



**The Regional Municipality of Durham**

**Committee of the Whole Revised Agenda**

**Wednesday, February 12, 2025, 9:30 a.m.**

**Regional Council Chambers**

**Regional Headquarters Building**

**605 Rossland Road East, Whitby**

If this information is required in an accessible format, please contact 1-800-372-1102 ext. 2097.

Note: This meeting will be held in a hybrid meeting format with electronic and in-person participation. Committee meetings may be [viewed via live streaming](#).

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	<b>Pages</b>
<b>1. Roll Call</b>	
<b>2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest</b>	
<b>3. Statutory Public Meetings</b>	
There are no statutory public meetings	
<b>4. Presentations</b>	
4.1 Elizabeth Roy and Allison Hector-Alexander, Co-Chairs, Durham Local Immigration Partnership (DLIP) Council Re: Durham Local Immigration Partnership 2025-2030 Community and Inclusion Plan (2025-COW-6) [Item 7.2]	5
4.2 Erin Valant, Director, Housing Services Division Re: At Home in Durham Update and Overview of Community Housing History	17
<b>5. Delegations</b>	
5.1 Emma Cunningham, Durham District School Board Trustee, Pickering (In-Person Attendance) Re: Motion regarding Protecting Canadian Values: Ban the Nazi Swastika in Canada (Item 8.2)	
5.2 Richard Robertson, Director of Research and Advocacy, B'nai Brith Canada (In-Person Attendance) Re: Motion regarding Protecting Canadian Values: Ban the Nazi Swastika in Canada (Item 8.2)	

- 5.3 Richard Robertson, Director of Research and Advocacy, B'nai Brith Canada (In-Person Attendance)  
Re: Motion regarding Combatting Antisemitism and Protocol for Reporting Non-Criminal Acts of Hate (Item 8.1)
- 5.4 David Larmour, Lead Pastor, King Street Community Church (In-Person Attendance)  
Re: Motion regarding Protecting Canadian Values: Ban the Nazi Swastika in Canada (Item 8.2)
- 5.5 David Larmour, Lead Pastor, King Street Community Church (In-Person Attendance)  
Re: Motion regarding Combatting Antisemitism and Protocol for Reporting Non-Criminal Acts of Hate (Item 8.1)
- 5.6 Josh Landau, Director, Government Relations, Ontario, Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (In-Person Attendance)  
Re: Motion regarding Protecting Canadian Values: Ban the Nazi Swastika in Canada (Item 8.2)
- 5.7 Josh Landau, Director, Government Relations, Ontario, Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (In-Person Attendance)  
Re: Motion regarding Combatting Antisemitism and Protocol for Reporting Non-Criminal Acts of Hate (Item 8.1)
- 5.8 Sari Watson, Resident (Virtual Attendance)  
Re: Motion regarding Protecting Canadian Values: Ban the Nazi Swastika in Canada (Item 8.2)
- 5.9 Sari Watson, Resident (Virtual Attendance)  
Re: Motion regarding Combatting Antisemitism and Protocol for Reporting Non-Criminal Acts of Hate (Item 8.1)
- 5.10 Rabbi Tzali Borenstein, Director, Chabad Jewish Centre of Durham Region (In-Person Attendance)  
Re: Motion regarding Protecting Canadian Values: Ban the Nazi Swastika in Canada (Item 8.2)
- 5.11 Rabbi Tzali Borenstein, Director, Chabad Jewish Centre of Durham Region (In-Person Attendance)  
Re: Motion regarding Combatting Antisemitism and Protocol for Reporting Non-Criminal Acts of Hate (Item 8.1)
- \*5.12 Denise Boudreau, Resident (In-Person Attendance)  
Re: Motion regarding Combatting Antisemitism and Protocol for Reporting Non-Criminal Acts of Hate (Item 8.1)
- \*5.13 Ira Walfish, Resident (Virtual Attendance)  
Re: Motion regarding Combatting Antisemitism and Protocol for Reporting Non-Criminal Acts of Hate (Item 8.1)

*5.14	Ira Walfish, Resident (Virtual Attendance) Re: Motion regarding Protecting Canadian Values: Ban the Nazi Swastika in Canada (Item 8.2)	
*5.15	Sam Eskenasi, Director of Advocacy, La'ad Canada (Virtual Attendance) Re: Motion regarding Combatting Antisemitism and Protocol for Reporting Non-Criminal Acts of Hate (Item 8.1)	
*5.16	Sam Eskenasi, Director of Advocacy, La'ad Canada (Virtual Attendance) Re: Motion regarding Protecting Canadian Values: Ban the Nazi Swastika in Canada (Item 8.2)	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Correspondence</b>	
6.1	Correspondence from Gillian Venning, Trustee Services Coordinator, Durham District School Board Re: DDSB Board of Trustees' Statement of Support for Combatting Jew Hate  Recommendation: Refer to Consideration of Motion regarding Protecting Canadian Values: Ban the Nazi Swastika in Canada (Item 8.2)	41
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<b>9.</b>	<b>Confidential Matters</b>	
9.1	Report #2025-COW-8 Confidential Report of the Commissioner of Social Services – Closed Matter with respect to information explicitly supplied in confidence to the	

municipality or local board by Canada, a province or territory or a Crown agency of any of them, regarding Capital Projects submitted under the Last Mile Funding Program

**10. Adjournment**

Notice regarding collection, use and disclosure of personal information:

Written information (either paper or electronic) that you send to Durham Regional Council or Committees, including home address, phone numbers and email addresses, will become part of the public record. This also includes oral submissions at meetings. If you have any questions about the collection of information, please contact the Regional Clerk/Director of Legislative Services.





# 2025-2030 Community and Inclusion Plan: We All Belong Here

Durham Local Immigration  
Partnership (DLIP)



# Overview of the DLIP and its role

- LIPs are a mechanism to develop partnerships and community-based planning around the needs of newcomers and residents
- There are over 80 LIPs across Canada and over 30 in Ontario.

Program activities include:

Coordination  
and  
collaboration

Capacity  
strengthening

Community  
building and  
engagement

Data and  
research





# Durham Humanitarian Response Program

- The DHRP is the Region's emergency resettlement response offering temporary accommodations and wraparound supports for asylum seekers.
- The DLIP assists with the delivery of the Durham Humanitarian Response Program (DHRP) in collaboration with Social Services and Community Development Council Durham (CDCD) by:
  - Coordinating supports and services for the DHRP
  - Overseeing the program's data collection and analysis
  - Participating in intergovernmental discussions to monitor policy and program changes related to the asylum seeker response



# Immigration in Durham

- In Durham, 28% (192,600 people) of Durham's total population are immigrants.
- Ajax has the highest percentage of immigrants with 42.7%, followed by Pickering with 37.3%, and Whitby with 28.4%. Brock has the lowest with 8.2%.



# Immigration in Durham

- In 2021, approximately 47% of immigrants in Durham arrived through the economic admission category, followed by 35% under family reunification, and 16% as refugees.
- More than 65% of recent immigrants to Durham are of core working age (between 25 to 54 years old). The overall labour force participation rate of immigrants in Durham is 60.7%.
- 62.8% of immigrants in the region have a post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree, compared to 53.5% of non-immigrants in Durham.





# 2020-2024 Durham Immigration and Inclusion Community Plan

## Pillar 1: Economic Prosperity

- Developed a local Employer Toolkit, containing information and resources related to immigration and settlement in the workplace and in the community.

## Pillar 2: Service Coordination

- Continued to maintain and enhanced the Durham Immigration Portal.
- Developed and disseminate program development and planning tools (service maps, resources, measurement tools, etc.).
- Co-ordinated, conducted and disseminated local research.
- Delivered a Best Practices Forum.
- Co-ordinated a Funder's Forum.
- Developed and disseminate an e-Newsletter with a focus on the needs of community partners.

## Pillar 3: Community Belonging

- Co-ordinated the Newcomer Advisory Table.
- Developed and implemented a regional anti-discrimination awareness campaign.
- Co-ordinated community events that promote public discourse around immigration, diversity, equity and inclusion.



# 2025-2030 Community and Inclusion Plan Pillars

**1**

**Champion Collective  
Action**

**2**

**Build Inclusive  
Communities**

**3**

**Embrace Innovation and  
Responsiveness**

# Community Plan Pillars

1

## Champion Collective Action

Create long-term change in systems and institutions in Durham Region, highlighting immigration and settlement challenges, advocating for solutions, and mobilizing resources, partners and institutions to act.

### Actions

We mobilize data, research and insights on immigration and settlement

We raise the profile of the LIP and its partners

We advocate for better access to core services and infrastructure



# Community Plan Pillars

## 2

### Build Inclusive Communities

Create a supportive, inclusive and welcoming environment where newcomers are empowered to connect, contribute and thrive by amplifying their voices, fostering meaningful relationships and enabling access to services that meet them where they are.

#### Actions

We amplify newcomer voices

We foster community connections

We celebrate newcomer successes

We enhance service navigation

# Community Plan Pillars

3

## Embrace Innovation and Responsiveness

Continue to be recognized as a trusted and forward-thinking partner, known for quickly adapting to emerging needs in the settlement sector and innovating to meet the needs of both our partners and Durham's immigrants.

### Actions

We implement innovative solutions

We remain responsive to SPOs and community partners

We adapt to the shifting immigration landscape

We advance capacity and service coordination in the settlement sector

# Conclusion/Next steps

- The Community and Inclusion Plan will be launched this Spring.
- The Plan will be a blueprint for the DLIP and community partners to continue their collaborative work focused on improving the settlement journey of newcomers.
- The DLIP will report annually to Regional Council on the progress of the Community Plan and DLIP activities.



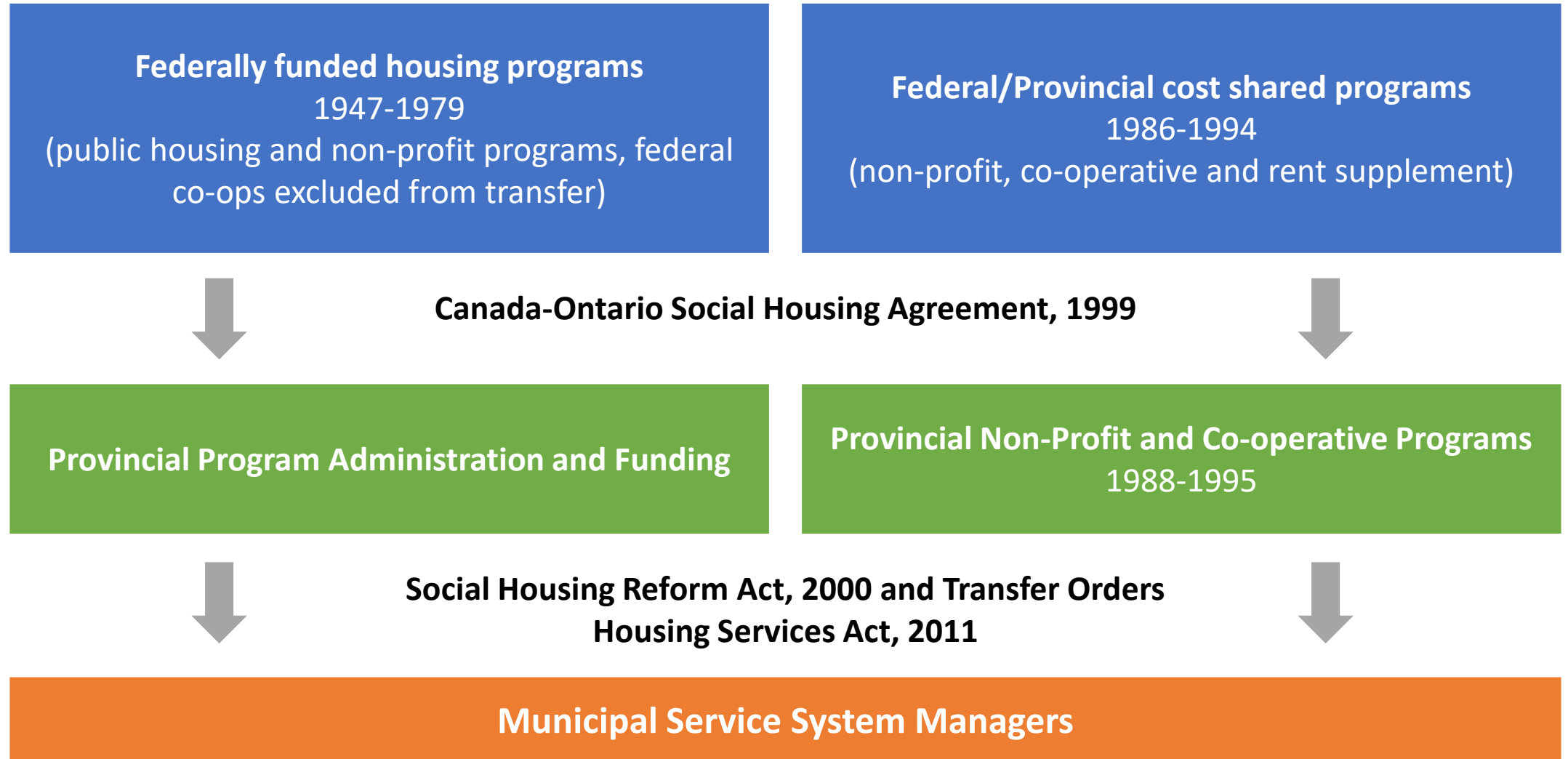
**Thank you.**



## Housing Services

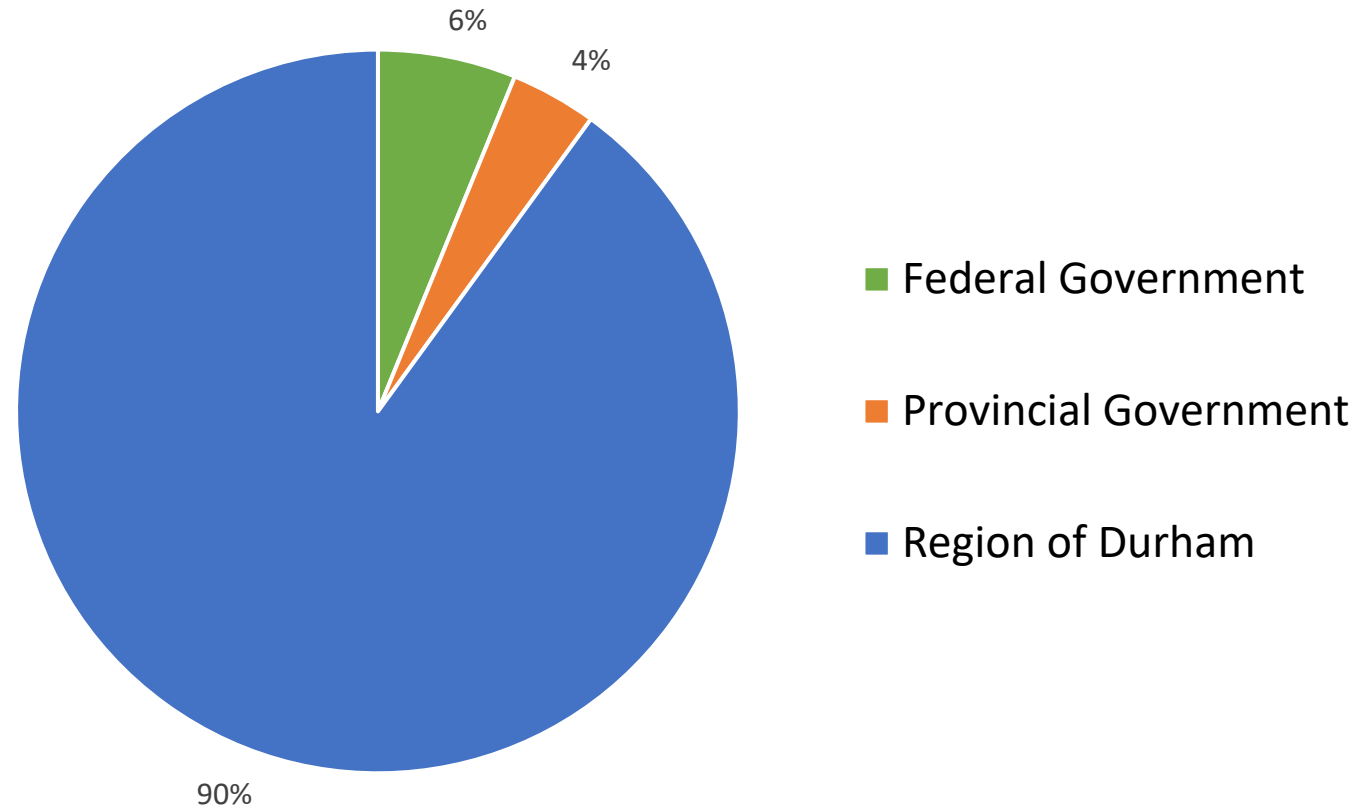
Overview of Community Housing history and update on the development of the new 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan

# Devolution of Community Housing



# Community Housing Funding Through Devolution

Service Managers are the primary funders of Community Housing



# Role and Responsibilities of a Service System Manager



Funding Administration



Monitoring & Reporting



10 Year Housing & Homelessness Plan



Centralized Waitlist (DASH)



