

**Assessing the Impact of Immigration and Cultural Diversity
on Municipal Parks, Recreation and Cultural Policies**

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International migration introduces the cultures of the world to local cultures (Burayidi, 2015), transforming the built and natural environment, and the institutions and exchanges that define urban centres. Canadian municipal governments, in their role as policy-makers, service providers, employers and purchasers of goods and services, are integral parts of these local cultures. All Canadian municipalities have some legal authority for parks and recreation services (Sancton, 2009), which involve three areas of responsibility: facilities and open spaces, programs and services, and events (Smale and Reid, 2002). Parks and recreation infrastructure has expanded in size and sophistication since the late nineteenth century (Siegel, 2002), due to their contribution to community and individual well-being.

Parks and open spaces preserve a community's natural legacy and provide positive economic benefits through enhanced property values and municipal revenues. Urban natural capital helps define the quality of life that attracts business investment and workforce talent. Accessible parks and recreation amenities promote healthy lifestyles and help reduce long-term health care costs. They can also help build a community's identity and social cohesion (City of Edmonton, 2006). A poignant example of the power of local public space to bring people from diverse cultures together was illustrated when Willowdale residents transformed a parkette into a memorial honoring the victims of a deadly vehicular attack on pedestrians. Multilingual messages of sympathy and public vigils organized by different faith groups turned communal space into a place where the world could mourn together.

This paper draws on documentary and interview evidence to examine the extent to which one aspect of local culture—parks and recreation programming and service delivery—reflects the demographic changes that have been brought about by international migration in five important immigrant destination cities: Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Toronto and Brampton. It asks whether the normative outlook of their policy, planning, program, and service initiatives reflect multicultural planning thought, which recognizes cultural differences in public institutions and supports responses that are tailored to different groups, or does it embody a different outlook that treats all groups in a similar way? How active have these municipalities been in adopting multicultural planning practises? To what extent are responses defined by the parameters of state-level models of community building and immigrant incorporation, or by localized factors? If the latter, what role does the local civic culture and demography play in decision-making?

Urban planners have historically been concerned with providing all residents with access to facilities and amenities. However, immigrant status, belonging to a minority religion, and speaking a non-official language have been associated with lower rates of participation in recreational activities (Aizlewood, Bevelander and Pendakur, 2005). Young newcomers take part in recreation half as often as Canadian-born children because of the hurdles their parents face (Social Planning Toronto, 2016). Immigrants face barriers to access that are particular to their adjustment to a new environment: a time crunch, language barriers, a lack of familiarity with the ways of life in their new homeland, insufficient knowledge about and access to recreational activities, and experiences with discrimination (Stodolska, 1998). Program affordability is often a challenge for newcomers and racialized minorities, or they may have facility and programming preferences that are different from the preferences of more established residents (City for All Women Initiative, 2009).

Manager in the parks and recreation field have discussed the merits of different approaches to facilitating the civic integration of immigrants and minority communities. While ethnic recreational activities might merge with the “mainstream” over the long-term, some feel there is a need to accommodate ethnic needs in the short-term. Others suggested striking a

balance between integration and the preservation of ethnic values, practises and lifestyles, particularly when dealing with immigrant seniors. Some predicted less cultural assimilation as ethnic populations increase in size, resulting in a need for municipalities to adapt to cultural differences through targeted hiring and programming (Edmonton Community Services, 2002). Which of these approaches to take is the puzzle that confronts parks and recreation staff in immigrant destination cities across Canada.

Planning for Immigration and Diversity: normative debates

Historically, urban planning thought has evolved to reflect changing paradigms about society and ethnic relations, and in response to the rights claims of civil society actors. Prior to the 1960s, American urban planning practises were based on a monistic philosophy grounded in universalist values, reflecting the state-level assimilationist paradigm of immigrant incorporation. This philosophy was criticized for ignoring the needs of minority groups whose value systems were different than those of professional planners (Burayidi, 2000). Pluralist planning practises emerged against the backdrop of the Civil Rights and feminist movements, broadening the scope of planning from a concern for the physical environment to advocacy planning on behalf of disadvantaged groups and the incorporation of alternate viewpoints. While the central aim was to advocate for the rights and needs of African Americans, later waves of immigrants to North America began demanding equity and recognition of their rights to the city and its services (Qadeer, 2015).

By the late 1980s and 1990s, an emerging post-modern paradigm envisioned the United States as a fusion of disparate cultures, prompting new thinking about planning. Post-colonial and post-modern discourse emphasized the legitimacy of different forms of knowledge based on the demographic and experiential characteristics of a society. A new holistic planning approach would treat various groups differently and adopt more inclusive planning practices (Burayidi, 2000). Multicultural planning rejects the classic liberal conception of a common good that “transcends or ignores” cultural and other differences (Sandercock, 2003). Multicultural planning thought has “raised consciousness about the rights of ethnic groups, racial minorities and immigrants to the city” (Fainstein, 2005). It incorporates the diverse cultural backgrounds of clients, staff and managers into programs, services and delivery methods (Burayidi, 2000; Reeves, 2005), while respecting the common good and equity for others, through reasonable accommodation. Planning practices founded on reasonable accommodation principles would include measures to ensure the representation and participation of ethnic communities in planning processes, and targeted policies for the provision of culturally sensitive community services for ethnic minorities and immigrants (Qadeer and Agrawal, 2011). By the early 2000s, the discursive framework of multicultural planning shifted to regarding diversity as an “important quality of a good city and creating common institutions” (Qadeer, 2009).

State-level Paradigms of Immigrant Incorporation and Local Autonomy

In response to sustained migration, local authorities in the United States, Europe and Canada have developed policies and practices aimed at reducing the “segregation, inequality, discrimination and poverty” experienced by immigrants, and to make city institutions more representative and accommodative of newcomers’ needs (DeGraauw and Vermeulen, 2016). While local integration policymaking might deviate from national traditions of citizenship and notions of national identity, it has been argued that it does so within the limits of nationally defined paths (Koopmans, 2004). For example, local integration policy at the corporate level in Amsterdam “moved away from a multicultural approach at a time when multiculturalism lost favour at the national level” (DeGraauw and Vermeulen).

Yet there is considerable scope for local deviations from national integration models. Local policy in Berlin has been more inclusive than what would have been expected based on the anti-immigrant mood and exclusionary immigration and citizenship policies of the German state. New York City and San Francisco have developed immigrant integration policies in the absence of a formal national integration program and at a time when federal policies and practises emphasized enforcement and the restriction of immigrant rights and benefits” (DeGraauw and Vermeulen).

