



Diverse Cities: Urban Experiences and International Migration in Saint John, NB

Authors:

Hepzibah Muñoz-Martínez, PhD

Department of History and Politics, University of New Brunswick Saint John

Kristen Byrne, PhD Candidate,

Interdisciplinary Studies (ABD), University of New Brunswick Saint John

Data Transformation and Georeferencing:

Abdullah Aboelneil, BCS



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Executive summary

The report explores the settlement and integration experiences of international immigrants in Saint John, New Brunswick and some municipalities of its CMA, using a qualitative, community-based research approach grounded in the Welcoming Communities Initiative (WCI) framework and critical urban studies. Immigration to small and mid-sized Canadian cities has increased significantly, with Saint John experiencing a seven-fold rise in international migration from 2020–2024. The report aims to understand how local infrastructures, services, and governance affect immigrant integration, emphasizing the neighborhood level as a key site of analysis. Mixed methods were used: including surveys (100 participants), ethnographic fieldwork, participatory mapping, and art-based workshops. Participants were diverse in age, gender, country of origin (notably Syria, Somalia, Sudan, Afghanistan, Ukraine, Colombia, and Mexico), and immigration stream (refugee, economic, international student, work permit). Data collection focused on seven WCI indicators: housing, employment, healthcare, transportation, education, neighborhood equity, and inter-organizational coordination.

Some key findings in the report in relation to housing show that overcrowding and affordability are major issues, especially in low-income neighborhoods like Crescent Valley and the Old North End. Many immigrants live in market rentals with structural issues and limited access to subsidized housing. Zoning and gentrification (e.g., in Waterloo Village) exacerbate housing challenges. In areas of employment and education, immigrants face underemployment, lack of recognition of foreign credentials, and limited adult education opportunities. Women, especially those from refugee backgrounds, often experience compounded barriers due to low literacy and limited access to gender-informed programs.

Access to primary healthcare is uneven, with many relying on emergency services or walk-in clinics. Mental health needs are significant, particularly among those from conflict zones, but services are limited and culturally inadequate. Public transit is insufficient in frequency, coverage, and infrastructure (e.g., shelters, sidewalks), especially in peripheral neighborhoods. Transportation barriers limit access to employment, healthcare, and education. In terms of neighborhood equity, immigrants often reside in areas with high crime rates, environmental pollution, and limited access to healthy food and green spaces. Safety concerns, especially among women, and lack of inclusive public spaces hinder social integration.

Municipalities and local organizations remain under-resourced and overburdened. Fragmentation and short-term funding cycles limit the effectiveness of settlement services. Despite challenges, local organizations play a vital role in immigrant support and community-building.

Recommendations include the enhancement of municipal capacity through sustained funding and formal roles in immigration governance, improvement of housing policies with tenant protections; affordable housing development and inclusive zoning; expansion of adult education and credential recognition, especially for women and refugees; investment in public transit and active transportation to improve accessibility and reduce isolation; strengthening of healthcare access, including culturally competent mental health services; fostering inclusive neighborhoods through equitable urban planning and community engagement, and supports for ISOs with long-term, flexible funding to adapt to evolving immigrant needs.

Disclaimer

The information of this report does not represent the views of the funding and partner organizations. This information only represents the views of authors and data analyst based on the analysis of primary and secondary sources.

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Table of contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Multi-level governance and Immigration in Canada: A literature review	6
3. Towards Welcoming Communities: Ethnography, Survey Analysis and Mapping	14
3.1 Access to affordable, adequate, and suitable housing	22
3.2 Educational, Employment and Entrepreneurship Opportunities	28
3.3 Access to suitable health care, including mental health care.	36
3.4 Access to transportation	43
3.5 Equitable Neighborhoods	52
3.6 Coordination and Collaboration Among Community Organizations and Different Levels of Government Working Toward Welcoming Communities	65
4. Preliminary conclusions and recommendations	68
5. References	75
6. Appendix 1	81
7. Appendix 2	89

Figure, Graphs, Photos and Maps

Figures

- Figure 1. Survey participants according to country of origin
- Figure 2. Survey participants' age
- Figure 3. Summary of literature review on international immigration and cities in Canada
- Figure 4. Most important needs in general and by neighbourhood
- Figure 5. Survey comments
- Figure 6. Ethnographic observations by theme
- Figure 7. Levels of government, programs and funding for immigration-related policies and organizations.

Photos

- Photo 1. Participatory mapping in Kent Theater (Saint John).
- Photo 2. Participatory mapping and artwork at Nick Nicolle Centre (Saint John)
- Photo 3. "My most important memories" (2022)
- Photo 4. Untitled, Anonymous, (2023).
- Photo 5. Untitled, Anonymous, (2023)
- Photo 6. Untitled, Anonymous, (2023)
- Photo 7. Untitled, Anonymous, (2023)
- Photo 8. Untitled, by Ismail (2023)
- Photo 9. "Saint John's sight," by Viktoria Yerenko (2022)
- Photo 10. Untitled, Anonymous (2023)
- Photo 11. Untitled, by Hasraa (2023)
- Photo 12. Untitled, by Saeed (2023)
- Photo 13. Untitled, by Saraswathi, (2022).
- Photo 14. "My heart in the Middle of Two Beautiful Places," by Susana, (2022).

Graphs

- Graph 1. Age and neighborhood
- Graph 2. Racialization and neighborhood
- Graph 3. Residency status and neighbourhood
- Graph 4. Poverty line according to market basket measure average of 2022 and 2023 for the Saint John CMA (CAN \$ 49, 618)
- Graph 5. Average paid on accommodation by neighborhood post Covid-19.
- Graph 6. Number of adults per household.
- Graph 7. Number of children per household.
- Graph 8. Number of bedrooms per household by neighborhood
- Graph 9. Housing type by neighborhood
- Graph 10. Household structural/safety issues by neighborhood
- Graph 11. Disability and neighborhood
- Graph 12. Highest level of education completed by neighborhood
- Graph 13. Source of income by neighborhood
- Graph 14. Employment Rate Landed Immigrants, 2015-2025
- Graph 15. Enterprises by immigrant status and characteristics of owners in New Brunswick
- Graph 16. Enterprises by immigrant status characteristics of owners in New Brunswick (arrival)
- Graph 17. Total enterprises owned by Immigrants by Revenue Threshold in New Brunswick
- Graph 18. Number of businesses owned by immigrants in New Brunswick (employer and non-employer).
- Graph 19. Access to primary healthcare services by neighborhood

Graph 20. Neighborhood and proximity to health services
 Graph 21. Transportation mode to healthcare services by neighborhood (daytime)
 Graph 22. Transportation mode to healthcare services by neighborhood (nighttime)
 Graph 23. Neighborhoods & number of non-communicable diseases
 Graph 24. Transportation mode by neighborhood
 Graph 25. Transportation barriers by neighborhood
 Graph 26. Availability of healthy and affordable food by neighbourhood
 Graph 27. Safety walking/biking to greenspace by neighborhood
 Graph 28. Difficulty moving through the city by neighborhood

Maps

Map 1. Country of origin and neighborhood
 Map 2. Total median income
 Map 3. Total median income and source of aggregate income by percentage
 Map 4. Source of income Rothesay and Quispamsis.
 Map 5. Source of income Central Peninsula, Old North End and Crescent Valley
 Map 6. Source of income West Side and Grandbay-Westfield
 Map 7. Source of income East Side
 Map. 8 Median market income.
 Map 9. Hospitals, Clinics, and Community Centres Central Peninsula and West Side
 Map 10. Hospitals, Clinics, and Community Centres Millidgeville and North End
 Map 11. Hospitals, Clinics, and Community Centres East Side
 Map 12. Transportation map low-income neighborhoods North End and East Side.
 Map 13. General Transportation
 Map 14. Sheltered Bus Stops Saint John Area in grey
 Map. 15. Sheltered Bus Stops West Side in grey
 Map 16. Sheltered Bus Stops Millidgeville and North End in grey
 Map 17. Sheltered Bus Stops East Side in grey
 Map 18. Sheltered Bus Stops Central Peninsula in grey
 Map 19. Job Opportunities Commercial and Industrialized Areas Source
 Map 20. Bike Routes
 Map 21. Heat map of crime in general in Saint John, NB.
 Map 22. Crime Heat Map (Millidgeville and East side) from 2020 to 2025 for assault, homicide and robbery. Source: Saint John Police Department.
 Map 23. Crime Heat Map (Central Peninsula, West side and North end) from 2020 to 2025 for assault, homicide and robbery.
 Map 24. Grocery Stores in Saint John with public transit routes
 Map 25. Parks, Playgrounds, Libraries, Community Centres, Community Gardens in Central Peninsula, Crescent Valley, Millidgeville and North End with public transit and bike routes.
 Map 26. Parks, Playgrounds, Libraries, Community Centres, Community Gardens in West Side with public transit and bike routes
 Map 27. Parks, Playgrounds, Libraries, Community Centres, Community Gardens in East Side with public transit and bike routes
 Map 28. Afterschool programs with public transit and bike routes in Saint John
 Map 29. Daycares with public transit and bike routes in Saint John Saint John
 Map 30. Places of Worship with public transit and bike routes in the West Side, North End, Crescent Valley, Millidgeville, and Central Peninsula
 Map 31. Places of Workshop with public transit and bike routes in East Side

1. Introduction

An understanding of immigration in small and mid-size cities and their census metropolitan areas (CMA) helps to identify challenges that local jurisdictions face to provide services in a changing scenario of immigration flows and policy in Canada. An example is the rapid increase of international migration from the third quarter of 2021 to the third of 2024 by almost 50 percent in New Brunswick (Statistics Canada 2025a). In the Saint John CMA, as defined by Statistics Canada, there was a seven-fold increase of international migration between 2020-2021 to 2023-2024 (Statistics Canada 2025b). Thus, an analysis of the local aspects of integration and settlement can inform economic and urban planning and social policy at the level of the neighborhood, the municipality and the region.

The current report addresses this changing scenario through an urban studies approach and the Welcoming Communities Initiative (WCI) framework to examine how the local challenges to international migrants' settlement and integration require attention to the built environment, services and resources in neighborhoods and the city. The report first presents the framework, concepts and methods guiding the analysis of surveys among international immigrants in Saint John. The second section offers a review of the literature on multilevel-governance of migration, including the role of local government, and the challenges of integration and settlement in small and medium-size cities, particularly in Atlantic Canada and the Saint John CMA. The third section examines seven indicators of the WCI framework through survey responses, ethnographic work, art-based research, participatory mapping and geographical analysis. The results shed light on how the everyday experiences of settlement and integration of international immigrants are connected in the short- and long term to local infrastructures and services. The final part of the report provides preliminary conclusions and recommendations based on the collected data.

Concepts and methods

The report draws on critical urban studies and the WCI framework to understand the local experiences of international immigrants in connection to infrastructures, services and community resources in the Saint John CMA. We employ the general term international immigrants rather than looking at more particular categories that refer to period of arrival and/or residency status. The report acknowledges the distinct barriers that people face according to residency status, time of arrival and length of stay in Canada. Yet, the term international immigrant is employed to show how immigration is a continuum that does not end with Canadian citizenship, particularly for racialized and low-income immigrants, but rather involves continuous adjustment and distinct experiences of (non)belonging in their host community (Shapendonk et al. 2021; Bitschnau and D'Amato 2023).

In this report, settlement and integration is not seen as the sole individual responsibility of international immigrants to adapt to Canada. Rather, it employs the WCI notion of integration as a two-way process involving co-adjustment, shared responsibilities and constant dialogue between the host communities and international immigrants. The WCI framework also places emphasis on the local level of governance of migration and acknowledges several domains of public policy involved in settlement and integration. According to the WCI, a welcoming community has both a spatial dimension, namely a geographical area, namely town, city and region, in which newcomers feel valued, and their needs are met (Esses et al. 2010). A discursive dimension refers to the responsibility of the host community and its engagement in facilitating the integration of international immigrants (Esses et al. 2023, 5).

WCI includes a list of 17 characteristics of a welcoming community based on the review of the literature and the input from 259 key informants from all levels of government, settlement organizations, postsecondary education institutions, Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) and the *Reseaux en*

Immigration Francophone. From this list, we make an initial assessment of **seven** characteristics on **access to affordable, adequate, and suitable housing; employment and entrepreneurship opportunities; access to suitable health care; access to transportation; educational opportunities; equitable neighbourhoods; coordination and collaboration among community organizations and different levels of government.**

While the WCI is insightful in analyzing existing institutional mechanisms and policies, this report also identifies some gaps in this framework. In the WCI, there is an emphasis on the municipality. Yet, accessibility to services, programs and infrastructures might differ according to location in terms of neighborhoods. For that reason, we also employ a critical urban politics perspective to understand how various settlement experiences intertwine in places such as neighborhoods, and how this geographical location influences accessibility, and decision-making in relation to settlement and integration including education, employment, health and social engagement in their community and the city (Brenner 2010). In other words, the way cities and neighbourhoods are organized can intensify the negative effects of unemployment, poverty, poor physical and mental health, isolation and overwork. For that reason, we map income levels according to Statistics Canada census tracts and overlap them with local services mapped by the City of Saint John in its open database ([access to interactive map](#)). It is worth noting that mapping of services is only available from the City of Saint John, and for that reason, services in other areas of the Saint John CMA are not considered.

Our contribution to the existing studies on immigration in Atlantic cities include our considerations for the level of the neighborhood. Socioeconomic status and neighborhood environments impact many health and social indicators and outcomes (See Narla et al. 2015; Xie, Hubbard and Himes 2020). Also, neighborhoods, including infrastructures, services and social interactions, are important aspects of social inclusion (Ray and Preston 2009). Yet, neighborhoods cannot be seen in isolation from the local, provincial and national socio-economic and political contexts. Positive changes at the neighborhood level do not suffice if other aspects of the city at large and/or the provincial socio-economic context do not improve (Fincher et al. 2014). The report uses some of the existing neighborhood categories employed by the city of Saint John in combination with how residents of Saint John have historically defined the city in distinct areas, namely **Central Peninsula (South End, Waterloo Village), Old North End (including Mount Pleasant), Crescent Valley, Millidgeville, Lower West Side, Upper West Side, East Side and metropolitan area (people living in Rothesay, Quispamsis, Grand Bay-Westfield or Hampton could choose the metropolitan area option without specifying the municipality).** While we included some mapping data and statistics referring to the Saint John CMA, most surveys and services location were focused on the municipality of Saint John for two reasons. First, many immigrants reside in the municipality of Saint John, where many immigration settlement organizations (ISOs) and government services are located. Second, information on municipal services as well as crime rates are publicly available from the City of Saint John and the Saint John police and not from other municipalities.

We employed statistical and geographical data to provide spatial insights on immigrants' experiences in Saint John CMA. We conducted surveys with 100 participants (there were 108 but we discarded because they did not comply with the criteria of being an international immigrant in Canada and/or were over 19 years old). The surveys were carried over a period of two years (2022-2024) given the difficulties in recruiting survey participants. In-person surveys were important to reach out to those sectors of the immigrant population that are unable to access online surveys due to lack of technology as well as economic, language and cultural barriers. The goal was to meet with people in their own neighborhoods or spaces where they access services such as priority neighborhoods, the Saint John Newcomers Centre, YMCA Newcomer Connections and the Saint John Public Library Main Branch. Difficulties initially arose from our lack of connections to some communities, hence the length of time it took to gain communities trust in participating in the survey. Participants received an inducement in the form of a gift certificate as a recognition of the value of their knowledge in accordance with the Tri-

Council Policy Statement under approval of the University of New Brunswick Research Ethics Board (#027-2021).

Our surveys provided representation across the various neighborhoods in Saint John with survey respondents residing in the Old North End (22%), Central Peninsula (South End) (17%), East Side (16%), Crescent Valley (16%), Millidgeville (10%), Central Peninsula (Waterloo Village) (5%), Lower West Side (4%), Upper West Side (1%), and the metropolitan area (1%). The results of the surveys related to neighborhoods are presented in percentages, and each neighborhood represents a 100 percent. For instance, if 50 percent of the participant reported having safety and structural issues in their household, this refers to half of those participants in that one neighborhood.

Around two thirds of the survey participants identified as women providing insights into the gendered aspects of immigration and settlement. According to our surveys, most participants were born in Syria (28%) with others born in Somalia (11%), Sudan (7%), Afghanistan (6%), Ukraine (5%), Colombia (5%), and Mexico (5%) with smaller representations from other countries (Figure 1). And 60 percent of survey participants were permanent residents through the refugee stream and 20 percent international students. Most participants' age ranged from 20 to 40 years old (Figure 2).