Administration of Housing Programs

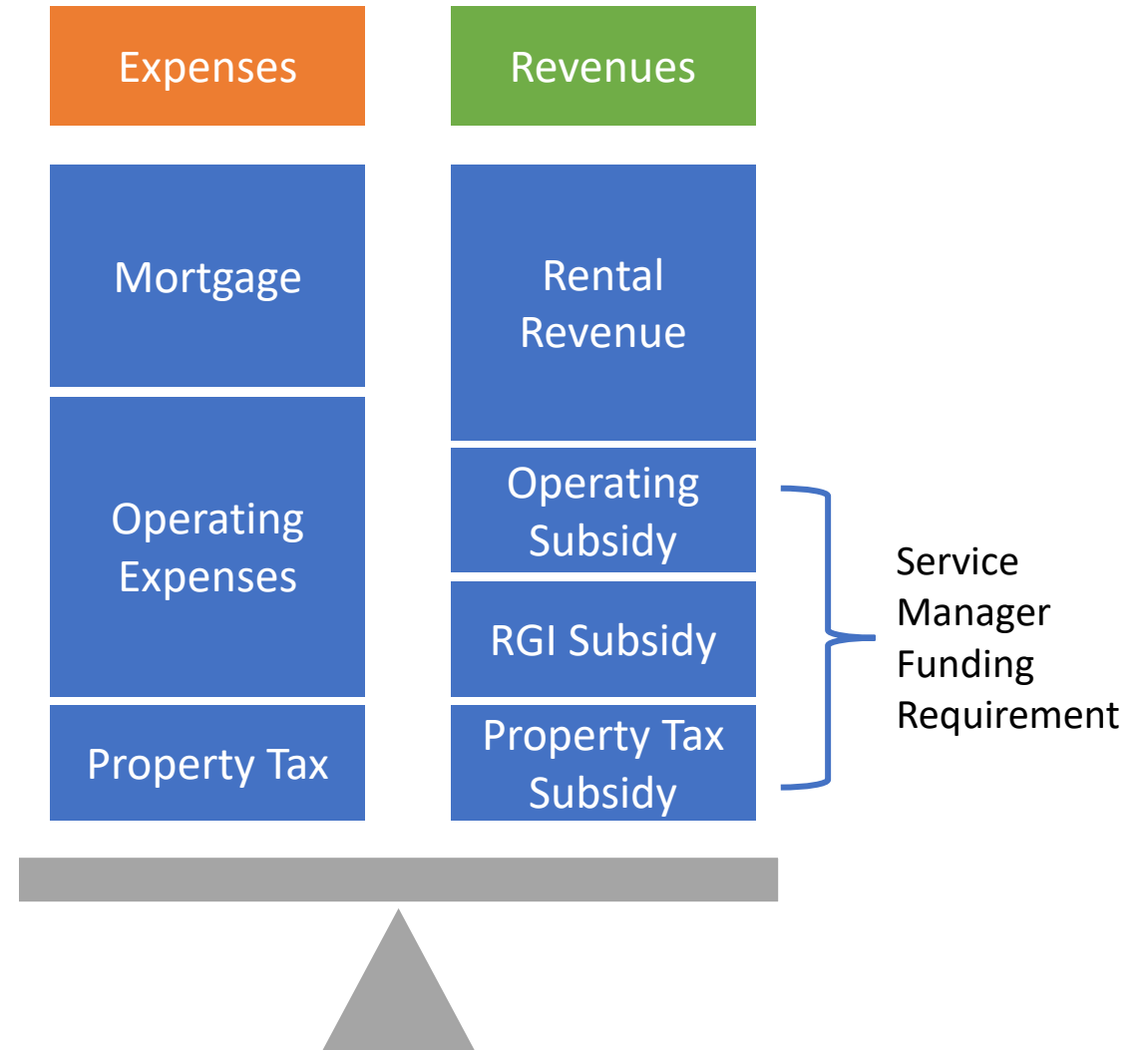


Durham Regional Local Housing Corporation

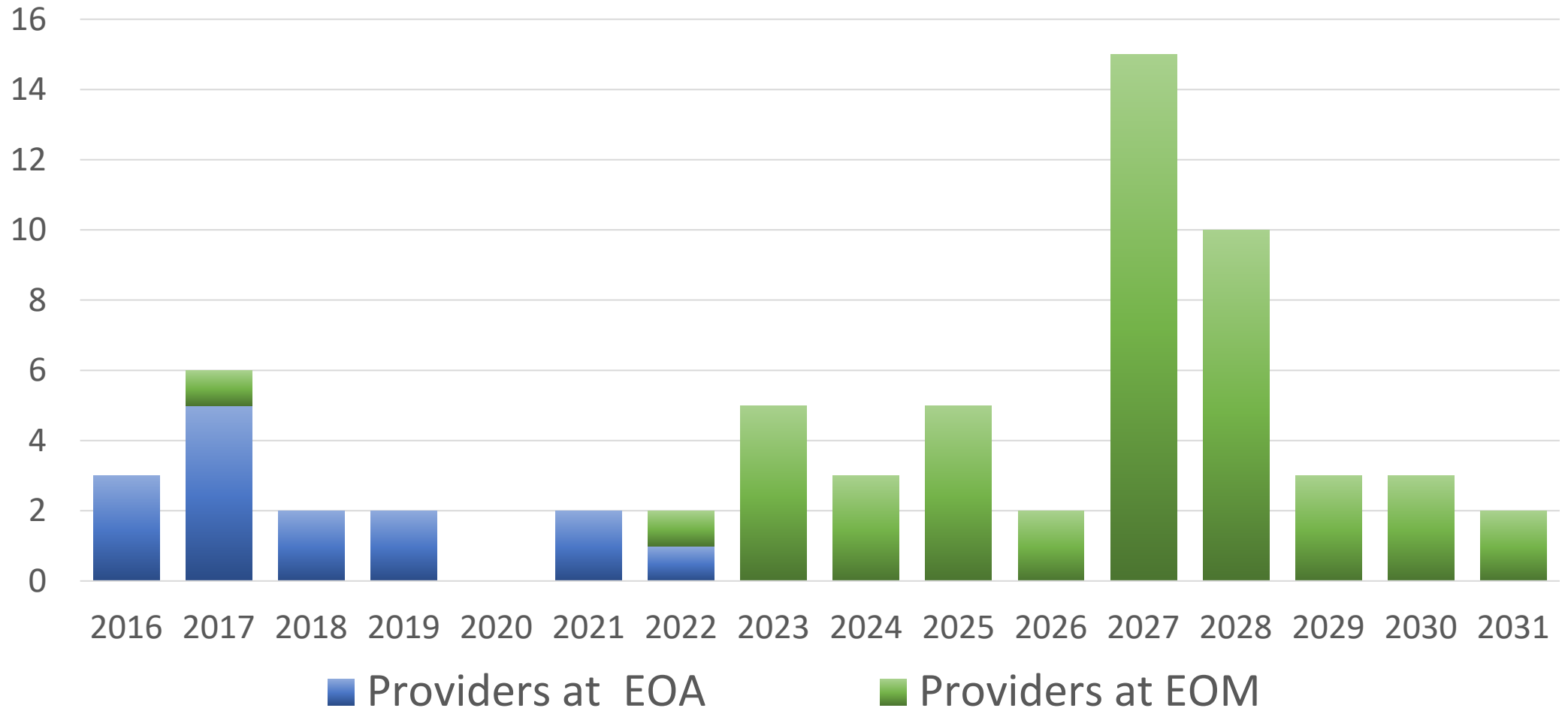


# Housing Services Act Funding Model

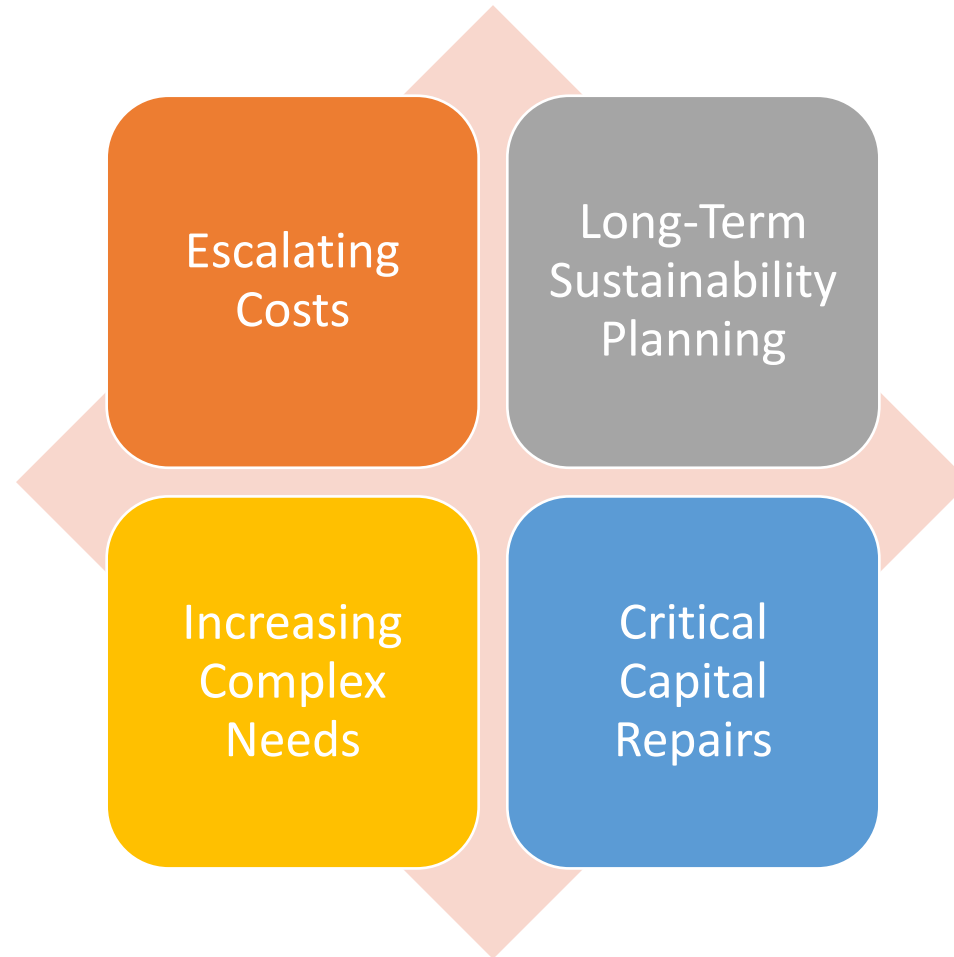
- Operating Subsidy: Economic gap between benchmark revenue and costs (including mortgage)
- Property Tax Subsidy: Flow through of property tax
- Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) Subsidy: Difference between 30% of income and the lesser of the benchmark rent or actual rent



# Projects Reaching End of Operating Agreements (EOA) and End of Mortgage (EOM)



# Community Housing Sector Pressures



# Priority Areas as Service System Manager





# **At Home in Durham: Update on the Development of the New 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan**



# At Home in Durham 2014-2024 Wrap Up

## End Homelessness in Durham

- Creation of the Regional Street Outreach Program
- Creation of the Durham Region Integrated Homelessness System Plan
- Increased Shelter Capacity by >95 beds

## Affordable Rent for Everyone

- Creation of the At Home Incentive Program (AHIP)
- Creation of the Durham Portable Housing Benefit
- Initiated ~903 New Affordable Units\*

## Greater Housing Choice

- Increased Transitional Housing by 100 units
- Creation of the Affordable Housing Development and Renewal Division
- DRLHC Revitalization

## Strong and Vibrant Neighbourhoods

- Increased Community Housing Tenant Supports
- DRLHC Energy Retrofits & Upgrades
- New Framework for Community Housing

# Study Background



## Context Setting Summary\*

Outlines roles and responsibilities within the housing system, the policy framework in Durham, and effective practice research completed



## What We Heard Report\*

Details the engagement conducted, who was reached, and what was learned to inform the Plan



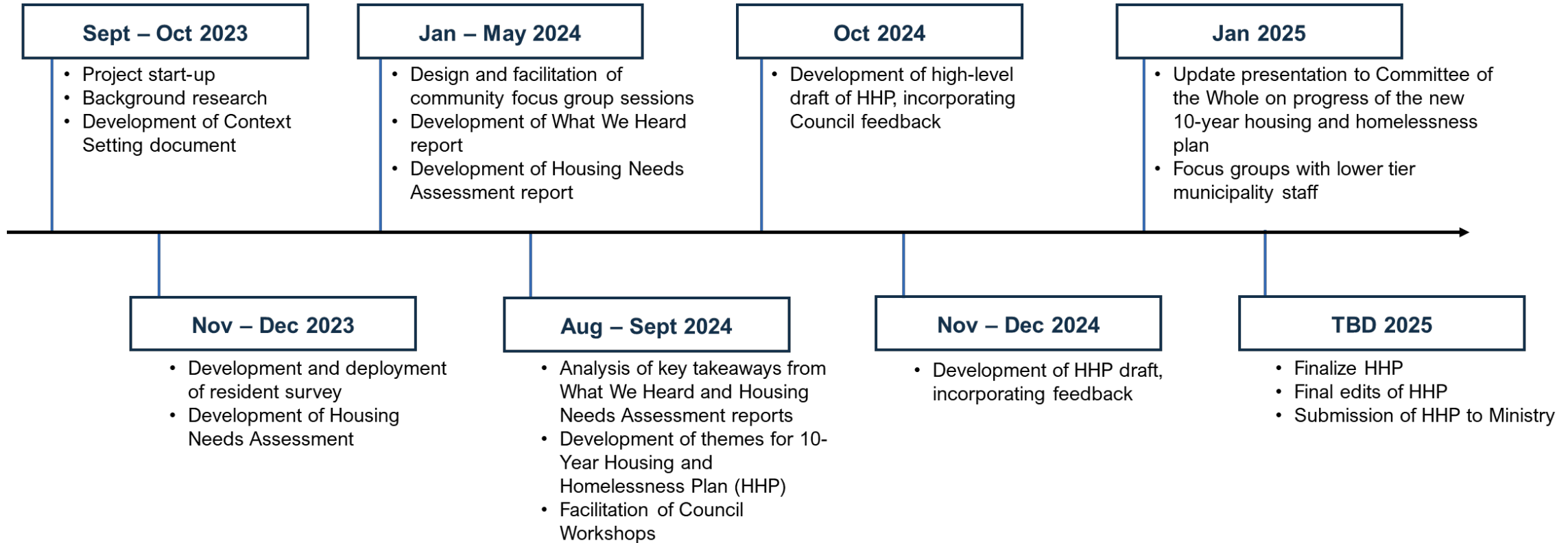
## Housing Needs Assessment\*

Assesses the current housing demand and supply in Durham to inform housing insights to be addressed in the Plan



## New 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan

# Project Timeline





# Key Housing Insights

Non-Market Housing for Those in Greatest Need

Purpose Built Rental Housing & Affordable Ownership Housing

Diverse Housing Options & Repair/Improve Housing Stock

Systems & Programs

# Insight: Non-Market Housing for Those in Greatest Need



## Non-Market Housing for those in Greatest Need

There is a need for non-market housing suitable for families, as they experience unique barriers to access and maintain housing

There is an acute need for additional shelter beds and transitional housing

There is a need for supportive housing across the Region

There is a need for housing appropriate for seniors as they age

There is a need for non-market housing for households on a single income, as they face more barriers to access and afford housing

# Insight: Purpose-Built Rental Housing & Affordable Ownership Housing



## Purpose-built Rental Housing

There is a need to increase the supply of purpose-built rental housing to match the growth of renter households in Durham

There is a need for affordable, adequate, and suitable rental housing

There is a need for affordable rental housing for one-person households

There is a need for programs and supports to improve landlord-tenant relations



## Affordable Ownership Housing

There is a need for affordable ownership housing options across Durham for moderate-income households

There is a need for affordable ownership housing for large families

# Insight: Diverse Housing Options & Repair/Improve Housing Stock



## Diverse Housing Options

There is a need for a range of housing options for a range of household compositions and ages to keep pace with growth throughout Durham

There is a need for affordable and suitable housing for immigrant households and large family households

There is a need for diverse housing forms that can support rental housing in rural communities



## Repair and Improve Housing Stock

There is a need to rehabilitate the existing housing stock in municipalities across Durham

There is a need to protect and improve the existing stock of affordable and rental housing

# Insight: Improved System & Programs



## System

There is a need to align housing with physical and social infrastructure

There is a need for collaboration to create change that has been challenging in the current system

There is a need for increased funding and appropriate resources to address the magnitude of the issue



## Programs

There is a need to gain trust among community members with the growing DASH waitlist and existing challenges within community housing

There is a need to increase awareness of housing supports and programs available in the Durham Region

# Goals

The overarching goal of the Plan is to create complete and thriving communities across Durham



**Address housing insecurity and homelessness**



**Increase housing affordability across the continuum**



**Encourage an increased supply of housing options and a range of housing types**



**Create a more responsive housing and homelessness system**

# Strategies to Achieve Goals



## Goal: Address housing instability and homelessness

### Strategies:

- Address the acute need for supportive housing across Durham
- Increase capacity and reach of emergency shelters and transitional housing across Durham
- Remove barriers to access housing and supports for low-income households
- Coordinate services throughout the region to ensure quality community responses for those in need
- Implement strategic priorities from *Durham Region Integrated Homelessness System Action Plan (2023)*

# Strategies to Achieve Goals



## Goal: Increase housing affordability across the continuum

### Strategies:

- Encourage the development of affordable and suitable rental units for small households and large families throughout the Region
- Encourage the development of affordable ownership housing options, including housing suitable for singles and families
- Partner with local municipalities to coordinate incentives to affordable housing development
- Encourage local municipalities to provide local incentives to affordable housing development



# Strategies to Achieve Goals



**Goal: Encourage an increased supply of housing options and a range of housing types**

**Strategies:**

- Promote the development of an increased supply of housing, including of a diverse range of residential built forms that meet the demand for a range of housing unit sizes and types
- Encourage the supply of housing that supports household formation for young adults, aging-in-place for older adults, and suitable housing for immigrant households
- Support the development of purpose-built rental housing and built forms that may support the increase in rental housing stock throughout the region
- Protect and improve existing supply of affordable housing, while addressing the condition and required maintenance of the housing stock
- Partner with all public agencies to provide surplus land for affordable housing development
- Develop non-market and market rental, focusing on complete and thriving communities

# Strategies to Achieve Goals



## Goal: Create a more responsive housing and homelessness system

### Strategies:

- Create a more transparent, efficient, and collaborative housing system
- Increase awareness of housing supports and programs available
- Align housing with social supports, community building and engagement
- Address barriers for priority population groups to access appropriate housing
- Enable partnerships at the local level and advocate for funding from upper levels of government
- Ensure comprehensive homelessness prevention programming to address root causes of homelessness, improve housing stability, and offer supportive services that promote long-term stability and well-being

# Potential Activities to Support Strategies

Each of the **goals** and associated **strategies** of the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan will include **objectives, actions, and key performance indicators** to measure success:



Policy and Programs



Education and Advocacy



Financial



Partnerships and Capacity Building



# Questions

Erin Valant

Director, Housing Services

Erin.Valant@durham.ca

[durham.ca](http://durham.ca)

[@RegionofDurham](#)



**From:** GILLIAN VENNING

**Sent:** Friday, January 31, 2025 8:37 AM

**Subject:** DDSB Board of Trustees' Statement of Support for Combatting Jew Hate

**This message is being sent on behalf of the Board of Trustees, Durham District School Board**

To: Regional Chair and Council of the Regional Municipality of Durham and Mayor and Council of the Town of Whitby

We have been made aware of two motions being brought forward for consideration at Whitby Council on February 3, 2025, and Durham Regional Council on February 12, 2025, in response to the rise of Jew hate in the region and around the world.

The DDSB Board of Trustees would like to express its strong support for any actions and steps taken to address the rise of Jew hate and antisemitism. We stand united as allies in our commitment to fostering a region free from hate and discrimination.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

DDSB Board of Trustees

Cc: Mayor and Council, Town of Ajax; Mayor and Council, Township of Brock; Mayor and Council, City of Oshawa; Mayor and Council, City of Pickering; Mayor and Council, Township of Scugog, Mayor and Council, Township of Uxbridge



# The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

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To: Committee of the Whole  
From: Commissioner of Social Services, Commissioner of Finance and  
Commissioner of Works  
Report: #2025-COW-5  
Date: February 12, 2025

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**Subject:**

Revitalization of the Ritson School Site in the City of Oshawa to include Sustainably Built, Mixed-Income Housing, the Adaptive Reuse of the Existing Heritage School Building to a Community Hub with Community Services and Supports and the Creation of New Public Open Spaces

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**Recommendation:**

That the Committee of the Whole recommends to Regional Council:

- A) That the phased redevelopment of the Ritson School site as described within this report be endorsed as follows:
  - i) The development of a total of approximately 660 units of new purpose-built rental housing, with a minimum of 30% of the units being affordable within each building;
  - ii) Advancing approximately 500 units on Blocks 1A, 1B, 3A and 3B as shown on Figure 2 to this report through the release of a Request for Proposals to prospective development partners as described within this report through a long-term lease model;
  - iii) The restoration and adaptive reuse of the existing Ritson School building to provide a community hub and complementary multi-functional space, in a manner consistent with its designation under the Ontario Heritage Act;
  - iv) The creation of new public pedestrian open spaces.
- B) That an unbudgeted capital project for building stabilization works, abatement, heritage impact assessment, detailed design for adaptive reuse and design of public realm improvements on Block 2 in the amount of \$2,950,000 be approved and funded first from any surplus that arises in the 2025 Business Plans and Budgets of the Social Services Department, with any shortfall funded from debenture financing or other sources at the discretion of the Commissioner of Finance, as follows:

<b>Project Element</b>	<b>Gross Cost</b>
Building Stabilization	\$1,000,000
Heritage Impact Assessment/Conservation Master Plan	\$100,000
School Building Adaptive Reuse Detailed Design	\$1,750,000
Public Realm Improvements Landscape Design	\$100,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,950,000</b>

- C) That the Commissioner of Finance be authorized to take all necessary steps to obtain debenture financing and execute any required documents.

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## Report:

### 1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- a. Provide an update on the status of the site and building;
- b. Summarize the Phase Two Community Engagement process;
- c. Summarize the results of the Request for Information (RFI) process;
- d. Seek Regional Council's endorsement of the redevelopment project to enable the release of a Request for Proposals (RFP) to prospective development partners;
- e. Seek funding for building stabilization work, abatement, heritage assessment, and the design of capital improvements to the existing Ritson School building and planned public spaces.

1.2 Throughout 2024, the Regional Municipality of Durham (Region), in collaboration with the City of Oshawa (Oshawa) worked to develop a vision for the Ritson School site. Informed by extensive community and stakeholder engagement, the vision includes a mix of affordable and market housing where new residents will live, and where the community can come together to enjoy new, safe and walkable public spaces while having access to needed services. The historic school building will be restored and repurposed to offer Regional services and community amenities.

