Small Places, Big Changes: Temporary Migration & Immigration to Brandon, Manitoba

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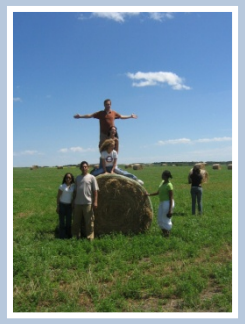
Outline



- Provincial context
- Local context
- Industrial labour needs
- Transitional migration
- Family reunification
- Rural challenge
- Moving forward

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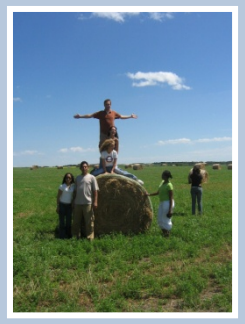
Manitoba



- 1996: Canada-MB Immigration Agreement
  - 1998: included Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) and settlement services
- 2007: PNP accounted for 70% of Manitoba's newcomers
  - 28% of Provincial Nominees chose rural destinations
- Policy framework – *Growing Through Immigration Strategy (2007)*
  - Past annual target was 10,000 arrivals
  - Over the next decade, goal is an addition of 1000 per year to a target of 20,000 per year

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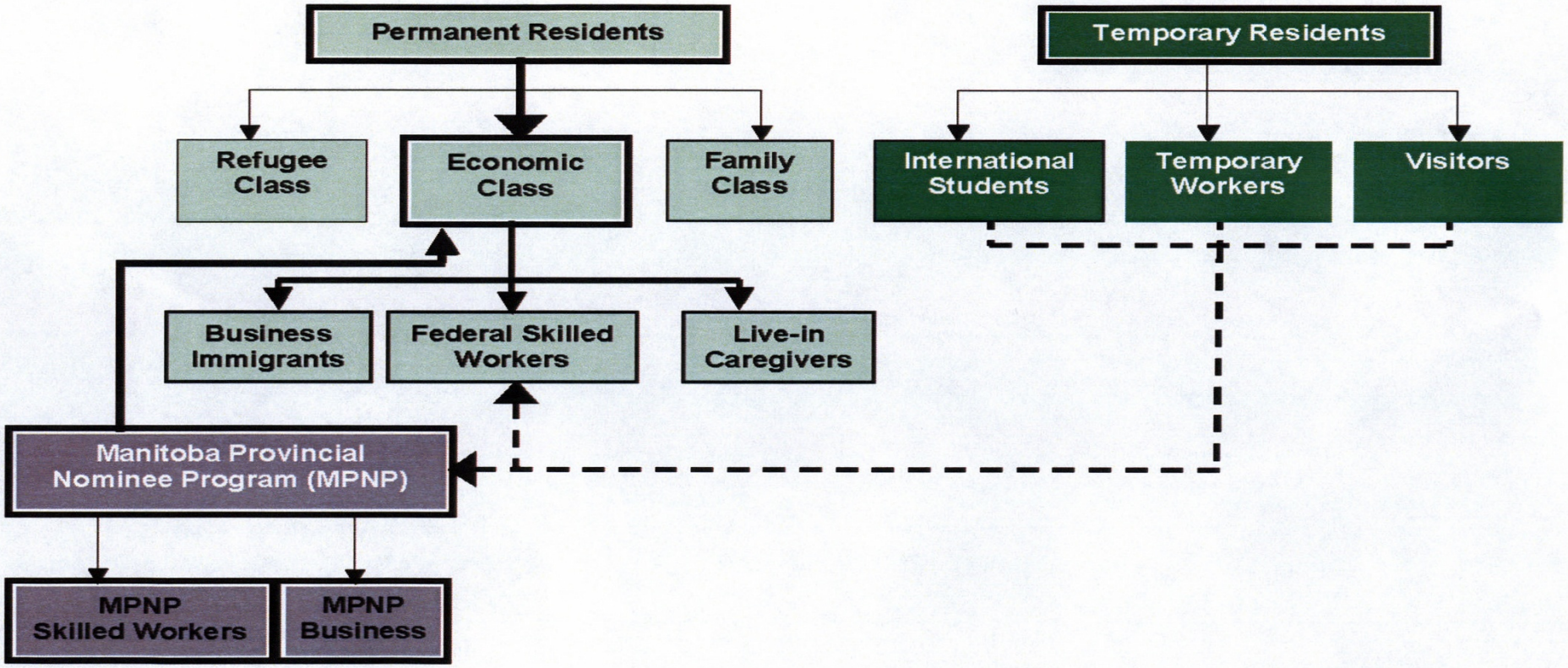
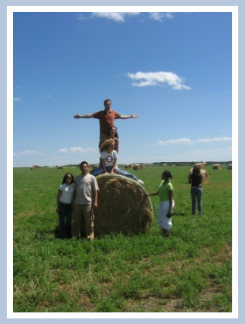
Pathways to Immigration

PATHWAYS TO MANITOBA FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL ENTRY STREAMS

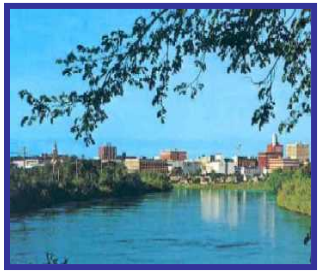


Brandon



Population = 41, 115

- Second largest urban centre
- Relatively homogenous population over time
- Destination for hundreds of temporary foreign workers
- Rapidly changing population dynamics



