



Building a Welcoming Grande Prairie – Community, Arts-Based Research

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Research indicates that municipalities must take an active role in making their communities more welcoming and inclusive to help attract and retain new citizens.



OBJECTIVES – WHAT DID I HOPE THIS RESEARCH WOULD ACCOMPLISH?

- To understand immigrants' lived experiences of integrating into a host community through an art exhibit, with the goal of identifying newcomers' needs and what increases successful newcomer integration.
- The intention to present a proposed action plan to the City of Grande Prairie.



Research Question

What can the City of Grande Prairie do to understand newcomers' lived experiences of integrating into a host community to make future newcomers feel more welcome?



WHAT IS ARTS-BASED INQUIRY?

- A newer form of research that can bring about change by eliciting an empathetic response from viewers who may be inspired to take action related to the research question.

WHO WAS INVOLVED?

Newcomers



Local Artists

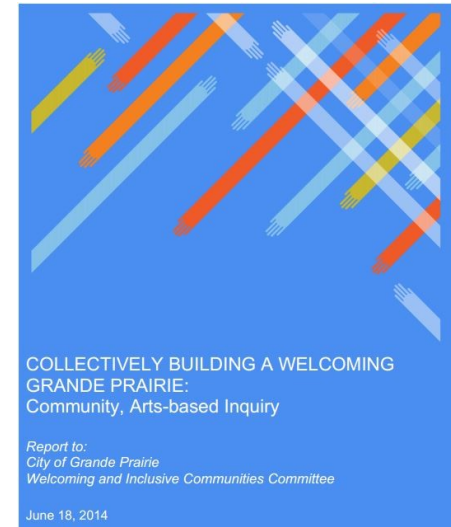


Local Agency Representatives



SERIES OF 5 WORKSHOPS

1. Meet / Share Purpose / Guidelines / Share Stories
2. Show and Tell / Survey Creation
 - Digital Photographic Art, Poetry, Dance, Song, Painting
3. Art Exhibit / Survey Completion
 - 47/50 Attendees Completed Survey
4. Action Plan Creation
5. Report to City



Welcoming & Inclusive Communities
Together we thrive

Tymmarah Zehr, Graduate Student
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The Action Plan & Report

The report to the City was presented to present the survey findings in summary form.

The action plan included three clear priorities:

1. Improve communication to newcomers and host community members about what is available to help with newcomer integration;
2. Involve host community members to assist with newcomer integration;
and
3. Market a diversity campaign.



“I always thought they were so
happy to be in Canada.”

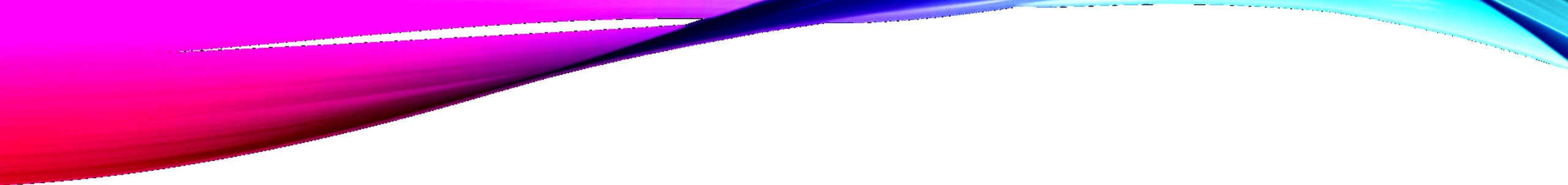
– 36 year old male, Grande Prairie



“(I learned) that it is a process to adjust to Grande Prairie.

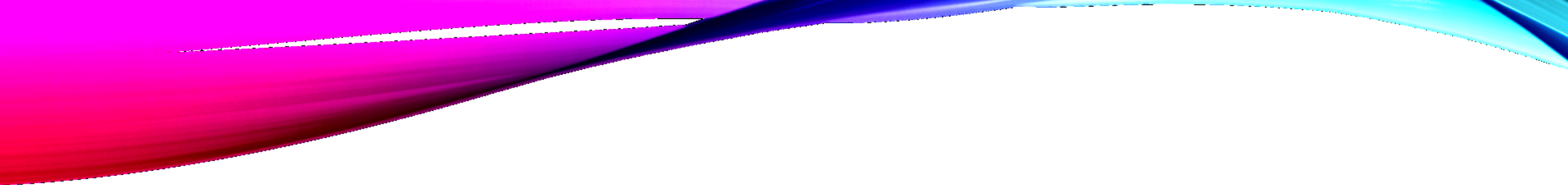
People (and) organizations are not always welcoming.”