1.3 On June 26, 2024, Regional Council endorsed development principles for the site, supported by a demonstration plan illustrating how the vision could be achieved.

1.4 A Request for Information (RFI) process gauged the level of interest in the first phase of redevelopment by the private and not-for-profit sectors experienced in affordable housing development and property management.

1.5 Further community engagement, land acquisitions, technical studies and local planning initiatives have also been undertaken to support the vision.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 Located in Central Oshawa, the Ritson School site is 2.1 ha (5.3 acres) in size and is within one of seven Health Neighbourhoods (Area O3 – Downtown Oshawa), identified by the Durham Region Health Department as an area requiring focus to build on health and well-being. The health indicators that warranted its inclusion as a Health Neighbourhood include:
- a. A greater incidence of female lone-parent families;
  - b. A greater percentage of seniors who live alone;
  - c. A higher percentage of dwellings in need of major repairs;
  - d. A higher percentage of the population spending more than 30% of their income on shelter costs;
  - e. A higher percentage of children in low income households;
  - f. A higher percentage of low income households;
  - g. Higher levels of unemployment.
- 2.2 The community has a high rate of core housing need. The Region purchased the Ritson School property at 300 Ritson Road South in 2022 at a cost of \$7.49M as a strategic opportunity to provide sustainably built, mixed income, mixed-use housing with community services and supports.
- 2.3 Following the Region's purchase of the school property, opportunities for new residential development, along with community programs and services were explored. Public consultation was undertaken to identify the nature and types of services and programs that could be offered while informing the delivery of new housing.
- 2.4 A Community Needs Assessment (CNA) was prepared by Smart Density, Inc. and LURA Consulting, supported by a Market Assessment prepared by Parcel to identify current and future needs of residents, and market conditions to inform future revitalization and renovation initiatives.
- 2.5 The CNA recommended the following:
- a. There is a need to address concerns with housing affordability and attainable housing: Single or 2-bedroom housing units in conjunction with support program should be considered.
  - b. There is a need to improve access to physical and mental healthcare. Providing a variety of physical and mental health supports is recommended. A hub model where multiple uses are consolidated in a single floor or building should be considered.
  - c. There is a need to provide support services for youth and sole caregiver families. Program options that offer childcare or educational or recreational programs for youth should be considered.
  - d. There is a need to assess and improve ongoing access to community programs and services. Educational, training, or recreational programs accessible to people of different skills, abilities, and backgrounds are recommended.



- e. There is a need to support services for seniors. Recreational or drop-in programs for seniors should be considered.
- f. There is a need to support continued reconciliation in partnership with Indigenous peoples. The Region of Durham has already begun discussing and coordinating with Indigenous groups to provide Indigenous-led programs on the site.
- g. There is a need to address the impacts of population growth due to the future Central Oshawa GO Station. The design of the site should consider flexible spaces that can be used for a variety of programs and uses can best address the changing population and provide opportunities for placemaking without requiring extensive modification.
- h. There is a need to protect and provide parks and open space. A design that can maximize both floor space and open space on the site is desirable to provide outdoor programming and open space.
- i. A mixed-income, mixed-tenure model should be considered for housing to improve the financial feasibility of the subject site and reduce the potential for creating social barriers.
- j. A partnership with both a private-sector partner and one or multiple non-profit organizations for housing could be considered for development and affordable housing operations.
- k. A recreational facility, if feasible, could be considered to best meet recreational needs and broaden the range of programs and training that could be provided.

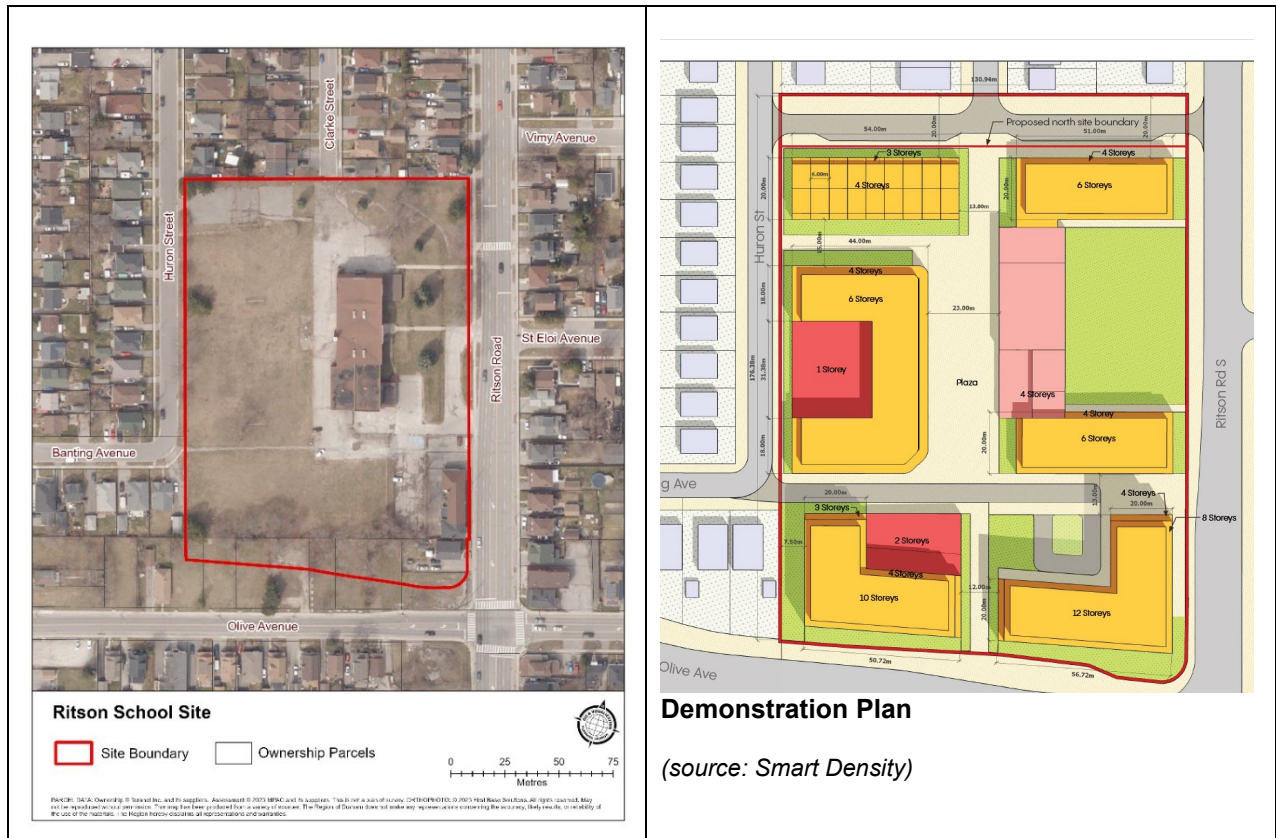
### **3. The Site**

#### **3.1 The subject site includes:**

- a. 300 Ritson Road South (the former Ritson School property)
- b. Parts of 222 – 252 Olive Avenue and 334 Ritson Road South that are not required for the future Gibb Street/Olive Avenue realignment
- c. 326 Ritson Road South (acquired in summer of 2024)
- d. 320 Ritson Road South (purchase agreement closes March 2025).

#### **3.2 The project consists of new mixed income housing, the adaptive reuse of the existing heritage school building, and new pedestrian oriented public open spaces. The site and demonstration plan are shown in Figure 1.**

**Figure 1: Subject Site and Demonstration Plan**



**4. Adapting the School Building**

4.1 The school building has been unoccupied since 2012. Clean up and stabilization is necessary to prevent further deterioration. Investments in the building to complete structural repairs, clean up and base work is needed before renovation and refit. The building is approximately 3,714 m<sup>2</sup> (+/- 40,000 sq. ft.) in size:

- a. The 1,520 m<sup>2</sup> (16,370 sq. ft) ground floor includes a general purpose room (gymnasium/auditorium/stage), 5 classroom spaces, a boiler/mechanical room, washrooms, library and storage space;
- b. The 1,110 m<sup>2</sup> (11,956 sq. ft.) second floor includes 8 classrooms, washrooms and office space;
- c. The 1,082 m<sup>2</sup> (11,653 sq. ft.) third floor includes 8 classrooms and 2 other workspaces.

4.2 Some items identified for early attention include:

- a. The need for structural and façade reinforcements including steel lintels to support previous alterations and new supports for exterior masonry;
- b. Removal of obsolete equipment, plumbing, electrical, heating and building systems;
- c. Mitigating spalling, ponding and drainage issues though patching, parging, and removal of loose or crumbling masonry;

- d. Removal of debris, cleaning of drains, removal of any floors, finishes must be done in accordance with asbestos remediation procedures;
  - e. Removal and clean-up of damage from vandalism.
- 4.3 The functional components of the building requiring replacement includes:
- a. A new domestic hot water plant, plumbing systems, sanitary drainage and storm drainage;
  - b. New HVAC and potential energy recovery systems aligned with the Durham Standard where feasible;
  - c. New power distribution, lighting and security systems within the building.
- 4.4 Since the building is designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, its adaptation should be design-led, focusing on retaining its heritage value, including key attributes as:
- a. Existing entranceways, window styles/openings and architectural features;
  - b. All interior heritage characteristics including wood floor, stairs, railings and treads;
  - c. Since there is generous floor-to-ceiling heights, drop ceilings can be removed to allow windows to be returned to their original height;
  - d. The opportunity to salvage or re-use existing original built-in cabinetry, wood trim, door surrounds, decorative wood partitions and the auditorium (wood detailing and the stage);
  - e. Repairing and restoring building entrances, and providing design improvements for AODA compliance, including an elevator;
  - f. Retrofitting building interiors including walls, floors and ceiling finishes while maintaining items of heritage interest.
- 4.5 The Community Needs Assessment completed by Smart Density and LURA identified reuse opportunities such as social and health related programming, affordable housing, education and training, support services for seniors, childcare, recreation, outdoor amenities, commercial, childcare and indigenous programming.
- 4.6 Detailed architectural, mechanical and interior design work is required. Designs should account for the two future adjoining residential buildings and should explore opportunities to integrate elements such as elevators, or common space between the new buildings and the existing school.

## **5. Proposed Housing Development**

- 5.1 The phased development of approximately 660 mixed market rental units is proposed in six new buildings, some of which would have ancillary ground floor non-residential floor space. Approximately 200 units would be affordable housing. The project consists of the following (see Figure 2):
- a. Block 1A is 0.24 hectares (0.6 acres) and provides 36 four-storey, three-bedroom, back-to-back townhouses and a road connection. One parking space is provided per unit, with visitors' lay-by surface parking.



- 5.2 To provide affordable housing while supporting long-term financial viability, a minimum of 30% affordable units and 70% market rental units are proposed. It is anticipated that the 200 affordable units would be provided at 80% of the Median Market Rent (MMR).
- 5.3 Detailed architectural design, materials, programming would be determined through the detailed design process, following the award of proposals to one or more successful proponents.

## 6. New Public Spaces

- 6.1 New publicly accessible open spaces will be created that are vibrant, active, and inviting with place-making in mind, incorporating Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles. There are three components:
- Central Pedestrian Plaza:** The plaza space behind the school will incorporate hard and soft landscaping for use by those of all ages and abilities including barrier free paths of travel, locations for seating, shade, lighting and climate resilient features. Once developed, a conceptual design will be informed by engagement with the local community and City staff.
  - Ritson Road Open Space:** The open space on Ritson Road will signify the building's heritage significance, while incorporating opportunities for placemaking and public gathering. A strata park concept is being explored due to a 3.5 metre grade change leading to the front entrance of the school, and below grade parking required to serve Block 2 buildings.
  - Street Related Public Realm:** The pedestrian realm also includes a multi-use trail along the future Olive Avenue realignment and sidewalk improvements on Ritson Road, Huron Street, and the proposed new road on the north edge of the site.

## 7. Policy Updates

- 7.1 When the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing approved the new Durham Regional Official Plan ("Envision Durham") in September 2024, the Ritson School site became part of the Central Oshawa "Protected Major Transit Station Area" (PMTSA). PMTSAs allow medium and high-density residential, commercial, retail, recreational and community use at a minimum density of 150 persons and jobs per hectare. The plan for the subject site is consistent with the policies for PMTSAs.
- 7.2 When Bill 185 ("Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act") received Royal Assent by the province in June of 2024, the Planning Act was amended so that official plans and zoning by-laws can no longer impose minimum parking standards within PMTSAs other than parking for bicycles. Bill 185 can reduce costs as parking supply in PMTSAs can now be optimized based on landowner/applicant needs as opposed to being prescribed by official plans or zoning by-laws.
- 7.3 In September 2024, Oshawa Council adopted Amendment No. 223 to the Oshawa Official Plan (OPA 223). OPA 223 was initiated by the City and permits a maximum net residential density of 280 units per hectare (114 u/ac.) on the site, which is the density reflected in the demonstration plan.

- 7.4 The Final Report for the City of Oshawa's PMTSA Study was released on December 2, 2024, for public input. The Study identifies the following elements for the subject site:
- a. A proposed open space area along Ritson Road as a "Parkland Consolidation Opportunity" and a "Neighbourhood Park" as reflected in the demonstration plan;
  - b. A proposed east-west road;
  - c. An "Active Non-vehicle Linkage" aligned with the pedestrian plaza behind the school;
  - d. The future Gibb/Olive realignment is shown as an "Active Transportation Linkage" and a Future Road.
  - e. The former Ritson School site is identified as "Medium Density II Residential Mixed Use" which allows between 300-600 people and jobs per hectare.
- 7.5 Staff have provided further comments requesting confirmation that the density classification for the entirety of the subject site align with the City's recently approved densities under OPA 223.
- 7.6 Oshawa held a statutory public meeting under the Planning Act on January 13, 2025, to consider City initiated amendments to the Oshawa Official Plan and Zoning By-law to implement the PMTSA study findings. Proposed changes would expand land use permissions to include apartment buildings, daycare centres, flats, personal service establishments, offices, restaurants, retail stores, schools and other uses. Increases to building heights and residential densities, the removal of minimum parking requirements and the use of Holding (h) provisions are also proposed.
- 7.7 Housing Services is preparing a new 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan as an update to At Home in Durham. Some of the early insights that are applicable to the Ritson School project includes the following:
- a. There is a need for non-market housing suitable for families, as they experience unique barriers to access and maintain housing;
  - b. There is a need for housing appropriate to seniors as they age;
  - c. There is a need for non-market housing affordable to households on a single income, as they face more barriers to accessible and affordable housing;
  - d. There is a need to increase the supply of purpose-built rental housing to match the growth of renter households in Durham.

## **8. Request for Information: Summary Update**

- 8.1 A Request for Information (RFI) was publicly posted on August 12, 2024, for a seven-week period closing on September 27, 2024. The RFI provided valuable insight and responses are summarized below.

## Interest in the Project

- 8.2 There is interest in the project based on the development principles for the site. Interest went beyond Blocks 1A and 1B and includes Blocks 3A and 3B. Respondents had expertise in development, operation and management of affordable housing based on a mixed market development model. Some respondents were very enthusiastic about implementing the vision of the project and were prepared to exceed the minimum affordability threshold in the RFI. Other respondents felt the development may be too ambitious.
- 8.3 Adaptive reuse of the school building and design/construction of public spaces was seen as cost prohibitive to non-profit housing providers. It was suggested that the Region retain management of the school building and apply resources to establish a community hub. It was also suggested that the Region maintain ownership and management of non-residential space, public amenities, open space areas and contribute to the costs of underground parking. The benefits of new age-friendly open space within the community were noted while designing for safety and security. Addressing flood risk and on-site stormwater management was also noted.
- 8.4 There is interest in a long-term land lease to maintain affordability, while details including the length of the lease term need to be understood.

## Modular Construction

- 8.5 Responses on modular construction was mixed, as follows:
- a. construction timelines are faster, and money can be saved on labour costs;
  - b. there is less control over building design since the technology relies on simple, straight lines;
  - c. doubling of wall systems for each unit adds costs, but reduces sound transmission and improves structural integrity;
  - d. it is a difficult approach for taller buildings.
- 8.6 Flexibility was suggested on how the project is implemented. Some prefer panelized methods for certain building components while others prefer conventional construction techniques.

## Durham Standard

- 8.7 RFI responses noted the Durham Standard as a positive response to reduce GHG emissions and energy usage, improve accessibility and inclusivity but needs to be balanced with project financing and feasibility.
- 8.8 Certain elements of the Durham Standard are easier to address than others, such as installing photovoltaic systems, improving HVAC performance, upgrading lighting systems and installing better insulation and windows. More costly elements include EV charging infrastructure, certification processes, providing shower and change facilities for staff and green roofs. Prioritization of design elements was suggested.



- 8.9 Other suggestions included adding seating outside of front entrances for tenants needing to be picked up and incorporating greywater capture and reuse for reducing water consumption. Some identified geothermal heating solutions as a key opportunity. A district energy approach was viewed as a potential opportunity if led by the Region.
- 8.10 It was suggested that elements of the Durham Standard be incentivized to affordable housing providers, since they go beyond the sustainability and accessibility goals within CMHC and other affordable housing financing programs.

## **9. Observations and Approach**

- 9.1 The RFI process identified third party interest in Blocks 1A, 1B, 3A and 3B. Substantial work is required on Block 2 to repair, retrofit and improve the school building and for public realm improvements to be undertaken by the Region.
- 9.2 The RFI responses confirm it is not necessary to prescribe the method of construction. Whether volumetric or panelized modular, conventional or a mix of construction methodologies is employed is a decision that should be determined by the developer/constructor.
- 9.3 There are opportunities for the Durham Standard to be applied. How individual elements of the Standard are to be implemented should be part of detailed project design and costing, undertaken by a third-party developer/provider.
- 9.4 Geotechnical and hydrogeological testing is underway, and a Phase 1 ESA has been completed.
- 9.5 It is anticipated that the housing redevelopment component will include:
- a. Designing, building, operating, maintaining, and financing future buildings under a long-term land lease with the Region based on the development principles endorsed by Regional Council;
  - b. Coordinating and obtaining approvals and project management of buildings and site works;
  - c. Ensuring appropriate and orderly development sequencing, construction management, staging, contractor parking and on-site operations;
  - d. Community engagement in coordination with the Region;
  - e. Designing and constructing public spaces on the Region's behalf where coincident with development;
  - f. Providing on-site training opportunities and strengthening connections to the local labour market.



- 9.6 Following the successful award of an RFP, it is anticipated that proponent-led development applications could be submitted as early as 2026 and subject to the requisite review and approval process, has the potential for the initial stages of implementation in 2027.
- 9.7 Conceptual plans for the pedestrian plaza will be undertaken by the Region in 2025 for discussions with the City and engagement with the surrounding community. Detailed designs can then be prepared in 2026. It is preferred that the winning proponent of the RFP construct the pedestrian plaza improvements on the Region's behalf, with Regional reimbursement for detailed design, capital improvements, contract administration and related costs.
- 9.8 The Region will commission the studies and plans for the restoration and interior improvements to the building over 2025-2026. Subject to the requisite heritage and building permit approvals, implementation of interior improvements could commence in 2026-2027, with interior improvements completed by 2028-2029.
- 9.9 A separate RFP process will engage a developer for the detailed design and construction of the two new six-storey buildings, parking and open space improvements on Block 2. This process could be initiated in the 2028 timeframe, while restoration and renovation work for the school building is underway. The functional requirements and sequencing of new development within this Block will require detailed review, including:
- a. Optimizing parking supply
  - b. Functional layout, circulation, and points of access
  - c. Addressing built and cultural heritage assets and interests
  - d. Detailed design and community engagement on public realm improvements
  - e. Engagement with third parties with a potential interest in the use of space within a newly renovated heritage building.
- 9.10 The implementation of public realm improvements on Block 2 will be in the final phases of development, coincident with the two future residential buildings. This stage would be initiated in or around 2030.

