increase in purchasing private lessons (e.g. private swim/skate)
- Students - how long do you plan on being here? Increase in transient population; might not be that long-term
- Need to integrate? Self sufficient
- Man-out of town; woman - doesn't work out of the home; lang. is a barrier. Hard to move beyond 4 walls
- We can only do so much; school system (challenge of ESL in est. classes)
- Neighbours don't connect. Portable in BP/break-down physical barriers
- Language
- Affordability

## APPENDIZ B – NOTES FROM JUNE 24<sup>TH</sup> WEST VANCOUVER LEADERS' FORUM

### 1. What are the top three priorities NSIIP should focus on for making West Vancouver more inclusive?

#### Group 1

- a. Employment – credentials recognition/transferable, city – between residents & immigrants
- b. Relations – Finding common ground – values are the same internationally
  - o Safety
  - o Education
  - o job security
  - o healthy environment
- c. Better representation in public/civil service/b&s/clees/politics

#### Group 2

- a. Advocate for federal gov't to provide more \$ in communities per capita/immigrant
- b. Focus on children of recent immigrants – volunteers – joins teams

#### Group 3

- a. Advocate for more Fed funding & immigrant \$ that goes with the person within the community, English Language Learning, the Hub, etc.
- b. Reaching kids -> families through kids
- c. Focus Group / Committees -> kids give surveys to parents or through library champions – kids ask the questions
- d. Celebrate other cultures/educate ourselves
- e. Copy SUCCESS – ask SUCCESS what we could be doing differently

#### Group 4

- a. Build on your successes; focus on the people you can reach & are interested
- b. Communicate the issues, the opportunities & the organization; educate the community, the info bias to be where the newcomers are
- c. Work on language; two ways – English <-> other language

#### Group 5

- a. More resources to be pour into a)adult language learning b) school classroom K-12 “ELE” aides
- b. More thought to creating and operating community hubs as we rebuild West Vancouver - A town planning/real estate challenge
- c. “Success” teams or programs; exploit immigrant parents -> strong desire for their children to learn enough and western culture for their kids' long-term success

#### Group 6

- a. Build on your successes to reach deeper into the community.



## 2. What do you think are a few ideas worth pursuing?

### Group 1

- a. Outreach from recreation facilities e.g. Ambleside & GE golf courses to newcomers

### Group 2

- a. More “hubs”
- b. Welcome to WV booklet to be distributed through the immigrant children and NSIIP (in 2-3 languages other than English).

### Group 3

- a. More hubs
- b. Balanced appts to Committees, Boards, etc.

### Group 4

- a. No comments

### Group 5

- a. Get some of all that immigrant \$ settlement Federal funding flowing disproportionately to Quebec!

### Group 6

- a. No comments

## 3. If there was only one thing NSIIP could achieve it should be...

### Group 1

- a. Share what it means to live in W.V. but also celebrate other cultures overtly -> two way street
- b. Use community Day, Coho, Harmony Arts, and Municipal Hall

### Group 2

- a. 100% connections with every new immigrant family

### Group 3

- a. Break down us & them
- b. Not afraid of change
- c. Better mix of housing
- d. To be able to make an initial connection with every new family