The planning practices of all Canadian municipalities are embedded in a state-level institutional and legal framework and nation-building paradigm that supports multiculturalism. At the ideological level, multiculturalism celebrates ethnic diversity as legitimate and integral to Canadian society. At the policy level, the objectives of the federal government’s multiculturalism program have evolved since the policy was introduced in 1971 and subsequently recognized in the Constitution and statutes. Early multicultural policies concentrated on supporting the preservation of minority cultures and intercultural sharing through the promotion of ethnic presses and festivals. In the late 1980s, the focus shifted to promoting social and economic integration through institutional change in the federal government, eradicating racism, and removing discriminatory barriers. In the 2000s, the program continued the focus on promoting intercultural understanding and the economic, social and cultural integration of newcomers and cultural communities, but placed additional emphasis on promoting “Canadian” values (Dewing, 2013).

Writing in the early 2000s, Sandercock lamented the gap between the multicultural rhetoric of federal politics and legislation, and the reality of the streets and neighbourhoods of Canadian cities (2003). Since then, planning departments in large and medium-sized North American cities have adopted multicultural planning practices on a case-by-case basis (Qadeer, 2009; Qadeer and Agrawal, 2011). Research suggests that the adoption, timing and breadth of multicultural planning principles and practices in the municipal corporate policy domain have not been uniform across Canadian cities, including those situated in close proximity (Good, 2009; Tossutti, 2012), suggesting there is room for local autonomy.

Local Responses to Immigrant Incorporation

Comparative urban researchers have examined the conditions that prompt local authorities to craft corporate-level integration policies in response to international migration. The key

variables they have identified may be grouped under the concept of local civic culture, which consists of three components: community power systems; community value systems, and community decision-making systems (Reese and Rosenfeld, 2016).

The community power system is concerned with the groups or actors that wield the most power in public decision-making. Correlations have been found between the representation of immigrant-origin individuals in legislative or administrative posts in San Francisco and New York City and a policy commitment to immigrant integration (DeGrauw and Vermeulen). Political leadership has been identified as critical in Toronto (Wallace and Frisken, 2000), Truro, Rimouski, Sherbrooke, Ottawa and Surrey, while mayoral disinterest in other cities has resulted in inaction, even where there was intense pressure from civil society organizations to help with immigrant settlement. A lack of significant movement on the immigration and diversity file in many Ontario municipalities has been attributed to fiscal constraints and a “weak” mayor system (Tolley and Young, 2011). Civil society actors have been effective in persuading municipalities to act, particularly when they have acted in concert with each other. A strong infrastructure of immigrant rights organizations has played a role in the development and implementation of a local integration program in San Francisco (DeGrauw and Vermeulen). In Canada, networks of immigrant-serving agencies and community groups, supported by sympathetic elected officials, have driven municipal action in Montreal and Ottawa (Poirier, 2000), Edmonton (Derwing and Krahn, 2006), and Sherbrooke (Corriveau and LaRougery, 2006; Vatz Laaroussi et al., 2006).

The community value system component encompasses ideological predispositions, tolerance for conflict among groups and decision-making processes, visions of the community and goals for the future, and general orientations toward public policies (Reese and Rosenfeld). For example, the election of liberal or left-leaning councils in Amsterdam and San Francisco has been linked to the adoption of integration policies (DeGrauw and Vermeulen). A study of 17 European cities found that official attitudes about the temporal and spatial presence of migrants and normative premises about the desirability of recognizing ethnic or religious “otherness” have influenced the granting of migrant citizenship rights and opportunities for political participation (Alexander, 2004). Poirier’s Canadian research has argued that policy responses are shaped by official attitudes about whether culturally-based differences should be recognized in public institutions (2004).

The community decision-making component includes the resources devoted to policy implementation, the internal organization of departments, and the processes that lead to decisions (Reese and Rosenfeld). In the Greater Toronto Area, the most proactive municipalities had established an early lead in developing programs for the immigrant community (Wallace and Frisken, 2000). Toronto’s early lead in programming was facilitated by its status as an older city and recipient of settlement resources from senior governments, which gave ethnoracial minorities more time to organize and create bridges with municipal institutions compared to the newer municipalities of Mississauga or Brampton (Good, 2009).

Many of these studies have considered the impact of local demography on decision-making. An early study of Greater Toronto Area municipalities found that the timing of recent immigration, the proportionate size of the immigrant population, and the electoral strength of minority communities, exerted little to no influence on municipal policy responses (Wallace and Frisken, 2000). However, in the Greater Vancouver Regional District, municipalities with a proportionately larger share of immigrants, visible minorities and non-English-speaking populations were more active than those with less diverse populations (Edgington and Hutton, 2002). A similar conclusion was reached about the impact of Toronto’s large immigrant and

visible minority population on the city's responsiveness. A community's ethnic configuration may also matter; biracial municipalities with a concentration of a single visible minority group were generally more responsive than multiracial communities (Good). These studies have advanced our knowledge about why, when and how local authorities develop corporate-level responses to immigration and cultural diversity. This paper hopes to achieve the same objectives with regard to the field of parks and recreation.

Municipal Responses in the Parks and Recreation Domain

This paper is part of a larger comparative case study of six cities across three provinces. Complete results for the sixth city of Abbotsford were not available at the time of writing. Two cities were selected from each province to control for potential provincial effects. The case selection was based on their status as some of the most culturally diverse cities in the country and in their respective provinces. Between 30 and 31 percent of the populations of Calgary and Edmonton was born abroad; visible minorities comprise 36.2 and 37 percent of their respective populations. Vancouver (42.5 percent), Toronto (47 percent) and Brampton (52.3 percent) have proportionately large immigrant populations. Their respective visible minority communities are also high, with Vancouver at 51.6 percent, Toronto at 51.5 percent and Brampton at 73.3 percent (Statistics Canada, 2018).