## **10. Public Engagement Summary**

- 10.1 On July 31, 2024, an online Public Meeting was held on the Ritson School Project. Facilitated by LURA Consulting, Regional staff provided a presentation that described the Community Needs Assessment, the vision, development principles, the demonstration plan prepared by Smart Density and the RFI process. The meeting was attended by 20 residents, and responses were positive.

10.2 An online survey was launched over the summer of 2024 which had 291 responses and is summarized as follows:

- a. The most valued development principles were:
  - **Mixed Housing:** Respondents wanted to know how affordability would be defined, while stressing the need for social and affordable housing.
  - **Community Connections:** Providing opportunities for businesses and amenities at the ground level, and providing space for programs, services and counselling was well received.
  - **Inclusive Open Space:** Having green space and pedestrian friendly space as part of the development was seen as positive. There was interest in ideas like a playground, splash pad, pavilion, seating or other types of play space.
  - **Built and Cultural Heritage:** Honouring the site's heritage was well received. Providing opportunities to include Indigenous art/designs and showcasing the history of the school was encouraged.
  - **Sustainability:** Respondents would like to see more trees, native plants and greenery. Some would like geo-thermal heating/cooling included as an opportunity to reduce GHG emissions.
- b. The following are the top 3 elements residents would like to see in the pedestrian oriented open space:
  - Trees, gardens and greenery;
  - Pedestrian walkways/multi-use trails;
  - Redesigned public open space with seating areas.
- c. The following are the top 3 activities residents would like to animate the pedestrian oriented open spaces:
  - Outdoor markets;
  - Recreational or other active programs;
  - Cultural gatherings, special events or celebrations.

## 11. Financial Implications

11.1 This report is seeking Committee/Council approval for an unbudgeted capital project for building stabilization works, heritage impact assessment, detailed design for the adaptive reuse and design of public realm improvements on Block 2 at an upset amount of \$2,950,000 as detailed in the following table.

<b>Project Element</b>	<b>Gross Cost</b>
Building Stabilization	\$1,000,000
Heritage Impact Assessment/Conservation Master Plan	\$100,000
School Building Adaptive Reuse Detailed Design	\$1,750,000
Public Realm Improvements Landscape Design	\$100,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,950,000</b>

- 11.2 It is recommended that the \$2,950,000 be funded first from any surplus that arises in the approved 2025 Business Plans and Budgets for the Social Services Department, with any shortfall funded from debenture financing or other sources at the discretion of the Commissioner of Finance.
- 11.3 Should debenture financing be required, the estimated annual debt servicing costs associated with a \$2,950,000 million debenture is approximately \$286,600. Actual debt servicing costs will vary based on market conditions at the time of debenture issuance, term and debenture instrument selected. The Regional Treasurer has updated the Region's debt and financial obligation limit and has determined that the limit will not be exceeded with the issuance of this additional debenture amount.
- 11.4 A detailed scope of work for stabilization work has been prepared. The cost breakdown for renovation for the adaptive reuse of the school building will be confirmed upon the preparation of detailed designs, including updated building systems, unique costs to be encountered for the restoration of the historic building and potential future finishings but are currently estimated at \$30 million. Capital costs for public realm improvements will be developed through the future detailed design process. Additional pre-development costs will be incurred in preparation for development by third parties.
- 11.5 Adaptive reuse of the Ritson School by the Region will also imply new annual operating budget pressures associated with potential Regional programming and maintenance of the facility. Costs for this will depend on the final design and use of this facility and will be considered as part of future annual Business Plans and Budgets.
- 11.6 Ongoing due diligence and predevelopment site testing will continue as part of the departmental operating budget.
- 11.7 The Housing and Homelessness Service and Financing Strategy being presented to Council in 2025 will include details on the projected costing and financing for the complete Ritson Redevelopment Project.

## **12. Previous Reports and Decisions**

- 12.1 On November 27, 2020, Regional Council approved a Master Housing Strategy, to operationalize At Home in Durham, the Durham Housing Plan 2014-2024 ([#2020-COW-27](#)).
- 12.2 On June 22, 2022, Regional Council approved financing for site investigation work for restoration and redevelopment at 300 Ritson Road South ([#2022-COW-18](#)).
- 12.3 On April 26, 2023, Regional Council endorsed the Durham Standard for all new building construction and applicable renovation projects delivered by or for the Regional Municipality of Durham ([#2023-COW-18](#)).

12.4 On June 26, 2024, Regional Council endorsed the development principles for the Ritson School site and authorized staff to release a Request for Information to gauge the level of business interest by the private and not-for profit sectors in development and property management, either through a long-term land lease or traditional design-build-operate contract ([#2024-COW-26](#)).

### 13. Relationship to Strategic Plan

13.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following strategic goals and priorities in the Durham Region Strategic Plan:

- a. Strategic Direction – Connected and Vibrant Neighbourhoods
  - C1. Align Regional infrastructure and asset management with projected growth, climate impacts, and community needs.
  - C2. Enable a full range of housing options, including housing that is affordable and close to transit.
- b. Strategic Direction – Environmental Action and Climate Leadership
  - E1. Reduce corporate greenhouse gas emissions to meet established targets.
  - E3. Collaborate with partners on the low-carbon transition to reduce community greenhouse gas emissions across Durham Region.
- c. Strategic Direction – Resilient Local Economies
  - R3. Develop, attract, retain, and support a skilled and qualified workforce, including youth and newcomers.
  - R5. Cultivate and promote local arts, culture, quality of place, and tourism.
- d. Strategic Direction – Strong Community Relationships
  - S1. Enhance inclusive opportunities for community engagement and meaningful collaboration.
  - S2. Build and strengthen respectful relationships with First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous communities.
  - S3. Collaborate across local area municipalities, with agencies, and community partners to deliver coordinated and efficient services.

### 14. Conclusion

14.1 The Ritson School site is a unique opportunity for new affordable and mixed income housing, and where built and cultural heritage can be complemented by new, sustainable buildings. The site will become a vibrant, complete community that is walkable, inclusive, well-connected, age-friendly and will have a mix of housing options.

14.2 Upon endorsement Regional Council of the scope of redevelopment described in this report, staff will initiate the process to undertake an open and competitive process inviting private and/or non-profit affordable housing developers to submit proposals for the south and west portions of the site.

14.3 In addition, staff will undertake work to have stabilization work initiated for the Ritson School building, prepare the required studies for heritage conservation, and initiate the detailed design process for its ultimate adaptive reuse as a community hub.

## 15. Attachments

Attachment #1: Development Principles

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

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Stella Danos-Papaconstantinou  
Commissioner of Social Services

Original signed by

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Nancy Taylor, CPA, CA  
Commissioner of Finance

Original signed by

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Ramesh Jagannathan, MBA, M.Eng., P.Eng., PTOE  
Commissioner of Works

Recommended for Presentation to Committee

Original signed by

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Elaine C. Baxter-Trahair  
Chief Administrative Officer

**Attachment #1**

Development Principles endorsed by Regional Council (#2024-COW-26):

**1. Redevelopment Parcel and Phasing Plan**

Three complementary sites will accommodate future development, improvement and partnerships. The first phase, behind the existing school, presents the optimal opportunity to initiate housing development. The existing school building will form part of a future phase/block that will be reused to accommodate a mix of community and public uses, together new housing opportunities.

**2. Purpose Built Affordable and Market Rental Housing**

Each block will provide a minimum of 30% affordable rental accommodation while the remainder may be market oriented. Block 1 will provide a minimum of 160 units. Preference will be given to proposals that can be delivered quickly through modular construction. Partnerships with non-profit, Indigenous, co-operative and/or other non-market providers or communities are encouraged. A mix of unit sizes including 1, 2, and 3-bedroom units will be provided.

**3. Excellence in Urban Design**

Contextually sensitive designs will provide heights and densities of buildings that are appropriately scaled in relation to the surrounding neighbourhood. Project buildings will frame streets and public spaces with frequent pedestrian entrances. Main pedestrian entrances will be sheltered from weather. High standards of architectural excellence and environmental sustainability will be presented through high-quality, durable, contextually sensitive, aesthetically pleasing architectural features and building materials. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design techniques will be applied.

**4. Pedestrian Accessibility and Circulation**

Pedestrian circulation routes will include an east-west connection from Huron Street to Ritson Road, along a future east-west local road. All streets will include sidewalks or multi-use paths on both sides, street trees and pedestrian amenities as appropriate.

A publicly accessible open space (plaza) area will be provided behind the school building as an active, open, visible, accessible pedestrian space with future programming that will be tied to future ground floor non-residential uses within surrounding buildings. Surface parking in the area behind the school building will not be permitted. Buildings surrounding the plaza will have open, transparent, accessible building faces.

Project buildings will be designed for accessibility of residents of all ages and abilities using universal accessibility design principles, strategic placement and orientation of buildings, including street front facing buildings and entrances.

## **5. Traffic Connectivity**

Traffic connections to Ritson Road network will be provided by a new east-west local road at the north end of the site. The new local road will provide driveway access to required underground parking areas, provide access from new development to Ritson Road, and avoid conflicts with existing intersections.

## **6. Publicly Accessible Open Space**

Two publicly accessible open space areas will be provided. A formal open space area will form a courtyard in front of the Ritson School building, facing Ritson Road providing opportunities for public art, as well as ceremonial, formal or informal gatherings.

An open space area will be included on Block 1 and in front of the existing school in Block 2 that will provide access and amenity space for future residents.

## **7. Parking and Servicing**

Below grade parking will be provided for each of the blocks, except for under the existing school building. Underground parking may connect adjoining phases. Shared parking and/or reduced parking approaches are encouraged. Provide development loading, servicing and vehicular parking access within the interior of the site. Cycling infrastructure, bicycle parking and end-of-trip facilities will be included.

## **8. Placemaking**

Opportunities for reconciliation and Indigenous cultural heritage through the design of new development. Provides opportunities for placemaking and public gathering through building placement, landscaping, and streetscape design measures. Quality urban design, public spaces and facilities.

Non-residential floor space is provided on the ground floors of buildings on each block, providing opportunities for future community related uses and complementary services.

## **9. Embracing Built and Cultural Heritage**

Buildings will form part of a cohesive community, centred on the renovation, protection, preservation, enhancement and adaptive reuse of the heritage Ritson School building. Provides a vibrant and attractive public realm incorporating art, culture and heritage to contribute to a sense of place and identity. Buildings will promote inclusivity and diversity of cultures, religions, abilities and beliefs through project programs or designs.

## **10. Providing Meaningful Connections**

Project designs and implementation practices will promote transit use. Ground floors of buildings that provide services to the broader community or form part of a community hub will be directly accessible by local transit routes and active transportation linkages.

## **11. Climate Resiliency**

The project will align with the Region's climate emergency declaration and support implementation of the Durham Community Energy Plan, including use of energy efficiency measures to reduce utility operating costs and its operational GHG emissions footprint. Measures within the Durham Green Standard will be applied to reduce the urban heat island effect, such as: low carbon, net-zero and/or net-zero ready building design; green and cool roofs; or other low impact development measures, including green infrastructure.



If this information is required in an accessible format, please contact 1-800-372-1102 ext. 2009.



# The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

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To: Committee of the Whole  
From: Chief Administrative Officer  
Report: #2025-COW-6  
Date: February 12, 2025

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**Subject:**

Durham Local Immigration Partnership 2025-2030 Community and Inclusion Plan

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**Recommendation:**

That the Committee of the Whole recommends to Regional Council:

- A) That the new Durham Local Immigration Partnership (DLIP) 2025-2030 Community and Inclusion Plan be approved and implemented by the Durham Local Immigration Partnership secretariat.
  - B) That council endorses the DLIP 2025-2030 Community and Inclusion Plan.
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**Report:**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee and Council with information on the new Durham Local Immigration Partnership (DLIP) 2025-2030 Community and Inclusion Plan for approval.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 In Durham, 28% (192,600 people) of Durham's total population are immigrants. Ajax has the highest percentage of immigrants with 42.7%, followed by Pickering with 37.3%, and Whitby with 28.4%. Brock had the lowest with 8.2%.
- 2.2 In 2021, approximately 47% of immigrants in Durham arrived through the economic admission category, followed by 35% under family reunification, and 16% as refugees. These categories highlight the various pathways through which immigrants contribute to Durham's population and economy.

- 2.3 More than 65% of recent immigrants to Durham are of core working age (between 25 to 54 years old). The overall labour force participation rate of immigrants in Durham is 60.7%. Additionally, 62.8% of immigrants in the region have a post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree, compared to 53.5% of non-immigrants in Durham.
- 2.4 The retention of immigrants is essential for Durham's prosperity and sustainability. By fostering an inclusive environment where both residents and newcomers feel a sense of belonging, Durham can strengthen its ability to retain immigrants, contributing to the region's long-term economic and social vitality.
- 2.5 Since 2009, the Region has held a federal funding agreement with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) for the DLIP, with a new agreement set to be signed by March 31, 2025.
- 2.6 This program has been fully funded by IRCC for last 16 years. The DLIP does not incur any financial impact to the Region. The Region continues to support the DLIP through in-kind services and other supports.
- 2.7 Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) are a national initiative that functions as planning bodies to support the development of community-based partnerships addressing the needs of newcomers, with over 80 LIPs in Canada, including 35 in Ontario.
- 2.8 The DLIP's primary activities include facilitating local collaboration and coordination, creating opportunities for capacity building, community building and engagement, and undertaking local research to meet the needs of both immigrants and residents. The DLIP has conducted this work through a variety of projects, including:
  - a. Leading academic research with Trent University on the newcomer employment experience in Durham;
  - b. Collaborating with settlement partners to create the Newcomer Housing Journey Map and the Durham Immigration Report to support local planning and decision-making;
  - c. Designing and hosting capacity strengthening opportunities for settlement providers through webinars, workshops, and forums and;
  - d. Creating awareness campaigns, including the We All Belong and Durham is More, to celebrate the contributions of newcomers and immigrant business owners in Durham.
- 2.9 The DLIP has been assisting with the delivery of the Durham Humanitarian Response Program (DHRP) in collaboration with Community Development Council Durham. The DHRP is the Region's emergency resettlement response providing temporary accommodations and wraparound supports for asylum seekers. The DLIP helps coordinate supports and services for the DHRP, oversees the program's data collection and analysis activities, and participates in intergovernmental tables to monitor policy and program changes related to the asylum seeker response.

- 2.10 The DLIP holds a network dedicated to fostering a welcoming environment for newcomers in Durham Region. The DLIP Council is an advisory body comprised of executives and community leaders from a range of sectors, lending direction to the development and execution of the work of the broader Durham LIP. The fifteen (15) member council represents the following organizations: chambers/board of trade, employer/business, employment services, libraries, post-secondary institutions, public health, settlement services and victim services.
- 2.11 Other groups of the DLIP include:
- a. **Newcomer Advisory Table:** local residents (born outside of Canada) who share their lived experience, provide perspective and advice on DLIP activities and acts as a channel for the work of the DLIP to their own communities and networks.
  - b. **Community Partners in Diversity:** over 100 local member agencies and institutions from across sectors share information with the goal of coordinating services and building capacity.
  - c. **Francophone Working Group:** agencies and institutions that serve French-speaking residents across sectors share information with the goal of coordinating services and building capacity.
- 2.12 In addition, the DLIP is connected to a number of other community groups to facilitate information exchange and partnerships, including groups with a mandate to address diversity, equity and inclusion in service delivery and in the community.
- 2.13 The DLIP's agreement with IRCC includes establishing a local settlement strategy related to the successful settlement and integration of newcomers in the community.
- 2.14 The 2025-2030 DLIP Community and Inclusion Plan was developed through a multi-phase process, which involved consultations with the community and collaboration with local partners.
- a. **Community consultation:** Through a community survey and in-person consultations sessions with residents on key immigration and settlement issues and needs in their communities.
  - b. **Working groups engagement sessions:** The DLIP working groups were consulted to provide their input on the next steps and priorities for the new community plan.
  - c. **Review and validation:** The draft plan was reviewed and validated by the working groups to ensure it accurately reflected community input.

### 3. Previous Reports and Decisions

3.1 [#2024-INFO-39](#)

3.2 [#2022-INFO-102](#)

3.3 [#2021-INFO-43](#)

### 4. Durham Local Immigration Partnership 2025-2030 Community and Inclusion Plan

4.1 The new Community and Inclusion Plan identifies the key priorities for the DLIP within three (3) pillars.

- a. **Champion collective action:** Create long-term change in systems and institutions in Durham Region, highlighting immigration and settlement challenges, advocating for solutions, and mobilizing resources, partners and institutions to act. This includes conducting research and advocating for the needs for newcomers and partners.
- b. **Build inclusive communities:** Create a supportive, inclusive and welcoming environment where newcomers are empowered to connect, contribute and thrive by amplifying their voices, fostering meaningful relationships and enabling access to services that meet them where they are. The DLIP will continue to seek the advice of the NAT and other partners for initiatives and to build on the success of their awareness campaigns.
- c. **Embrace innovation and responsiveness:** Continue to be recognized as a trusted and forward-thinking partner, known for quickly adapting to emerging needs in the settlement sector and innovating to meet the needs of both our partners and Durham's immigrants. The DLIP will continue to foster meaningful relationships and a large network, which has allowed them to take on projects based on the needs of the community, such as mental health, employment, funding, and more.

4.2 See further details in Attachment #1: 2025-2030 Durham Immigration and Inclusion Community Plan.

### 5. Relationship to Strategic Plan

5.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following strategic goals and priorities in the Durham Region Strategic Plan:

- a. Community Vitality:
  - Goal 2: To foster an exceptional quality of life with services that contribute to strong neighborhoods, vibrant and diverse communities, and influence our safety and well-being.

b. Economic Prosperity:

- Goal 3: To build a strong and resilient economy that maximizes opportunities for business and employment growth, innovation and partnership.

c. Social Investment:

- Goal 4: To ensure a range of programs, services and supports are available and accessible to those in need, so that no individual is left behind.

