



## Sharing information on VLIP as we progress through our planning stages and promoting information for the formation of welcoming and inclusive communities.

This newsletter connects service providers and VLIP members with information on the status of the Partnership, and aims to promote community resources, events and initiatives that support the creation of a welcoming and inclusive Vancouver.

Please circulate widely.

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### UPDATE ON STRATEGIC PLAN & EVALUATION

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#### Where we started

We hit the ground running with the finalization of our team in early January and our first events, VLIP Open House *and* the 1<sup>st</sup> VLIP Council Meeting finished by the end of February. We've already had 3 council meetings, one in February, one in April, and one at the beginning of June.

It's been a fast-paced, exhilarating first two quarters of the year so far. With support from the City of Vancouver and past VIP members, we've been able to work towards honouring the legacy that City of Vancouver built with VIP, while also utilizing planning, evaluation, and analysis techniques available through strategic planners Vantage Point, and evaluators, LevelUp, to assist us in our endeavor to improve VLIP from its precursor and make large-scale change in our community more impactful.

#### Where we're at

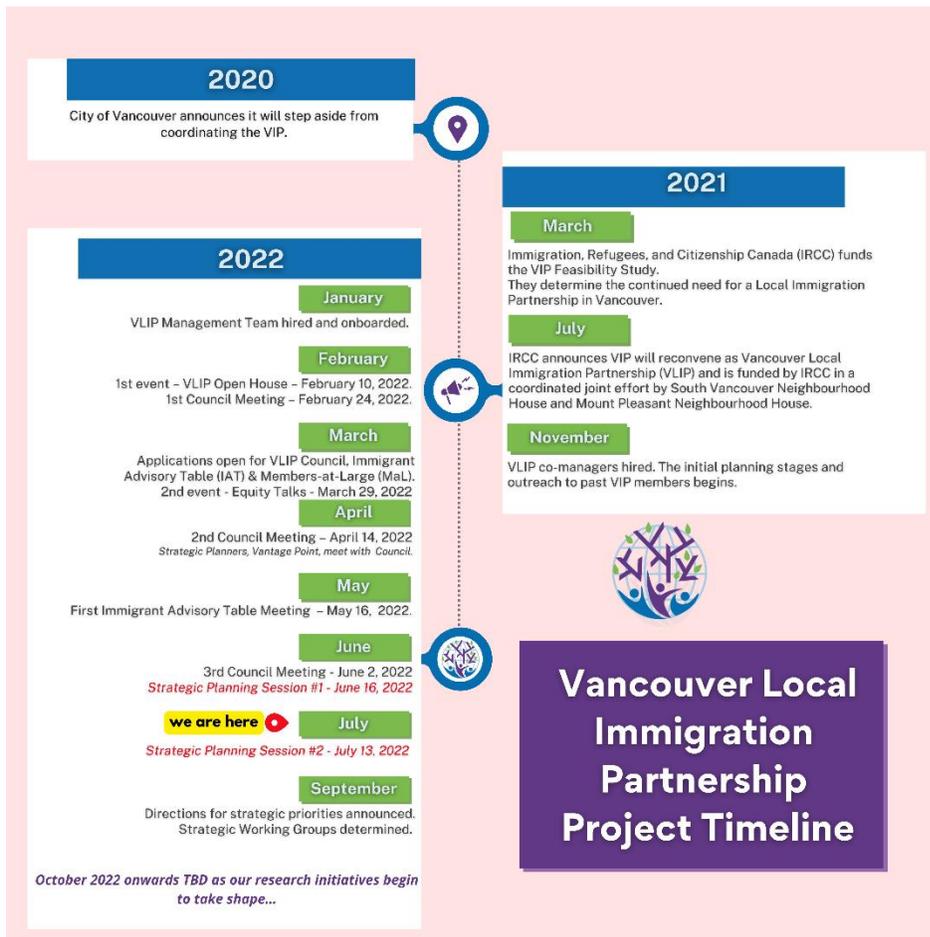
We're currently right in the middle of the strategic planning and evaluation processes. We're running an evaluation of the VLIP in conjunction with our strategic planning to maximize the effectiveness of our iteration of the Partnership. We want to make sure we do our due diligence in carrying over the best

parts of VIP, while working to remove the friction and barriers to success faced by the previous group by completing an evaluation at the same time.