### Group 4

- a. Expose the organization

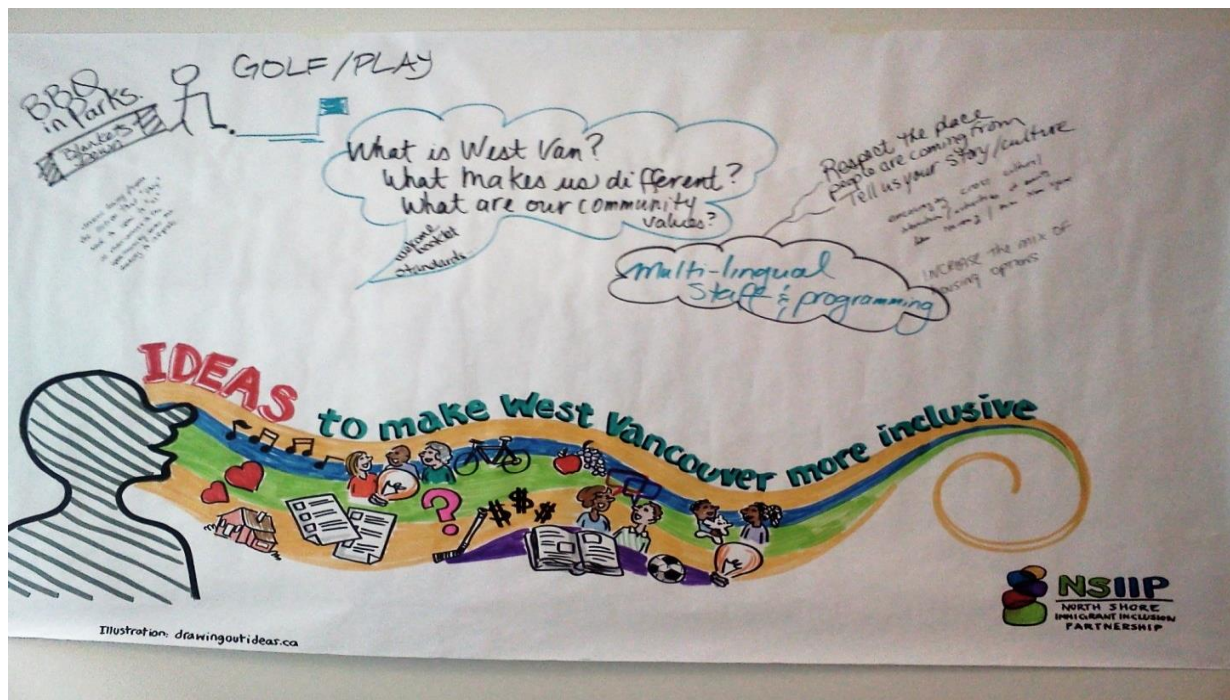
### Group 5

- a. Copy “success” they have preceded in immigrant settlement

### Group 6

- a. More exposure of NSIIP in the community

## APPENDIX C – VISION BOARDS – JUNE 24<sup>TH</sup> FORUM





For me, an **INCLUSIVE** west Vancouver looks like....



current **SUCCESSES** we could build on include....



## APPENDIX D – NOTES FROM SEPTEMBER 16<sup>TH</sup> NORTH VANCOUVER LEADER’S FORUM

What are the current challenges and barriers to an inclusive North Vancouver City and District?

### Group 1

- Language, housing, health, education, etc.
- Barriers to professional entry: law, physicians
- Body smell – kids smell different from food, etc.
- Social stuff – language, embarrassment, making friends
- Navigating systems – advocate for themselves
- Public health: moms and kids, moms isolated with kids, social groups
- Education around necessity of immigration. Balance of aging population
- Housing affordability/cost of living
- Lack of places
- Soft skills/hard skills for employment
- “ethical dissonance” – how you negotiate
- Different gender roles/expectations
- How to make sure we have representation at leadership/committees, etc.
- Push back from change in community (i.e. new houses)
- Unable to talk about fears
- Insular culture on the North Shore. Lack of connection. Urban planning issues.
- Transience

### Group 2

- Not knowing what they don’t know. People come from various cultural places and don’t know how it is here. Don’t know what questions to ask. Very vulnerable place to be; those of us who are here don’t realize they don’t know what questions to ask
- How would new people know about various facilities? I.e. not knowing that our public schools are good because they have other ideas. Couldn’t find information. Each immigrant has different perspective.
- Navigating systems and services
- On a whole we all make assumptions; generally we aren’t good communicators
- Two-way barriers, two-way lack of understanding - assumptions
- Language barriers and misunderstandings
- Don’t know how to ask the right questions or how to interpret; also, what do we forget that we know in order to help others navigate
- There are barriers the host community’s peoples are experiencing on how to receive.
- What part can we in the host community play to facilitate an immigrant to be more successful
- How do immigrants get to understand the nuances
- We (the hosts) are in denial of our racism and prejudices because we don’t know enough about other cultures

### Group 3

- Immigrant education is not recognized. People having to do university/college degrees all over again; Lack of opportunities to practice in field immigrant was training in. Has big impacts on ego, self-esteem
- Language piece is huge; ESL challenges
- Loneliness. People feeling lack of social connection
- Don't understand the school system. Don't understand that they're welcome to come in the classrooms and talk with the teachers. Some just drop the kids at the door and leave because that was the norm in their previous country
- Lack of universal accessing to municipal services. Municipalities challenged to provide services in other languages. Concern about raising expectations on this.
- Differing views on the role of local government. Different perceptions of police services (e.g. police are to be feared)
- Perception that people don't want to be included. Lack of friendly banter between people in public places (e.g. lining up at the grocery store, etc.)
- Trouble understanding the culture, adapting to the culture
- Immigrants struggle with the fact that no one talks to each other on the street – unlike in their country of origin
- Some newcomers are given bad advice by friends and family. Some encouraged to pretend they have qualifications when they don't (e.g. hair salon training). Easy to figure out when someone isn't being honest about their level of training. Makes host community suspicious of other newcomers.
- Newcomers having false expectations of how easy it will be for them to find work before they arrive here.
- Differing perceptions between host community and newcomers about how social newcomers want to be. Locals complain that immigrants don't want to socialize with them while newcomers complain that North Van is a hard place to make social connections. Not as social as “back home.”
- Citizens not accepting immigrants; people making nasty comments (“North Van has become Little Iran”); citizens don't embrace multiculturalism (although this is changing with youth. Parents find that kids don't describe their friends by country of origin)
- Perception that newcomers are here to take advantage, that they're a burden on society.
- Immigrants who want to bring dependents who have disabilities have a hard time with this. Canada should be accepting of whole families, not exclude people with disabilities.