## 6. Conclusion

6.1 The 2025-2030 Community and Inclusion Plan is set to be launched to the community in the spring.

6.2 The DLIP Secretariat will report to Council on the progress of the DLIP and the Community Plan on an annual basis.

6.3 For additional information, contact: Allison Hector-Alexander. Director, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, at 905-668-7711, extension 3893 and Allison.Hector-Alexander@durham.ca

## 7. Attachments

Attachment #1: 2025-2030 Community and Inclusion Plan

Prepared by: Jessica Batres, Policy Advisor, at 905-668-7711, extension 2190.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

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Elaine C. Baxter-Trahair  
Chief Administrative Officer

# We All Belong Here:

## Durham Local Immigration Partnership 2025-2030 Community and Inclusion Plan



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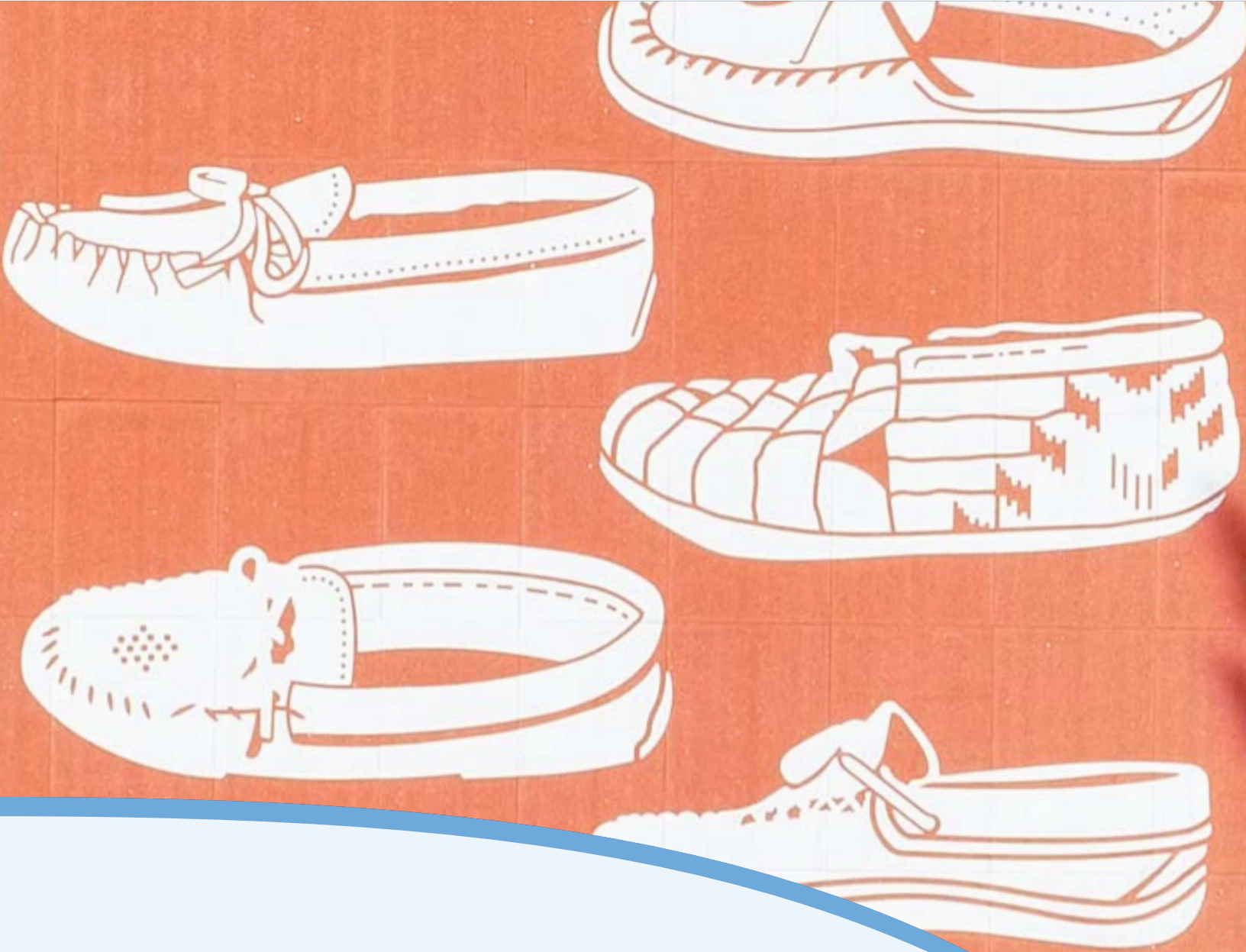


Immigration, Refugees  
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## Land Acknowledgement

The Region of Durham exists on lands that the Michi Saagiig Anishinaabeg inhabited for thousands of years prior to European colonization. These lands are the traditional and treaty territories of the Nations covered under the Williams Treaties, including the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, Alderville First Nation, Hiawatha First Nation, Curve Lake First Nation, and the Chippewa Nations of Georgina Island, Beausoleil and Rama.

We honour, recognize, and respect Indigenous Peoples as rights holders and stewards of the lands and waters on which we have the privilege to live. In our efforts toward reconciliation, we continue to build and strengthen relationships with First Nations, as well as the large Métis communities and growing Inuit communities here in Durham. We commit to learning from Indigenous values and knowledge, building opportunities for collaboration, and recognizing that we are all connected.



## Message from Regional Chair, John Henry

On behalf of Durham Regional Council, I am proud to introduce the new Durham Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) 2025-2030 Community and Inclusion Plan.

Durham is a community that embraces diversity, where every individual is valued and included. This plan outlines the priorities and actions necessary to support the successful integration and inclusion of newcomers, ensuring they have the resources and opportunities to thrive in Durham. Their successful integration will benefit all of Durham Region. As the region's population continues to grow and welcomes individuals from across the globe, this plan helps us remain focused on actionable steps that can help newcomers navigate their new home, find opportunities to connect with their neighbours, and access support and services that can improve their settlement experience.

The Durham LIP and local services are steadfast in their commitment to supporting the integration and well-being of newcomers. We know that immigration has positively impacted Durham by contributing to the vibrancy of our neighbourhoods, bringing global talent, and supporting our labour market demands. I am excited about the work ahead, as presented in this plan, which will guide us toward a better Durham for all.





## Message from the Regional Municipality of Durham CAO, Elaine Baxter-Trahair

As the CAO of the Regional Municipality of Durham, it is my pleasure to introduce the new Durham Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) 2025-2030 Community and Inclusion Plan. This plan outlines our strategic approach that will enhance the integration and well-being of newcomers in Durham Region.

Durham has long been a welcoming community for newcomers. This plan reflects our ongoing commitment to fostering a sense of belonging for all residents who choose to make Durham their home. While we work closely with our federal and provincial partners in supporting immigrants, we know that settlement happens in local communities. Over the past years, our community partners have done an excellent job of adapting and supporting newcomers despite increasing pressures on the immigration and settlement sectors. It is through this collective strength that we can support Durham's new residents and advance their long-term contributions to a more prosperous region.

Newcomers have brought valuable knowledge and fresh perspectives to Durham, creating new businesses, driving innovation, and bringing cultural and social diversity. Their skills and experiences enrich our community and fuel our economic growth. As immigration in Durham continues to grow, we will continue to build on our strengths, working toward a future where everyone feels a sense of belonging and can fully participate in our community.



## Acknowledgements

The Durham Local Immigration Partnership (Durham LIP) would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all the individuals and organizations who contributed to the development of the 2025-2030 Community and Inclusion Plan. This plan is the result of collaboration and consultations, and it would not have been possible without the dedication and support of our community partners, stakeholders, and residents.

- **DLIP Council:** For their community leadership and unwavering commitment to championing a welcoming and inclusive Durham Region. Their endorsement of this plan is critical.
- **Newcomer Advisory Table:** For generously volunteering their time and sharing their lived experiences. Their input has been crucial in identifying gaps for newcomers and fostering discussions on topics we might not have otherwise considered.
- **Community Partners in Diversity:** For their dedication and front-line work supporting newcomers. Their expertise in service delivery has been vital in identifying best practices and areas for improvement, strengthening our collective efforts to enhance settlement and inclusion outcomes.
- **Francophone Working Group:** For their steadfast commitment to diversity, inclusion, and the recognition of Durham's bilingual heritage. Their advocacy for Francophone newcomers and efforts to raise awareness about their needs have helped foster stronger relationships between Anglophone and Francophone services.
- **Regional and local area municipal staff:** For their ongoing support, collaboration, and commitment to the projects and events of the Durham LIP. To our leaders, thank you for your vision and for leading by example. A special thank you to our communications and engagement team for their expertise in shaping the design of this Plan.
- **Principal 1964 Consulting Group:** For leading the engagement sessions with excellence and preparing this report. Your esteemed work and writing captured the conversations and insights from the working groups and the LIP.
- **Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC):** For their financial support and commitment to supporting newcomers through direct and indirect services. Your contributions have enabled us to undertake this important work and implement the initiatives outlined in this Plan.

Finally, we would like to thank and recognize the over 500 residents who participated in the survey and consultations that informed this Plan. Your contributions and discussions were pivotal in creating this new plan, ensuring it is grounded in the experiences and needs of our community.

We look forward to continuing our work to create a welcoming, inclusive, and thriving Durham Region for all.





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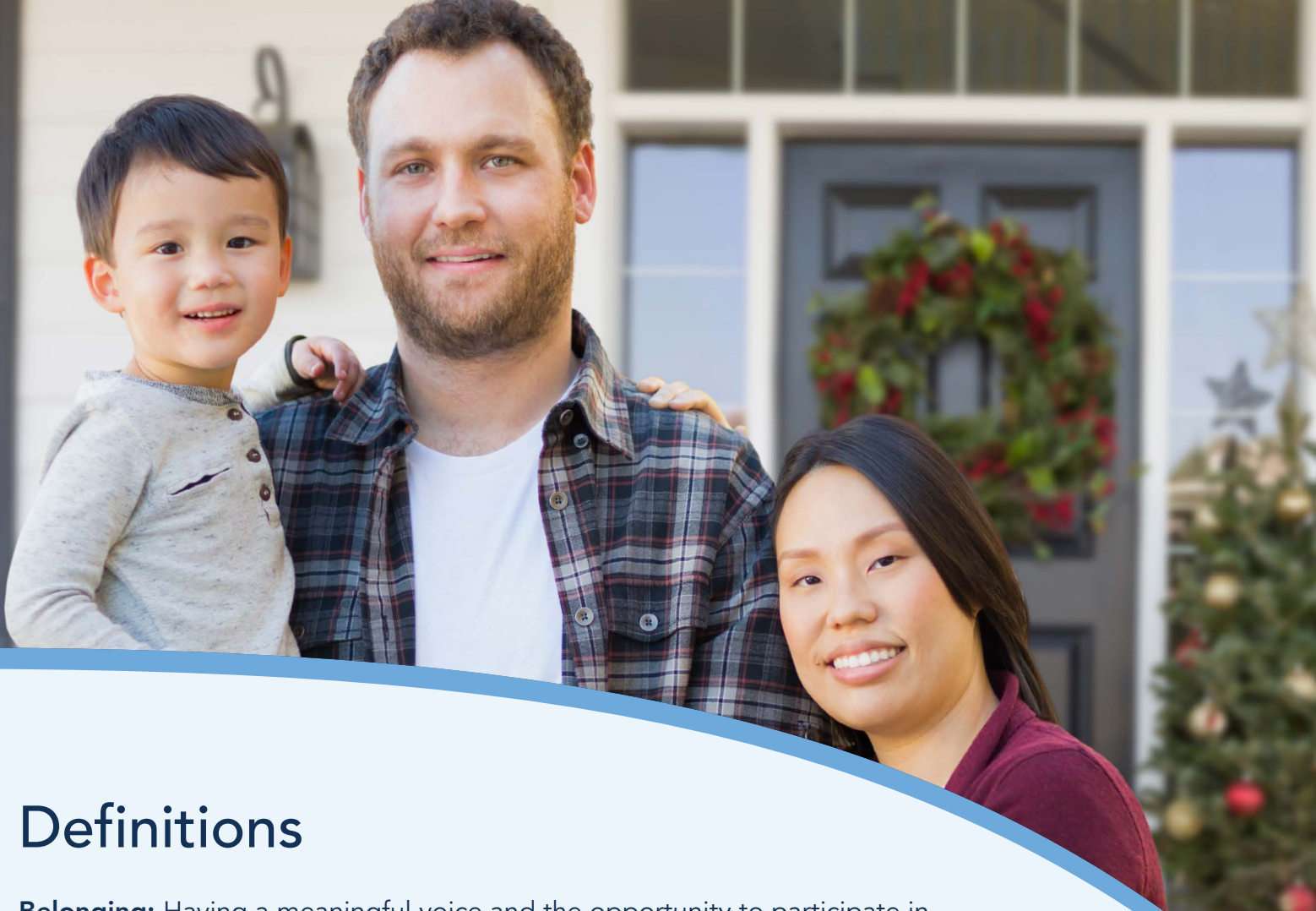
# Executive summary

Immigrants have long chosen Durham as their place to settle and call home. Today, 28 per cent of Durham's current immigrant population are immigrants, or individuals born outside of Canada (Durham Region, 2022). Immigration enriches our community by bringing global talent, contributing to the labour force, creating businesses, and enhancing social and cultural diversity. These are critical components of a healthy, prosperous, and thriving Durham for all.

The 2025-2030 Durham Community and Inclusion Plan (the Plan) builds on the work and success of the Durham LIP's previous Community Plan and outlines strategic priorities and actions that aim to improve the integration outcomes of newcomers and immigrants in Durham Region. The Plan aims to complement other regional strategies that impact the settlement journey of immigrants, such as accessibility, employment, housing, mental health, and feelings of belonging. The [Community Safety and Well-Being Plan](#), [At Home in Durham](#), [Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#), the forthcoming Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan and Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan address these issues more directly.

This report was developed with input from Durham residents, newcomers, community partners, regional and area municipal staff, and all the Durham LIP's advisory and working groups, namely the Durham LIP Council, Community Partners in Diversity (CPD), the Francophone Working Group (FWG), and the Newcomer Advisory Table (NAT). This approach allowed us to create a Plan that is evidence-driven, leverages community assets, and is championed by a collective network that has similar strategic priorities.

To address community needs, this Plan will focus on three key areas: championing collective action in immigration and settlement, building inclusive communities, and embracing innovation and responsiveness in a rapidly changing sector. The Regional Municipality of Durham and the DLIP Secretariat will steward the implementation, measurement, and evaluation of the Plan, while working collaboratively with newcomers, community partners, local municipalities, and service providers to deliver on its initiatives.



## Definitions

**Belonging:** Having a meaningful voice and the opportunity to participate in the design of political, social and cultural structures that shape one’s life—the right to both contribute and make demands upon society and political institutions. Belonging requires mutual power, access and opportunity among all groups and individuals within a shared container (such as a society, organization, club, etc). It is a feeling of security, support and acceptance felt by a person within a space or a system.

**Diversity:** The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique and recognizes our individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs or other ideologies. It is the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual. Diversity can also be considered in terms of organizational, professional and societal differences.

**Discrimination:** Treating someone unfairly by either imposing a burden on them, or denying them a privilege, benefit or opportunity enjoyed by others, because of their race, citizenship, family status, disability, sex or other personal characteristics (note: this is not a legal definition).





**Francophone:** Persons whose first language is French, plus those whose first language is neither French nor English but have a particular knowledge of French as an Official Language and use French at home.

**Immigrant:** Refers to a person who is, or has ever been, a landed immigrant or permanent resident. Such a person has been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities. Immigrants are either Canadian citizens by naturalization (the citizenship process) or permanent residents (landed immigrants) under Canadian legislation. Some immigrants have resided in Canada for a number of years, while others have arrived recently.

**Immigrant status:** Refers to whether the person is a non-immigrant, an immigrant or a non-permanent resident.

**Inclusion:** Acknowledging and valuing people’s uniqueness to enrich social planning, decision-making, and quality of life for everyone. In an inclusive municipality, we each have a sense of belonging, acceptance, and are recognized as valued and contributing members of society. Real inclusion takes place when those already included in the “mainstream” learn from those who are excluded and initiate change.

**Newcomer:** An inclusive term for immigrants or refugees who have been in Canada for a short time, usually less than five years. Newcomers contribute greatly to a country’s social and economic prosperity.

**Refugee:** A person who is forced to flee from persecution and who is located outside of their home country

# Introduction





The Regional Municipality of Durham, the Durham Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) and the Durham LIP council are pleased to present the 2025-2030 Immigration and Inclusion Community Plan. Durham Region is at a pivotal moment of growth and transformation. As one of Canada's fastest-growing areas, the region is projected to reach 1.3 million people and 460,000 jobs by 2051. The expansion in population brings both opportunities and challenges, particularly when it comes to evolving directives and supporting the growing immigrant population.

This five-year Community and Inclusion Plan reflects a response to the significant growth in immigration to Durham Region. Insights from consultations with individuals and community partners have highlighted both changing immigration pathways and evolving experiences of newcomers. Consultations also underscored the evolving political and public sentiment alongside an increasingly complex geopolitical landscape.

As LIP council members, we recognize that the success of newcomers is critical—not only to their personal prosperity but also to the economic and social fabric of Durham. Empowering newcomers to thrive ensures a more vibrant, inclusive, and thriving future for all who call Durham home.

While immigrants make important contributions to our region, they also face unique challenges when establishing themselves here. Ensuring that newcomers can successfully integrate and contribute to our region's economy and community is crucial not just for them but also for the overall prosperity of Durham Region and Canada..

This Community and Inclusion Plan addresses those challenges and focuses specifically on supporting newcomers as they navigate their settlement journey.

This document builds on the success of three previous plans and was developed through a multi-pronged approach, drawing on evidence-based insights and driven by engagement with newcomers, service providers and community partners. The result is a comprehensive plan that puts newcomers at the centre of our efforts, ensuring their long-term success.

As we move forward, the Durham LIP council remains committed to mobilizing collective action across sectors to support immigrant success.

We thank all partners for their contributions to the 2025-2030 Immigration and Inclusion Community Plan and for your commitment to the work that lies ahead. Stronger together, we will continue to foster the collaboration and partnerships needed to create lasting change, ensuring that Durham remains a welcoming, inclusive, and thriving community for all.

**We all belong here.**

**From the Durham LIP Council**



## Durham LIP Council Members

**Allison Hector Alexander**, Co-Chair, Director, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion of Division, Regional Municipality of Durham

**Boluwa Massina**, Executive Director, Conseil des Organismes de Francophone de Durham

**Caroline Chikoore**, DEI Lead, Ontario English Teachers Union

**Elizabeth Roy**, Co-Chair, Mayor, Town of Whitby

**Hermia Corbette**, Executive Director, Community Development Council Durham

**Jackie Flowers**, CEO, Pickering Public Library

**Janelle Benjamin**, Owner, All Things Equitable

**Karey Anne Large**, CEO at Whitby Chamber of Commerce

**Lina Zakaria**, Executive Director, Durham Region Unemployed Help Centre

**Marina Morgenshtern**, Professor and Director of Social Work, Trent University

**Roberta Reyns**, Director of Recruitment and Onboarding, Ontario Power Generation

**Sydney Marcoux**, Clinical Director, Victims Services Durham

**Thom MacDonald**, Dean, Durham College

**Tracey Wright**, Case Manager, Durham College Community Services

**Zareen Butt**, Manager, Public Health, Region of Durham

The 2025-2030 Community Plan builds on the success of the [Durham Immigration and Inclusion Community Plan 2020-2024](#) which focused on the critical role of immigration in driving Durham Region's economic growth.

The following are achievements from the previous plan.



### **Economic Prosperity**

- Developed a local Employer Toolkit, containing information and resources related to immigration and settlement in the workplace and in the community.



### **Service Coordination**

- Continued to maintain and enhanced the Durham Immigration Portal.
- Developed and disseminate program development and planning tools (service maps, resources, measurement tools, etc.).
- Co-ordinated, conducted and disseminated local research.
- Delivered a Best Practices Forum.
- Co-ordinated a Funder's Forum.
- Developed and disseminate an e-Newsletter with a focus on the needs of community partners.



### **Community Belonging**

- Co-ordinated the Newcomer Advisory Table.
- Developed and implemented a regional anti-discrimination awareness campaign.
- Co-ordinated community events that promote public discourse around immigration, diversity, equity and inclusion.

# Approach

This 2025-2030 Community and Inclusion Plan was developed as a result of a three-phase approach designed to engage with residents and community partners across Durham Region to co-design a plan for collective action.



- Had engagement sessions with Durham LIP working groups.
- Analyzed and themed of action planning findings.
- Organized all knowledge articles and wrote the new Durham LIP community plans.



- Launched community survey to residents to identify newcomer issues.
- Held three in-person and one virtual resident engagement sessions.
- Analyzed and themed public engagement findings.



- Validated with working groups.
- Finalized new strategic plan.