Information from official documents and semi-structured interviews with officials in parks and recreation departments was used to summarize responses to immigration and cultural diversity in two analytical areas—general governance and individual migrant empowerment. Cities were classified as comprehensive if they had adopted initiatives on 60 percent or more of the indicators, as selective if they had adopted initiatives for 30-59 percent of the indicators, and limited if they had adopted fewer than 30 percent of the relevant indicators. The inventory provided the baseline data for describing the breadth of each municipality's response in each area. The selection of indicators was based on previous research that has examined the local governance of immigration and diversity in European cities (Eurocities and the Migration Policy Group, 2008):

General governance:

- The municipality's strategic plan(s) for parks and recreation recognizes the presence and policy/program/service implications of immigrants and racialized populations

- Staff take immigrant status and ethno-racial characteristics into account in the planning and delivery of parks and recreation services
- The municipality has implemented targeted programming and services to address the leisure needs of immigrants or members of racialized populations*
- The municipality has built facilities that are targeted to address the leisure needs of immigrants or members of racialized populations*
- The municipality conducts immigrant and/or racialized minority-focussed research in the domain of parks and recreation*

Individual immigrant empowerment:

- The municipality's plan for parks and recreation is prepared in consultation with immigrants and immigrant associations, and their views are reflected in the document.
- Staff in parks and recreation units reflect the composition of the city's population*
- The municipality publishes multilingual information about parks and recreation*
- Immigrants can express themselves in their own language through an interpreter when accessing parks and recreation services delivered by the municipality and/or its partners*

The same sources were used to describe each municipality's normative outlook on the adoption of multicultural planning practises. Previous studies have adopted an assimilationist-pluralist continuum to situate municipal responses to immigration and diversity (Poirier, 2004; Graham and Phillips, 2006; Tossutti, 2012). Assimilationist models emphasize individual equality, the recognition of individual rights and the right to protection from discrimination. Public spaces are expected to remain "culturally neutral" and the expression of cultural distinctiveness is confined to the private sphere. Policies, programs and services do not recognize differences based on a resident's immigrant or visible minority status (Poirier, 2004). Pluralist models acknowledge that the diversity that is found in the private sphere should be reflected in public policies, programs and services. Pluralist cities are further distinguished based on their adoption of the multicultural or intercultural variant of pluralism (Poirier). The former recognizes individual *and* group-based citizenship identities and rights in policy, programming and service responses. These group-based identities and rights are founded on the idea that the needs and experiences of native-born, immigrant and racialized populations may be different, and require targeted initiatives. The intercultural variant emphasizes individual citizenship identities and rights; the rhetorical and policy emphasis is placed on creating pan-ethnic structures, policies, programs and services, rather than outputs that are specifically designed for immigrants or members of racialized communities.

Municipalities that adopted 5 or more of the nine indicators of pluralism were classified as pluralist. Cities that implemented fewer than five were classified as assimilationist. The distinction between whether a city had adopted the multicultural or intercultural variant of pluralism was assessed according to a city's adoption of the sub-set of six indicators indicated with an asterisk above. Cities were classified as multicultural if they adopted four or more of these indicators. If a pluralist municipality exhibited fewer than four, it was classified as intercultural.

General Governance

The municipality's strategic plan(s) for parks and recreation services recognize the presence or impact of immigrants and racialized populations

The strategic plans for parks and recreation services in four municipalities overtly recognize that international migration and cultural diversity are shaping residents' needs and preferences. Brampton's *Parks and Recreation Master Plan* identifies the city's multicultural profile as a core attribute and commits the city to ensuring that "cultural background" is not a barrier to participation (City of Brampton, 2017). It notes that persons from diverse cultural groups may be using parks for social rather than traditional recreational purposes, which has implications for the design of future parks. It also recognizes that planners will need to consider cultural nuances when developing a seniors centre in the east end, where there is a substantial East Asian and South Asian population and other cultural groups. Older adults from these communities are not as inclined to formally register for programs in the same way as established Canadian seniors, but instead may be looking for non-structured activities they can pursue with friends or family. The Plan also identifies several priorities related to the city's multicultural profile: the construction of three new cricket pitches and a seniors' centre that would incorporate both traditional elements (e.g. eating areas, yoga studios, gyms) and non-traditional spaces and programs oriented to newcomer services, with a greater focus on indoor/outdoor communal areas for gatherings.

Toronto's *Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan 2019-2038* acknowledges that more newcomers are creating increased demand for facilities and sports that support cultural interests (City of Toronto Parks and Recreation, 2017). Toronto's *Recreation Service Plan 2013-2017* acknowledges language as a barrier to participation, and recommends creating multilingual promotional materials, improved outreach to newcomers, working with other city divisions and organizations that support or work with underserved populations, including newcomers (City of Toronto Parks and Recreation, 2013a). Recreation programmers in every facility will be provided with a demographic and service profile of surrounding neighborhoods, which include languages spoke at home so that culturally relevant programs can be designed, delivered and promoted. The guiding principles of the *Parks Plan 2012-2017* refer to respecting the needs of diverse populations regardless of cultural background, among other characteristics (City of Toronto Parks and Recreation, 2013b).

A guiding principle of Calgary's 20-year *Imagine Parks* is that public spaces should be accessible, regardless of culture and other characteristics (City of Calgary Parks, 2014). The *Recreation Master Plan 2010-2020* commits the city to addressing language and cultural barriers (City of Calgary Recreation). It acknowledges that increased population diversity and the vulnerability of immigrants and visible minorities to poverty may require community outreach and/or focused programming efforts. Edmonton's *Recreation Facility Master Plan 2005-2015* and 2009 update identify cultural diversification and the values of diversity and inclusiveness as trends shaping facility needs. The *Outdoor Aquatic Strategy 2008-2017* acknowledges that changing ethnic profiles may boost demand for new sports/activities and the need for increased sensitivity to how current facilities are used. The *10-Year Gymnasium Strategy 2013-2025* recommends identifying potentially vulnerable populations, including new immigrants, multicultural groups, and working with staff, social workers and community recreation

coordinators to increase user awareness and ensure that employees are familiar with corporate diversity and inclusion initiatives and the remote interpretation services provided by 311. The *Urban Parks and Management Plan 2006-2016* mentions cultural diversity as a planning consideration and identifies the increase in newcomers with language and financial challenges as barriers to participation in recreational activities and public engagement processes. It recommends modifying traditional practices with respect to public input, parks acquisition, design and programming. Multi-use parks must consider cultural diversity by conducting research to identify the recreational needs of ethnic or cultural populations; providing translation services to assist with needs assessment and public meetings; supporting non-traditional park landscapes; park signage or way-finding signage; and working with community partners to facilitate culture-specific recreational programming.

The *Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation's Strategic Framework 2012* does not overtly refer to the city's cultural diversity in its statement of its mission, vision, directions, goals and objectives. A new master plan to guide the delivery of parks and recreation over the next 25 years is scheduled to be presented before city council in June 2018.

Municipal staff take immigrant status and ethno-racial characteristics into account

The principles of accessibility and inclusion have historically informed the professional norms of planners in leisure services, and these norms were observed during the interviews with senior managers. There was a universal recognition of the impact of immigration and cultural diversity on their research and public consultation activities, programming and/or facility design. While ideas on how to respond differ across cities, they were all preoccupied with expanding opportunities for participation to all community members.