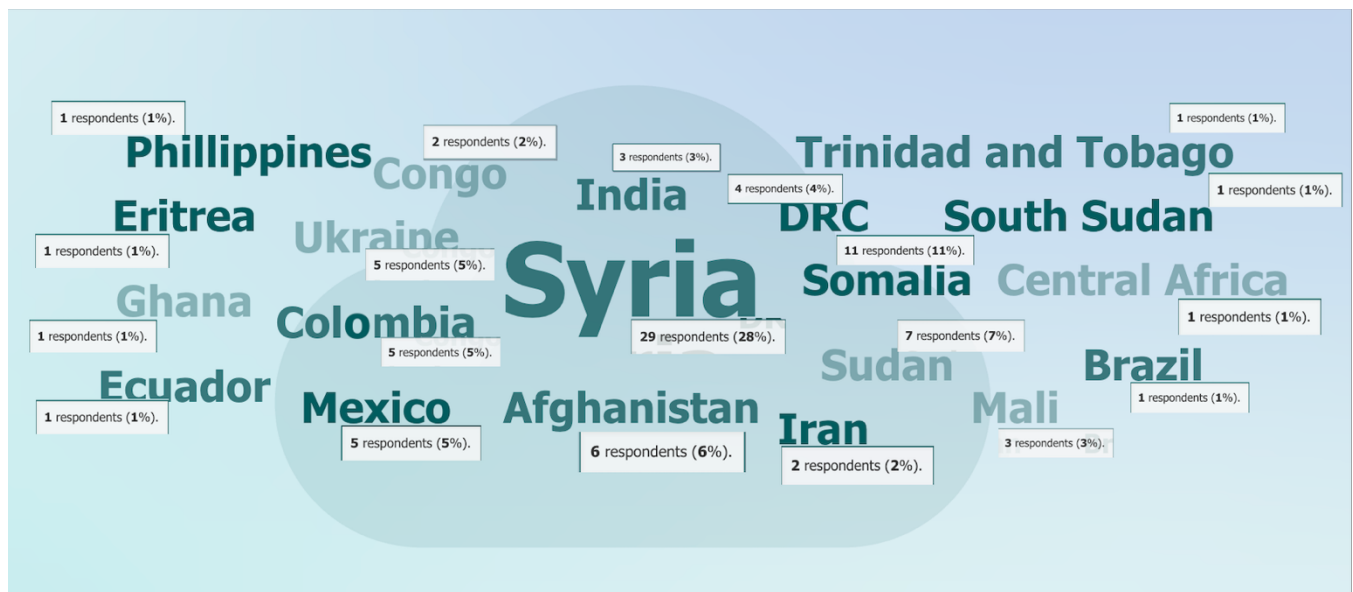


Figure 1. Survey participants according to country of origin.

In addition to English and French, participants spoke Arabic, Spanish, Somali and Dari and interpretation in those languages was provided. The level of education amongst participants varied. The level of education is discussed in greater detail according to neighborhood level.

Surveys were complemented with participant observation through reflexive critical ethnography. The reason is two-fold. First, in many cases, participants felt that recording some of their critiques and opinions within the survey would bring negative consequences on their immigration status and settlement opportunities despite reassuring them through written and oral communications this was not the case. Existing research indicates that international immigrants might abstain from expressing criticism of their host society for fear of losing opportunities (Bilodeau 2008). Second, participant observation through a critical ethnography lens allowed us to pay attention to how everyday life of immigrants were connected to larger economic and political processes while reflecting on our own positionality as researchers. Muñoz-Martínez is a female racialized immigrant and a mother of two without her

extended family in Canada, with a Canadian graduate degree, and a university professor. So, while this co-author was able to relate to other immigrant families that are racialized, she was cognizant of her economic and educational privileges and how this affected power relations during the fieldwork. Co-author Byrne is a white middle-class female pursuing a graduate degree. Throughout the fieldwork, this co-author recognized how her privilege as a white researcher born in Canada shaped the power dynamics between herself and international immigrants. In this way, we were constantly acknowledging our positionality during the research to limit unidirectional power relations with survey participants and avoid objectifying and stigmatizing them but rather engaging in a mutual learning dialogue (Chang 2020). The report visualizes coded comments and observations to highlight the most pressing concerns for international immigrants in the area.

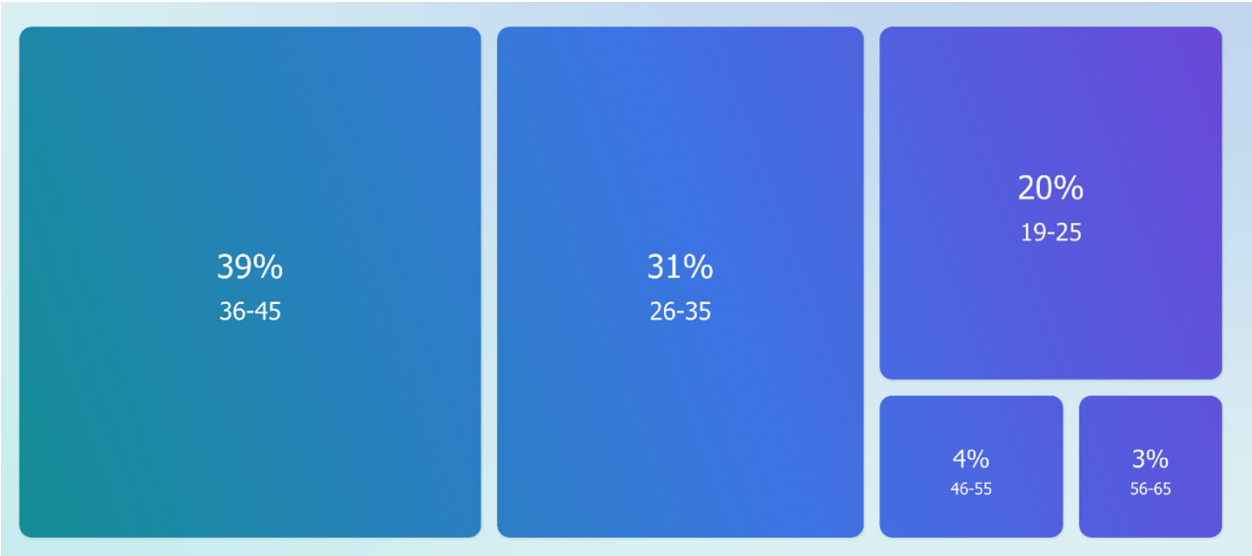


Figure 2. Survey participants' age

The report employs participatory mapping, a form of community-based research visually representing participants' experiences navigating the city (Denwood et al. 2022). As such, this approach allows us to map community assets and problems to determine gaps and barriers to accessing resources and services through community knowledge and lived experiences. We asked participants to use different colored stickers to locate where they live, work, and go to school to understand how they can access different services and places in the city. We also asked them to identify assets, problems and vision in their neighbourhood/city with different color Post-it notes (Photo 1 and 2). We transferred this information to open software [Umap](#).

Two art workshops were organized at the public library in 2022 and at the Nick Nicolle community centre in the Old North End in 2023 with the assistance of visual artist Fabiola Martínez. In the 2022 workshop, participants were invited to express their perception of the city as international immigrants. In the second workshop, participants took pictures of their neighborhoods to indicate what aspects of their city and/or neighborhood they liked or disliked and include them in the painting as collage. This is another form of participatory methodology that uses creative art to allow participants to express their experiences of immigration in the city, providing important insights that might not be evident in the surveys or statistical data (Moralli 2024).



Photo 1. Participatory mapping in Saint John. Source: Kristen Byrne (2022)



Photo 2. Participatory mapping and artwork at the Nick Nicolle Centre. Source: Sarah Lunney (2023)

The report has limitations. For instance, it does not include all indicators in the WCI framework (see appendix 1), and it might not be representative of the main countries of origin where many immigrants in the Saint John CMA come from and where people live in the city. The surveys focus mostly on the municipality of Saint John with only a few participants from two municipalities of the Saint John CMA. Further work needs to be done in other municipalities in the Saint John CMA to have a regional perspective on immigration. Also, the data might not be statistically significant, and percentages by each neighborhood might not necessarily reflect the overall experiences of all residents. Likewise, this study does not include an analysis of the rural-urban fringe. Also, the number of people according to neighborhood differ and the data was collected over a period of two years rather in a short period of time within a given year each. Yet, the existing data and the diverse methodologies provide insights about the continuation of needs and change of needs according to different socio-economic variables, residency status, gender, age and country of origin.

1. Multi-level governance and Immigration in Canada: A literature review

Canadian federal immigration policy, multiculturalism and diversity, and health, economic, social and cultural aspects of integration and settlement of international immigrants have been widely researched. Yet, these studies remained focused on large Canadian cities. The study of the role of local government in Canada, particularly municipalities, in the provision of services and infrastructure for immigrants that is inclusive of immigrants needs, remains largely unexplored (Barber 2024). The report reviews the relevant literature of the past ten years on multi-level governance of immigration involving different levels of government, especially in medium and small-size cities, and analyses on experiences of settlement and integration in the Maritimes and the Saint John CMA. This review provides the latest insights from studies that have recently recognized the increasing importance of medium-and small size cities in international immigration in Canada, and the centrality of the local, including municipalities and neighborhoods, in the process of settlement and integration. The review also highlights recent efforts to understand the experiences of immigrants and existing needs and services in Atlantic Canada, particularly in the Saint John CMA. The latter provides insights into the continuities and/or changes of the needs of international immigrants in the Saint John CMA in relation to the research results of this report.

In the last decade, there has been a turn to the 'local' in migration research as federal migration policy has been encouraging population growth away from Canada's large urban centres to geographical areas experiencing depopulation (Schmidtke 2019). Also, municipalities are the main site where national and provincial immigration and multiculturalism policy is implemented and immediate services central to settlement are provided. Zhixi Zhuang (2021) notes that cities have a crucial role in managing diversity particularly in relation to increasing needs for housing, transportation, infrastructure, public spaces and services driven by international migration.

The literature on multi-level governance describes the prevalence of the federal government in decision-making over migration, including a focus on a balanced population growth across different geographical areas of the country and the point system for economic migration which prioritizes long-term needs in the labour market or (Rice and Quan 2023; Barber 2024). In general, the literature argues a disconnect between federal policies and the local realities of international immigrants and therefore the need to look at the participation of local level of government in the process of international migration policy.

Such concerns have led to the expansion of direct provincial participation into immigration policy to address low population growth and the local needs of labour markets through the provincial nomination program (PNP) initiated in 1998, the 2017 Atlantic Immigration Pilot Programs (AIPP), the 2023 Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot (RNIP), the 2025 Rural Community Immigration Pilot (RCIP), the 2025 Francophone Community Immigration Pilot (FCIP). It is worth noting that New Brunswick was not part of the RNIP and the RCIP. In this context, provinces, in dialogue with local employers, set priority sectors and the necessary skills required by the provincial economy (Paquet and Xhardez 2020).

The federal government has also opened spaces for collaboration with municipalities, particularly through the Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) and the Welcoming Communities Initiative (WCI) (Schmidtke 2019). LIPs are funded by the federal government via Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to coordinate local engagement in settlement services, promote existing local initiatives, enhanced planning across different levels of government related to immigrant settlement (CIC 2013). The WCI is also a framework funded by IRCC to redefine integration as a co-responsibility between the host community and international immigrant rather than the latter's exclusive task (Esses et al. 2023). It also recognizes the importance of local services, context and built environment in setting the conditions that make international immigrants feel welcome in a local community (Drolet 2017). This relates to the role of municipalities and ISOs as the main providers of these services in process of settlement. Policy innovations also include the 2020 IRCC Consultation on Immigration Levels and

Municipal Nominee Program (MNP), the MOU between the Canadian-government, Ontario and Toronto, and the establishment of formal role of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) within Annex D of the 2017 Canada-Ontario Agreement on Immigration (Rose and Preston 2017). In the case of the MOU and the Annex, governance mechanisms are set to identify priorities, programs and funding needed by municipalities to provide resources needed for international immigrants (IRCC 2018).

Still, the existing literature on multi-level governance of immigration points to complications in the role of municipalities when developing policy within the WCI framework. While there is an increasing local focus through LIPs and WCI, funding continues to be insufficient in relation to the needs required to provide local services (Drolet and Texeira 2022, Crea Arsenio et al. 2022). Federal and provincial control of funding, programs and mandates also prevail, while municipalities' role remains informal and/or limited to a consultation entity (Rose and Preston 2016). At the same time, there is continuous downloading of local integration and settlement tasks on ISOs and non-profit bodies through episodic and limited funding with restrictions such as eligibility criteria and mandatory quotas (Crea-Arsenio et al. 2023). Such conditional and limited funding does not allow ISOs and non-profits to adapt to rapid changing economic and social scenarios, such as increasing cost of housing and need for interpretation in legal and health care settings, because these activities fall outside the funding mandate (Drolet and Teixeira 2022). And often when such activities do not meet the criteria of the funding mandate, ISOs' members work overtime to provide these services without compensation, leading to burn out of staff and volunteers (Mukhtar et al. 2016). This context hinders ISOs ability to plan and implement programs according to immigrants' needs.

The literature also examines the prevalence of federal and provincial lens to immigration settlement and integration that might be disconnected from the actual needs on the ground. For instance, Mary Crea-Arsenio et al. (2022) discuss the federal government's focus on retraining programs to address skilled immigrants' lack of Canadian education and experience. Yet, this only addresses individual skills rather than structural barriers reinforcing the exclusion of immigrants in the workforce (Chatterjee 2019). Michael C.K. Ma (2017) argues that labour market policies to employ immigrants might differ depending on the stakeholder and the jurisdiction. For instance, federal migration policy, which assesses skills needed by the national economy in the long-term, might not meet the immediate expectations of local labour markets (Rice and Preston 2023). Likewise, barriers to integration and settlement might not be limited to labour markets, which is often a focus of federal and provincial policy but also include family and community networks and public and social infrastructures (Ma 2017).

At the municipal level, policy innovations around planning have emerged. The City of Toronto Newcomer Initiative implemented in the late 2000s aimed at hosting settlement workers in different city departments, including Parks, Forestry and Recreation, Shelters, Support and Housing Administration and Toronto Public Health over a limited period to inform municipal planning through an immigrant lens (Rose and Preston 2016). In the same city, other policy innovations include availability of settlement workers in various locations including city hall, public libraries and community recreation centres with funding from IRCC in partnership with ISOs (Praznik and Shields 2018).

The literature indicates a void in urban and regional planning practices in relation to immigration and diversity (Rose and Preston 2016). For instance, one-size fits all strategies of (colonial) urban planning related to high density, mixed-income neighborhoods and/or clustering with people from the same language, cultural or country of origin background might not always work. For example, women might face marginalization within their same ethnocultural community when the former do not meet the accepted norms of femineity and marriage in that community (Park et al. 2021). Immigrants might not all agree with high density depending on their home ownership or renter status (Zhuang 2021). In other cases, residents from the same cultural, language or country-regional origin might feel safer in the same area (Texeira 2017). Analyses indicate that in some situations lower density might encourage stronger relations between immigrants and their non-immigrant neighbors (Stick et al. 2024).

Zoning changes around retailing to foster informal and personal network can turn international immigrants' business into community hubs. This involves zoning that allows the combination of retail with residence spaces, where the latter have opening hours that adapt better to the social time of immigrants (e.g. later or earlier hours), potentially meeting the non-immigrants' needs as well (Zhuang and Chen 2017). Zoning that encourages mixed-income and neighborhood revitalization might drive gentrification if other measures are not set in place such as housing affordability and tenant rights for both immigrant and non-immigrants (Fincher et al. 2014). An immigrant and diversity lens in zoning is also relevant when considering spiritual spaces and considerations regarding parking and height. While zoning around places of worship might consider parking in relation to the number of seats based on the ways colonial planning revolved around Christian Churches, this might not be the case in other religions. Considerations of parking might be related on floor or pray areas. In some spiritual traditions, parking is not needed as worshippers are required to walk to the place of worship (Zhuang 2021, 216).

Studies on multi-level governance consider that the challenges on settlement and immigration might differ between large and small and mid-size cities. On the one hand, large cities have the historical know-how of adapting to the needs of immigrants. As a result, large cities might have continuity in federal and provincial funding allocated to settlement and integration (Drolet and Texeira 2022). And when federal and provincial funding and local public services do not provide resources, including those related to spiritual and emotional needs, historically constituted grassroots organizations established by immigrants and diasporas provide these supports in large cities (Chai et al. 2023). Shibao Guo and Yan Guo, note that:

[a]s the process of immigrant settlement and integration is inherently local, observations and conclusions based on studies of immigrant settlement and integration in Canada's large metropolitan areas do not necessarily apply to immigrant settlement and integration in other types of urban and rural areas (2016, 47).

Analyses on immigration in small and medium-size cities address the positive and negative aspects of immigrants' settlement. Positive aspects include lower density in small cities leading to stronger relations between immigrants and their local neighbours (Stick et al. 2024); better incomes for immigrants in smaller urban centres than large ones (Sano et al 2017; Fang and Hartley 2024); and support of local volunteers (Agrawal and Sanapala 2021) and benefits of publicly funded sports activities (Nadeau et al. 2016). Yet, problems remain. Retention rates tend to be lower than those of large cities and discrimination and lack of opportunities in labour markets are central issues in low retention rates (Sano et al. 2020; Fang et al. 2018). Federal and provincial focus on labour markets might miss other aspects of settlement and integration in small and mid-size cities which include, spiritual, health, intellectual and emotional aspects as well as housing and civic and social engagement (Brown 2017; Guo and Guo 2016). Also, there is the issue of lack of prompt local data that does not allow ISOs and municipalities to set policies and programs in preparation for the arrival of international immigrants (Gibson et al. 2017; Crea-Arsenio et al. 2023). Chai et al. (2023) and Lei and Guo (2022) also emphasize that an exclusive local emphasis on cultural diversity might miss how structural factors in everyday life in the community might continue to reinforce the idea of "wanted but not welcomed," and increase immigrants' sense of cultural ineptness due to disdain and indifference of locals. Some of these structural factors include the lack of continuous deracialized and familiar spaces that encourage sociability (Chai et al. 2023). And such spaces are usually provided at the municipal level, which include parks, community centres, cultural and sports programming for instance. And the provision of those spaces is not only influenced by jurisdictional and funding issues but also by zoning.