Host Community Member



“My first few months (were) really hard. Trying to go from one place to another was really hard, most especially in Winter time. But, I love Canada, particularly the people (in) Grande Prairie.”

- 50 year old male, newcomer living in Grande Prairie

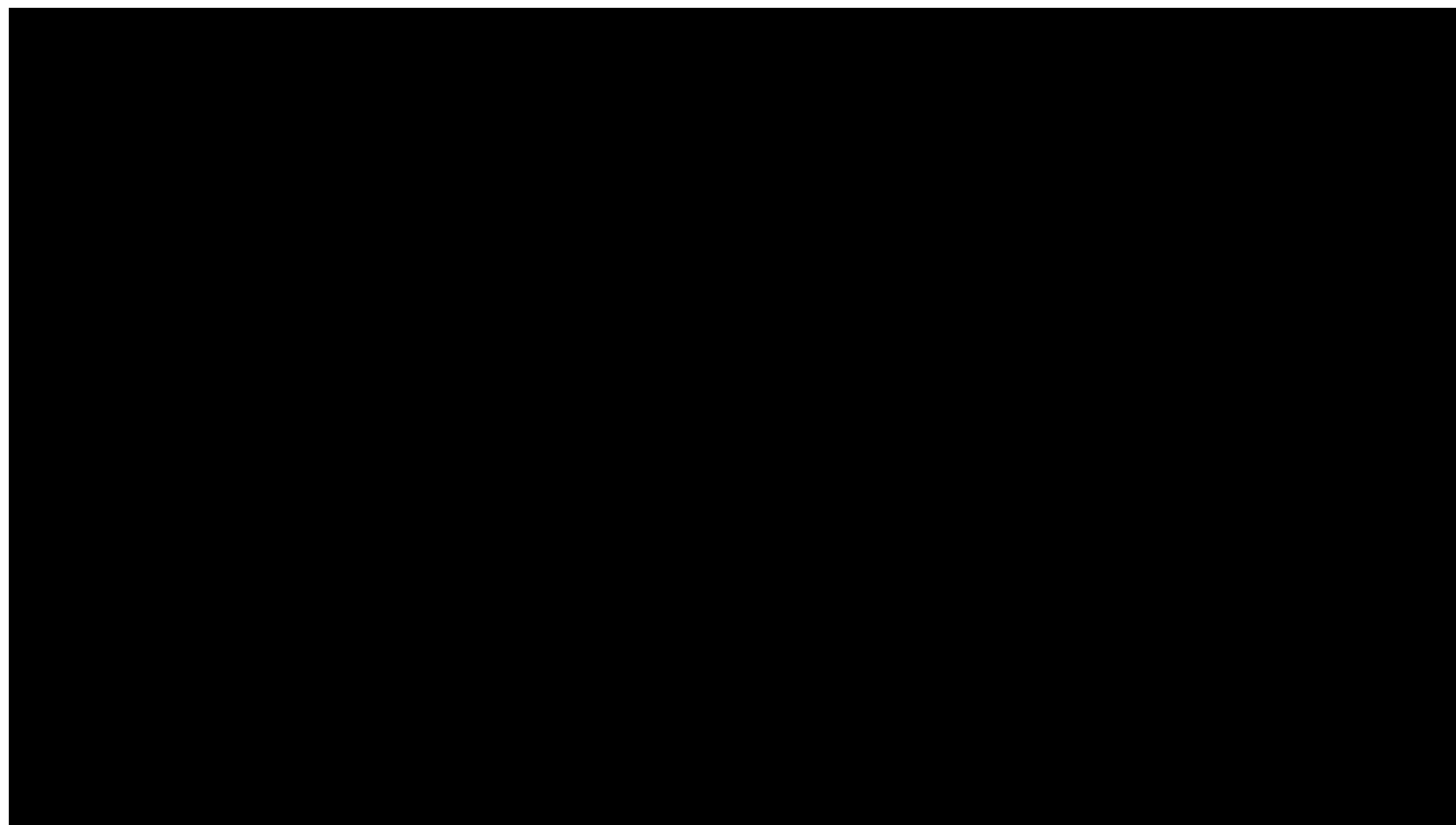


"Very well put together. I appreciated the diversity in artists. I feel it (was) a unique way to interpret stories from newcomers."

28 year old female, newcomer living in
Grande Prairie



THE PERFORMANCES – THE DANCE



THE PERFORMANCES – THE SONG



QUESTIONS?