# Durham Local Immigration Partnership overview



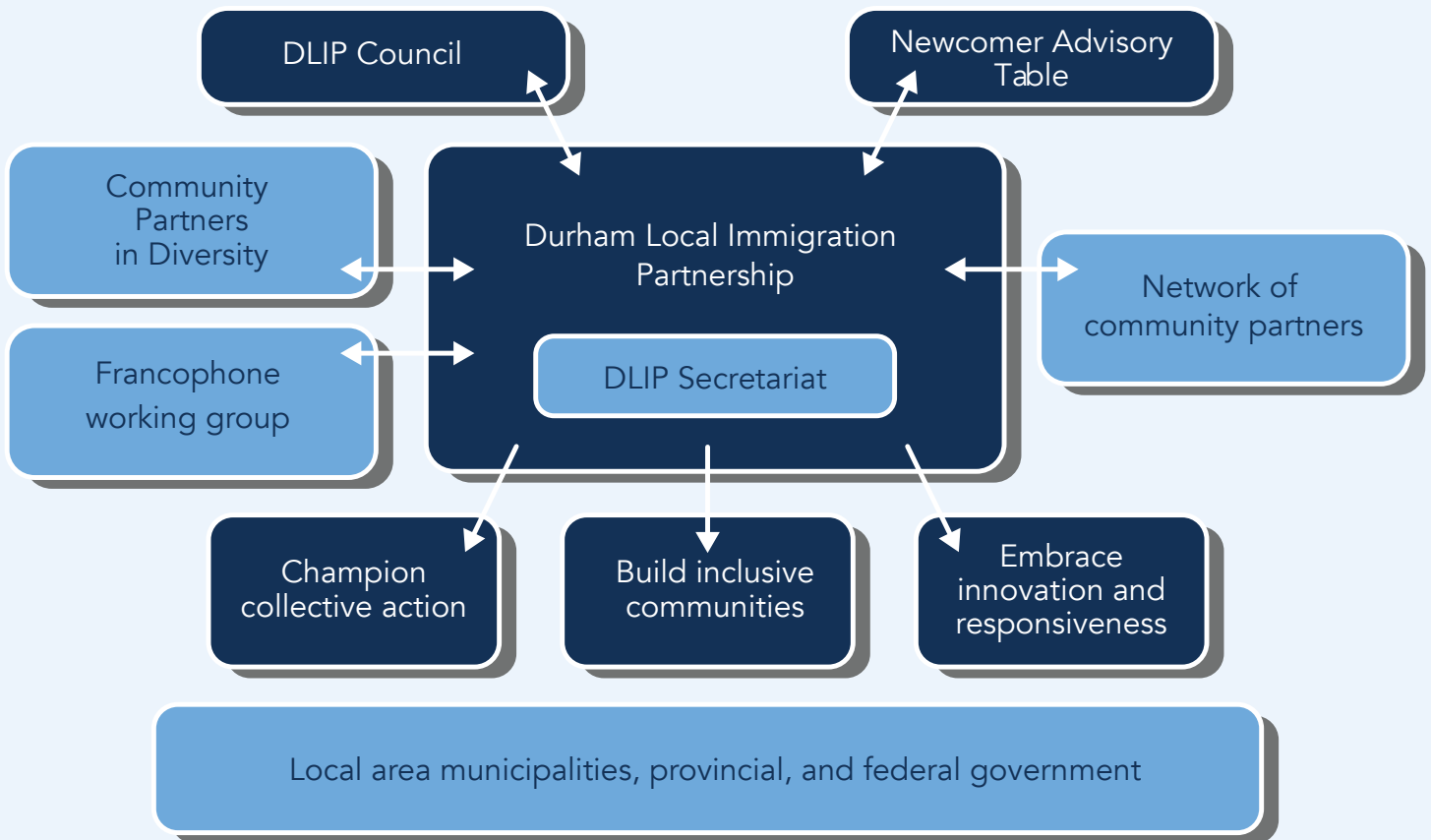


The Durham LIP is a dynamic network dedicated to fostering a welcoming environment for newcomers in Durham Region.

Formed in 2009, the Durham LIP is part of a Canada-wide initiative of Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs), which are designed to build local partnerships and engage in community-based planning to meet the needs of both immigrants and residents.

At the heart of Durham's LIP is a collaborative network of more than 140 community partners. These partners represent diverse service sectors including Welcome Centres, Language Training, Employment Skills and Training, Education, Labour Market Development, Health, Francophone Communities, Social Services and Government. As a network, the LIP works together to address the evolving needs of newcomers by identifying emerging trends, sharing resources, and developing initiatives that enhance inclusion and integration.





It is the responsibility of the Durham LIP Council and Secretariat to support the exchange of information and knowledge across the broader partnership.

**Secretariat:** The Durham LIP is led by staff from the Regional Municipality of Durham, within the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion division.

**Durham LIP Council:** An advisory body comprised of executives and community leaders from a range of sectors, lending direction to the development and execution of the work of the broader Durham LIP.

**Community Partners in Diversity:** Agencies and institutions from across sectors share information with the goal of co-ordinating services and building capacity.

**Francophone Working Group:** Agencies and institutions that serve French-speaking residents across sectors share information with the goal of co-ordinating services and building capacity.

**Newcomer Advisory Table:** Local residents (born outside of Canada) share their lived experience, provide perspective and advice on Durham LIP activities and act as a channel for the work of the Durham LIP to their own communities and networks.

Durham LIP’s mandate is to make Durham a welcoming community where immigrants can belong and contribute socially, culturally, and economically. The LIP also plays a crucial role in mobilizing community resources to tackle the challenges newcomers face, while acting as an incubator for innovative ideas that strengthen the overall settlement landscape.

# Strategic context: Immigration in Durham Region





# National and regional growth trends

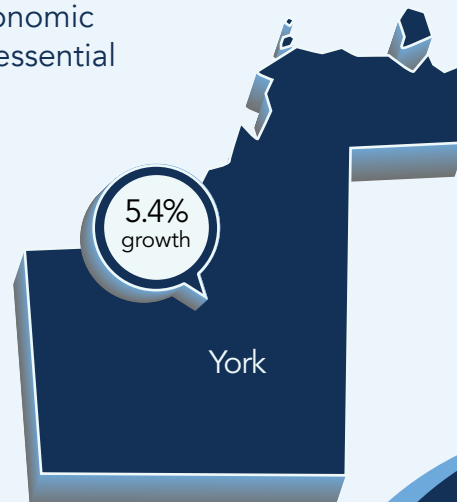
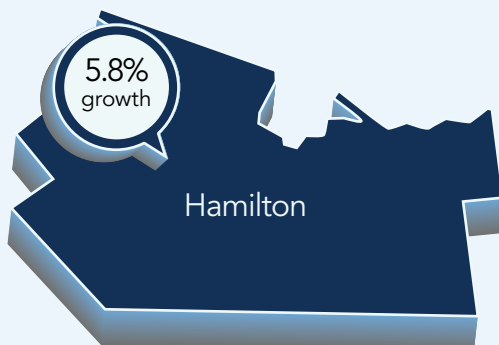
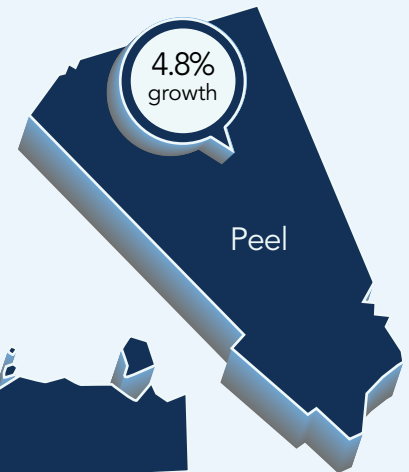
Between 2016 and 2021, Canada's population increased by 5.2 per cent, marking the fourth consecutive census period where Canada led G7 countries in population growth. International immigration played a significant role, accounting for approximately 80 per cent of the country's population growth during this period.

In 2021, 23 per cent of people living in Canada were immigrants, underlining the vital role of immigration in sustaining the country's population and economic prosperity.

Durham Region is part of this growth trajectory, ranking fifth in Ontario and tenth nationally in terms of population compared to other regions, counties, and large cities. During the 2016-2021 census period, Durham's population increased by 7.3 per cent (approximately 51,130 people), outpacing neighbouring regions like Toronto (2.2 per cent), Peel (4.8 per cent), York (5.4 per cent), and Hamilton (5.8 per cent).

Canada's population growth is heavily reliant on immigration, which highlights the important role that immigrants play in sustaining the Canadian population and the economy.

For Durham Region, this booming population growth positions the region as a key player in Ontario's economic development. The ability to support this growth is essential for long-term prosperity.





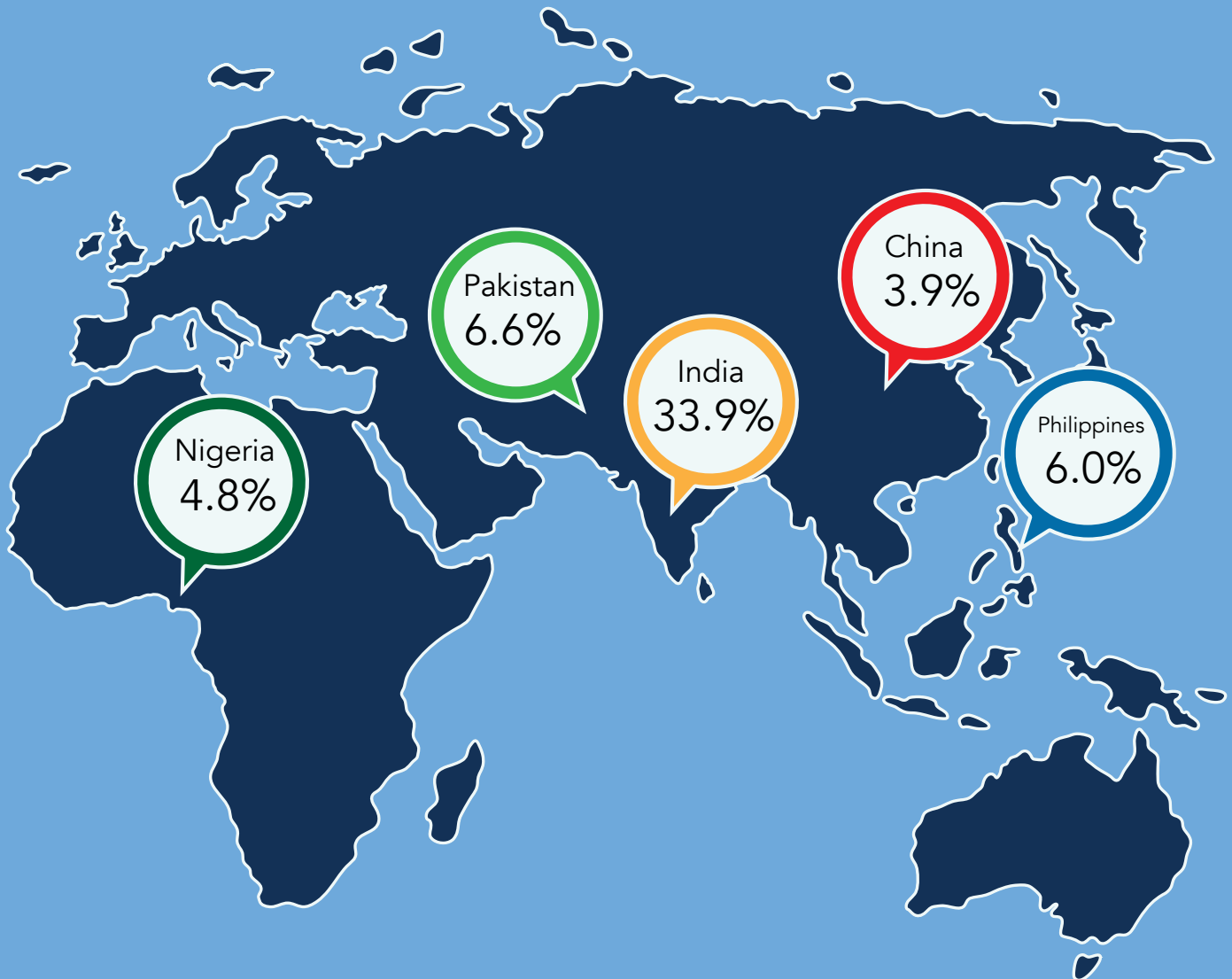
## Immigration demographics in Durham Region

As of the 2021 Census, immigrants represent 27 per cent of Durham’s total population, or 186,460 people. This is a significant increase from the 24 per cent reported in 2016, with Durham’s immigrant population growing at a rate that outpaces both the provincial and national averages. However, compared to other communities, Durham still has the lowest percentage of immigrants in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA).

Within Durham, the municipality of Ajax stands out as the most popular settlement destination for immigrants, accommodating 28 per cent of Durham’s total immigrant population, followed by Oshawa at 21.3 per cent, and Whitby at 20.2 per cent. In terms of percentage of the local population, Ajax again ranks highest with 42.7 per cent of its residents being immigrants, followed by Pickering at 37.3 per cent, and Whitby at 28.4 per cent. In contrast, municipalities like Brock have much lower immigrant populations, with only 8.2 per cent of its residents being immigrants. Overall, approximately 96.8 per cent of Durham’s total immigrant population resides in the southern municipalities, highlighting the concentration of services and economic opportunities in these areas.

# Shifting immigration origins

There have been notable changes in the countries of origin of immigrants settling in Durham. As of 2021, the top five countries of birth for recent immigrants in the region are:



This shift reflects broader trends in immigration, with an increasing proportion of immigrants coming from countries outside of Europe.



### **Growing Francophone population**

Durham Region is also home to a growing Francophone population. In 2021, over 9,300 individuals (1.3 per cent of the population) reported French as their first language. This percentage is higher than the GTHA average (1 per cent) but lower than the provincial average of 3.4 per cent. Additionally, approximately 3,500 residents reported speaking French as the primary language at home, while 580 residents identified French as their only known language.

The composition of Durham's Francophone immigrant population is changing as well. Historically, most French-speaking immigrants came from Europe, but this trend is shifting. In 2011, 37 per cent of French-speaking immigrants originated from Europe. By 2016, this percentage had dropped to 28 per cent, while the proportion of French-speaking immigrants from Africa increased to 35 per cent.

### **Racial diversity**

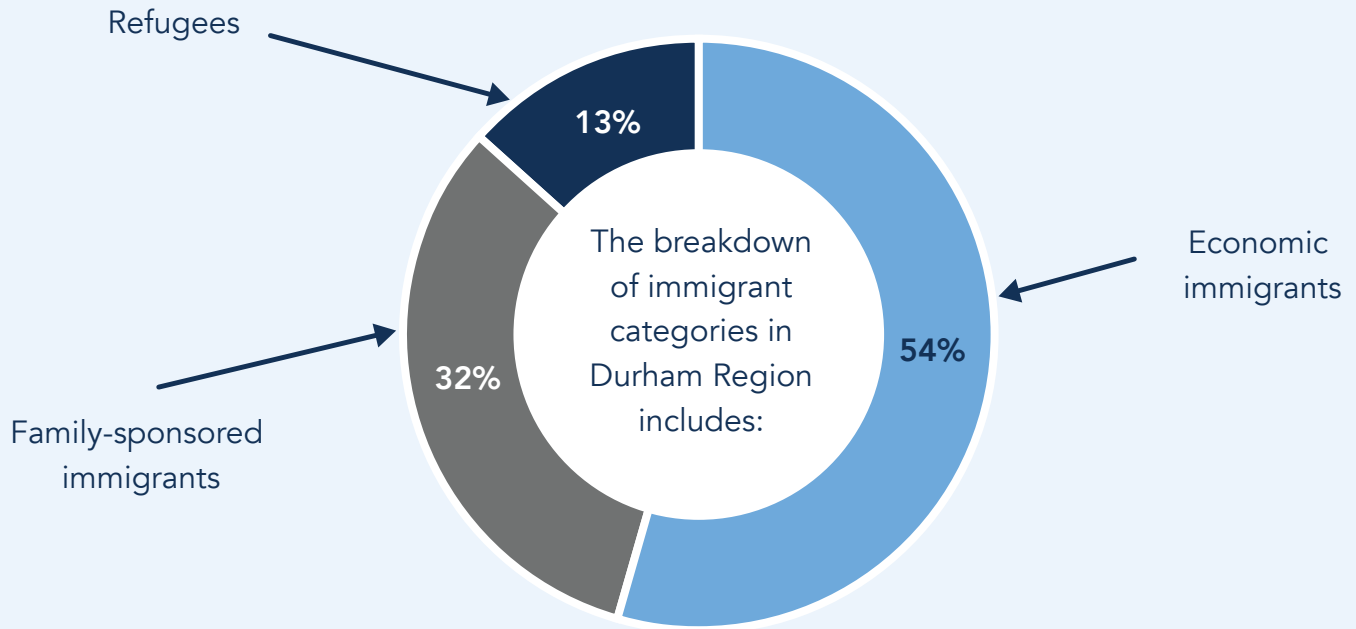
In 2021, 36.3 per cent of Durham's population identified as belonging to a racialized group, an increase from 27.1 per cent in 2016 and 26.8 per cent in 2006. This growing diversity is one of Durham's key strengths as the population continues to expand.

The rising number of immigrants in Durham, particularly in southern municipalities like Ajax and Pickering underscores the increasing social, cultural, linguistic and economic importance of immigrant communities. Understanding these changing demographics is important for tailoring services, programs and policies to meet the unique needs of these populations and support successful integration into Durham's communities.

# Contributions to Durham's economic landscape

Of the immigrants arriving in Durham, 65 per cent are of core working age, and many are admitted as economic immigrants due to their ability to rejuvenate Canada's aging population and address labour force gaps.

The breakdown of immigrant categories in Durham Region includes:



Educational attainment among immigrants in Durham is high, with nearly 30 per cent holding a bachelor's degree or higher, according to national census findings. This educated workforce contributes significantly to Durham's economy, with data showing a steady increase in immigrants' median income over time. The most substantial income gains typically occur three to five years after arrival, demonstrating the growing economic contributions of immigrants as they settle and integrate.

Durham also has a strong base of immigrant entrepreneurs. Between 2008 and 2018, the number of self-employed immigrants in the region more than doubled, increasing from 5,415 to 11,310. These entrepreneurs play a critical role in driving innovation, creating jobs, and contributing to the local economy.

The high levels of educational attainment among immigrants mean that Durham has a well-qualified labour force to continue to drive the economy forward. The level of entrepreneurship further strengthens the region's resilience. However, ensuring that the skills of immigrants are fully utilized in the workforce remains critical.





# Challenges

Despite the positive contributions of immigrants to Durham and Canada more broadly, there are emerging challenges.

- **Onward migration:** The Institute for Canadian Citizenship (2024) indicates that onward migration—where immigrants choose to leave Canada after settling—has been increasing, with ‘unprecedented peaks’ in recent years. This trend, combined with declining citizenship rates, raises concerns about the ability to maintain a stable and engaged immigrant population.
- **Housing:** Housing is another critical challenge. For the first time since 1976, Durham’s population has grown faster than its supply of private dwellings, intensifying the housing shortage. As newcomers seek to establish themselves in the region, they often encounter difficulties in finding affordable, suitable housing, which can delay or disrupt their settlement processes.
- **Discrimination:** Discrimination remains a significant barrier for immigrants. Many immigrants continue to face challenges that hinder their full social and economic integration into a community. From wage disparities (invalidation of credentials) to racial bias in health care or community interactions, discrimination has a detrimental impact on the success of newcomer settlement in a community.

The growing trend of onward migration and declining citizenship rates poses risks to the sustainability of Canada’s immigrant population (Institute for Canadian Citizenship, 2024). In Durham Region, if issues and challenges are not addressed, the region may lose valuable talent and diversity, weakening its long-term growth prospects.

A key solution lies in creating a more welcoming and inclusive community—one where immigrants feel a strong sense of belonging and support, encouraging them to stay, engage, and fully integrate. By fostering such an environment where all residents and newcomers feel like they belong, Durham can strengthen its ability to retain immigrants and sustain its economic and social vitality.

# 2025-2030 Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) Community and Inclusion Plan







# LIP Community and Inclusion Plan

Building on the foundation of the previous plan and shaped by the insights gathered through extensive consultations, this plan reflects a collective vision for addressing the evolving needs of Durham’s growing newcomer community.

## Key activities

The Durham LIP works to foster more welcoming communities by enhancing the coordination of services and partnerships designed to improve settlement and inclusion outcomes of immigrants and residents. The LIP provides indirect settlement services, with work falling primarily within four areas:

1. Coordination and collaboration

2. Capacity building

3. Community building and engagement

4. Data and research

The feedback gathered during consultations clearly illustrates that the Durham LIP is successfully delivering on its core mandate of service coordination and collaboration, data and research, capacity building, and community engagement. The feedback from attendees not only affirms the value the LIP brings to community partners and Durham LIP Council members, but also showcases how the LIP has been successful in meeting its strategic objectives.





## Who we create value for



**Newcomers:** The LIP connects newcomers to services in Durham Region and facilitates smoother integration into the community. The LIP allows newcomers to have a direct voice in shaping services through the Newcomer Advisory Table (NAT), enabling their needs and experiences to be heard and reflected in programs and policies.



**Durham communities:** The LIP fosters a welcoming and inclusive environment by promoting cultural awareness and supporting campaigns and programs that celebrate diversity.