To ensure the highest standard of intersectional, anti-oppression, and equity frameworks in our work, VLIP hired two separate organizations – one for *strategic planning*, and one for *evaluation*.

Strategic planners, *Vantage Point*, met the VLIP Council at the second Council Meeting on April 14, and met with the Immigrant Advisory Table at their first meeting on May 16. We are currently in **Phase 1** of our Strategic Plan.

Evaluators, *Level Up*, met with the VLIP council on June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Strategic Planning Sessions 1&2 have now been carried out by Vantage Point.



More detailed minutes of these meetings are available to members via our mailing list, or by reaching out to one of our co-managers noted in the footer portion of this newsletter.

We are currently in **Phase 1** of our **Evaluation**.

Thanks to the VIP Feasibility Study funded by IRCC and conducted by independent consultants, and the first few VLIP meetings where we've had opportunities for feedback, **we've been able to take some immediate actions** to

improve our Partnership all-around.

The formation of both the **Immigrant Advisory Table (IAT)** and the **Members-at-Large (MaL)** are action items taken by VLIP based on feedback from the group previously known as VIP.

### Where we're going

We won't have a definitive picture of where we're going until we've finalized our strategic plan as this will guide the direction of our work as it continues in the future.

We anticipate a report from Vantage Point around the beginning of September. Once available, we will use this report as a starting point for discussions as we work towards finalizing the Strategic Priorities and Strategic Working Groups.

With those initiatives and groups finalized by the Fall of 2022, we are hoping we can end the year with some research initiatives and priorities set for us as we head into January 2023.

Thanks for your patience as we work towards building a stronger, better Vancouver, through an improved, responsive Vancouver Local Immigration Partnership.

With gratitude,

Koyali Burman & Nova Chamberlin

Co-Managers, Vancouver Local Immigration Partnership

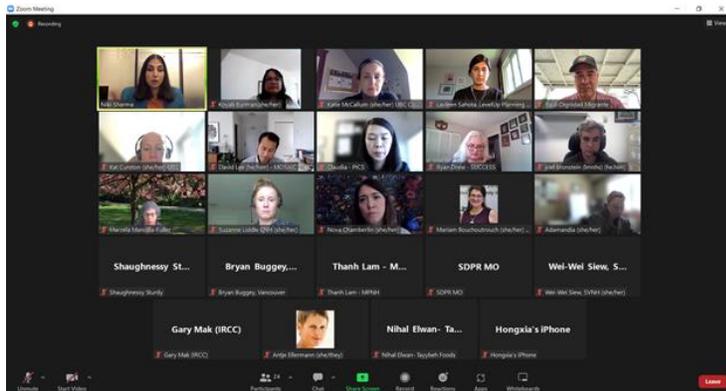
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## A WORD FROM PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND NON-PROFITS

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On June 2, 2022, we were lucky to have Parliamentary Secretary for Community Development and Non-Profits, Niki Sharma, join us for our VLIP Council Meeting. She gave the VLIP Council an information-filled presentation with some updates from Parliament on the work they're doing to support non-profits.

The non-profit sector is significant, adding \$6.7B to the economy every year. It keeps 86,000 of British Columbians employed. The non-profit sector was hit by the pandemic in ways different to other organizations. And the pandemic made it clear to the government: non-profits need an advocate in parliament with a specific role in government where someone is directly advocating for non-profits.



Niki received her mandate and hit the ground running. She learned how BC's non-profits are impacted by COVID, and through that, she met with other non-profits across the province. She found similar issues across organizations despite different mandates. Issues like higher operating costs, insecurity around fundraising and not knowing where fundraising is going to come from, and disruptions to service delivery are

commonalities among organizations, despite the range in services delivered and participant demographics.

Longer-term issues have also arisen regarding the government being a good partner to the non-profit sector. How they give out grants and what admin burdens most non-profits face, in addition to listening, learning, and communicating better are all things the government is reevaluating as they work to understand the needs of non-profits, and what they can do to be better partners.