#### Group 4

- English language skills, especially as they relate to understanding and accessing health services
- Healthcare understanding and expectations; e.g. many newcomers have a very limited understanding of the range of healthcare services available to them
- Lack of understanding of how healthcare is paid for; in some countries, there are costs associated with the provision of health care; e.g. doctors are given a “tip” and if you are on a limited budget, you may avoid accessing healthcare
- We deliver information in a “passive” way; the user has to be “active”
- Needs for all kinds of services may be greater here than in home country as they are without the support of family, friends, etc.
- Mainstream programs and services (community centre delivered services) may not be meeting the needs and interests of newcomers
- The costs of services and the costs of getting to services (transportation)



- Some businesses owned by new immigrants are bothered when a female health inspector is conducting the inspection
- Costs and time required to get credentials assessed
- Assumptions and stereotypes of many cultures still exist
- A lack of representation of different cultural groups in decision making position e.g. boards, committees, etc.
- We focus a lot on efficiencies when sometimes we need to spend a little more time with an individual or a family

## Group 5

- Expectations of healthcare; understanding of healthcare system, mis-alignment of expectations is a challenge amongst immigrant communities. They believe Canada is FREE healthcare and so they are confused that not everything is free and they might have to pay for some things.
- There is a lack of understanding of how to access the medical system. For example, please will call 911 for a sniffle and they will say it's an emergency and fire shows up and what they really need is a walk-in clinic.
- Financial barriers – immigrants can end up with a bill for \$25K, and they assume it's all free.
- VCH has a service to where you can get a translator for a call, but this service is rarely used. Typically the family is used as translators. Within the family there is generally no discussion around costs.
- A challenge is in engaging immigrants/newcomers in civic affairs. For example, some Chinese simply avoided the government and their neighbours because their neighbours could be snitches for the government.
- Many newcomers only want to engage with the Mayor, they have no time for staff. They Mayor can get them a job, solve their problem, find housing, etc...
- There is limited understand of how municipalities work and it is so different around the world that it's very confusing.
  - How does City hall work? Why do I need a permit for something?
  - People are intimidated to ask
- In Vancouver, immigrants often only trust family, not neighbours, there is no sense of community or that we are all in this together.
- Communications with large strata units where it is known immigrants live have resulted in limited uptake. For example, in North Van District, 5 of 500 residents responded to an online survey.
- Communications on occupancy, load, bylaws, "the rules" is challenging as some immigrants ask why?
- How do we recruit diversity (fire)? There is not a common understanding of first responders or what they do.
- There is a lack of cross cultural training, including challenges with gender equality in the workplace. Relations between men and women is different across cultures. For example, the Squamish Nation has had to develop an HR policy around equality.
- Cultural integration and common understanding of medical/health care services is unique across all cultures. For example, cultural preferences for C-section (North Shore has some of the highest rates) even when the health outcomes are better for vagina deliveries.

- Historically, the issue of sex-ing ultrasounds was an issue in immigrant communities which VGH has had to manage. This is not a mainstream issue, but still exists particularly when the doctor is from the same ethnic community.
- Children are increasingly becoming westernized, while the parents are considered old country.
- How to this place feel like home? We need to move beyond tolerance.
- For many ethnic communities pride is in the ability to welcome other people so if they can't welcome people (for lack of resources) this is very challenging.