In every city, the mix of service delivery and programs is informed by a demographic analysis of neighbourhoods or service areas, including their cultural and linguistic characteristics. Aydin Sarrafzadeh, Manager of Aquatics, Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation, has observed a shift in demands over the last 15 years. Gender-specific programming for drop-in and recreational programs was introduced in response to requests for religious accommodation and concerns about comfort and safe spaces. International migration has also contributed to more complexity surrounding decision-making. "Every neighbourhood changes very rapidly. People move around. Changes to our programs are done on a quarterly basis. There is a phase-out period during which we consult. While some want specific programs, others want more inclusive programs. We must be both nimble and strategic" (Sarrafzadeh, 2018). Richard Ubbens, Director of Parks, Forestry and Recreation has observed that newcomers and members of minority communities use parks for traditional activities such as picnics and cultural festivals, but also for religious ceremonies involving the spreading of human ashes or animal sacrifices. When religious-based uses violate park rules, the city will research the faith tradition and work with communities and conservation authority partners to formulate other ways of allowing faith-based ceremonies to continue in a manner that conforms with city rules (2018).

James McLaughlin, Director of Calgary Recreation Services, says that differences in how people recreate has meant redefining the concept of participation more broadly: "participation may be the grandparents watching a soccer game. Spectating is an activity that exposes them to the sport. The Northeast Centre has a space where seniors come to socialize. They are using

public space just by watching, and this is a “win” for us” (McLaughlin, 2018). Graham Jones, Business, Planning and Policy and Strategy Lead for Calgary Parks, notes that the City has adapted its public consultation processes to improve participation from ethnocultural minorities. Open house attendance is very low, so we have tried different forms of engagement such as going to mosques and Punjabi radio stations. This has produced better participation.” His unit is also discussing whether provincial guidelines which require the building of a baseball diamond and soccer pitch at school sites need to be changed? “If residents in the northeast, which has a large South Asian population, prefer cricket, we need to ask ‘why are we still putting in baseball diamonds?’” Our school boards no longer program baseball’.” (Jones, 2018)

Donnie Rosa, Director of Recreation for the Vancouver Parks and Recreation Board, says her staff rely on the city’s direct relationship with elected community centre associations (CCA) to assess community need, develop, deliver and staff programming and other services offered in or from jointly-operated facilities, engage with and promote participation within the community, and provide input on major capital projects and initiatives. Each CCA develops its own approach to engaging people in the planning process. Rosa says this model has allowed for a good representation of members of the Chinese and South Asian communities, leading to Chinese seniors groups and South Asian programming. The Board also works closely with cultural planners in other city departments on projects such as organizing a festival to coincide with the city’s formal apology in April 2018 to the Chinese community for past discrimination (Rosa, 2018).

- *The municipality has implemented targeted policies, programming and services to address the leisure needs of immigrants or members of racialized populations**

Every city has developed at least one policy, programming or service initiative that is targeted to immigrant or minority communities, with women’s only swim groups being the most common response. Brampton’s Parks and Recreation Services has organized women’s only swim programs, schedules gaps in the times when pool users are entering and exiting the pool and has placed curtains on the rooms of fitness classes, primarily in response to concerns about modesty raised by cultural groups. Its recreational centres provide space where faith-based and cultural groups can congregate for holidays such as Eid and Ramadan. Derek Boyce, the Director of Recreation, says the city is a big supporter of cricket and field hockey, and its future planning is tilted toward these sports, but that he does not program activities for particular ethnic groups. He has observed a strong demand for basketball from the children of immigrants, but registrations for skating lessons have also been increasing over the years, which might suggest assimilationist tendencies in terms of sports preferences (Boyce, 2017).

Teresa Grayston-Miller, Director of Leisure Centres with the City of Edmonton, reports that programming has shifted in the last few years to adapt to diversity (Grayston-Miller, 2017). Examples include water safety aquatic programs for new Canadians, and, at the request of female members of the Muslim community, women’s only swimming at pools staffed by female lifeguards. The city also initiated girls only swimming programs in response to culture and body image issues. As part of Edmonton’s welcome to Syrian refugees in 2016, the city worked with sponsoring groups to bus them to recreational centres where they were provided with information about the recreation centre, housing, employment, and health care. Edmonton also partners with Jumpstart, a charity of the Canadian Tire Corporation, to offer free swimming lessons to children from low-income families, many of whom are culturally diverse.

William Whelbourn, Executive Advisor with Calgary Recreation, says the city does not create segregated programs as it does not have the resources to offer programming for one group and have others expect the same (2018a). The city has a non-traditional bathing wear policy that allows people to wear clothing other than swim wear. It accommodates private bookings for groups that desire opportunities due to cultural requirements, such as women's only swimming, and attempts to schedule women's only swim groups in older buildings with fewer windows that offer more privacy (2018b). Calgary Recreation offers fee assistance customers "I Love" sports programs, which introduce children to different sports and provide them with equipment after the program is over. A majority of the "I Love Cricket" participants have been new to the sport, but some have indicated they played cricket before they moved to Canada and are excited to be able to play again. As part of its welcome to Syrian refugees, Calgary organized a pop-up swim program at a local hotel. The Calgary Neighbourhoods unit provides Calgary Parks with training for working with specific populations and issues (Charlton, 2018).

Vancouver's *Access to City Services Without Fear Policy for Residents of Uncertain or No Immigrant Status* does not require residents to provide proof of residence when accessing city services, including parks and recreation. The policy was adopted in response to the arrest of an undocumented hotel worker for a transit violation in 2013. The individual was transferred to the Canada Border Security Agency, which then transported her to the Vancouver International Airport detention centre to commence deportation. After 20 days in custody, she took her own life. As part of Vancouver's response to the Syrian refugee crisis, the Park Board unanimously approved a motion in 2015 to work with city and community partners to welcome and support refugees living in Vancouver (Rosa, 2018). The *Economic Access Policy*, which ensures Vancouver residents have access to the basic programs and services provided by the Vancouver Park Board, regardless of their ability to pay, was amended in 2016 to replace all references to "citizens" with "residents"- a term that covers citizens as well as refugees, permanent residents, homeless persons without identification or address, and individuals whose government issued ID does not reflect their gender identity.

Toronto, Parks, Forestry and Recreation (PFR) played a central role in the Toronto Newcomers Initiative, a federally funded pilot project that ran in 2011, which informed the Toronto Newcomer Strategy. PFR projects included female-only swim programs, cricket, and winter sports orientation for newcomer youth (City of Toronto Social Development and Financial Administration, 2012). Participants were provided with assistance registering for the *Welcome Policy*, which provides an annual payment to help with program fees, and with applying for employment opportunities (City of Toronto, 2013b). Howard Dayton, Director of Community Recreation, says they have been heavily engaged with the city's Newcomer Settlement Office on some responses. When the Syrian refugees were being welcomed in Toronto hotels, Recreation was asked to provide programming (e.g summer camps, after school programs), in partnership with settlement services and other city divisions. Petra Wolfbeiss, Director of Policy and Strategic Planning, recalls that it was "quite a step up in terms of going from recreation services to dealing with the complex needs of refugees, dealing with trauma and language barriers." Dayton says that refugee claimants are a big policy issue that Toronto is trying to grapple with, and that the city is currently providing two arena facilities that are not being used as overflow respite. Outside of the refugee file, the city partners with settlement workers in schools who provide referrals to recreational programming. It also offers women's only and girl's only swim programs.