**Community service providers and partners:** The LIP enhances collaboration and coordination among Community Partners in Diversity (CPD) and builds capacity among service providers to support better outcomes for immigrants. The LIP also provides data and research that highlights trends, strengthens partnership networks and improves the accessibility of services for newcomers.



**Durham region elected officials and staff:** The LIP highlights community needs to drive informed decision-making and the development of programs and policies that are responsive to meet the needs of diverse immigrant populations.

# Community and Inclusion Plan summary



## **Champion collective action**

Create long-term change in systems and institutions in Durham Region, highlighting immigration and settlement challenges, advocating for solutions, and mobilizing resources, partners and institutions to act.

- 1.1 We mobilize data, research and insights on immigration and settlement.
- 1.2 We raise the profile of the LIP and its partners.
- 1.3 We advocate for improved access to core services and infrastructure.



## **Build inclusive communities**

Create a supportive, inclusive and welcoming environment where newcomers are empowered to connect, contribute and thrive by amplifying their voices, fostering meaningful relationships and enabling access to services that meet them where they are.

- 2.1 We amplify newcomer voices.
- 2.2 We foster community connections.
- 2.3 We celebrate newcomer successes and contributions.
- 2.4 We enhance service navigation.



## **Embrace innovation and responsiveness**

Continue to be recognized as a trusted and forward-thinking partner, known for quickly adapting to emerging needs in the settlement sector and innovating to meet the needs of both our partners and Durham's immigrants.

- 3.1 We implement innovative solutions to meet community needs.
- 3.2 We continue to be responsive to service providers and partners.
- 3.3 We adapt to the shifting immigration landscape.
- 3.4 We advance capacity and service coordination in the settlement sector.

# Champion collective action



# 1. Champion collective action

**Goal:** Create long-term change in systems and institutions in Durham Region, highlighting immigration and settlement challenges, advocating for solutions, and mobilizing resources, partners and institutions to act.

## **What this means for the Durham LIP**

This goal reflects the LIP's commitment to fostering long-term collective action for systemic change in Durham Region. It is specifically aimed at enhancing the newcomer experience and addressing the challenges that they face in accessing services, employment and community integration. This priority was reinforced by feedback gathered during consultations where stakeholders consistently highlighted the critical role of the LIP in addressing structural issues affecting immigration and settlement.

Advocacy was recognized as essential in addressing persistent barriers that affect newcomers such as access to affordable housing, employment opportunities, health care and other essential services, all of which can hinder the successful integration into a community. This means responding to existing and emerging challenges and working to influence broader policies and systems that shape the experiences of newcomers in Durham Region.

In the previous community plan, the Durham LIP specifically focused on the Economic Prosperity of newcomers. Building upon the work to date, stakeholder consultations for this new plan highlighted the importance of considering the interrelated factors that influence settlement outcomes and create a welcoming environment (Appendix 1). These consultations emphasized that conditions such as housing, employment and healthcare should not be considered in isolation but rather addressed through a system-wide approach that considers the interrelated nature of these factors.

Consultations also underscored the importance of collective action in creating meaningful change. The LIP is uniquely positioned to bring together partners, institutions, and government officials to collaborate on solutions, ensuring immigration and settlement challenges are addressed collectively so that both newcomers and residents can thrive in an inclusive and welcoming Durham Region.



## 1.1 We mobilize data, research and insights on immigration and settlement.

**We actively understand newcomer needs and share research, insights and settlement outcomes to drive informed decision-making.**

### **Rationale**

Understanding newcomer needs through research is essential for informed decision making. The LIP must not only undertake research but also focus on using insights to develop actionable solutions. Consultations emphasized the LIPs role in leading and collaborating on research that identifies gaps, trends and challenges. Research should focus on uncovering barriers and informing strategies that promote successful integration and well-being.

By sharing insights and outcomes, the LIP will drive informed decision-making that empowers stakeholders, from service providers to regional staff, to develop and implement strategies that address newcomer challenges. This approach ensures that policies and programs are not only evidence-based but also adaptable, responsive and impactful.

## 1.2 We raise the profile of the LIP and its partners.

**We raise the profile of the LIP and its partners by enhancing the visibility and reputation of the LIP and our partners, positioning ourselves as the go-to resource on issues that impact Durham's newcomers.**

### **Rationale**

As Durham Region's immigrant population grows, it is important to enhance the visibility and reputation of the LIP as the go-to resource for reliable information and services. The non-profit sector in Durham, which provides essential services to newcomers, is facing challenges, with 68 per cent experiencing staffing changes in 2022- 2023 (Vital Signs, 2023). This turnover highlights the need to raise awareness of the LIP among partners affected by service disruptions, ensuring that they stay informed about key resources available to both service providers and newcomers.

Increasing the LIP's profile will strengthen partnerships, attract new collaborators, reduce duplication and amplify advocacy efforts, helping address systemic and emerging issues collectively. A strong profile builds credibility and influence, encouraging engagement from key decision-makers including regional staff, elected officials, and community service providers. This supports the LIP's ability to advocate for policies, mobilize resources, and drive collective action, ultimately enhancing the newcomer experience and fostering long-term community growth.

### 1.3 We advocate for improved access to core services and infrastructure.

**We advocate for the evolving settlement needs of immigrants such as housing, employment, and healthcare, critical for successful integration and quality of life by engaging key partners, institutions and decision-makers.**

#### **Rationale**

Advocating for immigrant-centred solutions was identified in consultations as important to addressing the evolving settlement needs of newcomers and driving meaningful change in Durham Region. Participants identified an opportunity for the LIP to strengthen its internal advocacy in areas within the Region's control - such as public transit and community safety – allowing the Region to lead by example in advancing policies that directly impact newcomers.

The importance of storytelling was also emphasized, combining compelling personal narratives with data to highlight the challenges and successes of immigrant integration. This approach deepens understanding, builds case studies and resonates with decision-makers, amplifying the call for action.

By collaborating with key partners on advocacy initiatives, the LIP can amplify its efforts, sharing resources and working together to close service gaps. Collective advocacy enhances the LIP's impact, ensuring that immigrant needs are prioritized and addressed through data-driven solutions that improve quality of life and successful integration into Durham Region.

# Build inclusive communities





## 2. Build inclusive communities

**Goal:** Create a supportive, inclusive and welcoming environment where newcomers are empowered to connect, contribute and thrive by amplifying their voices, fostering meaningful relationships and enabling access to services that meet them where they are.

### **What this means for the Durham LIP**

Building welcoming communities has always been a strategic priority of the Durham LIP. Creating a supportive, inclusive and welcoming environment for newcomers is not only about providing services but about actively building social capital within the Region. Feedback from consultations emphasized that newcomers often face barriers of isolation and loneliness, with many unaware of the support available to them. Participants consistently emphasized the importance of fostering connections at the grassroots level and also in meeting people where they are – whether through culturally responsive services or by engaging them in their communities – so that they feel supported and empowered to access resources. Participants suggested that the LIP should focus on building communities where immigrants feel truly integrated and valued, driving both social cohesion and community well-being.

“How we gather, where we gather and what we do when we gather matters because thriving communities are gathering communities”  
~ **Durham Community Foundations (2023)**

In their 2023 Vital Signs report, Durham Community Foundations noted that ‘deeper and broader community engagement is required, especially considering population growth, Durham’s diversity, and demands on non-profit organizations’. Grassroots organizations are often the closest to newcomers and can play a pivotal role in helping them navigate their surroundings.

Consultations also suggested that the booming population growth and changing immigration demographics in Durham Region require a continued focus on education and addressing discrimination, whether based on race, ethnicity, language, religion or immigration status.

Discrimination has negative implications for overall health and well-being and creates divides within communities, leading to exclusion, inequality and social isolation, particularly for immigrants and marginalized groups.

Moving to a new place can be daunting because it involves adapting to a wide range of unfamiliar challenges, from practical concerns like housing and employment to emotional and social adjustments. Supporting newcomers to overcome these barriers is critical for fostering a sense of belonging, easing the transition and enabling equal opportunities for all community members.

## 2.1 We amplify newcomer voices.

**We create platforms and opportunities for newcomers to actively share their stories, experiences, and perspectives, empowering them to demonstrate their positive impact on Durham and Durham's future.**

### **Rationale**

Amplifying newcomer voices is essential, allowing the individuals most affected by policies and services to have a say in shaping them. When newcomers are given platforms to share their experiences, they highlight perspectives that might otherwise be overlooked, especially when it comes to language, cultural differences and service navigation. Participants noted that certain stigmas can discourage newcomers from accessing certain services. Including newcomer voices in decision-making helps Durham create more tailored, responsive services, improving settlement outcomes.

Empowering newcomers also fosters belonging and inclusion. When immigrants actively participate in shaping policies and programs, they are more likely to feel connected to community, reducing social isolation and strengthening community cohesion.

## 2.2 We foster community connections.

**Through partners in the LIP network, we support the development of social capital and meaningful connections between newcomers and residents through grassroots connections that foster trust and understanding.**

### **Rationale**

Fostering community connections in Durham Region builds social capital among newcomers and strengthens cohesion with the broader community. These connections enable cultural exchange, breaking down stereotypes and promoting mutual respect. By engaging newcomers and residents, the LIP creates space for dialogue and collaboration, helping newcomers connect and also helping existing community members appreciate the contributions that immigrants bring to the region. This mutual understanding strengthens community resilience, by fostering a shared sense of responsibility and inclusion.

## 2.3 We celebrate newcomer successes and contributions.

**We celebrate the achievements of newcomers, shining a spotlight on their contributions to the economic and social fabric of our community through recognition and storytelling.**

### **Rationale**

Celebrating the successes and contributions of newcomers recognizes their vital role in shaping the social, cultural, and economic fabric of Durham. By sharing personal stories, the LIP can combat stereotypes and showcase the unique skills and perspectives that immigrants bring. Participants in consultations emphasized that storytelling adds a human element, creating relatable narratives that resonate with broader audiences.

Recognizing accomplishments boosts the confidence and sense of belonging of newcomers while also encouraging broader community engagement in supporting immigrant integration.

## 2.4 We enhance service navigation.

**We identify opportunities to improve service navigation, enabling newcomers to easily access equitable and culturally appropriate services that provide visibility into local ways and meet them where they are.**

### **Rationale**

Service navigation remains a challenge for newcomers in Durham Region. Enhancing it is critical for the LIP, as it directly addresses one of the main barriers to accessing services.

Many immigrants struggle to find, understand or use available services, leading to unmet needs, making it difficult for newcomers to fully integrate and contribute in the region. Effective service navigation reduces confusion, streamlines access and ensures that newcomers get timely support. When individuals can find the help they need quickly and efficiently, it leads to better longer-term outcomes.

# Embrace innovation and responsiveness



### 3. Embrace innovation and responsiveness

**Goal:** Continue to be recognized as a trusted and forward-thinking partner, known for quickly adapting to emerging needs in the settlement sector and innovating to meet the needs of both our partners and Durham’s immigrants.

#### **What this means for the Durham LIP**

Based on the feedback from consultations, it is clear that the LIP plays an essential role in information and resource sharing, fostering collaboration, understanding community needs, and supporting the newcomer community in Durham Region. This positions the LIP as a trusted and forward-thinking partner, a reputation that it must continue to uphold to remain a vital resource for both service providers and newcomers, ensuring that the region’s settlement services evolve in response to emerging needs.

By embracing innovation and responsiveness, the LIP will not only strengthen its ability to adapt to future challenges but will also continue to foster collective action among service providers, ensuring Durham’s growing immigrant population is supported with the resources they need to thrive in a dynamic and evolving environment.

#### 3.1 We implement innovative solutions to meet community needs.

**We demonstrate leadership by championing and supporting creative thinking and new approaches of doing things to drive continuous improvement and meet the evolving needs of immigrants in Durham.**

#### **Rationale**

Rapid developments in digital technologies and increasing operating pressures in the non-profit and community services sectors are reshaping service delivery expectations. Individuals, including newcomers, expect personalized and efficient services that meet their unique needs. As immigration patterns, policies, and needs evolve, the LIP must adopt innovative approaches, both digital and in-person, to remain relevant, effective, and equitable, helping immigrants integrate successfully and navigate the complexities of settlement.

By embracing innovative solutions, the LIP can remain adaptive and proactive in responding to emerging challenges. Additionally, the LIP plays a key role in encouraging service providers to think explore new approaches that enhance outcomes for newcomers. Participants in consultations emphasized the LIP’s potential to share innovative ideas and continue to facilitate information sharing, strengthen outreach and build stronger community connections.

### 3.2 We continue to be responsive to service providers and partners.

**We actively engage with service providers and ensure our support is timely, relevant and tailored to their needs.**

#### **Rationale**

Service providers play a critical front line role in supporting immigrants to integrate and succeed in Durham Region. By engaging with service providers and offering tailored, timely support, the LIP equips partners with the information, resources and connections required to serve newcomers effectively.

Given the diverse services provided to newcomers, service providers face unique challenges, tailoring the LIP's support to these specific needs helps close service gaps and improve service quality. By staying responsive, the LIP fosters positive, reliable partnerships and builds trust within the network of service providers and partners.

Consultation feedback highlighted that service providers value the LIP's customized, practical guidance and resource sharing, which helps them adapt to immigration trends and evolving needs. By continuing to be responsive, the LIP fosters collaboration, strengthens partnerships and meets the needs of our partners.

### 3.3 We adapt to the shifting immigration landscape.

**We monitor changes in immigration policies and trends and collaborate with partners to adjust our strategies and programs.**

#### **Rationale**

Monitoring immigration policies and trends is essential for keeping programs and strategies aligned with the global geopolitical environment. Immigration patterns are influenced by global factors including economic conditions, political instability, and humanitarian crises, affecting the types of immigrants arriving. Currently, Durham's immigration profile includes economic immigrants (54 per cent), family-sponsored immigrants (32 per cent), and refugees (13 per cent), each with unique needs and settlement challenges.

As policies and global events evolve, staying up-to-date and collaborating with partners allows the LIP to proactively adjust its strategies and respond to emerging needs. This ensures that the LIP remains responsive, relevant, and effective in addressing diverse needs.



### 3.4 We advance capacity and service coordination in the settlement sector.

**We empower service providers through targeted, system-level, capacity-building initiatives, to create a strong, more integrated network that supports immigrants in Durham Region.**

#### **Rationale**

Newcomer settlement relies on the strengths of the communities and service providers positioned to support them. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, many service providers face ongoing operational challenges, including financial pressures and an increased demand for services. Staffing issues and program reductions due to funding have further strained resources (Durham Community Foundations, 2023). Building capacity within these providers remains a key for maintaining a strong, interconnected network to support immigrants effectively.

Empowering service providers through system-level initiatives enhances coordination, resource sharing, and alignment across the settlement system. Strengthening capacity enables newcomers to receive consistent, high-quality support across different providers, supporting their effective integration into the community.



## Conclusion

As newcomers continue to choose Durham Region as their destination of choice, supporting the social and economic inclusion of new residents will be critical to the region's growth and prosperity. The success of newcomers in Durham will be the success of the whole community.

The Durham Local Immigration Partnership's 2025-2030 Community and Inclusion Plan serves as a shared blueprint for the region and its community partners to continue their collaborative work focused on improving the settlement journey of newcomers. The Durham Local Immigration Partnership, informed by local, provincial, and federal priorities, will identify collective actions and initiatives to advance the strategic areas outlined in this Plan. This Plan will also be supported by a forthcoming measurement and evaluation framework, which will identify key outcomes and performance measures to assess the DLIP's progress toward its objectives.

When Canada's immigration programs and policies change, so too will the components of this Plan. It will remain responsive to community needs so that the work of the region and its partners brings real, tangible impact to the lives of Durham's newest residents.

# Appendix

## 17 Factors which contribute to an open and inclusive environment Employment Opportunities

1. Employment Opportunities
2. Fostering of Social Capital
3. Affordable and Suitable Housing
4. Positive Attitudes toward Immigrants, Cultural Diversity, and the Presence of Newcomers in the Community
5. Presence of Newcomer-Serving Agencies that can Successfully Meet the Needs of Newcomers
6. Links between Main Actors Working toward Welcoming Communities 7
7. Municipal Features and Services Sensitive to the Presence and Needs of Newcomers
8. Educational Opportunities
9. Accessible and Suitable Health Care
10. Available and Accessible Public Transit
11. Presence of Diverse Religious Organizations
12. Social Engagement Opportunities
13. Political Participation Opportunities
14. Positive Relationships with the Police and the Justice System
15. Safety
16. Opportunities for Use of Public Space and Recreation Facilities
17. Favourable Media Coverage and Representation

Source: [Citizen and Immigration Canada \(n.d\). Local Immigration Partnerships Handbook.](#)

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# The Regional Municipality of Durham Information Report

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To: Committee of the Whole  
From: Chief Administrative Officer  
Report: 2025-COW-7  
Date: February 12, 2025

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**Subject:**

Municipal Diversity Plan for the Durham Region Police Service Board

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**Recommendations:**

That the Committee of the Whole recommends to Regional Council:

- A) That the Municipal Diversity Plan and Recruitment Policy for the Durham Regional Police Service Board, as set out in Attachment #1, be approved;
  - B) That the size of the Durham Regional Police Service Board be composed of seven members; and
  - C) That the Durham Regional Police Services Board Community Member Appointment Recruitment and Selection Policy, adopted by Council in April 2022, be replaced with the new Municipal Diversity Plan and Recruitment Policy, as set out in Attachment #1.
- 

**Report:**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to respond to the requirement, under the Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019, for municipalities to develop a Municipal Diversity Plan for appointments to police service boards and confirm the size of the police board.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 Effective April 1, 2024, the Police Services Act was repealed and replaced with the Community Safety and Policing Act (CSPA), 2019 to modernize policing and enhance community safety.

2.2 Section 28 of the CSPA requires municipalities to prepare and approve a Municipal Diversity Plan. The responsibility of the development and approval of this plan falls to the relevant municipality:

- CSPA, section 28 (1) “Every municipality that maintains a municipal board shall prepare and, by resolution, approve a diversity plan to ensure that the members of the municipal board appointed by the municipality are representative of the diversity of the population in the municipality.”

2.3 The Region’s first Municipal Diversity Plan must be approved by Regional Council before April 2, 2025.

2.4 Under the CSPA, Regional Council is also required to adopt a resolution determining the size of the police service board prior to the start of the next term of office. Failure to do so results in the police service board defaulting to a size of five members.

### **3. Municipal Diversity Plan**

3.1 A Municipal Diversity Plan for the Durham Region Police Board (DRPSB) is attached as an appendix.

3.2 It prescribes how the Region shall make best efforts to attain diverse representation on the DRPSB through an application process that will result in 42% of the Board consisting of members with diverse identities.

3.3 The 42% target was determined by:

- An analysis of regional socio-demographics and trends. For example, Durham’s immigrant population growth outpaces the provincial growth rate. Ontario’s immigrant population grew from 28.5% in 2011 to 30% in 2021, representing a 1.5% increase in 10 years, whereas Durham’s grew by 6.1% during the same period. In addition, the 2021 Census of Population revealed that visible minorities comprised 36.3% of Durham’s population representing a 9.1% increase from 2016, and a 15.6% increase from 2011.<sup>1</sup>
- An analysis of the rationale for the Government of Canada’s 50-30 challenge. This initiative aims to attain gender parity and significant representation (at least 30%) of underrepresented groups on boards and in senior management positions. Regional staff deem the 50-30 target aggressive for the first iteration of this Plan and will revisit this target during the next review cycle.

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<sup>1</sup> A Look at Durham: Trends In Immigration And Citizenship,  
<https://www.durhamimmigration.ca/en/resources/A-Look-At-Durham---2024---Published.pdf>

- 3.4 The current composition of the DRPSB is already in compliance with this requirement and no changes to the current membership are needed. The 42% target was also chosen because of the relative ease with which it can be adopted and maintained. The Region recommends the DRPSB adopt a similar target when developing its own Diversity Plan to ensure their police service's diversity reflects community diversity.
- 3.5 The Region recommends the Government of Ontario adopt the Plan's guiding principles and a similar target when evaluating candidates for provincial appointment.
- 3.6 The Committee may also adopt additional measures to assist in ensuring that appointments are representative of the diversity of the population of the Region, such as improving content and plain language of recruitment communications to make the recruitment process more accessible to residents with a variety of lived experiences and through the application of an equity lens to the selection process.