Highest rate of immigration growth in the province (2007)

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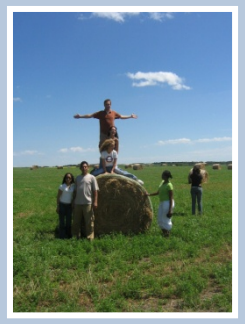
Industry



Maple Leaf Foods Brandon

- 1999: Maple Leaf Foods (MLF) pork processing plant opened
- 2001: MLF began foreign recruitment campaign
- 2008: Second shift fully operational
- Today there are approximately 1500 international recruits employed at MLF
  - 70% of employees are international recruits
  - From Mexico, El Salvador, Ukraine, China, Colombia, and Mauritius.

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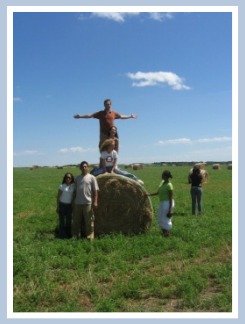
Transitional Migration



- Situation where ‘temporary’ actually means ‘transitional’
  - Community preparedness
  - Community welcome
  - Community development

Resources for rural immigration planning are difficult to locate.

Immigration is not the sole responsibility of any level of government.

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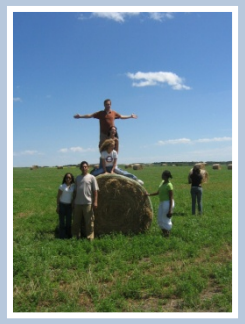
Family Reunification



Arriving with a plan…

- Approximately 3,500 family members will relocate to Brandon between June 2007 and February 2011
- Supporting reunification after separation
- Evolving needs
  - ~ 5 new students per week enrolled
  - Housing shortage
  - Local service delivery

…your plan will likely be influenced by your initial experiences

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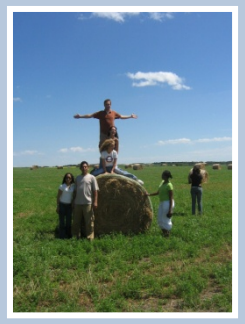
The Rural Challenge



- Small centres and rural regions face unique retention challenges
- Amenities and services associated with large-scale immigration may not exist

Therefore…

- Effective communication is vital
- Appropriate local strategies for settlement, integration, and retention are needed
- Share lessons learned in other jurisdictions
- Provincial-municipal collaboration is required
- Cross-departmental communication
- Understanding community/regional capacity

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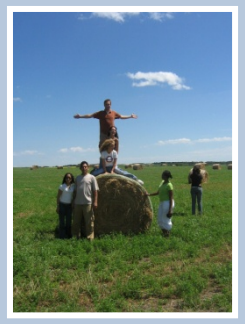
Becoming Welcoming



- Organize in preparation for immigration
- Establish multi-stakeholder regional or community groups
- Foster capacity, community, and partnership building
- Develop local immigration plans
- Celebrate diversity
- Holistic approach to service provision

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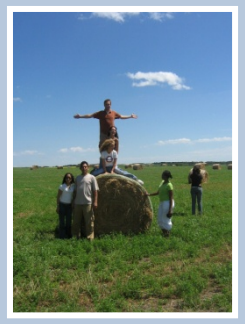
Welcoming Communities Steering Committee

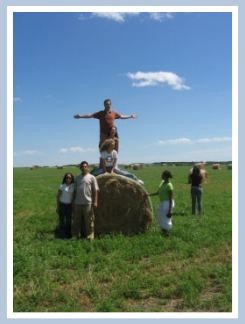


- 2007: First meeting
- Forum for community, community-serving organizations, industry, governments, and researchers
- Began as dialogue around temporary foreign workers
- Transitioned to dialogue on welcoming communities

Membership

- Economic Development Brandon
- Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives
- Manitoba Labour and Immigration
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada
- Rural Secretariat
- Service Canada
- Brandon School Division
- Brandon Regional Health Authority
- Westman Immigrant Services
- Maple Leaf Foods

Ethnocultural Organizations, 2008-2009



- To increase understanding of the needs and capacities of ethnocultural groups in rural Manitoba
- Ensure vibrant and active ethnocultural communities
- Multi-phase project with focus on Brandon and Steinbach
- Establishing relationships between community organizations and ethnocultural communities

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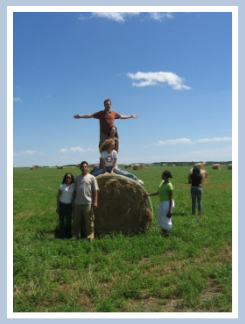
Challenges in Moving Forward



- Resources for rural immigration planning are difficult to locate
  - Immigration is not the sole responsibility of either the federal or provincial government
- Bringing the ‘right’ voices to the table for discussions
  - Need to create an environment for open discussions among all stakeholders
- Sharing lessons learned from rural and northern communities
  - Need for forums and avenues to share information

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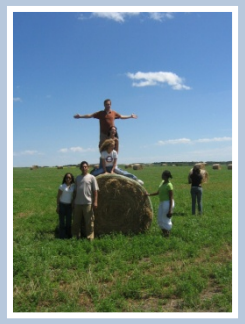
Contact Information



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