On the Parks side, PFR teaches users of its community and allotment gardens, many of whom are newcomers who grew their own food in their own countries, what can be grown in the local environment without using pesticides and herbicides. The city is also reviewing its parks permit system. While it works well for regular users, first time and occasional users, as well as residents facing linguistic, cultural and communication barriers, can find it difficult to navigate (City of Toronto, 2013a).

- *The municipality has built facilities that are targeted to address the leisure needs of immigrants or members of racialized populations**

Facility designs have been modified to some extent in every city, to accommodate preferences from members of ethnocultural communities for more unstructured opportunities to socialize, hold community events or celebrate culture. In Brampton, Boyce says there is a large demand for shade structures and gazebos in parks, and for recreation centre space that offers opportunities to play games that are popular with ethnic minority cultures (e.g. dominoes). “African Canadians just want to come to the centre, meet friends, play card games and sit and chat. They are not signing up for yoga classes. We account for that in terms of how we build.” Vancouver’s Marpole Community Centre was built with tiny rooms for music lessons, in response to the preferences of Chinese-speaking residents (Rosa).

Anne Charlton, Director of Calgary Parks, says the city has placed park benches in closer proximity to reflect the usage patterns of individuals from more collectivist cultures, who use parks for group-based activities rather than for individual walks. Parks have had to be redesigned to accommodate larger families from minority communities, which has involved providing more picnic tables, shelters, larger barbecues and tables. In response to community demand, a tandoori oven was placed in Prairie Winds park and city staff were trained how to use it. More symbols are being used in the parks to make them more user friendly (Charlton, 2018). The Genesis Centre and Northeast Centre of Community Society serves an area with a substantial South Asian population. It does not have an ice rink, but it does have a large component for cooking, community gathering spaces and an event centre to host festivals (McLaughlin, 2018; Whelbourn, 2018a).

Edmonton’s new 20-year Recreation Facility Master Plan will go before council in June 2018, with current and future demographic information informing the location and focus of facilities. Grayston-Miller says that “we will be looking at designs to create the privacy that women seek.” Toronto’s Aquatic Services facility design guidelines facilitate programming which responds to all needs within communities, including culturally sensitive issues. “Many of the older pools were built in basements with no windows, and are in a dingy and soggy environment. Our newer facilities are more inviting and can accommodate any type of program from an ability, age group, and cultural accessibility perspective (Sarrafzadeh, 2018). Colocation, where recreational services are located in the same building as libraries and social services, including children’s services and English as a Second language classes, is a major trend in recreation (Wolfbeiss, 2018).

- *The municipality conducts immigrant and/or racialized minority-focussed research in the domain of parks and recreation**

Every city conducts research to understand the immigrant, cultural and linguistic make-up of their communities, the motivations and needs of members of diverse communities, or to evaluate their satisfaction with city services. Demographic profiles, including languages spoken at home, are provided to programmers in every Toronto recreation facility so that culturally relevant programs can be designed, delivered and promoted (City of Toronto, 2013b).

In Calgary and Toronto, surveys have been used to assess if recreation facilities were welcoming to newcomers and accommodating to those with language barriers, or if facilities were meeting the needs of racialized populations. In both cities, higher levels of dissatisfaction were reported by visible minority residents. Calgary's *Recreation Amenities Gap Analysis* (Knights and Associates Ltd., 2010) found that visible minorities were significantly less satisfied with the amount, affordability and location of services. This led to the creation of Sport Calgary, whose mandate is to achieve equitable provision of services (McLaughlin, 2018). Recreation Services has also held focus groups with visible minorities.

Edmonton's *Urban Parks Master Plan Leisure and Recreation Trends Analysis* discusses the implications of demographic change (Edmonton Community Services, 2002), and states that the city will conduct a Cultural Landscape Needs Assessment to identify the needs of ethnic or cultural populations and share the information with community partners (2006). The first phase of the planning process for VanPlay, the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation new 25-year master plan, included online surveys in English and Chinese to discover the community's satisfaction with current amenities and programs.

Individual immigrant empowerment:

- *The municipality's plan for parks and recreation is prepared in consultation with immigrants and immigrant associations, and their views are reflected in the document.*

Parks and recreation managers and planner gather input from immigrants and members of minority communities using a variety of means: formal community consultations on strategic plans, stakeholder workshops, advisory groups, community centre staff, and contacts with formal and informal community leaders. The Vancouver Parks and Recreation Board works through Board and City Council committees, who help connect them to "the right people" in cultural communities (Rosa, 2018). It conducts community engagement in non-Official languages when possible and sends staff who are fluent in other language out into the community. "It is an internal expectation that we find ways to communicate and consult with the community as best we can, and not just wait for them to come to us. We are always looking for new, creative ways to reach a community, whether it is sitting with them at Mosques, seniors meetings, or malls (Rosa). The city's relationship with First Nations is also informing its approach to consultation in multicultural communities. "We have developed a way to work with First Nations to engage as co-planners. This is so new to us. We have to slow down and appreciate the conversation at the table. We are learning lessons from that and applying that lens to other projects."

In Brampton, Boyce says the development of the *Parks and Recreation Master Plan* included community consultations and stakeholder workshops. These revealed a desire for parks, facilities and programs with appeal to various cultural backgrounds, including flexible facilities for multicultural activities (2018). The Parks and Recreation department's community

development team meets with immigrant/cultural clubs (particularly seniors clubs), school boards, youths to obtain feedback. It organizes information-sharing “connect meetings” with school boards, the region and cultural groups in four quadrants of the city. “This is how we get permanent, ongoing feedback; another is the seniors council. At community consultation meetings, the city strives to ensure there are staff who can speak other languages (2018). The city’s Master Plan recommends developing a more formalized reference panel made up of all diverse groups including diverse cultures, females, persons from low income backgrounds, persons with disabilities and the LGBTQ community, to ensure that programs and services are inclusive and representative (City of Brampton, 2017).