#### Group 6

- Education about role of police – police aren't trusted in many other countries, so immigrants have a fear of calling the police. Also a distrust of government and other organizations seen as "arms" of the government. Needs to be education on this
- Language. Also, cultural differences. We go to safety, go to what we know, so we exclude without meaning to (both sides)
- Lack of acceptance in receiving community – cultural differences, values, income levels, relative prosperity, fears of jobs being taken by immigrants
- Barriers to employment can be lack of "presentation skills" or soft skills in addition to language barriers. In many countries, only the resume and technical skills speak to qualifications. In Canada, we learn soft skills – team player, presenting yourself well, eye contact, positive attitude, friendliness, enthusiasm. If you have only the hard skills that's not necessarily going to get you the job.
- Lack of understanding that it's OK to push up against regulations in Canada. It's OK to be a squeaky wheel a little, it's OK to express your ideas
- In some cultures, male children are seen as higher priority than female and males can be made to feel they can do no wrong. They assume a priority in every situation and may rebel, turn to crime, if that doesn't happen. Some immigrant families will go to great lengths to protect sons.
- Lack of education/information for immigrants to know what's expected of them in terms of integrating. Also cultural expectations – shaking hands, smiling, etc.
- Recognition of foreign qualifications/training/education
- Some population groups are stronger/have more numbers on North Shore than others. Immigrants from some cultures may have to go to another Lower Mainland city to get culture-specific support/networks
- Education on part of receiving community; having a better understanding of immigrants; more empathy for their experience/situation

## What's working well?

### Group 1

- Moving in the right direction!
- NewtoBC
- Good efforts. Lions Gate has Farsi speaking staff.
- Lots of collaboration at the service provider level
- Build on partnerships – communicate out more
- Build on communication
- NSMS is doing amazing work. Having one integrated centre works. More immigrants to seek service here.
- Get a dog! People will talk to you!
- Community spaces – nodes and hubs. Libraries. Rec centres.
- Use school facilities better. Closer to core. Use off-times
- Integrate immigrant centre into Harry Jerome
- Schools celebrate multiculturalism. Kids love to celebrate those differences
- Build on relationships with faith groups
- Volunteer opportunities – ways to get involved
- Awareness of committees where people can be introduced – help facilitate involvement through more personal approaches. Go beyond resumes.
- Leverage the so engaged immigrant youth.

### Group 2

- Have an amazing, strong social service network and non-profits
- 2 PACs have a volunteer welcome coordinator who welcomes new people
- Public spaces, playgrounds and libraries are working as well as anything. Build on these to use them more
- Build on relationships
- Build confidence
- Library champions is successful. Having programming like this helps build confidence and can work in any sectoral setting
- In schools: buddy programs
- Take advantage of immigrants who've been here a long time to do a blog /website of tips for new immigrants to tap into
- Instill more of a sense of community and going out of the way to say something
- Creating safe places for people to go (e.g. block parties)
- Community building grants
- Thinking about creative different options to connect and think about how open things are to create a space for connection
- Food is a great connector

### Group 3

- Tsleil Waututh collaborated with Western Arts Alliance on Cultural Arts Festival. Lots of great cross-cultural sharing at this event. Need more events like this where people can acknowledge each other's different traditions and have these kind of transactions.
- Create more opportunities to share each other's backgrounds, cultures.
- More festivals that bring people together (e.g. Caribbean days, Filipino festival)
- More celebrations that blend cultures (e.g. Scottish dancers at a Chinese festival)
- Leverage the Friday night market
- Leverage opportunities to bring people together over food and music
- School district holds multicultural evenings at schools. Families invited to bring different dishes from their home countries. Good way to bring school community together and kids are proud to share their dishes.
- Recognize religious events
- Ambassadors (e.g. PAC ambassadors, health ambassadors)
- More information, training, education on other cultures for teachers, citizens
- Small things help. E.g. offering a cup of coffee to someone can break the ice.
- Need more education on benefits of immigration. Positive statistics about refugees paying loans back, contributing to the economy. Myth busting.
- Schools better at creating an expectation that parents and kids should share their cultures and participate.
- NSNH speciality workshops are good.
- Leverage reconciliation work being done by First Nations. Do community presentations with break-out groups where people across cultures can share their different stories and struggles and acknowledge each other. Reconciliation work is making Canada a better place to be for everyone, including immigrants.
- Leverage opportunities to bring diverse people together over common subjects (e.g. parenting workshops). Need more venues where people can come together to discuss common issues. Kids are good ice breakers.
- Strong Start Centres a great example
- Use schools as hubs for events. Use rec centres
- Organize more festivals. Seek corporate sponsorship for this.
- "Slide the City" was a great event. Leverage this.
- Neighbourhood block parties. Encourage these with municipal grants.
- Create opportunities to break down shyness between people.
- Create opportunities where people can feel comfortable asking questions of each other (e.g. why do you wear a head scarf?)