In relation to the Atlantic region, existing analyses range from addressing power relations to understanding decisions to stay in the region. Allain et al. (2020) emphasise that that a "conditional welcoming" of immigrants predominate in Atlantic Canada as the former are seen as instruments to rescue struggling economies. These analyses recommend a shift away from this instrumentalization of

immigrants and a narrow focus on labour markets to foster retention (Pottie-Sherman and Graham 2021). In relation to retention, Mikael Hellstrom (2020a) and Evangelina Tastsoglou and Serperi Sevgur (2023) argue that immigrants' main reasons for leaving New Brunswick include lack of employment, sense of isolation and lack of health care. Reasons for staying in the province and the region were quality services provided by settlement agencies, education, and low cost of living and local friendliness.

Ted Macdonald and Pablo Miah (2021) examine retention rates between 2005 and 2019 in New Brunswick. The authors found that more than 50% retention rates existed for PNP primary applicants after 3 and 5 years as well as high retention rates of Syrian refugees and sponsored family streams. The study indicates that these outcomes reflect the revamping of the PNP Entrepreneurial Stream in 2017, a focus on nominations with job offers, additional investments in settlement support services, and increasing language requirements for new immigrants. Analyses of the Atlantic region highlight patterns of high concentration of immigrants, intensifying the needs for services in urban centres (Kaida et al. 2020). Also, studies show lack of resources and opportunities for civil engagement in the region, making immigrants rely increasingly on informal social networks for support (Chareka 2017; Weeasinghe et al. 2017). Few recent analyses address gendered dimensions of immigration in the Maritimes, particularly in New Brunswick. For instance, Cathy Holtman and Tracey Rickards (2018) argue that existing services at the local and provincial level do not address the concerns and needs of immigrant women experiencing domestic and intimate partner violence (DIPV) as this requires long-term funding and collaboration between public services addressing both DIPV and settlement.

Recent studies on the Saint John CMA focus on the relationship between immigration and retention, provision of services and housing. These studies include the 2020 *Succeed and Stay Report*; the 2021 *The City of Saint John Newcomer Housing Study*; the 2022 New Brunswick Multicultural Council Report *New Conversations 2.0*; the 2022 *Succeed and Stay Immigration Strategy*; and the 2024 *Succeed and Stay: Immigration Patterns Report for Greater Saint John* and the 2024 *Envision Saint John Strategic Planning Kit for the Regional Immigration Strategy*.

The 2020 *Succeed and Stay* report includes three comprehensive sections: a sector gap analysis; a study of experiences of immigrants; and an examination of push and pull factors for retention of immigrants in the local context. The first part of the report indicates that reasons to leave Saint John includes better job and education opportunities, and family and community, living costs cost, the lack of amenities and the high levels of geographical isolation intensified by lack of connectivity at the local, national and international level. Reasons to remain in the area were employment and education opportunities, family, community, social networks, sports infrastructure and ability to open a business (Diversis 2020). This section also assesses the local readiness to welcome and retain international immigrants, emphasizing the existence of essential services for integration, presence of welcoming cultural programs and organizations, and the Saint John Local Immigration Partnership (SJLIP). The study identifies as weaknesses the lack of engagement and a communications strategy to attract and retain economic immigrants, the absence of assessment of immigrants' needs in relation to economic integration, and the lack of a proactive approach aligning retention strategies with population growth needs. It also locates gaps related to 1. information for immigrants and 2. information for ISOs to plan and deliver programs; 3. gap in collaboration in service provision leading to overlapping tasks and inconsistencies; 4. the need to develop an attraction strategy to tackle gap; 5. internal reviews within ISOs to address service needs gaps. This section was based on 27 interviews with 44 people from ISOs, local ethnocultural organizations, places of faith and key municipal departments and on 11 focus groups with 78 immigrants in English, French and Arabic (Diversis 2020).

The section on immigrants' experiences provides a comprehensive analysis of characteristics of participants, use of local services and factors of retention based on 735 online surveys. The participants' region of origin was predominantly Asia, Europe and Africa and most of them became permanent

residents through the economic stream process, had knowledge of one of the official languages, had post-secondary education prior to arrival, and Saint John was the first point of contact. Most of the participants also came from larger cities and their source of income was employment. In terms of the urban infrastructure and place of residence, many economic immigrants lived in Rothesay and Quispamsis whereas immigrants that came in the refugee stream lived predominantly in the city of Saint John (Nguyen et al. 2020). A similar divide emerged in terms of racialization. Those racialized as white resided in Quispamsis and Rothesay, while those racialized as Asian, Latino and Arab resided in Saint John. In the three municipalities, the reason to stay were housing and schools while appreciating safety, food affordability and access to amenities such as parks, malls and public libraries. Residents of Rothesay and Quispamsis highlighted good neighborhoods and low property taxes as favorable features whereas Saint John residents stressed the short commute, jobs, public transit and access to settlement and government programs as assets.

Participants noted three negative aspects of living in the Saint John CMA: lack of family doctor and low-quality health care, shortage of childcare, particularly afterschool care, and confusing, expensive and inefficient public transit. In terms of use of services, respondents found existing settlement programs useful for Canadian culture and citizenship classes, but not for interpretation, translation and search of a home. Also, about half of the participants did not know about existing settlement and integration services and therefore did not use them. The report identifies a service gap for work and study permit workers. The report also recognizes five factors that are barriers to retention: 1) respondents were active in the community but were not represented in civic and political institutions and do not have many connections with locals, and in some cases there is a sense of isolation among those that migrated through the refugee stream; 2) job opportunities are scarce, there is not recognition of non-Canadian credentials and work experience, and international immigrants encounter difficulties to obtain interviews because they are not connected to existing local social networks; 3) lack of access to affordable housing; 4) need to improve language fluency and 5) need to incorporate a more inclusive framework in local services and labour markets to address discrimination and lack of economic opportunities (Nguyen et al. 2020).

The third section focuses on economic immigrants to understand push and pull factors based on 39 in-depth interviews with economic immigrants that either stayed, departed and/or returned to the Saint John CMA. The report cautions that this does not reflect the experiences of those migrating through the refugee stream (2020b). It identifies employment opportunities as push factors to leave the Saint John CMA, while the pull factors encouraging retention are welcoming people, family, low cost of living, short commute and access to nature. In terms of labour markets, the study highlights the absence of recognition of non-Canadian experience and credentials, the lack of access to the social networks necessary to be hired and the inconsistencies between federal and provincial expectations and the reality of the local labour markets. In terms of non-market barriers, the study points to everyday difficulties such as snow removal, weather related knowledge, access to credit cards and cultural misunderstandings; no access to health care, efficient and affordable transit; and limited knowledge on housing. The author notes that participants shared their experiences of racism and discrimination, which were often reported by respondents racialized as Black. The author also indicates that there are not gendered-informed settlement services.

The *Conversations 2.0 Report* (2021) examines the need for population growth in the Saint John CMA, particularly for having a tax-paying workforce that contributes to the financing of public services. It locates immigration as the main source of population increase and recognizes the need for municipalities to be engaged in the planning for this growth and expand their roles to include economic development, retention, people attraction and community and marketing strategies. Yet, as mentioned in the Canadian literature on multilevel governance, this role remains informal and without the necessary funding due to limitations imposed by the federal and provincial jurisdiction. The report

also advocates for the promotion of local business and social networks, local schools, churches, sports and recreation organizations as central aspects of retention (NBMC 2021).

The 2021 City of Saint John Newcomer Housing Study, based on the 2016 Statistics Canada census data, addresses the lack of new housing stock, low vacancy rates, unaffordability of housing for newcomers and encourages housing development meeting newcomers needs such as three bedroom rental units outside of the Central Peninsula, townhouse and semi-detached units for families for rental and homeownership, mixed income housing and mixed use in planning as well as inclusionary zoning (Dillon Consulting 2021). It is worth noting that the City of Saint John is including full spectrum housing strategy as part of its Affordable Housing Action Plan (City of Saint John 2022).

The 2024 Succeed and Stay: Immigration Patterns Report for Greater Saint John analyzes immigration and socio-economic data in the Saint John CMA between 2018 and 2023 from Statistics Canada and IRCC (Jupia Consultants 2024). It emphasizes substantial increases in the number of PRs, mostly in the City of Saint John, as well as the francophone immigrants and international students. The number of PRs indicating the Saint John CMA as the intended destination increased 18% between 2022-2023. More than half of the PRs were under 30 years old. Almost 40% of PRs have a university degree and the top countries of origin were India, Nigeria and the Philippines. The report also indicates that expansion of the workforce mostly came from immigration. And PRs through the economic stream and refugee and protected persons grew 107% and by 184% respectively. Sponsored family PR increased 36% during the same period. It is worth noting that the increase in the number of PRs through the refugee stream in Saint John CMA raised higher than the NB average. Yet, this CMA has the lowest retention rates in the Atlantic region. The report identifies family sponsorship and pre-admission experience as fostering retention.

The 2024 Envision Saint John Strategic Planning Kit for the Regional Immigration Strategy (O Strategies and Engagement Matters 2024) is based on stakeholder engagement in the local immigration settlement and integration sector, in-depth interviews with large industry partners and municipal staff, two bilingual dialogues with 44 participants in Saint John and Quispamsis and 331 online surveys. The report emphasises the need for better information and communication of living conditions of the area, improvements in marketing and branding strategy, foreign credential and experience recognition, and the need to match employment opportunities with immigrants' skills, and enhancement and diversification of language training programs. The report also pinpoints access to housing, health care and public transit and anti-racism and gender-based initiatives and long-term integration strategies that foster social networks with locals as important aspects to tackle towards an inclusive and welcoming community.

The literature review shows how the field of immigration in small and medium-size cities is expanding as international migration spreads outside Canada's larger cities. In this literature, there are concerns on the small and mid-size cities' limited role and funding capacities to address settlement and integration of international immigrants, and the disconnect between federal/provincial immigration policies and the local needs of municipalities, ISOs and international immigrants. As Barber (2024) notes, how responsibilities are delegated and negotiated at different levels of government affects access to rights for international immigrants. Studies in the Maritimes emphasize that the main factors for retention are employment opportunities, family ties and low living costs, while lack of job opportunities and social isolation are the main factors for leaving. This is echoed in recent extensive research done by the City of Saint John and regional agency Envision Saint John which highlight the need to 1) foster employment and business opportunities and recognize foreign credentials and experiences, particularly in the context of skilled international immigrants, 2) encourage community-making with locals to prevent feelings of social isolation, racism and discrimination; 3) develop communications that convey the realities of the living costs, access to services and labour markets and marketing strategies to attract immigrants to the region; 4) address access to health care and affordable housing shortages and

public transit deficiencies; 5) improve language training programs; 6) avoid fragmentation and overlapping of immigration services by local organizations.

In general, the literature emphasises, implicitly or explicitly, the importance of the local and the need to further fund and empower local government and ISOs. Our contribution to the current debate is two-fold. First, we study international migration in Saint John through the lens of the WCI framework, particularly in relation to urban inequalities at the level of the neighborhood. Second, our research methods allow us to learn about the distinct aspects and expression of immigrants' experience in Saint John that do not only focuses on the individual but also the household and the community. This provides insights on how diversity does not equal integration; and proximity is not the same as integration (Chai et al. 2023) but rather it is necessary to address social isolation and exclusion in everyday life through the local, particularly those related to city design, infrastructures, services.

For a summary of the literature review, press [link for podcast](#) and/or see Figure 3 for infographic.

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND CITIES

MULTILEVEL GOVERNANCE

- Dominance of the federal government in decision-making over migration, leading to labor market mismatches (Rice 2023; Barber 2024).
- Provincial programs aim to address local labor market needs (Paquett Xhardez 2020).
- Municipalities play a crucial role in implementing these policies but face challenges due to funding limitations and informal roles (Drolet and Teixeira 2022; Crea Arsenio et al. 2023).
- LIPs and Welcoming Communities Initiative promote local engagement (Schmidtke 2019; Esses et al. 2023).
- There is a disconnect between federal/provincial policies and local needs, leading to ineffective integration strategies (Rose and Preston 2016).
- There is a void in urban and regional planning practices, particularly in zoning, in relation to immigration and diversity (Rose and Preston 2016).
- One-size-fits-all strategies related to high density, mixed-income neighborhoods, and clustering with people from the same language, cultural, or country of origin background might not always work (Park et al. 2021; Zhixi 2021; Teixeira 2017; Stick et al. 2024).
- Zoning changes around retailing can foster informal and personal networks that turn international immigrants' businesses into community hubs. (Zhuang and Chen 2017).
- Zoning that encourages mixed-income and neighborhood revitalization might drive gentrification if other measures are not set in place, such as housing affordability and tenant rights for both immigrants and non-immigrants (Fincher et al. 2014).
- An immigrant lens in zoning is also relevant when considering spiritual spaces and considerations regarding parking and height. Zhixi 2021).

SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED CITIES

- Positive aspects include stronger community relations due to lower density (Stick et al. 2024), better incomes for immigrants (Sano et al. 2017; Fang and Hartley 2024), and support from local volunteers (Agrawal and Sanapala 2021).
- However, retention rates are lower than in large cities due to discrimination and lack of opportunities in labor markets (Alfonso et al. 2022; Sano et al. 2020; Fang et al. 2018).
- Federal and provincial policies often miss other aspects of settlement and integration, such as spiritual, health, intellectual, and emotional needs (Brown and Armenakyan 2020; Guo and Guo 2016).
- There is also a lack of prompt local data, which hinders the ability of ISOs and municipalities to set policies and programs in preparation for the arrival of international immigrants (Gibson et al. 2017; Crea Arsenio 2023).

ATLANTIC CANADA

- Emphasis on the conditional welcoming of immigrants, where they are seen as instruments to rescue struggling economies (Allain et al. 2020).
- Employment opportunities and family ties are key retention factors, while lack of job opportunities and social isolation are main reasons for leaving (Hellstrom 2020; Tastsoglou and Sevgur 2023).
- Recent research highlights the need for municipalities to be engaged in planning for population growth and expanding their roles to include economic development, retention, people attraction, and community and marketing strategies (NBMC 2021).
- Municipalities face limitations due to federal and provincial jurisdiction and funding constraints (Pottie-Sherman and Graham 2021).

SAINT JOHN CMA

- The Succeed and Stay report identifies reasons for leaving Saint John, such as better job and education opportunities, living costs, and geographical isolation (Diversis 2020). Reasons for staying include employment and education opportunities, family, community, social networks, sports infrastructure, and the ability to open a business (Nguyen et al. 2020). The report also highlights gaps in local readiness to welcome and retain international immigrants, such as the lack of an engagement and communications strategy, absence of assessment of immigrants' needs, and lack of proactive retention strategies (Hellstrom 2020).
- The City of Saint John Newcomer Housing Study addresses the lack of new housing stock, low vacancy rates, and unaffordability of housing for newcomers (Dillon Consulting 2021).
- The 2024 Succeed and Stay: Immigration Patterns Report emphasizes substantial increases in the number of PRs, mostly in the City of Saint John, and identifies family sponsorship and pre-admission experience as fostering retention (Jupia Consultants 2024).
- The EnvisionSJ Strategic Planning Kit (O Strategies and Engagement Matters 2024) emphasizes better information and communication of living conditions in the area, improvements in marketing and branding strategy, foreign credential and experience recognition, and the need to match employment opportunities with immigrants' skills to prevent deskilling. The report also highlights the enhancement and diversification of language training programs, access to housing, health care, and public transit, anti-racism and gender-based initiatives, and long-term integration strategies that foster social networks with locals as important aspects to tackle towards an inclusive and welcoming community.

Figure 3. Summary of literature review on international immigration and cities in Canada

3. Towards Welcoming Communities: Ethnography, Survey Analysis and Mapping

The WCI framework focuses on co-responsibility and mutual dialogue of host communities and international immigrants. Such sense is expressed in the painting below of two people holding hands under a tree (photo 3). This section provides an account of some of the general characteristics of the urban context in which the survey responses and participant observations took place, providing the background to use both the WCI framework within an urban and geographical analysis.



Photo 3. "My most important memories" by Gala Alfaro (2022)

Survey participants identified affordability and quality of housing, poverty and unemployment, the high dependency on a car and the lack of affordable and efficient public transportation, access to health care and affordable food as the most pressing need (Figure 4). And this is consistent across all neighborhoods. The word cloud below regarding most urgent community needs must be carefully analyzed as it reflects some of the limitations of the survey and the need to constantly address the researcher's position of privilege vis-a-vis vulnerable communities. The research team developing the survey took for granted access to healthcare and therefore did not include it as an option for the question. There was the option for *Other and specify* in which some people decided to point out the need for health care. Thus, the authors wonder if health care would have been included as an option, this would have ranked higher in the needs of participants. Hence the importance of complementing quantitative methodologies with qualitative analysis through ethnography as well as constantly reflecting on researchers' positionality during the analysis.



Figure 4. Community needs in general

Comments from the surveys (Figure 5) pointed to health care as a predominant concern followed by economic insecurity, municipal services and infrastructure, and access to education.