Grayston-Miller says that her Branch works with the city’s Public Engagement Office to develop an outreach plan that considers different formats for reaching immigrant and minority communities. “We get diverse populations coming to public sessions, but there is still a need to engage differently in specific areas. We have been successful in working with organizations that serve diverse populations. Perhaps they have a children’s or family program and we will ask to be part of that in order to get feedback or suggestions for new programs in our facility. We find it helps to talk to them in an environment where they feel comfortable. Trust is important. How can we work with you to encourage people to come into our facilities? We collaborate with these groups; we schedule a tour of our facility, the group arranges for a bus, and we give them a guided tour. A lack of awareness about recreational centres and swimming attire might dissuade people from coming. We try to find ways to address that lack of awareness. Where we have a diverse population using facilities, we will use that forum to engage. As an example, we want to know how members of religious groups would like us to identify that they have passed a swim test and are able to enter the deep water end of the pool...we can’t really take a marker and place a big “x” on their burkinis....and are looking into how other municipalities engage with diverse groups.”

Toronto’s *Parks Plan* was based on online surveys, town hall meetings and consultations with stakeholder groups. Seven focus group sessions were held to engage newcomers, youth, people with disabilities as well as park donors and sponsors. Many participants reported that staff should consider the needs of newcomers and others facing communications barriers when making information available. The Strategic Plan recommended that staff provide convenient meeting times and locations, ensure the inclusion of diverse residents and consistently report back to residents (City of Toronto, 2013a). The *Recreation Services Plan* recognizes the need to improve outreach to schools, faith-based organizations and settlement agencies regarding (City of Toronto, 2013b). PFR staff examine information from surveys and open houses, and work with community agencies and social groups that use city space, as well as with the Toronto Public Library (Dayton, 2018). Partners in the immigrant service provider and cultural sectors, frontline staff and politicians also play a role in relaying community preferences to managers. Sarrafzadeh says “this is a big factor in our world, particularly if the community is not comfortable going to staff—they redirect their demands through the political channel. The city’s work is embedded within Toronto’s 140 neighbourhoods. Our staff work with community residents and their representatives to identify and respond to needs. If there are broader policy issues that arise related to programming, facility design, etc., these issues are brought to the appropriate planning tables for review and further policy development (2018).

Both the Calgary Parks and Calgary Recreation business units consult with the Calgary Neighbourhoods unit to address the needs of new Canadians and multicultural groups, based on that unit’s research, established partnerships and best practices (Charlton, 2018; Jones, 2018),

and draw on the resources of the city's community engagement unit to determine the best way to reach diverse communities (Jones, 2018). Calgary Recreation conducts focus groups and meets with community associations and cultural groups when planning services. It will only target specific groups if they are prevalent in a certain catchment area (McLaughlin, 2018). McLaughlin finds that some groups will only respond if you reach out through church publications or through children. Recreation Services has had to oversample certain ethnocultural groups because they would not respond to surveys. "We go with the attitude that we have to put in the extra effort."

- Staff in parks and recreation units are diverse and reflect the composition of the city's population*

Department-level workforce composition data was not available for any city. Toronto and Edmonton are the only municipalities that have conducted recent workforce surveys at the corporate level. Toronto's *Count Yourself In Workforce* survey, which was in the field from 2014-2016, estimated that 32.4 percent of TPS employees self-identified as visible minorities/racialized groups, suggesting members of this group may be facing employment barriers (Toronto City Manager, December 2016). Dayton says PFR has discussed ways in which it could create more awareness of job opportunities in newcomer and ethnocultural communities. That said, Ubbens notes that the PFR workforce is changing:

"This was predominantly a white male workforce. Now you see more persons of colour and women. We are starting to reflect the cultures that live in Toronto, but this is only starting and it takes time. This doesn't happen overnight since the City of Toronto is a desirable employer and we only have so many positions. We have had many baby boomers retiring, so we are getting a lot of turnover and opportunity to move up. In order to move up, you need to be mentored. We know the core competencies of posts and we have identified key projects that people can work on to build those competencies. We look for individuals who have attitude and aptitude for the work. We pay them a higher wage to do the project. This is geared to all, making this an effective organization, fairness – it doesn't matter who you are, even if English is not your first language or you don't have experience." (Ubbens, 2018)

Some applicants for positions in PFR have difficulties passing the entrance exams for gardening, perhaps because they are unfamiliar with the plants or language. If they fail the test, PFR assesses whether they would fit as an apprentice. After acquiring some experience, applicants can write the test again and if they pass, they will be promoted to the gardener position. "We are looking for aptitude and attitude as much as experience. Just because you trained here doesn't mean you have an advantage over others."

Edmonton's Employee Engagement and Diversity Survey saw the proportion of self-identified visible minority employees increase from 17.5 percent in 2012 to 19.5 percent in 2014, still below their representation in the broader population (City of Edmonton, 2015). The Citizens Services Branch has an inter-departmental diversity and inclusion committee that strives to broaden the representation of the municipal workforce, identify and address barriers that might impact diversity, develop recruitment and retention strategies, and learn how it can improve the city's ability to serve diversity.

Brampton's Master Plan recommends that all committees and volunteers working with the department are representative of Brampton's diversity. Boyce says that his department does not have a targeted employment program and that it hires for qualifications and the business skill set. Frontline staff and recreational leaders are drawn from diverse communities, but that diversity is less present at management and coordinator/supervisor levels. "One factor that gets overlooked is that the children of immigrant parents are being encouraged to go into different professions. We don't find that our pool of applicants is culturally diverse and looking for jobs in recreation."

Calgary's McLaughlin says the city is trying to reflect the broader population, but that it is challenging to achieve this goal because of the time, training and cost involved to get people up to speed. The union environment is a contributing factor due to seniority rules. There are no formal business unit recruitment programs aimed at attracting a more diverse workforce, but "where we have more facilities with an ethnically diverse participation rate, we try to recruit from the people who are using our facilities." In Vancouver there is no specific policy requiring the hiring of individuals from a particular culture, with the exception of a plan specifically targeted to hiring Indigenous youth. Rosa estimates that about one third of her recreation team are from an Asian background, and that the figure increases amongst frontline workers. "In other municipalities, recreation tends to be a white field. Vancouver's CCA model reflects the community." The City has an Inclusion staff person responsible for developing policy on all forms of inclusiveness. There is a dedicated planner who is focussed on First Nations, but not on multicultural communities.

- The municipality publishes multilingual information about parks and recreation*

Grayston-Miller says Edmonton recognizes the importance of communicating with non-Official Language speakers. Front counter staff wear name tags indicating other languages spoken. This was put in place to encourage multilingual communication and celebrate the city's diverse workforce. There has also been a shift in signage away from text and words to icons and pictures. This was initiated to help everyone, including children and ESL residents. A guideline on pool use and etiquette has been translated into 16 languages and is available online and at the front desk of every facility.