### Group 4

- New immigrants are more willing to accept vaccinations than Canadian born. Not sure why but perhaps many have seen more illness or results of not being vaccinated or have not had the luxury of questioning vaccination.
- Group members felt their organizations – Parks Commission and its facilities and the healthcare system / hospital had good cultural representation within staff groups

- The array of free and low-cost services offered at community centres
- Vida and the work she does as the Leisure Access Coordinator – she assists newcomers to determine what might be the best programs and services for them to participate in and then assists them to navigate the system of registration, enrolment, etc.
- Women-only swim times (although many women who might participate are not aware that this is available)
- The translation of community services information into 8 languages (although they have run out of print copies and haven't done anything about that...)
- It was suggested that we assist ethno-cultural groups to come together to support each other. It was observed that these groups can be very helpful but may need assistance with space, promotion, etc.
- We talk about the role of community centre and libraries in bringing people together but we don't talk enough about it and how important these "community connections" are to people, perhaps especially for newcomers
- There was an 8-week cultural competency online training to assist people to better understand and serve aboriginal clients (in Sask. I think). It was suggested that something like this (although shorter) might be a good thing. It was also suggested that this training doesn't try to train people on all cultures but identifies the largest communities and presents information on their history, culture, language, ways of being, journey to Canada / North Shore, etc. It was then raised that we also need to make bigger efforts to ensure newcomers are aware of Canadian values and our culture and our ways of being.

#### Group 5

- North Shore Multicultural Society providing tours to city hall, more work to provide education and awareness around municipal government.
- Providing written material in non-English language (wayfinding in hospital)
- Building on events. For example, Friday night markets at the Quai and building on the I love our City campaign at the City of North Van.
- Having cultural events and encouraging diverse participation
- Immigrants love pools and parks – ex. Making a time for a women only swim so they feel comfortable is a good thing and has been popular.
- Reaching out to churches and other religious groups as they have a strong link to their community.
- Find connectivity through housing and employers
- Fire hall tours are always available, but usually its only school kids that go.
- Distribute information through realtors, pharmacists and doctors.
  - In the Middle East the pharmacist is like the doctor and has a trust relationship with his clients.
- Leverage translation costs across the three municipalities and school boards.
- Community engagement committee of VCH – CEAN – could be a usual avenue to engaging newcomers.
- Community forums on health care being delivered in community centres.