BC becomes a home for many people. It is the most diverse province in Canada. Over 40,000 new immigrants are welcomed into BC each year.

We had the highest immigration rates across Canada. People are even coming here and settling from other parts of Canada, and multiple displacements and violence around the world mean that BC has become a home for many people leaving that behind.

To support with the waves of people coming into BC from war torn countries across the globe, the provincial government recently announced \$15M in new funding over the next two years to help BC settlement and integration services. Part of that work is specific to settlement organizations to address the needs arising out of their community. For example, anti-racism work.

Recently in parliament, they introduced the *Anti-Racism Data Act*, which is the first of its kind in Canada. It helps address appropriate data collection to help identify gaps in government services, and show how and where systemic racism and colonial bias show up in government programs.

This will help them evaluate the gaps in areas like awarding grants and making sure they are not perpetuating the racist and colonial history that has been embedded in our systems since their creation.

The government recognizes that part of optimizing their relationship and partnership with the non-profit sector means understanding and acknowledging, in a real way, how reliant they are on non-profits to address community needs where they fall short or can't act fast enough.

As Niki Sharma said, "Community resilience is so important. It's the measure of how we respond to crisis. It doesn't happen overnight. It's built up through the steady hands of many people over time. Non-profits help build that resilience.

The work non-profits do is quietly weaving the social fabric of our communities. We rely upon that in a time of crisis and need.

As a society, we're all in this together. Together we can build a society that can face these challenges. One that is compassionate, inclusive, and sustainable."

Thank you, Niki, for taking the time to speak with us.

Note for readers: you can check out [this link](#) for more information on the new funding.

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## VIP ARCHIVES ARE LIVE!

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If you're ever looking for research and information from our precursor, VIP, make sure you check out the Resources section on our website. Under the [Resources](#) tab, you will be able to find the VIP website archive [link](#).



This portion of our newsletter highlights the human perspective behind the Partnership. VLIP Community Corner is committed to supporting and amplifying the voices of our member organizations – Immigrant Advisory Table Members, Council Members, and Members-at-Large. And once they’re formed, this is where you will find fresh perspectives from the strategic working groups.

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## WHAT’S NEW IN THE VLIP COMMUNITY?

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**July 2022**

PeaceGeeks is excited to announce their Arrival Advisor app is now available in Ukrainian and Farsi.

Newcomers to BC can now read all the basic information to start their journey in Canada in ten languages – for free and anonymously (this means no sign-up is required!). They can also search for public services nearby, and bookmark topics and services for later reading!

Find out more at [peacegeeks.org/arrival-advisor](https://peacegeeks.org/arrival-advisor).

We are pleased to welcome 6 new Council Members and 2 new Members-at-Large. New Council Members are:

- Dignidad Migrante Society
- BC Francophone Immigration Network
- Hastings North Business Improvement Association (BIA)
- Prometric LLC
- Simon Fraser University (Centre for Dialogue)
- Strathcona Business Improvement Association (BIA)

New Members-at-Large are:

- PeaceGeeks
- UBC International House

Welcome to our team! We are so thrilled you’re here to make social impact with us! 🤗



This July we asked members of our *Immigrant Advisory Table* for their reflections on being in Canada this Canada Day 2022. Special thanks to Alemu Nenko and Maggie Mak for hearing our call and sharing their journeys with us.

### **Alemu Sekora Nenko**

For my family and me, being in Canada means an ideal place on Earth. That is not necessarily because I came from Ethiopia, which has been ruled by successive repressive regimes for more than three decades and is one of the poorest countries in the world. Certainly, it is not because Canada is one of the richest nations. Yet again, as a social science student, I fully understand that neither the social history of Canada was perfect, nor today's Canada is free of challenges.

Then, why is Canada an ideal place on earth?

I have two main reasons.