"We had to reach out to different groups to help us translate as no one company could do it. It was leading edge when we looked at what other municipalities were doing. We have had to reorder this pamphlet, and this tells us that it is needed. That said, we are doing fewer brochures and guides and are moving towards web-based documents as we see more evidence of people using translation technology." (Grayston-Miller, 2018).

Toronto's corporate website offers auto-translation in 51 languages with 92 percent of online registrations offering automatic translations. The *Multilingual Information Provision Policy* requires the translation of information about critical services into no less than the top ten languages spoken at home, and French, unless the information is targeted to a localized area (City of Toronto, 2017b). Most PFR communications are citywide and published in English, but the city will conduct more targeted campaigns in other languages where registrations are lower (Cutler, 2018). If there is a need for a survey in a non top-10 language, the division will conduct

an assessment of the audience's linguistic needs and decide whether the information should be translated (Sarrafzadeh). In response to community and staff recommendations to make multilingual materials widely available PFR will consider creating multi-lingual promotional materials and outreach through ethnic media as part of the communications strategy (City of Toronto, 2013).

Vancouver's website has a Google translate function that allows visitors to translate content into 50 languages. The city does not have a translation policy, but it works with the community centre associations to translate some Parks Board or CCA materials. Vancouver also reaches out to the ethnic media to disseminate its messages (Rosa). Brampton does not translate recreation information into different languages, but it is contemplating making the web-based information more pictorial for ESL residents. Boyce says the city has not had requests for translations, possibly because front desk people are providing interpretation.

McLaughlin says Calgary Recreation does not typically translate materials as the information would not be current by the time it is translated. City services reach out to ethnocultural groups to make them aware of different assets. Translation services are accessed for some Calgary Parks print materials to provide resources in top languages (Charlton, 2018). A policy review of the Parks and Pathways Bylaw is now underway and the unit plans to translate questions related to the review into Mandarin so that it can reach the seniors population (Jones, 2018).

- Immigrants can express themselves in their own language through an interpreter when accessing parks and recreation services delivered by the municipality and/or its partners*

The municipalities rely on third party language lines and frontline workers to provide interpretive services. Toronto and Vancouver offer telephone interpretive services through their 311 lines in 180 languages. The 311 services in Brampton and Edmonton offer interpretation in 150 languages, and Calgary in 140 languages (Tossutti, 2016; Whelbourn, 2018b). Agents at the Citizen and New Arrival Information Centre at Edmonton's City Hall offer in-person support in more than 150 languages.

Municipal Social Service Responses to Immigration and Diversity

The last two decades have seen a growing recognition of the importance of taking cultural diversity into account when designing and implementing programs and services at the sub-national scale (Marc, 2010). In keeping with this trend, the summary of responses to immigration and cultural diversity in the areas of general governance and immigrant empowerment reveal that every city has adopted a pluralist outlook on the planning and delivery of parks and recreation services in culturally diverse settings (Table 2). Despite variations in the provincial location and proportionate presence of immigrant and visible minorities in the five cities, the number and nature of the initiatives they have adopted are very similar (Table 1). Within the pluralist urban planning paradigm, at least five multicultural planning practices that involve initiatives targeted to specific groups have been implemented to some degree in every city, resulting in their classification as having adopted the multicultural variant of the pluralist approach (Table 2). All municipalities recognize the potential impact of national origins, culture

and race in their strategic plans or planning processes, offer women's only swimming programs, have adapted their parks and recreation facilities to meet the needs of national and ethnocultural diversity, offer a limited number of translated publications, and provide over-the-phone interpretive services. While some cities publish the results of corporate-level surveys of their workforces, data is not publicly available at the administrative unit level.

Local policymaking unfolds in a broader ideological, historical and legal context that might help explain broad similarities in approaches across the country. Canada is the only western democracy in which there is no serious disagreement amongst political elites about the importance of immigration. The acceptance of pluralism, which strikes a balance between individual and group rights, could be the product of the country's long relationship with Indigenous Peoples, and their concepts of inclusion and belonging (Saul, 2011). It may also reflect the influence of the state-level, multicultural paradigm of immigrant incorporation. Yet if responses were shaped primarily by macro factors, this does not explain why other municipal policy fields have been characterized by more inter-municipal variations in approaches (Tossutti 2012; 2017). It seems that professional norms also play a role, and the values of inclusion and accessibility have a long history in the leisure services field. Boyce sums it up in this way: it is part of the city's duty to respond to diversity; "we can't build a city of baseball diamonds when most want cricket...to not respond would be negligence."

The general conclusion about similar normative and empirical responses should not allow us to overlook differences in emphasis across cities. Edmonton and Toronto provide more multilingual materials than other cities. While Brampton plans to build more cricket pitches, finding appropriate parkland space to accommodate the same requests in Toronto has been challenging. Calgary helped establish a non-profit organization to encourage participation in a wide variety of sports, including cricket and Gaelic football, and has developed partnerships with private actors to help children in lower income families access sports. Vancouver's elected CCA model for planning places the most power in the hands of community members to shape programming and staffing responses.

Accounting for Municipal Responses

This study supports Koopmans' contention that if local integration policymaking deviates from state-level notions of community and citizenship, it does so within the limits of nationally-defined paths. No city adopted an assimilationist approach to the delivery of parks and recreation services. Yet the differences in emphasis that distinguish municipal approaches reflect the unique mix of factors operating at the local level. This section explores the role of local civic culture and demography in facilitating or inhibiting the nature and breadth of municipal responses.

Variables related to each city's community value system were frequently identified as facilitators of responsiveness. Rosa referred to Vancouver's status as a City of Reconciliation: "we are learning from Indigenous communities and this has elevated our respect for doing things with people, and not for people." She also pointed to Vancouver as a city with a social conscience and highly-politicized residents who "speak up, organize and articulate. I think it elevates our game and the awareness that we have to do a better job reaching out." She also feels that the ideological leanings of municipal leaders and the broader population are relevant, pointing to the Green Party affiliation of the Board chair and the city's liberal attitude about

other forms of diversity. In her view, Vancouver's social liberalism has created an openness to difference that is not seen in smaller, more conservative cities. Community values can also refer to general orientations of public policies. Ubbens points to Toronto's corporate motto of "diversity is our strength" as setting the tone for the training and information his Division provides.

While community values can facilitate responsiveness, in some instances they can act as inhibitors. Sarrafzadeh has said a minor challenge has been those "individuals who challenge why we have ladies only swimming. We do our best to educate them. The issue is participation and people may not participate unless these services are available to them." Grayston-Miller recalls that "when we openly advocated that burkinis were acceptable attire, the response from some was that they should wear bathing suits like "the rest of us". We had to play an advocacy role and need to be sensitive to other populations. We want people to be active and healthy, so it is part of the education that we do. Two years ago I received many calls asking 'why are these people in my pool,' but it has been more than a year since I received those types of emails, phone calls. People are becoming aware they have the same rights to be in our facilities." Charlton noted that variations in neighbourhood cultures are important. Some neighbourhoods celebrate diversity and others that are more homogenous have not worked through change.