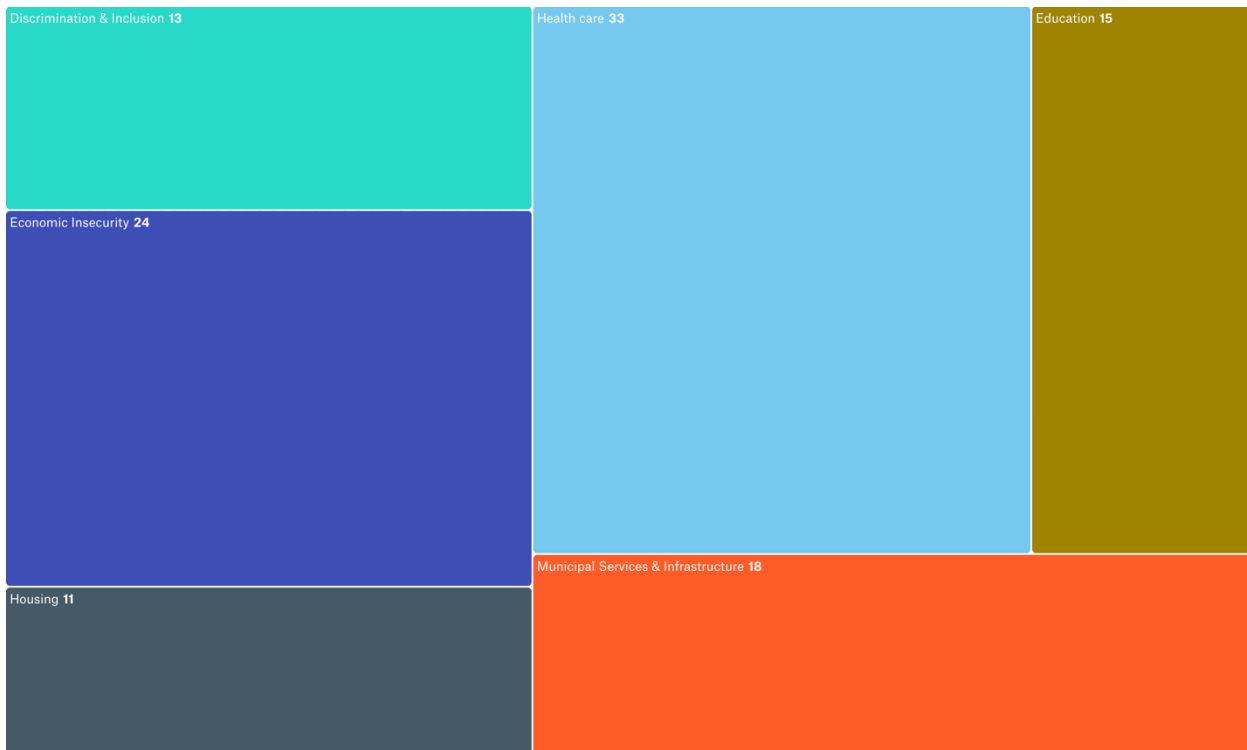


Figure 5. Survey Comments

In our participant observations, we noted that health care remained a prominent issue as well as housing and economic insecurity (Figure 6). Yet, discrimination and inclusion were a concern even though it was not expressed in the surveys but rather through informal conversations. These findings are, namely concerns over access to employment opportunities (including recognition of foreign credentials

and work experience), healthcare, housing, and transportation, education (language training, adult education and afterschool programs) and issues inclusion and discrimination are consistent with the findings from Diversis 2020, Nguyen et al., 2020, Hellstrom 2020 and O Strategies and Engagement Matters 2024.

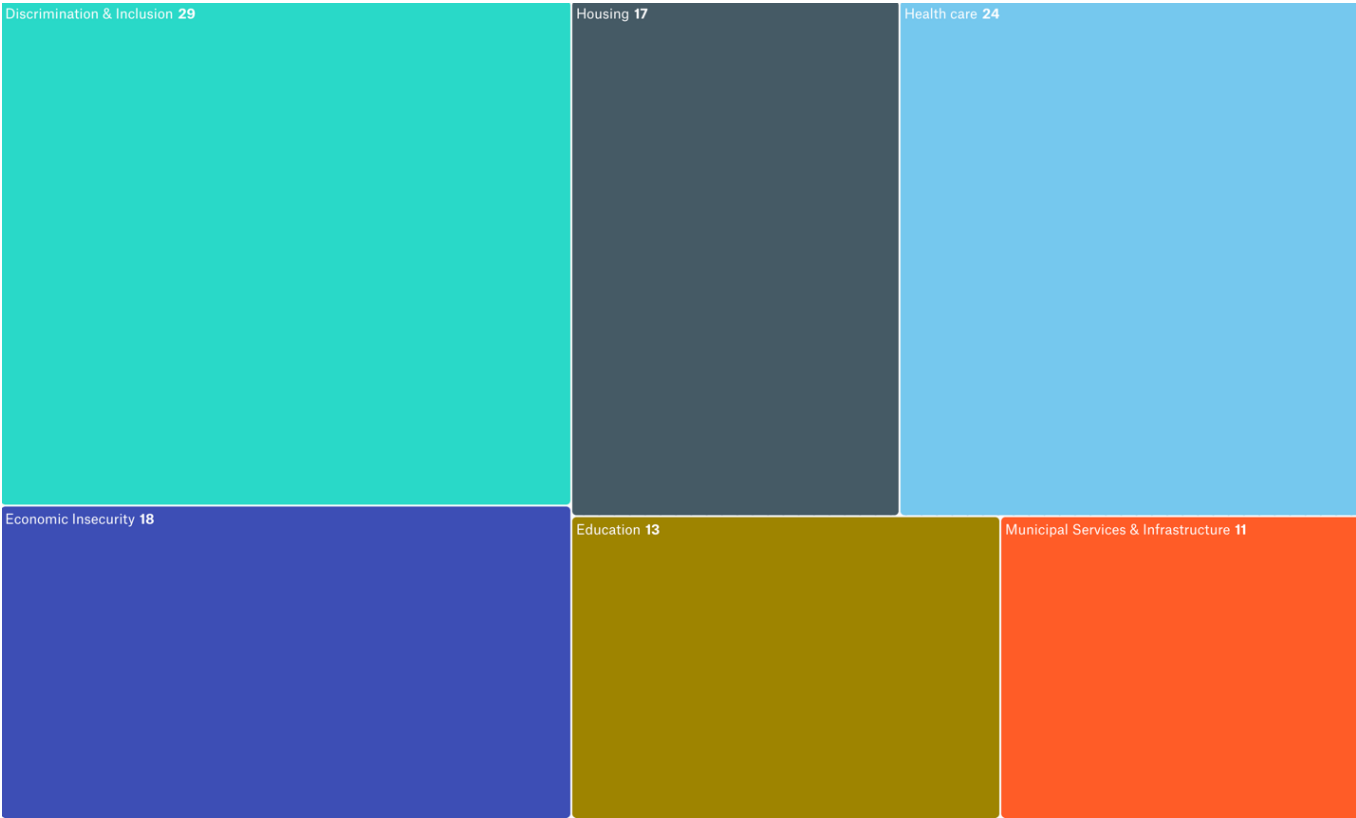
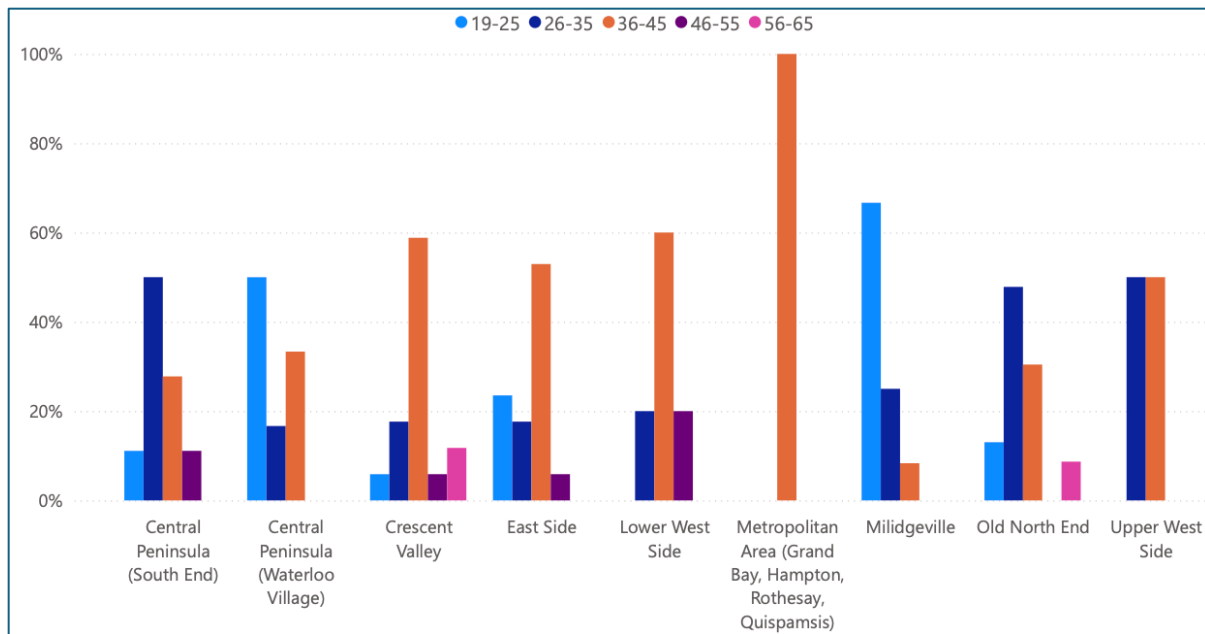


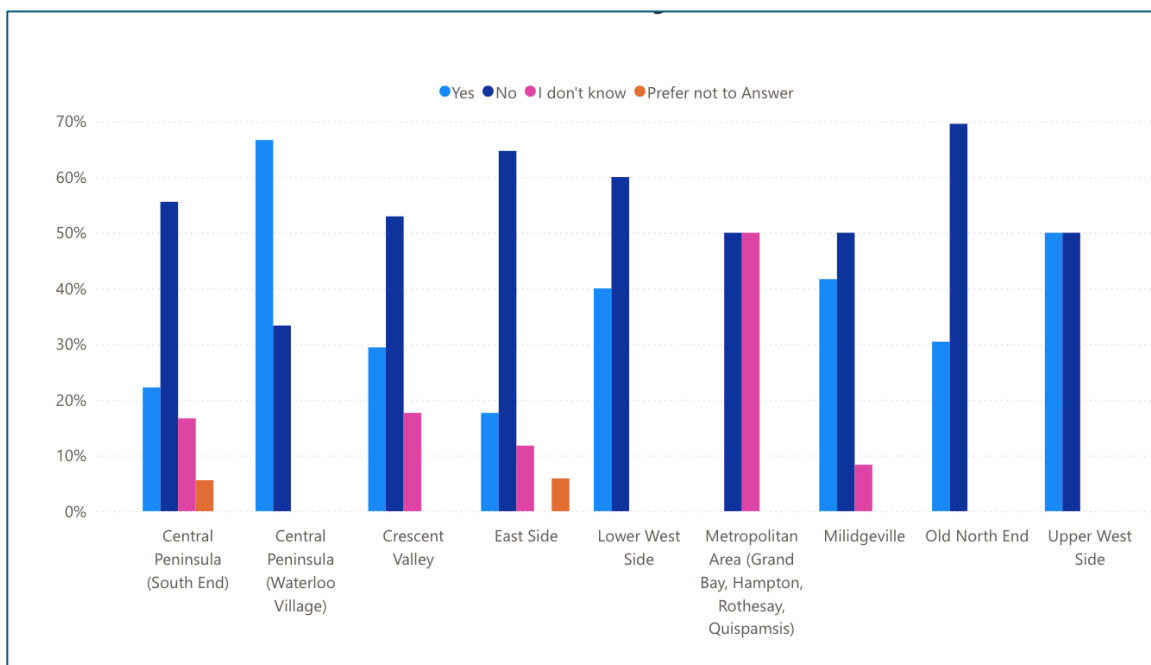
Figure 6 Ethnography notes by theme

The distribution of respondents according to age and neighborhood varied. We found that many respondents were between the age of 19-25 lived in Central Peninsula and Millidgeville. Respondents between the age range 25-35 resided in the Central Peninsula, Upper West Side, and Old North End. Respondents between the age range 36-45 resided primarily in the metropolitan areas, Lower West Side, Old North End, East Side, and Upper West Side. Though we had few respondents between the age ranges of 46-55 and 56-65 respondents, the former primarily resided in the Central Peninsula and Lower West Side and the latter in Crescent Valley and the Old North End (Graph 1). Yet, it worth noting that this might not be representative of the existing age groups among international immigrants.



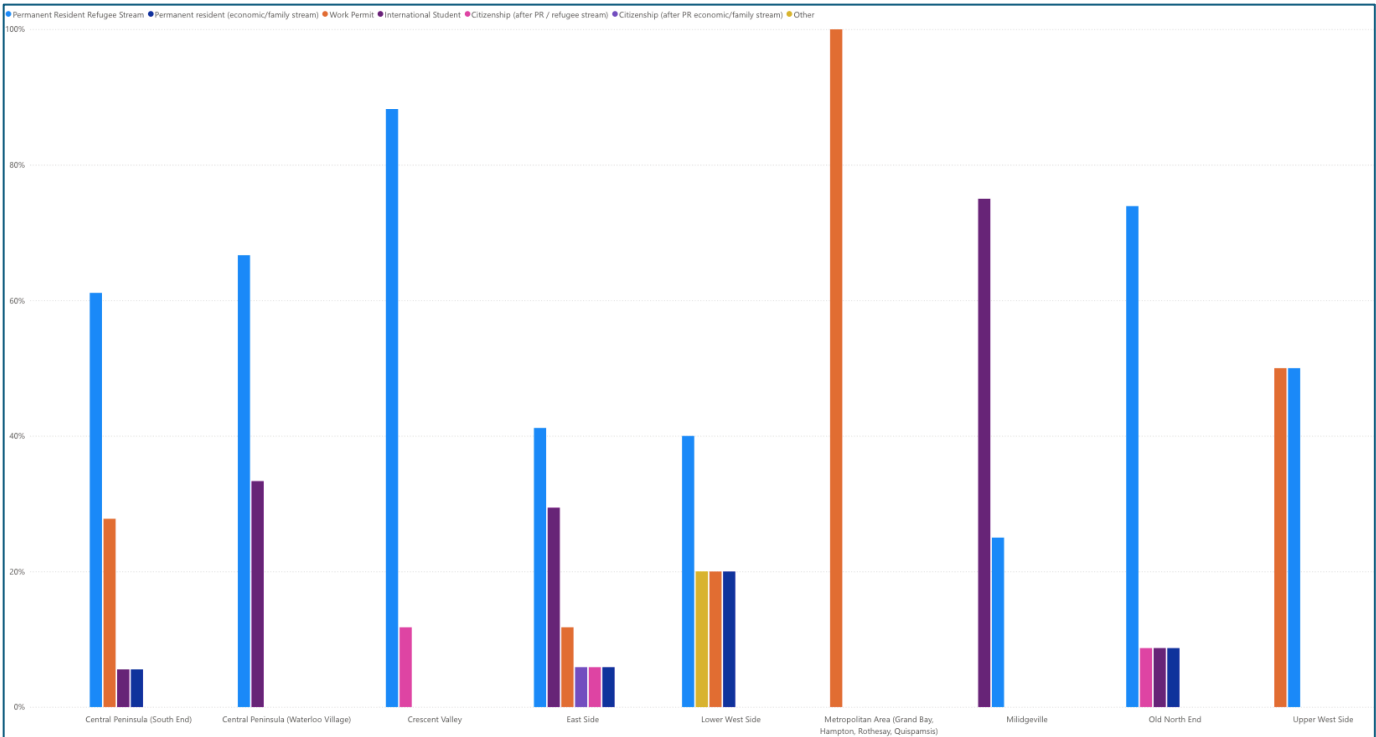
Graph 1 Age range and neighborhood

The surveys also asked participants whether they felt racialized. This was important because we did not want to impose categories on them and at the same time this would give us hints on issues related to discrimination and racism. We explained to participants the concept of racialization before we asked the question. Participants in the Central Peninsula responded yes, while most people in the Old North End, East Side and Lower West Side said no. In the metropolitan area, people said they didn't know. Through participant observation we noted that recent international immigrants particularly from Sub-Saharan Africa, that had arrived within one to two years, expressed not feeling discriminated against or racialized. Whereas international immigrants that had a longer time living in Saint John expressed that they felt racialized and discriminated (Graph 2).