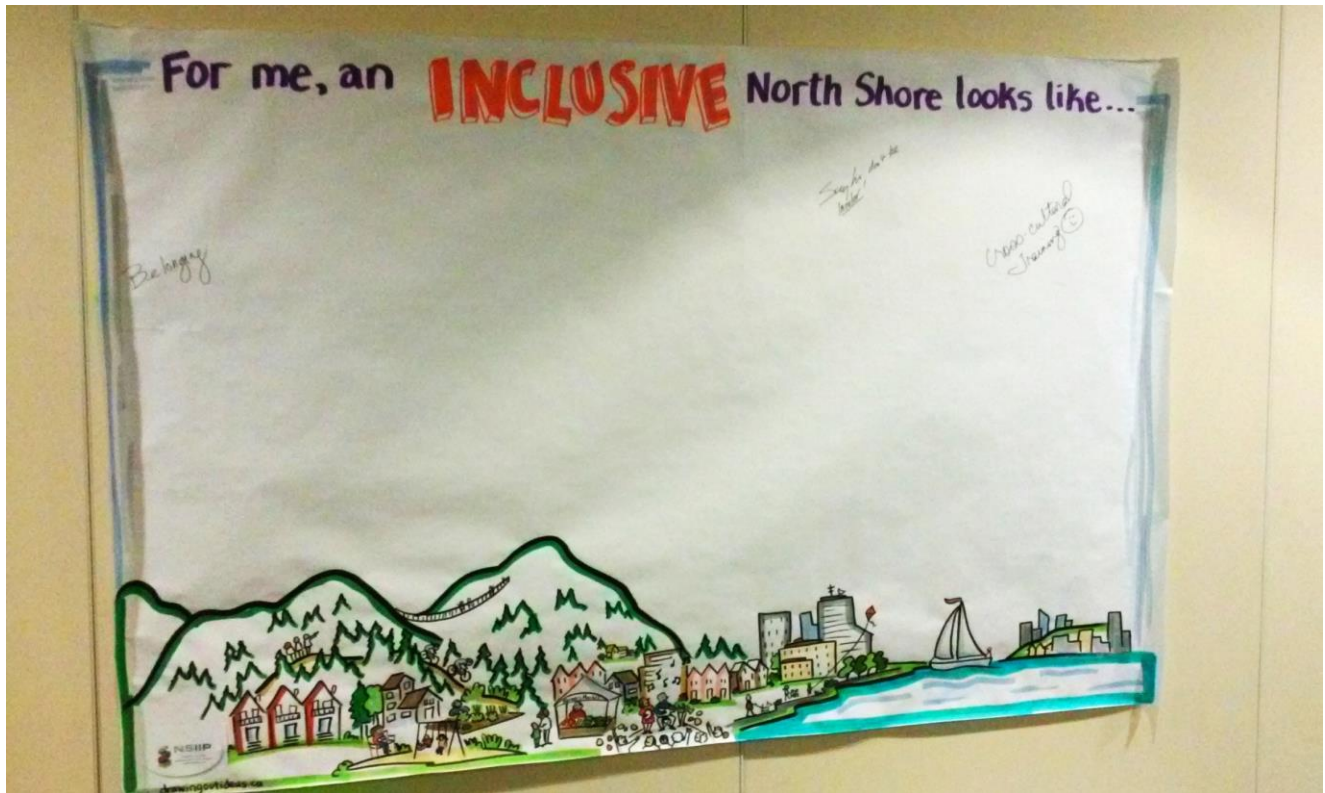
## Group 6

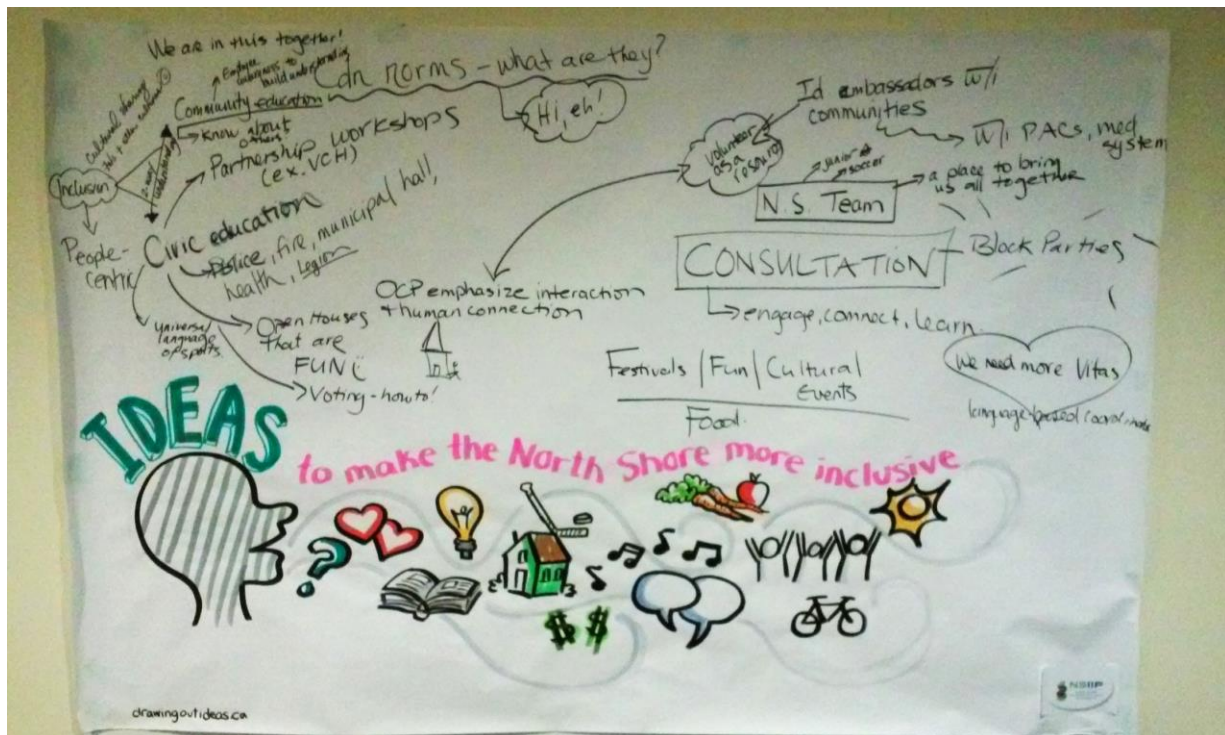
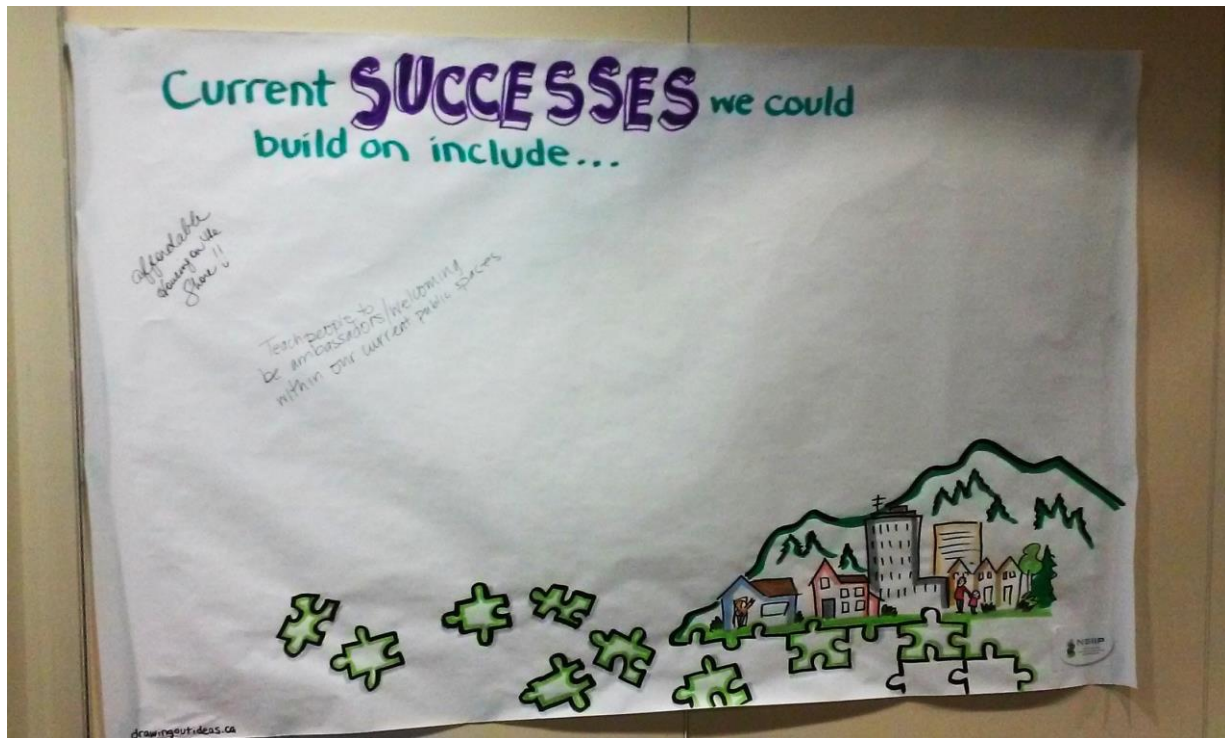
- MOSAIC language service – used by police
- Cross-cultural forum for community leaders that was hosted by the RCMP. That worked, but has to be continuous because always new people coming
- Services through the multicultural society and employment centre to provide one-on-one help for those who are job seeking
- Recreation and sports activities on the North Shore. The opportunities are huge and encourages newcomers to join. Sport is a shared language.
- Networking through the Chamber. But not everyone is comfortable with going up to a stranger and introducing themselves. What else could we create for people who are introverts and maybe don't want to go to a traditional networking event?
- Neighbourhood associations, block parties, etc. Those things seem to work. People don't avoid it if it's going on right outside their house
- About two years ago the welcoming committee organized dinners and events at different businesses. They connected immigrants, employers, community members; it was also social
- Ethnic festivals such as the Iranian Festival in West Van. More support for those so they are inclusive to everyone from the start.
- Street festivals. Heritage Days in Edmonton is a huge festival where every culture is represented. Someone could organize something like that along Lonsdale.
- Leverage the Friday night markets
- Education forums. Definitely need more education on both sides.
- Churches do a lot in terms of encouraging and welcoming people
- Don't know what's happening in schools, but there should be inclusion programs. Maybe a cultural dinner at the school level where everyone brings a cultural dish.

