

June 16, 2021

Re: Bow Valley Food Charter

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of the Bow Valley Immigration Partnership (BVIP), I am writing to express support for the Bow Valley Food Alliance's Food Charter.

The Bow Valley Immigration Partnership (BVIP) is a collaborative community initiative dedicated to improving immigrant integration from Lake Louise to Kananaskis. BVIP fosters a welcoming community by identifying settlement and integration needs and gaps and coordinating multi-party responses and is funded by Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship (IRCC). Our members include: Town of Banff, Town of Canmore, Canadian Rockies Public Schools, Bow Valley College, Settlement Services in the Bow Valley, Banff and Canmore Job Resource Centre, Banff Ministerial Association, Banff Lake Louise Hospitality Association, Bow Valley Primary Care Network, Innovate Canmore, Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta (ACFA) Canmore-Banff, YWCA Banff, Alberta Health Services and more. 16 foreign-born volunteers from all over the Bow Valley form our Immigrant Advisory Group, which works alongside organizational representatives to ensure that the work of the partnership reflects the lived experience of Bow Valley immigrants.

The Bow Valley Food Charter's vision of a healthy, sustainable, equitable, and culturally appropriate food system for all Bow Valley residents, aligns with the mission of the Bow Valley Immigration Partnership. Furthermore, the emphasis in the Food Charter's principles on social justice, equity, inclusion, respect, and collaboration align with our approach to build a more welcoming and inclusive community.

Support for ethnocultural groups and associations, including the critical work they do to advance food security is an important component of strong and resilient communities. Local ethnocultural groups were critical in distributing culturally appropriate food and supplies throughout the COVID-19 pandemic; support from the Bow Valley Food Alliance and others made much of this work possible.

Our research shows that the nearly one in four locals who were born outside of Canada face unique barriers to career development in the Bow Valley. In turn, this presents challenges for our community to retain diverse talent. The Bow Valley Food Charter advances principles and practices to help sustain our vibrant regional economy, through the nurturing of diverse entrepreneurship opportunities as well as food initiatives that prioritize sharing, cooperation, and collaboration.

Bow Valley Immigration Partnership (BVIP)

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The Food Charter aligns with the following 2019-2023 Integration Strategy goals identified through research, consultation, and collaborative strategic planning by our stakeholders:

Strategic Priority	Goal(s)
Workforce Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illuminate career pathways for underemployed immigrants
Community Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support development of ethnocultural associations • Strengthen non-settlement organizations' capacity to meet newcomer needs

To view the complete 2019-2023 Integration Strategy, visit: bvippartnership.com/strategy2019

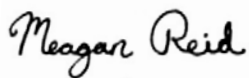
We will continue to partner with the Bow Valley Food Alliance in support of:

- Equitable and sustainable access to healthy, appropriate, and acceptable food by all Bow Valley residents
- Respect for and agency of all locals in shaping the future of food security in the Bow Valley
- Connections, understanding, and respect between Bow Valley locals of all backgrounds

As a multi-sector partnership that spans the entire Bow Valley region, we recognize that every municipality in the Bow Valley is unique. However, by working across communities and municipalities to advance inclusion, integration, and equity, we have strengthened each community and the region. We support a similar coordinated approach to food security and food sovereignty through the adoption of the food charter from ID9 to Iyarhe Nation.

Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at bvip@banff.ca or (403) 431-0705.

Signed,



Meagan Reid, Coordinator
Bow Valley Immigration Partnership (BVIP)