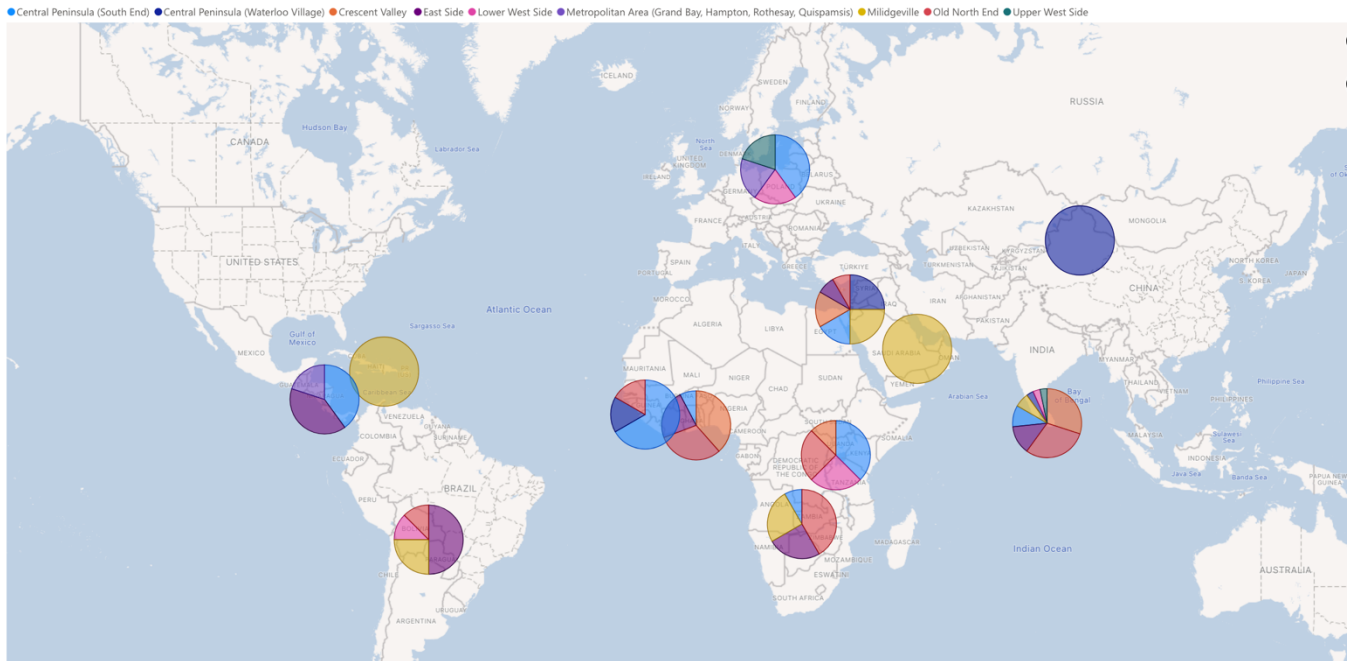
Graph 2. Racialization per neighborhood

We also noted there was an economic and urban divide among participants, which is consistent with Nguyen et al., findings (2020). The latter shows how economic immigrants are mostly located in more affluent areas of the Saint John CMA whereas permanent residents through the refugee stream concentrate in both medium and low-income areas. In the surveys, many participants with work permits and/ economic immigrants lived in the metropolitan area whereas most people in Crecent Valley, Central Peninsula, Lower West, East Side, and Old North End were permanent residents that came through the refugee stream. In Millidgeville most of the participants were international students (Graph 3).



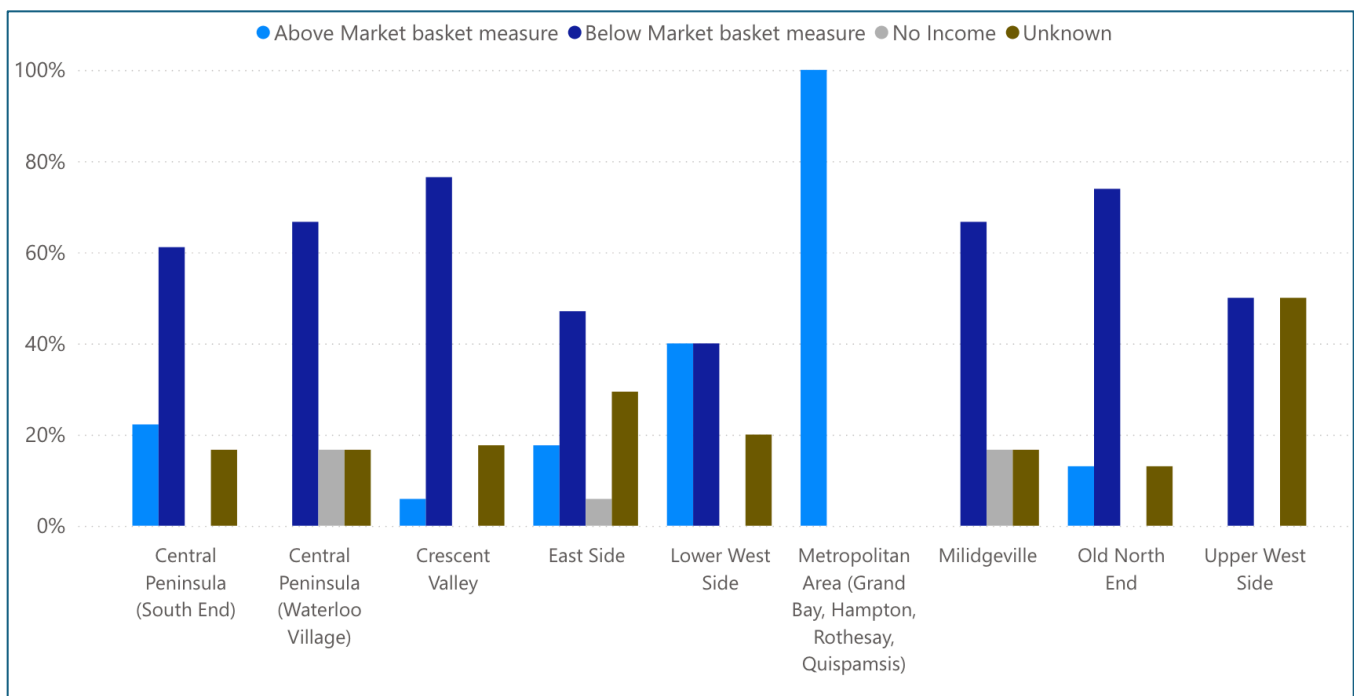
Graph 3. Residency status and neighbourhood

It is also worth noting that many participants that come from places of conflict and violence also live in low-income neighborhoods and priority neighborhoods (Map 1), which calls attention for trauma-informed services and planning that is culturally informed.



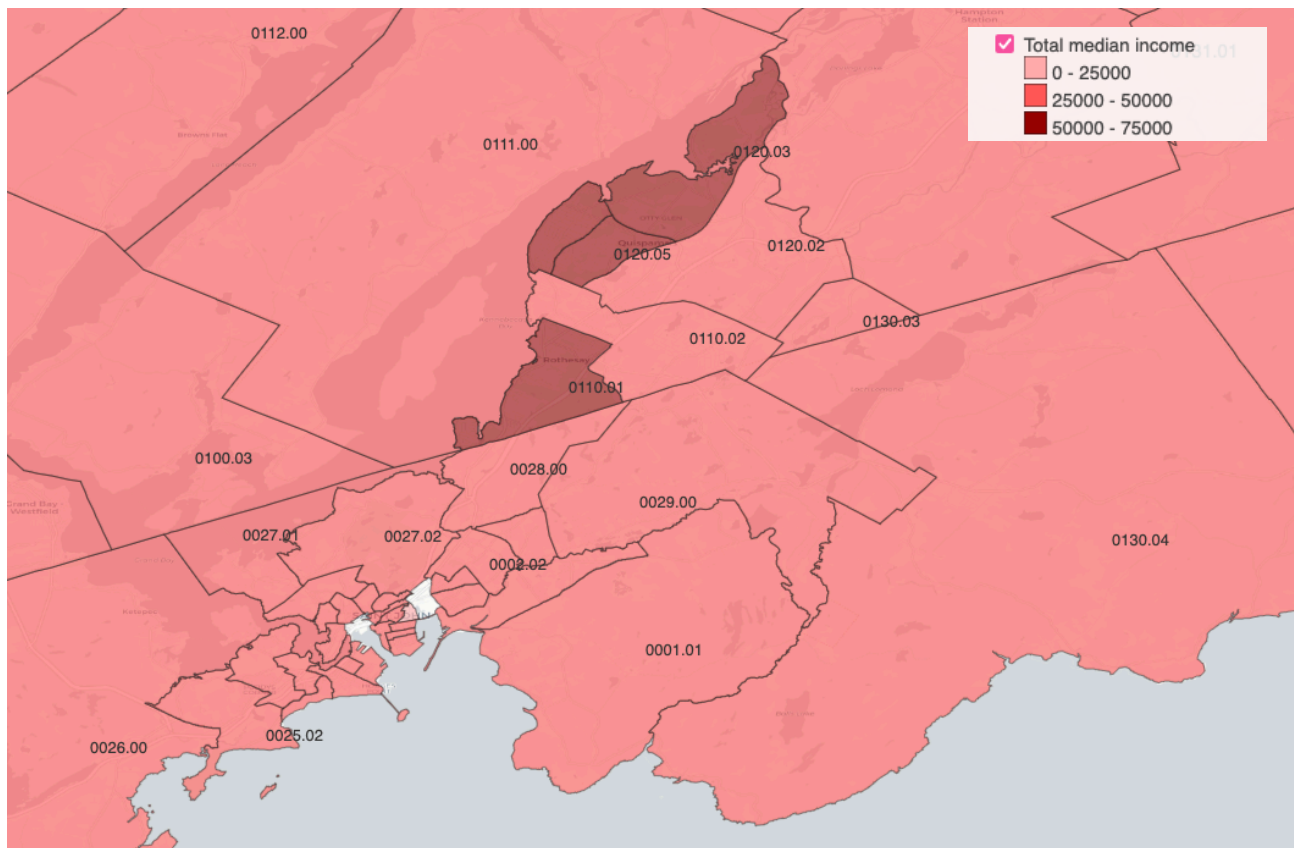
Map 1 Country of Origin and neighborhood

This economic and urban divide can also be found among survey participants. The market basket measure (MBM), a reference for the poverty line, shows that many participants in all neighborhoods, except for the metropolitan area, had an income below the MBM, particularly in the Old North End, Central Peninsula and Crescent Valley.



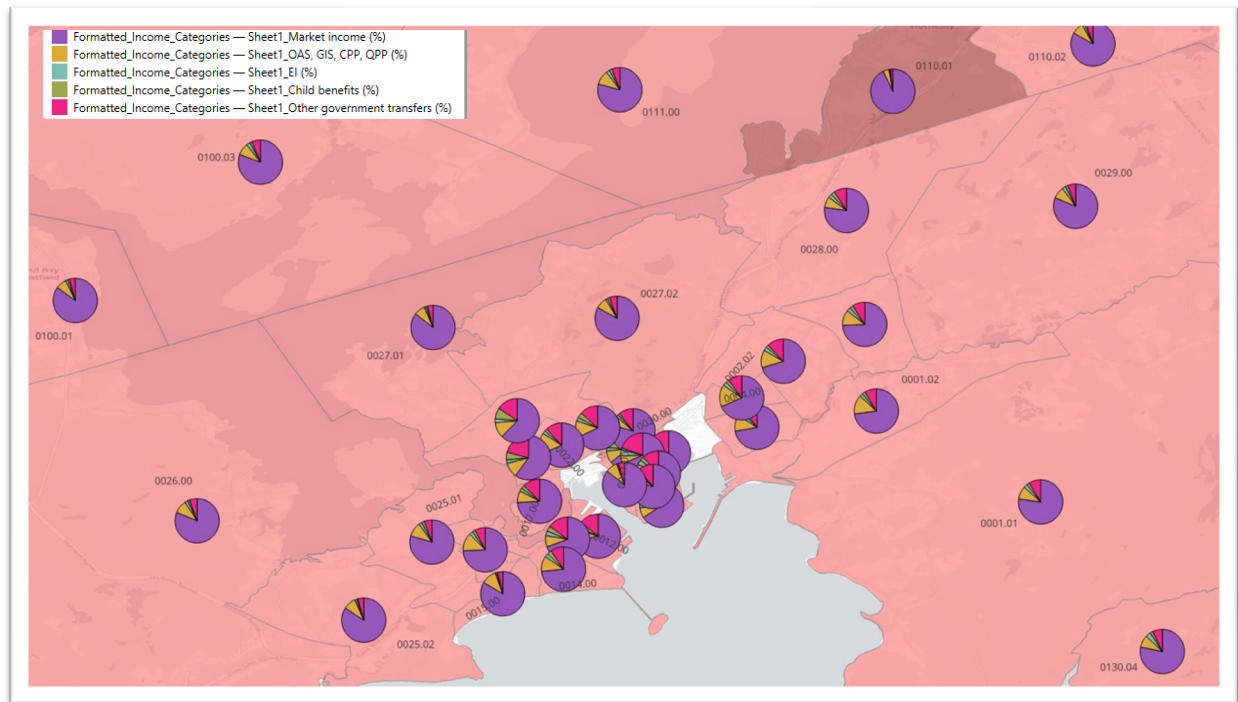
Graph 4. Poverty line according to market basket measure average of 2022 and 2023 for Saint John CMA (CAN\$ 49,618)

The following maps focus on total median income to show the economic divide in the Saint John CMA according to neighborhoods using census tracts (Map 2). The maps also show the source of income per census tract (Map 3), which is divided by 1) market income (employment income, wages, salaries and commissions, net self-employment income, investment income, private retirement income); 2) Old Age Security pension (OAS), Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS); Canada Pension Plan (CPP) ; 3) employment insurance (EI); 4) child benefits (federal and provincial); 5) other government transfers (social assistance benefits, workers' compensation benefits, Canada workers benefit Goods and Services Tax (GST) and Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) credit) ([for more detail of source of income, go to interactive map](#)). We use median rather than average income because the former provides a more appropriate measure for depicting income at the geographic level because it is not affected by a small number of extremely high- or low- outlier incomes.

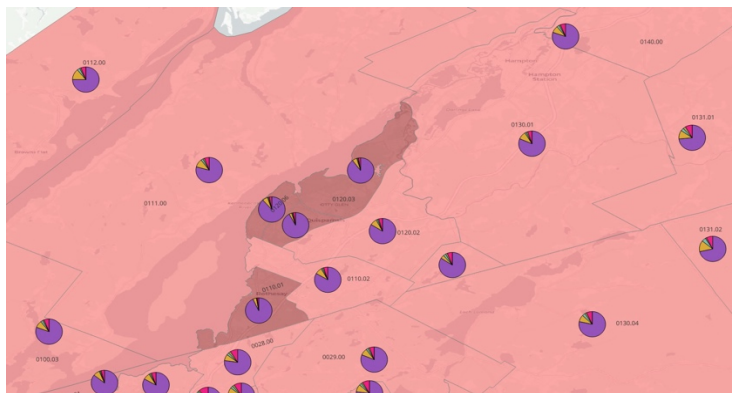


Map 2. Total median income (Source: Statistics Canada. Table 98-10-0071-01. Income statistics for detailed income sources and taxes, (DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25318/9810007101-eng>)

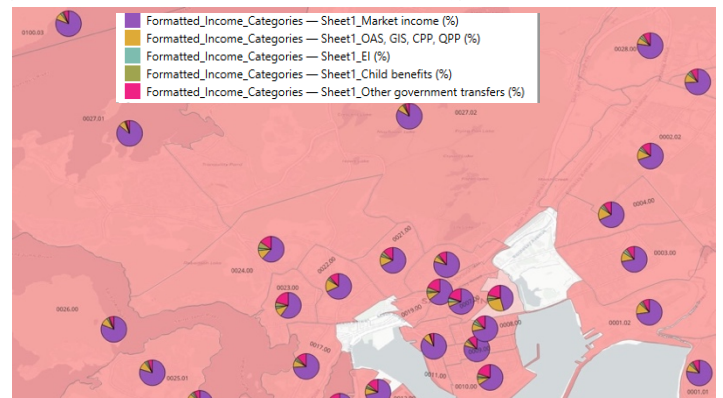
The maps below show how the source of market income prevails in higher income areas whereas other government transfers are significant source of income in Crescent Valley, Central Peninsula, Lower West Side, the Old North End and sections of the East Side (Map 3, 4, 5, 6, 7). Individuals that rely on provincial social assistance do not receive benefits that are sufficient to cover all necessary expenses. According to a 2023 study, New Brunswick had the lowest adequacy of welfare income for a couple with two children receiving just \$30,395. The official poverty line was \$51,082, and the deep poverty threshold was \$38,311. As such, the welfare income for a couple with two children in the province only reached 60% of MBM and was short 21% in relation to the deep income poverty line (Laidley & Tabara, 2024, p. 24). Consequently, factors such as these can further contribute to involuntary sharing of accommodations between multiple families or non-relatives and precarious living conditions affecting physical and mental health.