The **community power component** of the local civic culture was raised during the interviews. Boyce pointed to having a council and senior leaders at the commissioner and director levels who acknowledge and understand population diversity. Grayston-Miller referred to the vision of Edmonton City Council and city departments, specifically Citizens Services. "Our corporate vision is Edmonton for all, so that sets the tone and transcends into how we serve citizens, design facilities."

Factors that fall under the umbrella of the **community decision-making** systems – infrastructure and funding capacity, information and human resources, and planning models – were frequently mentioned as influencing responsiveness. Ubbens says that he has been able to draw on the corporate resources of a large city to organize public meetings. At the same time, the scope and size of the Toronto Public Service makes it impossible for him to be in tune with everything that is going on. "My people in the field are my intelligence; I don't always hear what they know." (2018)

Wolfbeiss believes that diversity initiatives cannot be implemented without proper resourcing. "It will take time to figure out how to do this better. We need to become more sophisticated about how to implement many of these well-intentioned strategies, given the reality of resourcing in the city to do this type of work." Vancouver's Rosa echoed these sentiments, citing a lack of capacity and the time required to invest in diversity issues. She noted that past practices of not "going to their spaces" partly explains a lack of awareness in some communities about parks and recreation services. Jones considers time as the most influential factor: "It might take time for a community to grow out, identify a need, consider whether I have enough land and whether I have the financial capital to build and maintain it." (2018)

A limited supply of parkland was raised as an issue in several municipalities. Brampton is a growing city that is approaching its apex population, but does not have many large indoor/outdoor gathering spaces to accommodate cultural events (Boyce). In Toronto, parkland planning is heavily contingent on space and land affordability. Ubbens says "We have a parkland strategy which says we need more parkland and a facilities plan which indicates how much of the land base is dedicated to anything. We don't have strategies for every sport. We don't have the funding to respond to the latest fads; if sports stand the test of time and there is

demand, it is a request that is on our plate. Baseball may have been on the decline, but it has picked up in recent years. Cricket is big with newcomers, but it needs a huge field and supporting infrastructure.”

Competition for limited resources also plays a role. For example, Jones says “we have always had soccer, baseball and tennis, but if I want to add a new facility, I have to make sure I satisfy older users. If a long-term change is involved, I need to move my staff around.” McLaughlin says that “recreation is a wonderful resource for the community in terms of stressor management, but is weighed against other city priorities.” Sarrafzadeh observed that due to the popularity of aquatics programs and services, “it is difficult to take something away and put in something new to respond to a new need. If additional funding is required to respond to new programming needs, this would need to be requested through the city’s budgeting process, which may be a longer process.” (2018)

Access to reliable and accurate information about ethnocultural communities is also key. Charlton relies on community profiles provided by Calgary Neighbourhoods for meaningful information. She also deemed it important to speak with formal and informal community leaders who have the pulse on the community, and to longtime staff who are familiar with usage patterns (2018). Wolfbeiss says that reaching some communities can be difficult. “We get low response rates in North Etobicoke and North Scarborough. Growing our ability to connect with diverse communities in a timely and proactive way is a challenge. Open Data is also an issue. How do we connect with communities and get meaningful data to help with planning?” (2018)

Decision-making processes are also relevant. Charlton says it is important to take the time to consult as “certain cultures are more thoughtful and will want to think about (it) longer than westerners. We need to understand that we can’t have two open houses and reach a broad multicultural framework.” In addition, the Joint Use Agreements between municipalities and local school boards in Alberta that allocate how lands will be used within a municipal boundary, may not be keeping up with trends and needs. For example, no cricket fields are provided for on junior high school sites yet (2018).

Neighbourhood-level programming models were seen by some to be more responsive to immigration and cultural diversity. Toronto’s Sarrafzadeh noted that “other cities don’t have the luxury of having as many ways of responding to diversity. Each neighbourhood is very unique in terms of its economic, cultural and religious characteristics. “Toronto has a multi-layered model of programming where every neighbourhood has a recreation asset to respond to local needs. If you are dealing with a heavily-populated area with a lot of Muslims and they prefer gender-specific swimming, we can respond to that. Larger facilities may be more of a drive-to destination location. Newmarket, which is in the same situation and dealing with it in a destination way, would have a tougher time responding.”

The city’s demographic context was mentioned as a driver of policymaking, but less frequently. Grayston-Miller noted that international and inter-provincial migration has caused officials to pause, reflect and conclude that it needs to change the way it serves citizens. “New people come to Edmonton with aspirations, new ways of doing things. We are a young, progressive community and we are a welcoming community, and that has supported the change and the belief that Edmonton is for all. It has set the tone. There is an openness to new ideas and new ways of doing business” (2018). Ubbens says that the sheer size of Toronto’s multicultural population means that residents experience the richness of world cuisine, music and celebrations. We experience diversity in a good way.”

Table 1-Municipal Parks and Recreation Responses to Immigration and Cultural Diversity

	V	C	E	B	T
General Governance					
The municipality’s strategic plan(s) for parks and recreation recognizes the presence and policy/program/service implications of immigrants and racialized populations		▲	▲	▲	▲
Parks and recreation staff take immigrant status and ethno-racial characteristics into account	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲
The municipality has implemented targeted policies, programming and/or services to address the leisure needs of immigrants or members of racialized populations*	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲
The municipality has built or adapted facilities to address the leisure needs of immigrants or members of racialized populations*	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲
The municipality conducts immigrant and/or racialized minority-focussed research in the policy domain of parks and recreation*	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲
	4	5	5	5	5
Individual Migrant Empowerment					
The municipality’s strategic plan for parks and recreation is prepared in consultation with immigrants, immigrant and/or ethnocultural associations, and their views are reflected in the document.	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲
The municipality publishes data on the demographic composition of parks and recreation staff*					
The municipality publishes multilingual information about parks and recreation*	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲
Immigrants can express themselves in their own language through an interpreter when accessing parks and recreation services delivered by the municipality and/or its partners*	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲
Total	3	3	3	3	3

Table 2 – A Typology of Municipal Responses to Diversity Planning in Parks and Recreation

	V	C	E	B	T
Normative	Multicultural	Multicultural	Multicultural	Multicultural	Multicultural
General Governance	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	Comprehensive
Migrant Empowerment	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	Comprehensive

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