### What are the top 3 priorities? What should NSIIP include in its strategic plan? (Whole group)

- Education – for instance, on policing. Teach them police are trustworthy and about the services we can offer
- Expectations – Canadian norms, cultural things (again, education)
- Consultation – talking to people, telling them where they can go for things
- Ambassadors – identifying and/or training people who can be a human resource. Can be identified in schools, medical system, post-secondary education, etc
- Interaction – the OCP of the City and District both emphasize building communities where people interact. We are already doing that – needs to continue and expand.
- Civic education – big open houses that are meant to be fun where you find out about services that are available, how to vote, etc. Look to Burnaby and other places for a model already in place; also Vancouver Coastal Health did workshops about healthcare system
- Sports – use the universal language of sports to bring people together
- Festivals/block parties/food/Friday night market – culturally diverse events that get people mingling
- Just say “hi” – greeting people on the street, in the grocery store; starting casual conversations with whoever
- Cultural education – learning more about each other; municipal and school board employee sessions on cultural training. More knowledge = more acceptance, understanding, success
- More counsellors/system-navigation staff/helpers – more people like Veda, the leisure access counsellor, who can be called upon if you need help navigating the system. Staff members who have the mandate to take time with people, understanding immigrants and their needs. Could be put in place in libraries, city hall, etc.
- Central gathering place AND a team to cheer for – let’s get a Junior A franchise and a big new arena. A place and a sport we can all identify with on the North Shore.
- The Legion – legions are floundering, so maybe they could get involved in welcoming immigrant

## APPENDIX E – VISION BOARDS – SEPTEMBER 16<sup>TH</sup> FORUM





## APPENDIX F – ATTENDEES – JUNE 24<sup>TH</sup> FORUM

1 <sup>st</sup> Name	Surname	Organization
Rick	Amantea	Chamber of Commerce
Delaina	Bell	West Vancouver Community Foundation
Arletta	Beckett	Manager, Community Development, Youth and Families
Jenny	Benedict	West Vancouver Memorial Library
Mary-Ann	Booth	West Vancouver Councillor
David	Carter	West Vancouver Memorial Library, co-Chair
Christine	Cassidy	West Vancouver Councillor
Mark	Chan	Director of Lands, Bylaws, First Nations and Legal Affairs, West Vancouver
Tony	D'Angelo	Deputy Fire Chief, West Vancouver
Sheelah	Donahue	Trustee, District 45
Nora	Gamboli	West Vancouver Councillor
Len	Goerke	West Vancouver Police Chief
Larry	Koopman	NDP federal candidate
Pam	Goldsmith-Jones	Liberal federal candidate
Kristi	Merilees	Manager Community Relations, West Vancouver
Jeff	McDonald	Director, Communications, West Vancouver
Jack	McGee	West Vancouver Police Board
Stephen	Mikich	Manager of Community Planning
Sheryl	Rasmussen	West Vancouver Community Centre Society
Ralph	Sultan	Member of Legislative Assembly, West Vancouver- Capilano



## APPENDIX G – ATTENDEES – SEPTEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup> FORUM

1 <sup>st</sup> Name	Surname	Organization
Cara	Pryor	North Vancouver City Library
Linda	Buchanan	Councillor, City of North Vancouver
Paul	Penner	Community Planner, City of North Vancouver
Mark	Lysyshyn	Medical Health Officer, North Shore
Louise	Ranger	CEO, North Vancouver Chamber of Commerce
Holly	Back	Councillor, City of North Vancouver
Heather	Turner	Director of Recreation
Barbara	Kelly	North Vancouver District Library
Cyndi	Gerlach	Vice-Chair of Board of Education, School District No. 44 - North Vancouver
John	Lewis	SD 44 - Superintendent
Ben	Themens	Director of Finance
Barry	Forward	School District No. 44 - North Vancouver
Mairi	Welman	Manager of Strategic Communications and Community Relations
Jean	Bennet	Dean, Faculty of Education, Health & Human Development
Darrell	Mussatto	Mayor, City of North Vancouver
Megan	Higgins	School District No. 44 - North Vancouver
Randy	Marquardt	Operations Support Officer, North Van RCMP
Ian	Bateson	North Vancouver City Library Trustee
Richard	Walton	Mayor, District of North Vancouver
Wayne	Kennedy	Deputy Fire Chief, District of North Vancouver
Cristina	Rucci	Social Planner, District of North Vancouver
Christie	Sacré	School Trustee, School District No. 44 - North Vancouver
Amanda	Nichol	North Vancouver School District PAC Chair
Mike	Nader	Chief Operating Officer, Vancouver Coastal Health
Robin	Hicks	Councillor, District of North Vancouver
Deborah	Baker	Councillor, Squamish Nation
Charlene	Aleck	Councillor, Tsleil-Waututh Nation
Vera	Radyo	President, North Shore Multicultural Society
Sarah	Dal Santo	Senior Planner, City of North Vancouver
Neila	Bazzarai	Vancouver Coastal Health