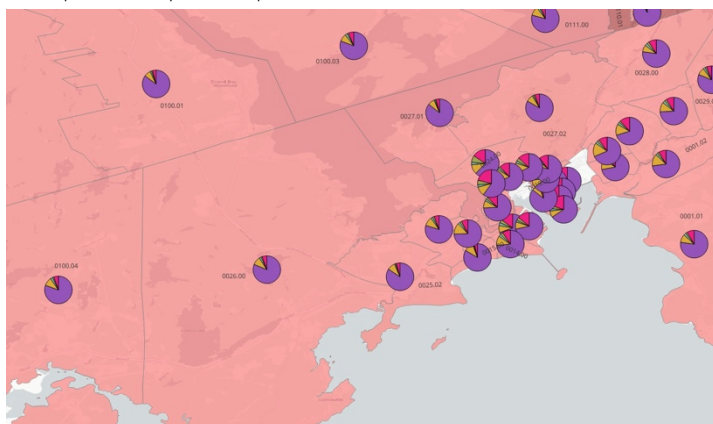
Map 3. Source of aggregate income by percentages per census tract in Saint John CMA (Source: Statistics Canada. Table 98-10-0071-01. Income statistics for detailed income sources and taxes, (DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25318/9810007101-eng>))



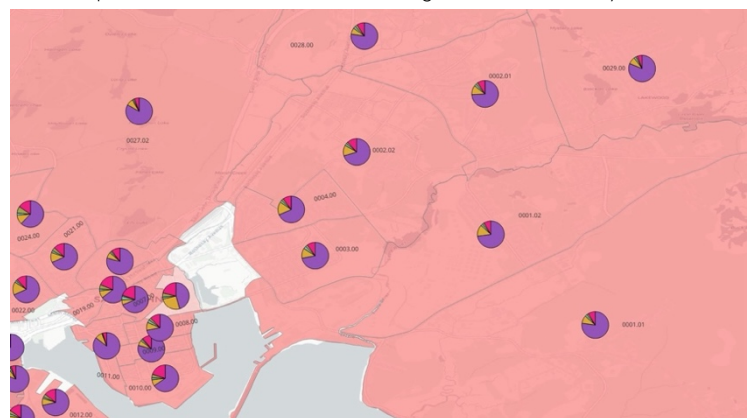
Map 4. Source of income West Side and Grand Bay-Westfield



Map 5. Source of income East Side



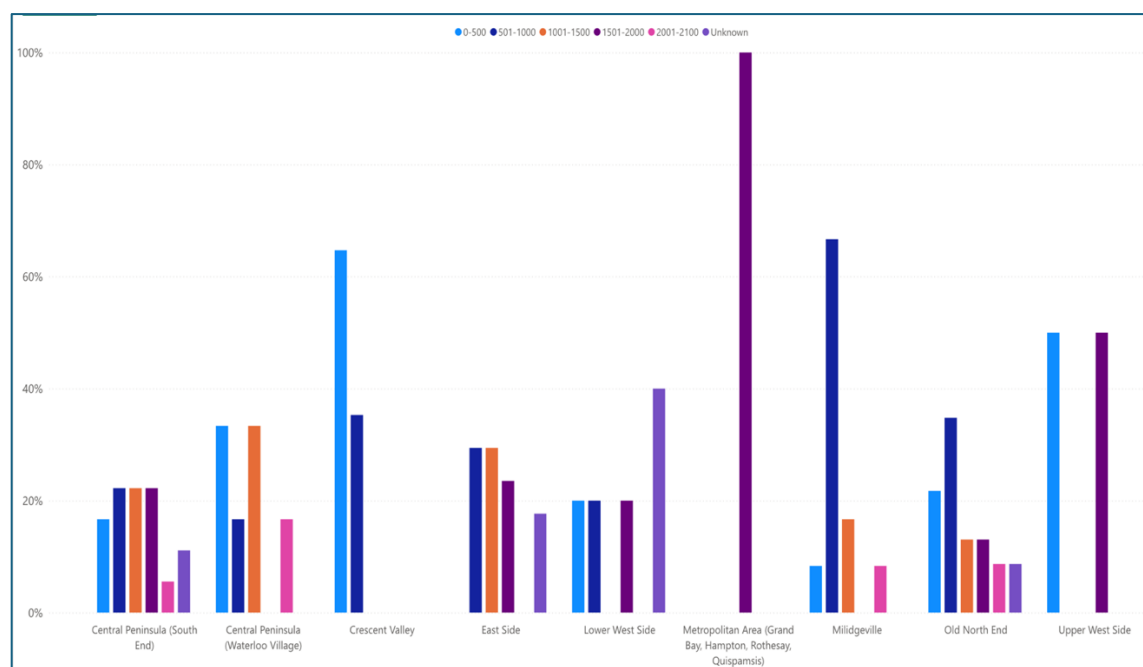
Map 6. Source of income West Side and Grand Bay-Westfield



Map 7. Source of income East Side.

3.1 Access to affordable, adequate, and suitable housing

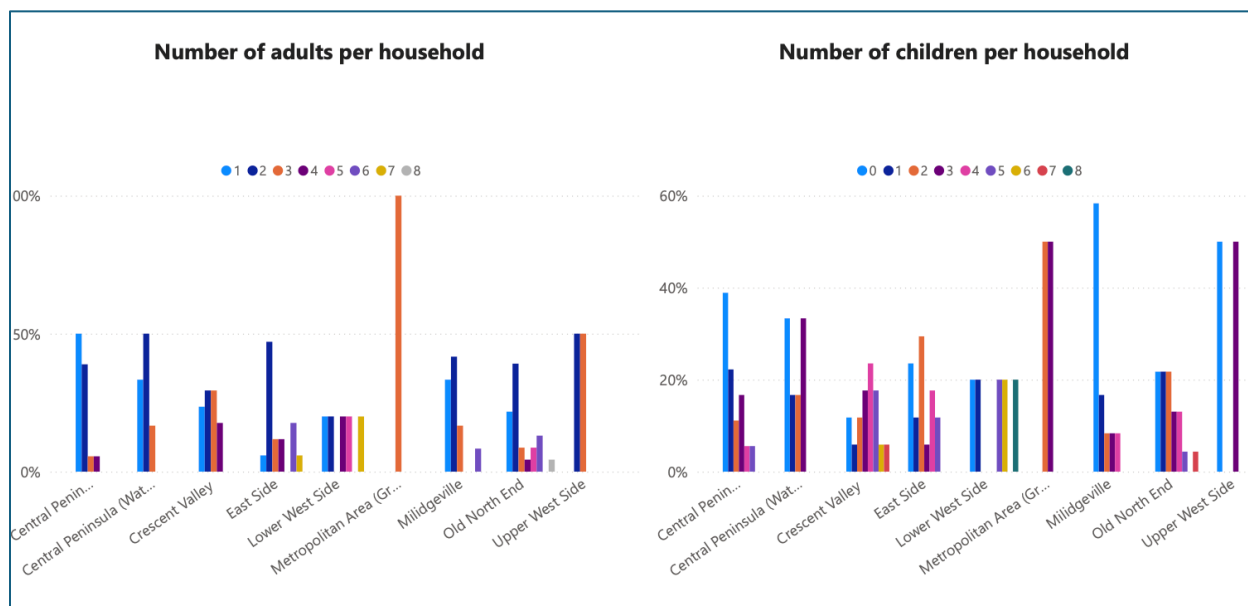
Access to affordable, adequate and suitable housing is recognized as a core component of the settlement process to promote social and economic inclusion, connecting individuals with key resources and services. Graph 5 shows how many participants paid a monthly rent ranging from below 500 to 1500 hundred monthly in most neighborhoods, including public, subsidized and market rental housing. However, in many cases, respondents indicated the portion of the rent they personally paid rather than the full rental amount for the housing. It is also worth noting that in many neighborhoods, particularly in the Central Peninsula, Crescent Valley and the Old North End, the total median and market income is low in relation to other areas of the city (Map 5). Also, income levels are below the poverty line in these neighborhoods (Graph 4). This raises questions on the share of income channeled to living arrangements.



Graph 5. Average paid on accommodation by neighborhood post Covid-19.

This report addresses household composition to understand housing adequacy. Single-adult households are the most common in the Central Peninsula (South End). In the Central Peninsula (Waterloo village), Millidgeville, and East Side, two-adult households are most common which may suggest that either families, couples, or roommates live in this area. It is important to note that in Millidgeville and the East Side this largely has to do with respondents identifying as international students who are renting a room in a shared living space. This raises concerns when renting a room and sharing accommodation that there might be issues, especially related to gender, when sharing the bathroom and kitchen.

In the Upper West Side and metropolitan neighborhoods there is a greater number of two to three adult households suggesting that sharing a living space with multiple families or multigenerational living. In the Old North End, Lower West Side, East Side and Crescent Valley we found that there was a high percentage of people with more than four adults even reaching up to eight adults per household (Graph 6). Crescent Valley and the Lower West Side also had the highest number of children, identified as more than five children per household. However, we did find households in the Old North End and Central Peninsula (Southend and Waterloo Village) with five or more children (Graph 7).



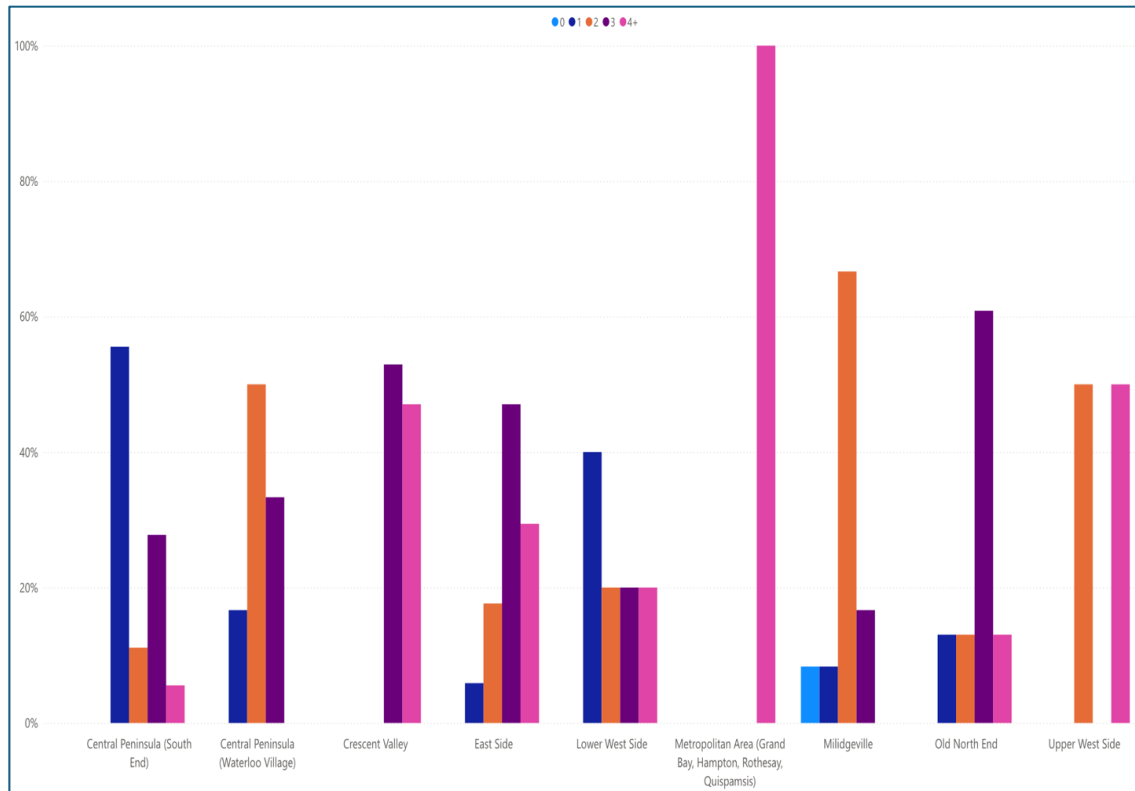
Graph 6. Number of adults per household

Graph 7. Number of children per household

We identified households that included as many as ten members, often sharing a limited number of bedrooms (Graph 8). Understanding participants' household composition provides an important context for understanding their experiences. Many participants described the connection between economic insecurity and their housing circumstances. For instance, international immigrants expressed their concern over landlords plans to increase the monthly rent and the lack of vacancy for rentals. These living arrangements reflect a high person to bedroom ratio, which while shaped by necessity, reflects a larger issue of housing affordability and suitability in the city of Saint John. In 2024, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) reported low vacancy rates in the city. The East Side vacancy rate was 2.8%, the North End rate was 6%, the South End rate was 2.5%, the Rothesay rate was 3.2% and the rates in the outlying areas was 2.9%.

These findings suggest that across neighborhoods but particularly in the Old North End, Lower West Side, East Side, Central Peninsula (Waterloo Village), and Crescent Valley, many participants share their living arrangements with extended family or non-relatives. These neighborhoods had the highest number of individuals living in the household. However, these areas mostly consist of apartments with three bedrooms or less. In the Central Peninsula (South End and Waterloo Village), only having one to two bedrooms per household was most common, which is where most respondents living in market rental housing lived followed by the Lower West Side and Old North End.

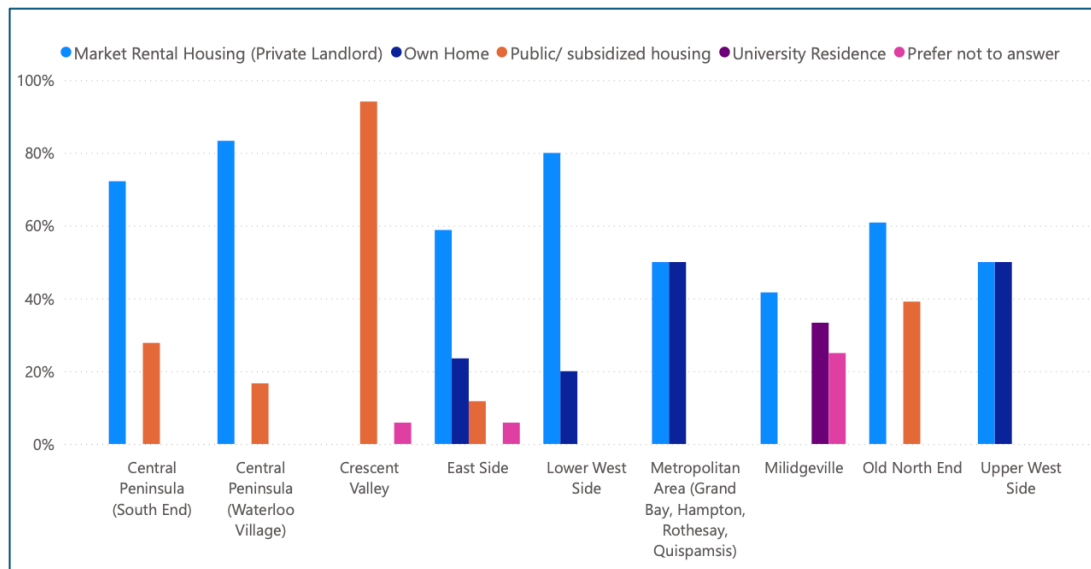
These arrangements suggest that many households are overcrowded, which may be caused by the high cost of living within the city and/or lack of housing stock that accommodates large families and/or multigenerational living arrangements. This could also suggest high rates of "hidden homelessness" including involuntary sharing of accommodations as we found in some cases there was sharing of accommodations between multiple families. In contrast, it was in the Upper West Side and metropolitan area where we found the highest number of bedrooms suggesting that these areas do not experience the same issues as many of the neighborhoods within the city (Graph 8).



Graph 8. Number of bedrooms per household by neighborhood

Many international immigrants who were living in market rental housing expressed their desire access to public or subsidized housing as their monthly housing costs were higher than what they were able to afford. Importantly, in our surveys over half of the respondents resided in market rental housing (51%), whereas only 32% lived in public or subsidized housing (Graph 9). Many respondents who lived in public or subsidized housing lived in Crescent Valley and the Old North End. Respondents residing in market rental housing were predominantly in the Central Peninsula, Lower West Side, and the East side (Graph 9). Some individuals reported residing in market rental housing in the Upper West Side, Millidgeville and metropolitan areas.

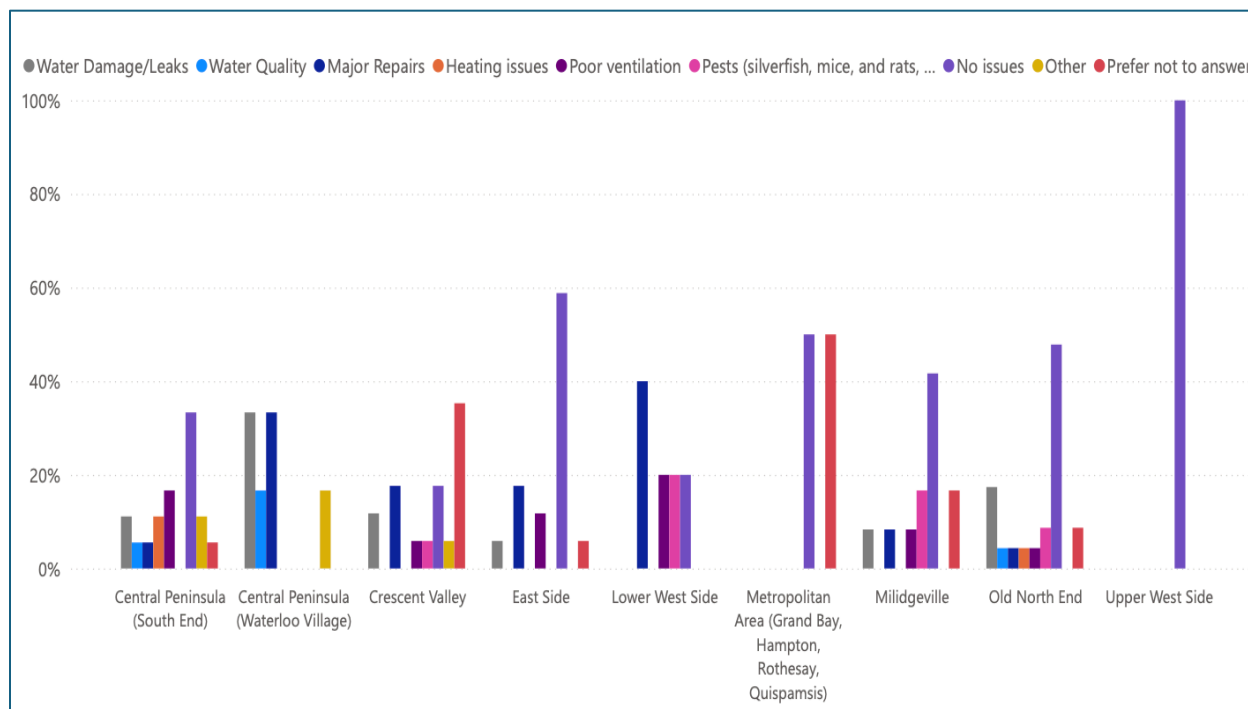
The desire to access public or subsidized housing by international immigrants is consistent with the report published by the city of Saint John's 2021 *Newcomer Housing Study* which demonstrated that housing unaffordability is affecting international immigrants, and the city has low vacancy rates and new housing stock. Though the 2020 *Succeed and Stay* report identified low cost of living as a primary reason for immigrants to stay in Saint John, this study was conducted prior to the pandemic and therefore does not reflect the significant rental increases that occurred post-COVID. Additionally, this report's ethnography found that there are people who arrived in Canada through the refugee stream and their point of entry was another Canadian city. They decided to move to Saint John because of the cost of housing in their point of entry. This shows that international migration might also be another aspect of inter-provincial migration into the Saint John CMA driven by expensive housing markets in the initial point of entry.