#### **4. Size of Durham Region Police Service Board**

- 4.1 Regional staff reviewed Durham Region's Police Service Board size in relationship to the size and composition of other municipalities in Ontario and recommends the size of the Durham Regional Police Service Board remain unchanged at seven members.

#### **5. Relationship to Strategic Plan**

- 5.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following strategic goals and priorities in the Durham Region Strategic Plan:
  - Goal 2: Community Vitality: To foster an exceptional quality of life with services that contribute to strong neighborhoods, vibrant and diverse communities, and influence our safety and well-being.
  - Goal 4: Social Investment: To ensure a range of programs, services and supports are available and accessible to those in need, so that no individual is left behind.

#### **6. Conclusion**

- 6.1 The Municipal Diversity Plan prescribes a process for appointments to the Region's police service board to attain members that are representative of the diversity of the population of Durham. A process that is equitable and transparent.
- 6.2 The Region recommends no changes to the DRPSB size.
- 6.3 For additional information, contact: Allison Hector-Alexander, Director, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at 905-668-7711, extension 3893.

**7. Attachments**

Attachment 1: Municipal Diversity Plan and Recruitment Plan for the Durham  
Region Police Board

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

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Elaine C. Baxter-Trahair  
Chief Administrative Officer



**Regional Municipality of Durham  
Municipal Diversity Plan and Recruitment Policy for Durham Regional  
Police Service Board**

<b>Approved by: Durham Regional Council &lt;pending&gt;</b>	
<b>Issued: April 2, 2025</b>	<b>Next Revision: April 2, 2029</b>
<b>Responsibility: Regional Municipality of Durham</b>	
<b>Authority: Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019, S.O. 2019, c. 1, Sched. 1</b>	

## 1. Statement

The following statement was developed by the Durham Region Police Service Board in 2011<sup>1</sup>. It holds even more relevance today and serves as inspiration for the contents of this Plan:

*“An effective and responsive police service must reflect the composition of the communities it serves. The police service must further demonstrate respect and sensitivity to the pluralistic, multiracial and multicultural character of its communities in the delivery of its programs and services.*

*It is the policy of the Durham Regional Police Services Board that the Durham Regional Police Service shall embrace diversity internally as an employer and externally through the services provided by the DRPS. The values of inclusiveness, tolerance, and respect will be promoted and maintained throughout the organization and the communities served by the DRPS.”*

## 2. Purpose

- 2.1 The Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019 and Municipal Diversity Plan provide direction on ensuring members of Durham Region Police Service Board (DRPSB) are representative of the diversity within Durham’s local municipalities. The Municipal Diversity Plan also includes a set of equity-specific guiding principles and recommendations to serve as a foundation for the DRPSB’s strategies, plans, and practices.
- 2.2 This Municipal Diversity Plan:
- i) provides direction on improving equity within the DRPSB. It is separate and distinct from the Diversity Plan the Board develops for members of the Durham Regional Police Service. Both Plans are mandated under the Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019 (CSPA).

<sup>1</sup> Community Diversity Policy, Durham Region Police Service Board, January 2011  
(<https://durhampoliceboard.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/community-diversity-01-Jan-11.pdf>)



- ii) replaces the ‘Durham Regional Police Services Board Community Member Appointment Recruitment and Selection Policy’ issued in April 2022.

### 3. Definitions

The following definitions should be used when reading this policy:

**DEI:** an acronym that stands for diversity, equity and inclusion. Interchangeable with EDI, the term refers to the organizational frameworks that seek to promote the fair treatment and full participation of all people, particularly groups who have historically been underrepresented or subject to discrimination on the basis of identity or disability.

**Diversity:** encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique and recognizes our individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio–economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs or other ideologies.

**Diverse identities:** characteristics associated with historically, persistently, or systemically marginalized groups listed as protected under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, including individuals who are Indigenous, Black and racialized, women, persons living with one or more disabilities (including invisible and episodic disabilities), 2SLGBTQ+ and/or gender diverse individuals.

**Equity:** a principle and process that promotes fair conditions for all persons to fully participate in society. It recognizes that while all people have the right to be treated equally, not all experience equal access to resources, opportunities or benefits. Achieving equality does not necessarily mean treating individuals or groups in the same way, but may require the use of specific measures to ensure fairness.

**Inclusion:** is about acknowledging and valuing people’s uniqueness to enrich social planning, decision–making, and quality of life for everyone. In an inclusive municipality, we each have a sense of belonging, acceptance, and are recognized as valued and contributing members of society. Real inclusion takes place when those already included in the “mainstream” learn from those who are excluded and initiate change.

### 4. Guiding Principles

These guiding principles provide a lens through which the work under this Plan shall be planned, implemented, and assessed.

**Respect:** Respecting the needs of Durham residents and making decisions that are in the public’s best interest and foster trust. This includes ensuring police service board members appointed by the Region take pride in and prioritize providing professional service that respects the inherent human rights and dignity of all community members.

**Community Engagement:** Acknowledging the importance of knowing and understanding local communities and customizing services to meet diverse needs through engagement and consultation. This includes continuous and transparent communication with diverse collaborators and partners.

**Innovation:** Applying creative solutions to achieve equitable and sustainable results. This includes an acknowledgement that as society evolves and community needs change, a police service board must encourage the police service to pursue new methods of maintaining public safety and order, enforcing laws, and preventing crime.

**Continuous Improvement:** Continuing to monitor and assess progress, collect data (including sociodemographic data), and evaluate strategic initiatives. This includes evidence-based planning and decision-making that advances positive outcomes for all Durham residents.

## 5. Board Composition

- 5.1 The Region shall ensure diverse representation on the DRPSB through the application process identified in section 7 and led by the Guiding Principles identified in section 4. The Region shall make best efforts to attain a forty-two percent composition with diverse identities.
- 5.2 As the Board consists of seven members (three appointed by the Province of Ontario and four chosen by Regional Council, three of whom being members of Regional Council and one being an appointee from the community), the Region shall consider the composition of the entire board when appointing its members. Practically, to attain the 42% target, 3 members out of the 7-member Board shall identify as having one or more identities listed as protected grounds under the Ontario *Human Rights Code*.

## 6. Promoting Board Appointment Opportunities

- 6.1 Under section 29 (1) of the CSPA, municipalities shall “take reasonable steps to promote the availability of the appointment, having regard to the need to ensure that police service boards are representative of the communities they serve”.
- 6.2 Prior to the start of each new term of Regional Council or when the need arises to appoint one or more new members to the DRPSB, regional staff shall employ a multifaceted approach to promote the opportunity to a broad pool of applicants. This includes, but is not limited to:
- i) Placing an advertisement with digital newspapers in the Region, posting on social media and sharing with the local area municipalities
  - ii) Leveraging the networks of diverse local community leaders

- iii) Posting flyers in local public institutions (ex. libraries, hospitals, community centres, welcome centres, etc.)
  - iv) Employing social media channels- cross posting and exploring the possibility of paid advertising
  - v) Posting on the job/recruitment boards of organizations that serve people of diverse identities (ex. HireDiverse, Indigenous Professionals Association of Canada (IPAC), Pride at Work Canada, Jobs Ability, etc.)
- 6.3 The appointment opportunity may also be promoted to diverse groups within associations and organizations as they possess qualifications relevant to their discipline as well as lived experience of being part of an underrepresented group. For example, employee resource groups within professional associations for architects, social workers, planners, and lawyers.
- 6.4 This Diversity Plan will be provided to all members of Council in orientation materials at the beginning of their term of office to ensure they are aware of the opportunity to participate as a DRPSB member when appointments are being considered.

## **7. Application Process and Selection Criteria**

- 7.1 Under the CSPA, the Region is permitted to appoint the following individuals to the DRPSB:
- i) The Regional Chair, or if the Regional Chair chooses not to be on the board or is ineligible to be a board member, another member of Regional Council appointed by resolution;
  - ii) Two further members of Regional Council appointed by resolution; and
  - iii) One person who is neither a member of council nor an employee of the Region.
- 7.2 To ensure DRPSB member appointments support the Region's commitment to fairness and integrity, a DRPSB Appointments Committee shall be established. This ad hoc committee will convene prior to the start of each new term of Regional Council and again whenever a new Board appointment becomes necessary.
- 7.3 Where the Regional Chair chooses not to be on the board or is ineligible to be a board member, Regional Council shall appoint another member of Regional Council to the board by resolution. The DRPSB Appointments Committee shall recommend for appointment two members of Regional Council and a member who is neither a member of council nor an employee of the region (i.e. individuals described in 7.1 ii) and iii)).
- 7.4 The DRPSB Appointments Committee, in consultation with regional policy development staff, shall develop an application form and eligibility criteria as well as a scoring process to select new members. Eligibility criteria shall include, at minimum, all legislated eligibility requirements in the CSPA, and may include further eligibility requirements identified by the Appointments Committee.

- 7.5 The Committee will also consider whether additional measures may be implemented to assist in ensuring that appointments are representative of the diversity of the population of the Region (language accessibility, application of an equity lens, etc.).
- 7.6 Regional Councillors and members of the public interested in serving on the DRPSB- as one of the two members of Regional Council or the member who is neither a member of council nor an employee of the region- will be required to submit an application
- 7.7 DRPSB Appointments Committee shall include representation from:
- i) The Durham Regional Chair or their designate
  - ii) The Regional Clerk or their designate
  - iii) The Commissioner of Finance or their designate
  - iv) The Commissioner of Social Services or their designate
  - v) One member of the Durham Local Immigration Partnership
  - vi) The Chair of the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce or their designate
  - vii) A senior representative of a local not-for-profit organization specializing in criminal justice, victim services, harm reduction or homelessness supports (e.g. John Howard Society, Durham Community Legal Clinic, Cornerstone, etc.)
- 7.8 The Regional Clerk's Office shall review applications received and identify all applicants that meet the eligibility criteria. After the application window closes, all eligible applications shall be forwarded to the DRPSB Appointments Committee for review.
- 7.9 The DRPSB Appointments Committee shall identify a shortlist of candidates from the eligible applications, from both members of the public and Regional Councillors, and conduct interviews with shortlisted applicants.
- 7.10 In accordance with the CSPA, in deciding which individuals to recommend for appointment to the DRPSB, the Appointments Committee shall consider:
- i) the need to ensure that the police service board is representative of the area it serves, having regard for the diversity of the population in the area;
  - ii) the need for the police service board to have members with the prescribed competencies, if any; and
  - iii) the requirements of this Diversity Plan.
- 7.11 The DRPSB Appointments Committee shall submit a recommendation report to Regional council with a list of their recommended appointees for approval. Report to include eligibility criteria chosen by the committee, details on how and where the appointment opportunity was promoted, number of applications received, number of applications eligible for consideration, number of interviews conducted, and an overview of the scoring process.

- 7.12 Selected applicants shall be required to provide a police record check prepared in the last 12 months. They may be required to pass an additional background check and a social media background check, conducted by a third-party vendor, prior to their formal appointment for the purpose of verifying details and revealing any discrepancies between their online presence and their application.
- 7.13 The DRPSB Appointments Committee to complete their selection process and recommend an individual or individuals for appointment to Regional Council for approval as soon as possible upon the start of a new term of Regional Council or an announcement of a vacancy.
- 7.14 The DRPSB Appointments Committee shall return all applications and related confidential material in their possession (including any lists of applicants) to the Regional Clerk once all appointments have been approved by Regional Council.

## **8. Term of Office**

- 8.1 The term of office shall be set out by the Regional Council for the appointment but shall not exceed the term of Regional Council that appointed the member. The member may continue to sit until the earlier of six months after the expiry of his or her term, or the day the member's successor is appointed by the Regional Council.

## **9. Equity-Specific Recommendations for All Members of the DRPSB**

- 9.1 DEI-competence will be assessed by the DRPSB Appointment Committee when reviewing applications. The Region views DEI knowledge, a commitment to reconciliation, and the modeling of anti-racist and anti-oppressive practices to be core competencies for members of the DRPSB for the following reasons:
- i) The Code of Conduct for Police Service Board Members Regulation (O. Reg. 408/23 under the CSPA) sets out the code of conduct with which every member of a police service board must comply. Under section 9(1) of this Regulation, members of the DRPSB "shall not, in the course of their duties, treat any person in a manner that the member, at the time, knows or reasonably ought to know would contravene the Human Rights Code."
  - ii) The CSPA requires members of police boards to complete mandatory human rights, systemic racism, diversity, and Indigenous training (standardized and virtual training made available by the Ministry of the Solicitor General) demonstrating a commitment by the Province to meeting the policing needs of diverse communities.
  - iii) DRPSB decisions impact all Durham families and communities. The level of impact may be felt differently by different communities but, ultimately, the Board demonstrates accountability to residents through their governance and what is prioritized. It is essential



- 9.2 Led by the Guiding Principles identified in section 4, the Region invites, but cannot prescribe, that all DRPSB members affirm human rights and the spirit of the Ontario Human Rights Code by:
- i) Ensuring equitable, not necessarily equal, service provision when approving new or revised DRPS initiatives.
  - ii) Reporting to Regional Council and/or members of the public on their progress on equity-specific work.
  - iii) Ensuring complaints of discrimination from members of the public and members of the police service are dealt with promptly and effectively and by appropriate and impartial parties.
  - iv) Addressing inequities by ensuring diverse groups are appropriately engaged and represented at DRPS decision-making tables.
  - v) Directing DRPS leaders and policy development staff to collaborate with local DEI subject matter experts (equity-focused staff from Durham region, school boards, healthcare, settlement agencies, etc.) on the development or revision of strategies, plans, and initiatives.
  - vi) Ensuring the Board's Diversity Plan includes direction to conduct a member census and survey at least once every 5 years and publish a report of the findings online. The census should examine the demographic composition of DRPS and include questions for both sworn officers and civilian professionals that explore their perceptions and experiences of equity and inclusion within their workplaces in order to develop strategic solutions for a more inclusive police service.
  - vii) Ensuring and monitoring the collection, analysis and reporting of race-based and other socio-demographic data.

## **10. Application**

- 10.1 This Plan applies to all Council appointments and reappointments to the DRPSB, members of the DRPSB, Regional Council, and select regional staff as outlined in sections 5-7.

## **11. Review Schedule**

- 11.1 As required by the CSPA, section 28(3), regional staff shall review and, if appropriate, amend this Municipal Diversity Plan every 4 years.

## **12. Information Sharing**

- 12.1 As required by the CSPA, section 28(4), regional staff shall ensure the Municipal Diversity Plan and any resulting reports are made available to the public on the Regional website, in accordance with the regulations made by the Minister, if any.
- 12.2 The DRPSB may post the Municipal Board Diversity Plan on their own website alongside their Diversity Plan for members of the police service.

## **13. Inquiries**

- 13.1 For further information regarding this Plan, please contact Legislative Services at [clerks@durham.ca](mailto:clerks@durham.ca)

## **Motion regarding Combatting Antisemitism and Protocol for Reporting Non-Criminal Acts of Hate**

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Moved by: Councillor Leahy

Seconded by: Councillor Yamada

That we recommend to Regional Council:

Whereas the Durham Regional Council condemn in the strongest terms possible the recent acts of antisemitism and hate discovered at the Whitby Public Library and restates its commitment to an inclusive and welcoming community for all Durham residents; and

Whereas Regional Council reiterates its support for the past National Action Summit on antisemitism, which had the participation of the Federal, Provincial and local governments; and

Whereas Regional Council should commit to looking for ways to educate residents about antisemitism and ways to combat all forms of hate including antisemitism, including a possible combatting antisemitism campaign; and

Whereas Regional council in the past has expressed support for other communities experiencing hate and condemned racist behaviours, including but not exclusive to Islamophobia, anti-Black racism, and anti-Asian hate;

Therefore be it resolved that Durham Regional Council direct the CAO to report on the possibility of establishing a protocol or policy to notify various human rights organizations when hate-motivated acts that might not reach the threshold of criminality but affect targeted communities when they are identified or discovered by region staff; and

That the report mentioned above be undertaken in consultation with human rights organizations that include, but are not exclusive to, B'nai Brith, the National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM), the Centre for Israel Jewish Affairs (CIJA), and the Urban Alliance on Race Relations, and that the CAO include any other Region of Durham organizations in the consultation process. The intent of the policy is to assist organizations in the collection of empirical evidence related to hate activities not meeting the threshold of crime.

## **Motion regarding Protecting Canadian Values: Ban the Nazi Swastika in Canada**

Moved by: Councillor Leahy

Seconded by: Councillor Yamada

That we recommend to Regional Council:

Whereas in recent years, Nazi iconography has surfaced with alarming frequency in the public sphere, used by an increasing number of groups and individuals to promote hate and instill fear within Canadian society; and

Whereas since the atrocities of WWII, the Nazi swastika, also known as the hakenkreuze, has become universally synonymous with systematic violence, terror and hate. Its growing presence in our country poses a threat to every single Canadian citizen, undermining the core values of equality, diversity, and inclusion that define our nation, and

Whereas eighteen countries have already taken action to ban these symbols, it is imperative that Canada follow suit;

Therefore be it resolved, that Durham Region Council supports B’Nai Brith’s call to the Government of Canada to pass legislation banning the public display of Nazi symbols and iconography, including the Nazi swastika (hakenkreuze). Specifically, demanding that the Government of Canada immediately:

1. Ban the Nazi swastika (hakenkreuze)
2. Ban all Nazi symbols and iconography

Durham Region Council agrees that the people of Canada are counting on the federal government to ensure a future free from hate, where every Canadian is protected, valued, and respected; and

That a copy of this motion is sent to all Canadian Municipalities.

## **Motion regarding Made in Canada Approach to Procurement**

Moved by: Councillor Leahy

Seconded by: Councillor Yamada

That we recommend to Regional Council:

Whereas possible tariffs from the United States of America (US), would threaten local jobs and the economy in Brampton; and

Whereas other orders of government are preparing to respond to such threats; and

Whereas all municipalities like the Durham Region, are major purchasers of goods and services; and

Whereas The Durham Region purchasing bylaw upholds respect for trade agreements, with specific reference to CETA (between Canada and the EU), but nothing specific to the United States;

Therefore be it resolved that, Region staff report back as soon as possible, on a "Made in Canada" procurement policy exception in response to tariff threats from the US, should they be implemented; and this motion be forwarded to the Durham member municipalities, FCM and AMO.

## **Motion regarding Request for Gun Amnesty in 2025**

Moved by: Councillor Leahy

Seconded by: Councillor Kerr

That we recommend to Regional Council:

Whereas the Durham Regional Police have reported a 33% increase in shooting incidents in 2024 over the previous year; and

Whereas community safety is an essential pillar of a thriving and successful municipality; and

Whereas the Durham Regional Council is always concerned with providing residents with the greatest possible opportunities to use best practice tools; and

Whereas not all gun violence is gang violence and The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) have reported in the past that 80% of all gun deaths are caused by suicide; and

Whereas the recent increase in gun violence is cause for concern of all Durham Region residents; and

Whereas there is a current national gun amnesty related to regulated changes to the criminal code that started in 2020 and will run until October 2025 that affects previously licensed owners of firearms; and

Whereas this amnesty does not cover all devices and firearms that may be in the possession of currently unlicensed owners; and

Whereas the Durham Regional Police Service in co-operation with the Ontario Provincial Police previously held a successful gun amnesty gun surrender event in 2019; and

Whereas some Durham Region residents may be in possession of unwanted firearms that they wish to dispose of in a responsible manner; and

Whereas reducing and eliminating the number of unlicensed, unregistered, and unwanted firearms will contribute to making our Durham Region communities safer; and

Whereas it is the authority of the Chief of the Durham Regional Police Service working with the Chief Firearms Officer of the OPP to determine when and how to conduct a firearms amnesty in their jurisdiction;

Therefore be it resolved that Durham Region Council request the Chief of the Durham Regional Police to consider applying for and conducting a general firearms amnesty for a one month period in the 2025 calendar year; and

That this request be forwarded the Durham Regional Police Services Board for information.