First, by learning from its own mistakes and the mistakes of other countries, Canada has shown slow but consistent progress in terms of attaining social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. So many developed nations have shown faster progress than Canada. Unfortunately, almost all of them have shown regress, and politics of anti-diversity, anti-equity, and anti-inclusivity are on the rise almost everywhere in the western world. In my view, that is why we should be grateful for being in Canada, where efforts of achieving social JEDI have been in progress for decades.

Second, being in Canada, we still have a window of opportunities to strive for more improvements in social JEDI. That is mainly because we have institutions that support changes, and a vast majority of Canadians firmly believe in equality for all human beings irrespective of their backgrounds. Further, Canadians do not often buy into polarized politics like other western nations. As a result, there is still a level playing field to advocate for collective progress toward making Canada a more ideal place on earth.



### **Maggie Mak**

Happy Canada Day!

It was my second Canada Day in Canada.

This day has another meaning for me because July 1st is also Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Establishment Day. I think it reflects what this day means to me by being in Canada. I love Canada and I am proud and honoured to be able to live, work and enjoy the nature and diverse culture and food on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəṅəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

As a newcomer, I am very grateful and blessed for all the opportunities and amazing encounters with wonderful people in Vancouver, Toronto and Calgary. Meanwhile, as a Hong Konger, this day reaffirms my identity and my hometown, which is the root of me and my family. I always remember that I shall not take things and freedom here for granted. I truly believe it is valuable to keep the balance between working towards Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (REDI) and maintaining your own identity. At the same time, as a person who loves diverse cultures, I would love to continue learning about different cultures and nourishing my cultural humility in this beautiful country.

On Canada Day, I had a fabulous time with my family and friends. We went to Emma Lea Farms to pick strawberries. I learnt about the long history of the farm while enjoying the sunshine with the sweet smell of strawberries. I also went to Tsawwassen Mills and then had a hotpot at my friend's home at night. My friends are newcomers from Hong Kong too. We talk about the challenges and blessings we experienced in Vancouver. We shared our feelings and experience as temporary residents in a new country. That includes surprise, insecurity, satisfaction, confusion, freedom, frustration, and support.

We also celebrated our growth and strengths as we walked through those good and bad days.

*We are also doing different things to assist and support recent newcomers from Hong Kong in regard to increasing Hong Kong immigrants arriving in Canada.*

I am eager to learn (new things), unlearn (old beliefs or norms) and grow like saplings. Support from social networks is like the sunshine which facilitates our growth. Moving forward, I would love to connect HKers with the local community and people from multi-cultural backgrounds and that is also one of my aspirations of joining IAT.

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## UPCOMING EVENTS AROUND VANCOUVER

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Summer in Vancouver is the best. And this summer is no exception! Check out all these awesome events happening in Vancouver this summer right in our own backyard.

DATE	TIME	EVENT	LOCATION	CITY
July 7 - 17	11AM – 10PM	Greek Summer Festival	4541 Boundary Road	Vancouver
July 15 - 17	12PM – 11PM	Vancouver Folk Festival	Jericho Beach Park	Vancouver
July 16	10AM -2PM	Multicultural Connections	TD Community Plaza	Coquitlam
	11AM -5PM	Chinatown Festival	106 Keefer Street	Vancouver
July 16 - 17	10AM – 9PM	African Descent Festival	Thornton Park	Vancouver
Jul. 23-25	11AM – 10PM	Surrey Fusion Fest	Holland Park	Surrey
Jul. 23-24	10AM-8PM & 11AM-7PM	Caribbean Days Festival	Town Centre Park	Coquitlam
Jul. 23, 27, 30	10PM	Honda Celebration of Lights	English Bay	Vancouver
Jul. 30 – 31	11:30AM – 7PM	Powell Street Festival	Oppenheimer Park and area	Vancouver
Jul. 31	12PM – 7PM	Jamaica Day Festival	Holland Park	Surrey
Aug. 28	1PM – Dusk	Chariot Festival and Parade	Creekside Park/Science World	Vancouver

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## IN THE NEXT ISSUE

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You've met our most recent additions to the council, but have you met the whole Partnership? Our next issue will highlight all the members that make this Partnership possible.

That's it for this edition of the VLIP Newsletter! Stay tuned for our next issue, coming out the week of **September 12, 2022.**

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