Graph 9. Housing type by neighborhood

In the surveys, participants reported that they had no issues with their current housing and living situations. However, many international immigrants expressed during our ethnographic work issues with heating, major repairs, appliances not working, and pests as well as problems with their neighborhoods and the neglect of landlords. This again suggests participants' hesitancy to report housing issues and experiences of discrimination with landlords as well as lack of knowledge of their rights as tenants.

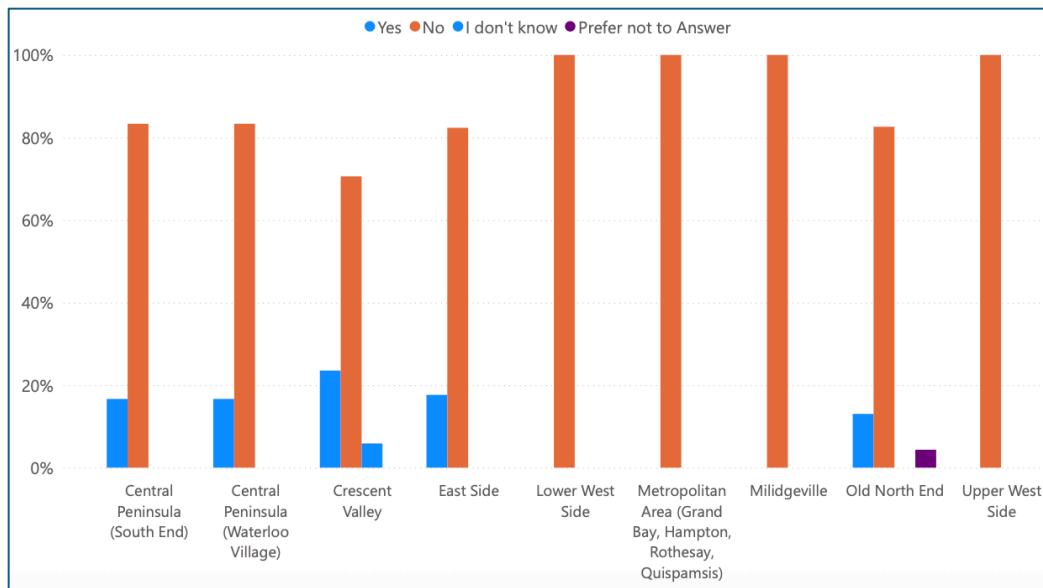
Though, as stated, many international immigrants were hesitant to express issues with their current housing situation, survey responses pointed to issues across many neighborhoods in both market-rental and public or subsidized housing. Participants that identified heating issues were predominantly in the South End and the Old North End whereas major repairs were identified as an issue predominantly in Waterloo Village, the Lower West Side and to some extent Crescent Valley and the East Side. Participants reported pest issues in Millidgeville, the Lower West Side, the Old North End, and Crescent Valley. Many ventilation issues were reported in the South End and the Lower West Side, and most areas experiencing water damage in their housing were in Waterloo Village, the Old North End, and Crescent Valley. Another interesting finding was that international immigrants expressed concern about water quality, particularly in Waterloo Village and the Old North End. However, it is unclear whether it is the water quality of the city or related to the context of water contamination of the country of origin where people usually prefer to boil water for health and safety reasons (Graph 10).



Graph 10. Household structural/safety issues by neighborhood

In 2023, official data reported issues with adequacy and suitability of housing in the Saint John CMA, with 1,615 renter units in Saint John CMA need major repair (230 subsidized and 1,385 not subsidized) (Statistics Canada 2023). In 2023, Statistics Canada also indicated that 875 units are unsuitable for renters (120 subsidized and 750 not subsidized) and that 6,445 units had issues with adequacy, suitability and affordability (housing cost more than 30% of household income), with 5,580 not subsidized and 860, respectively.

It is important to note that international immigrants expressed that available housing stock was not fit for aging population and people with disabilities. Though most respondents indicated they did not have a disability, there were individuals with a disability who lived in the Central Peninsula, Old North End, East Side, and Crescent Valley (Graph 11). Additionally, many participants discussed caring for an aging relative or family member with a disability during ethnographic work.



Graph 11. Disability and neighborhood

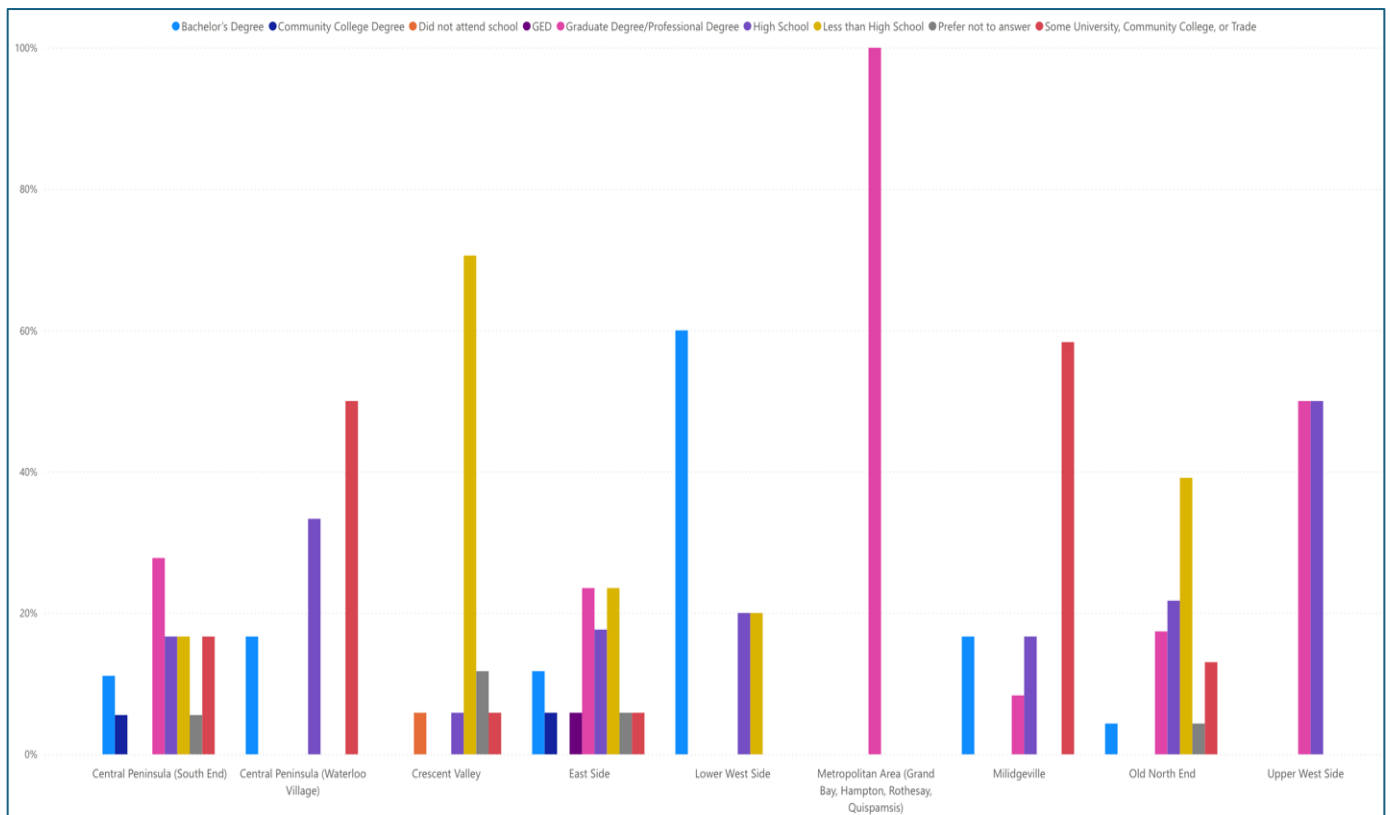
There was also a strong connection between housing and mental health especially when older adults or people with chronic pain or disabilities have inadequate living spaces. As stated, few respondents who were over the age of 55. However, the experiences of older adults, especially with regards to the lack of accessible housing, were found in ethnographic work where their children and younger relatives expressed concern over the barriers and challenges. For example, older adults living in public or subsidized housing require a doctor's note to move to accessible housing, but the lack of access to a family doctor undermines their ability to secure suitable housing.

The findings suggest that individuals experiencing problems with their housing ranging from overcrowding, structural issues, discrimination from landlords to issues accessing essential services and resources.

3.2 Educational, Employment and Entrepreneurship Opportunities

The WCI framework organizes employment and educational opportunities into two separate categories. The latter includes the availability of services for children and youth. The report combines these two categories as survey participants were 19 and older and their answers related to education were also connected to their ability to find employment. In the case of education, the WCI framework focuses on availability of services and ways to communicate existing educational opportunities to adults. This report, however, centres on the existing experiences of survey participants in relation to education and employment to understand the challenges that adult international immigrants face. And those issues in educational opportunities adults range from lack of foreign recognition experience to high illiteracy rates among women both in their first language and any of New Brunswick's official languages.

In terms of location, many people with the highest level of education (graduate degrees) were in the metropolitan area and Upper West Side. The greatest number of the participants with bachelor's degrees lived in the Lower West Side whereas people with a community college degree predominantly lived in the East Side and the Central Peninsula. Many participants with only a high school degree were in the Waterloo village and the Upper West side whereas people with high school equivalency lived in the East Side. Most people with some university or community college or trade lived in Waterloo Village and Millidgeville. The highest number of people with less than high school degree lived in Crescent Valley and the Old North End. And many of the survey participants did not have any schooling were in Crescent Valley. Most people completed their highest level of education in another country in all the neighborhoods, except for Millidgeville and Crescent Valley where their highest degree was completed in Canada. In the latter case neighborhood, this might be related to attendance to university or English lessons at the YMCA (Graph 12).



Graph 12. Highest level of education completed by neighborhood

These findings show that participants who could not access higher levels of education reside also in areas with low-income levels. There were participants who could not read and write in their first language and therefore could not speak any of New Brunswick's official languages either, especially those that recently arrived in Saint John through the refugee immigration stream. Most of these participants were women. This shows how female participants that might have experienced lack of access to educational opportunities in their country of origin are also encountering the same situation in Canada. Many participants also required interpretation into one of New Brunswick's official languages even after obtaining citizenship. This shows how international immigration is a continuum does not end after obtaining citizenship but rather requires ongoing educational support.

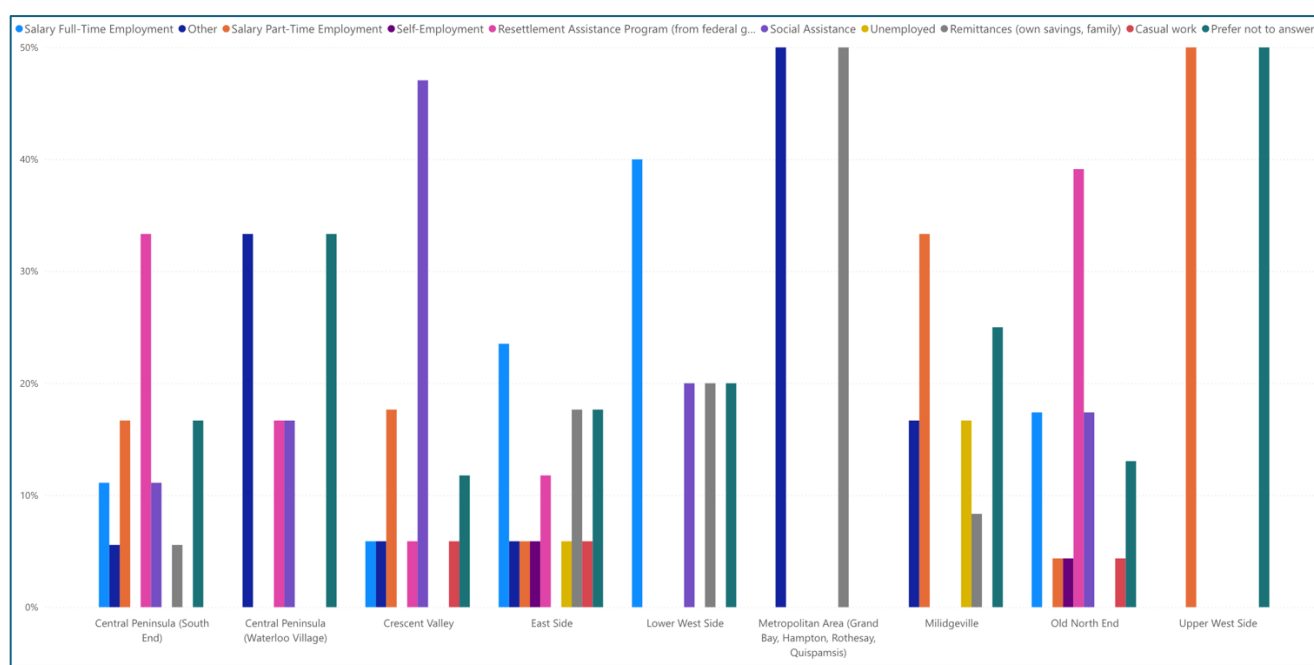
This also indicates a gap in adult education in the province. There are many programs and services in the Anglophone and Francophone-South district geared towards newcomer and international immigrant youth. This is not the case for adults except for a few language programs training and conversational practice at ISOs such as YMCA, Saint John Newcomers Centre, CAFI and PRUDE. Adult education programs geared to international immigrant that are also gender-informed are also lacking. The only resources available are the Learning Exchange and the SJ Kings Adults Learning Centre to obtain high school equivalency and those materials at the high school level provided by the Ministry of Education for self-teaching and program development by non-profit organizations. There is also the Workplace Essential Skills (WES) that focuses on a narrow set of skills geared to the workplace. This lack of adult educational programming might mean that employment opportunities remain limited, particularly for women that might want to work but are unable to do so, therefore reinforcing patterns of racial and gender inequality in the host community (Akbar 2025).

In contrast, there were also participants that completed their university graduate and undergraduate degrees abroad, particularly in middle and low-income countries, who have extensive work experience in their home country and are fluent in one or two official languages (Graph 12). In many cases, they were underemployed, their current job did not fit their expertise and credentials and/or they make a considerable monetary and time investment to obtain certification or enroll in a new undergraduate/graduate program. This shows the difficulties in getting recognition of foreign credentials and experience, even in professions that are not regulated, continues to prevail in the local labour market.

This is consistent with the general literature that indicates that there is a disconnect between the federal assessment of required skills in the long-term, the provincial evaluation of labour needs in the short-term, and the municipal resources required to facilitate integration into the labour market. The need for more educational opportunities, language support and recognition of foreign credentials and work experience are also consistent with the barriers identified by Nguyen et al. (2020), Hellstrom (2020) and O Strategies and Immigration Matters (2024) in relation to lack of programs related to improvement in language skills and recognition of foreign credentials and experience. This also relates to Statistics Canada data (2025) based on the 2021 Census Population in the Saint John CMA. This indicates that the higher the degree of education, the greater the gap pay between immigrants and non-immigrants. While the data shows that there is not much difference of pay between non-immigrants and immigrants when there is no educational certification and/or education reaches high school and/or apprenticeship, this changes with college certifications, bachelor's degrees and higher. Whereas the non-immigrants with a bachelor's degree or higher obtained an average income of \$78,900 and median income of \$69,500, immigrants with the same level of education obtained \$65,400 in average and \$47,600 median incomes (Statistics Canada 2025c).

This is closely connected to employment, underemployment and unemployment and how that affects income. While the WCI framework focuses on assessment of working conditions and job satisfaction, this report focuses on the source of income and type of work as an initial assessment of current labor market conditions. Several survey participants relied on social assistance, either at the provincial or federal

level. Many of the people that received federal resettlement assistance were in the Central Peninsula (South End), and Old North End whereas the highest percentages of provincial social assistance lived in Crescent Valley. Yet, it is worth noting that participants, in some cases, were unsure of the source of income assistance (Graph 13). This shows the difficulties of international immigrants, especially but not exclusively of those of recent arrival, with bureaucratic procedures, which are not only related to language barriers but also to a different political context. Also, these findings are significant as New Brunswick had the lowest total welfare incomes in 2023 for three types of households (unattached single considered employable, the unattached single with a disability, and the couple with two children) compared to other provinces. In 2024, the city of Saint John had more people coming through the refugee stream compared to NB average (Jupia Consulting 2024), hinting at the need for further supports to address the multifaceted challenges facing this population group, particularly those coming from conflict zones (for examples, see Preston et al. 2024).



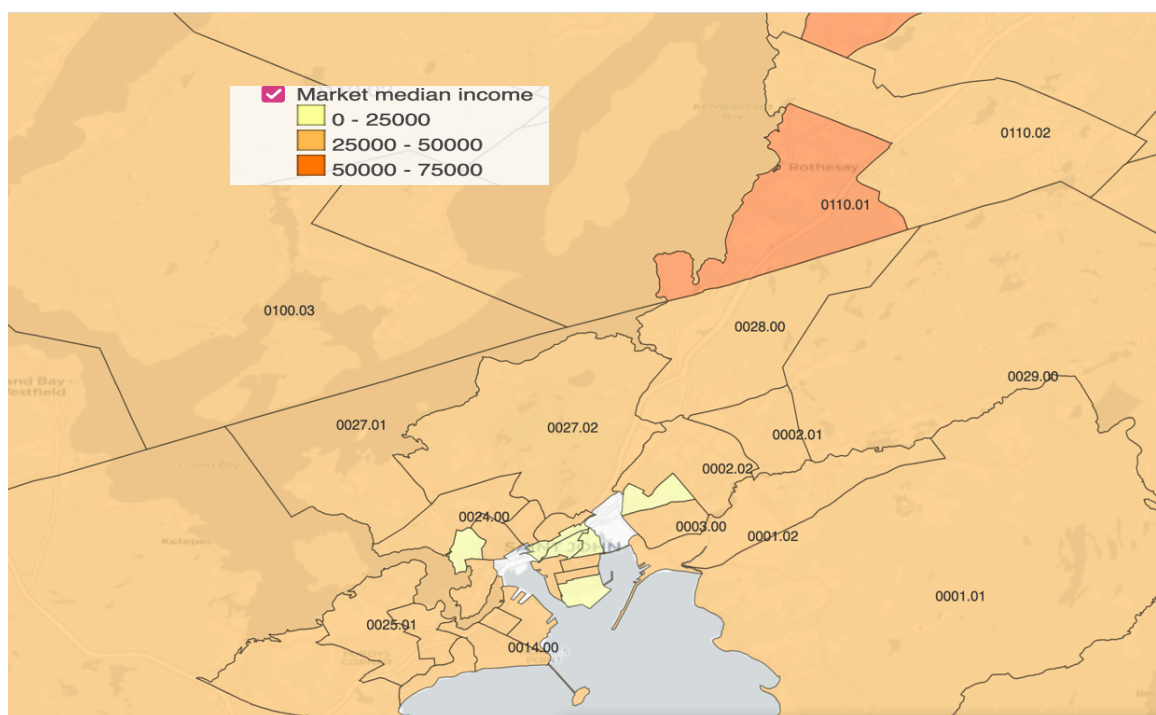
Graph 13. Source of income by neighborhood

Many participants with full-time work (30-40 hours per week) lived in the East side, Lower West Side, whereas the lowest rate of full-time work was found among participants that lived in Crescent Valley. The highest percentage of respondents with part-time work (less than 30 hours per week) were in upper West side and Millidgeville. In the latter, many participants were university students. While casual work (unreliable, occasional and unpredictable employment) remained low in many neighborhoods, it was mostly reported in the Old North End, Crescent Valley and the East Side. Also, self-employment was low but was found mostly on the East side and Old North End. Yet, our ethnography shows that when people noted they were self-employed, it could have referred to either their own formal business or work in the informal sector (no registration of business under Revenue Canada and other necessary permits). It is worth noting that the option cash for work under the table was offered but it was not chosen (Graph 13).

Interestingly the largest number of remittances were found in the metropolitan area and the East Side and Lower West Side, which refers to families supporting international immigrants in Canada (Graph 13). In other cases, immigrants' own savings and investment abroad was spent on settlement and

integration, particularly in the context of lack of employment in the host country. This finding is important as many studies only focus on remittances and money transfers from Canada to other countries (see for example, Tsala Dimbuene and Martin Turcotte 2019). Yet, there are also remittances coming from low and middle-income countries to Canada to sustain settlement. For instance, the World Bank reports that in 2019, Canada received 1.31 billion dollars, which decreased to 847 million in 2023 (World Bank, 2025). The collection of this type of indicators, including the cost of international tuition fees, are important to understand the direct inflow of money provided by international immigrants into the Canadian economy. Prefer not to answer was mostly answered in Upper West side and Waterloo village. This can be related to fear being in trouble as international immigrants might have a sense of constantly needing to meet the standards (or excel them) of the host country in the global North (Moffitt, 2020).

The share of income from market sources and government transfers is consistent with the distribution of income for the general population in the Saint John CMA (Map 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7). The comparison between median market and total median income is also telling (Map 2 and 8). This map shows how the number of areas with market income under 25,000 dollars increases compared to overall income, raising questions not only about quantity but also quality of the jobs.

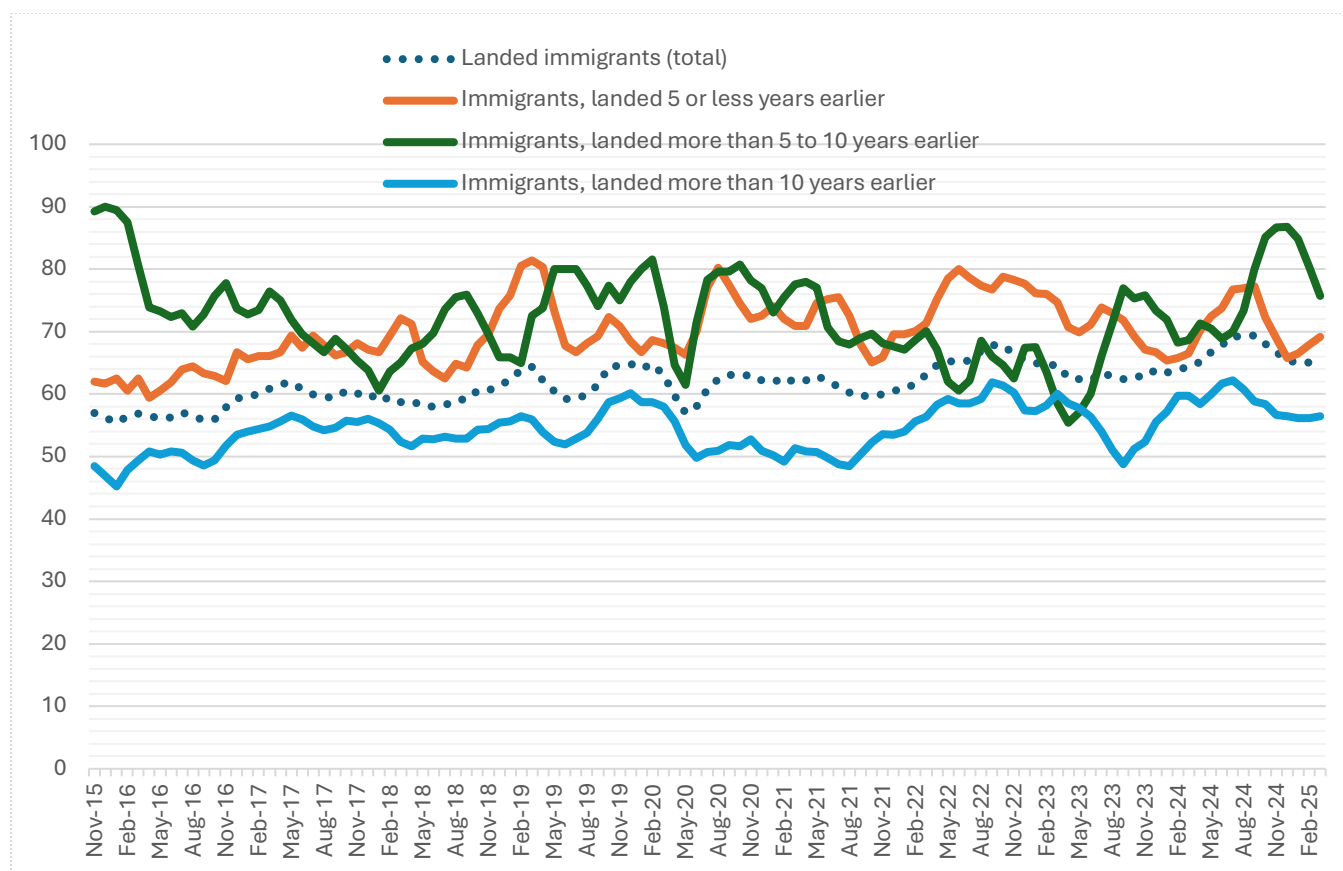


Map 8. Total median market income

(Source: Statistics Canada. Table 98-10-0071-01 Income statistics for detailed income sources and taxes: Census metropolitan areas, tracted census agglomerations and census tracts, (DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25318/9810007101-eng>)

The employment rate of landed immigrants for the province of New Brunswick has stayed around 50 percent from 2015 to 2025 (Graph 14). The largest share of people employed are those that landed 5 or less years or between 5 to 10 years earlier. This is not necessarily related to income as a higher rate of labour market participation might not correspond with equal or higher incomes, particularly if this participation is in low-wage sectors. As mentioned before, further research should differentiate labour market sectors, with a particular emphasis on the Saint John region (publicly available federal and provincial information on labour market characteristics does not currently address both employment rate, census agglomeration area and immigrants' status in the same data sets). This hints at some of the existing findings related to underemployment, lack of recognition of foreign credentials and work experience and lack of connection between federal and provincial skills priorities with the concrete

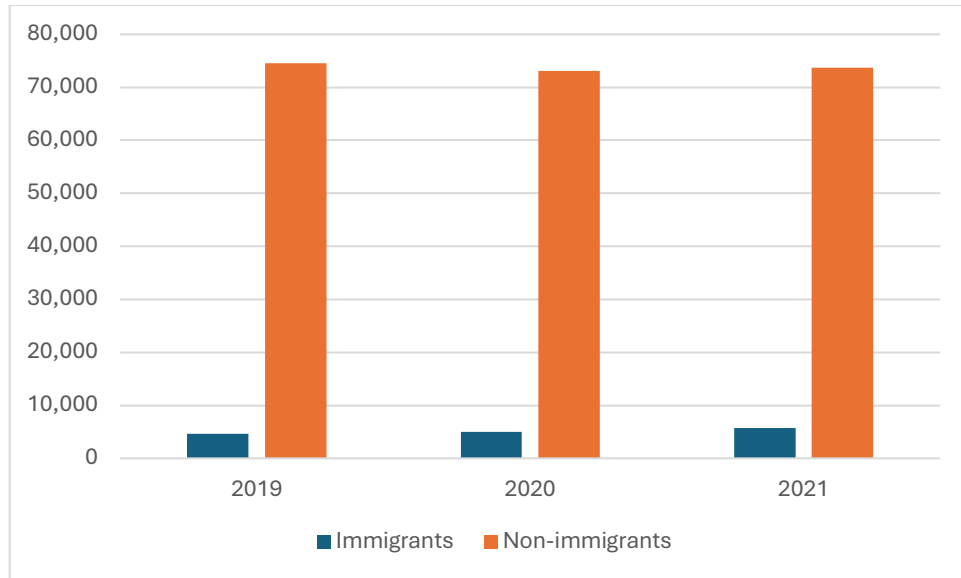
realities of local labour markets. In the ethnographic work, there were people that had post-secondary education outside of Canada, but this experience and foreign credentials were not recognized. There were also cases where the participants met the federal and provincial skill set requirements and spoke one or both official languages. Yet, they could not find a job locally, had to find employment in low wage sectors disconnected from their profession and/or had to make a significant investment in getting training in local postsecondary education related to a field considered in high demand in local labour markets.



Graph 14. Employment Rate Landed Immigrants in New Brunswick, 2015-2025

Source: Statistics Canada. Labour force characteristics of immigrants, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25318/1410047101-eng>

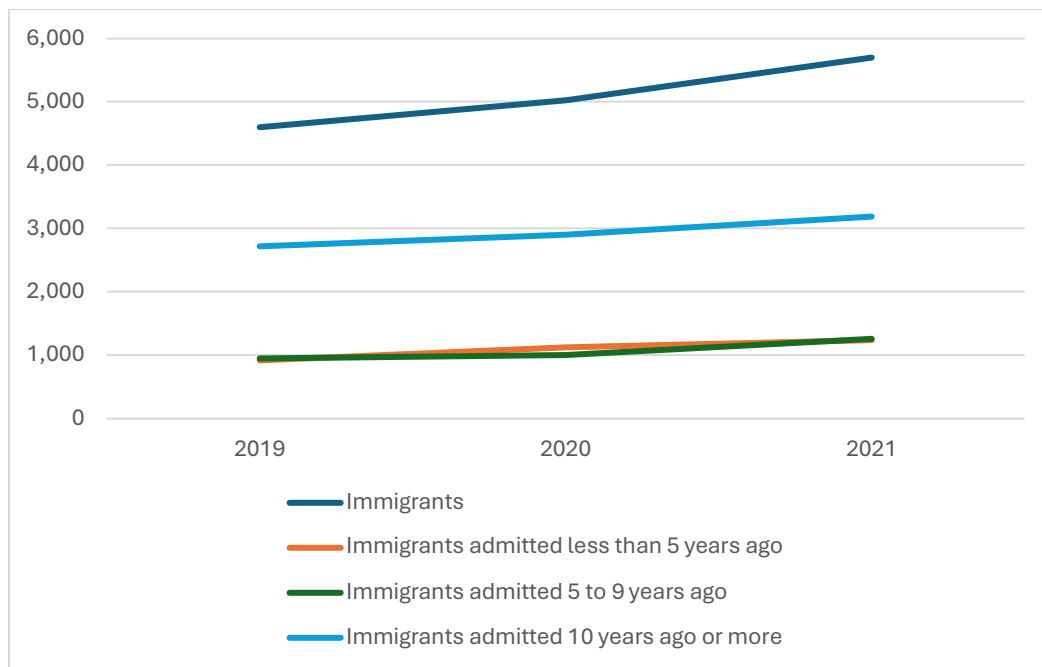
In terms of business opportunities for international immigrants, there needs to be further studies in the case of the Saint John CMA. Yet, some statistical data might provide insights of important indicators and variables to consider for this matter. In Canada, firms with immigrant majority ownership pay more in net taxes per employee than Canadian-born owners (16% for immigrant majority ownership and 23% for immigrant minority ownership). This might be related, according to Liu et al. 2025, with immigrant-owned firms facing more financial costs and its concentration in highly competitive, low-profit margin sectors such as hospitality services or small retail. In New Brunswick, businesses continue to be owned largely by non-immigrants. Yet, there is a slight increased number of owned by immigrants in 2020 and 2021 (Graph 15).



Graph 15. Enterprises by immigrant status in New Brunswick.

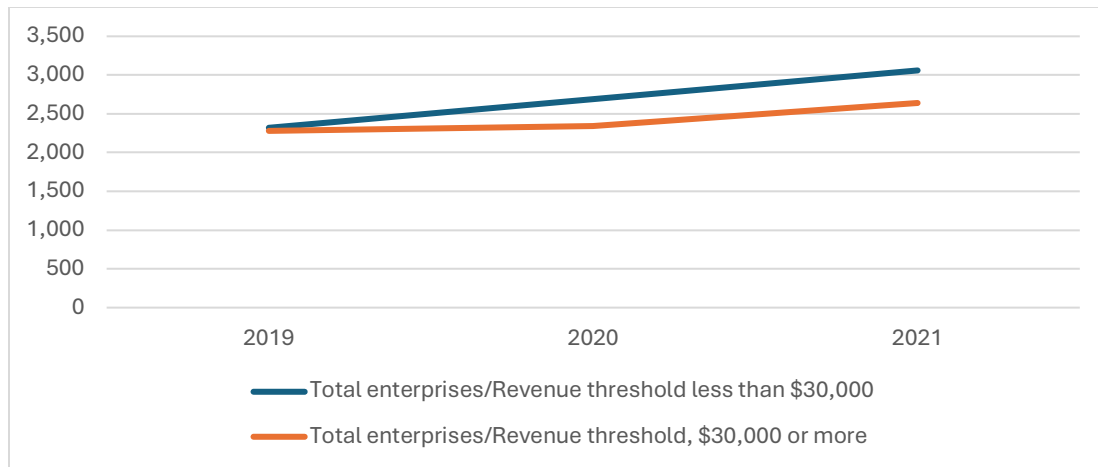
Source: Statistics Canada. Number of enterprises in Canada, by geography and immigrant status of owner

The data also shows that immigrants with more 10 years of living in Canada after arrival were more likely to open a business in New Brunswick (Graph 16). Yet, an increasing share of business owned by immigrants continue to have a revenue of 30,000 or less per year (Graph 17). While immigrant-owned businesses create employment opportunities, the trend towards self-employment was higher between 2019 and 2021 compared to the number of enterprises that employed people (Graph 18).

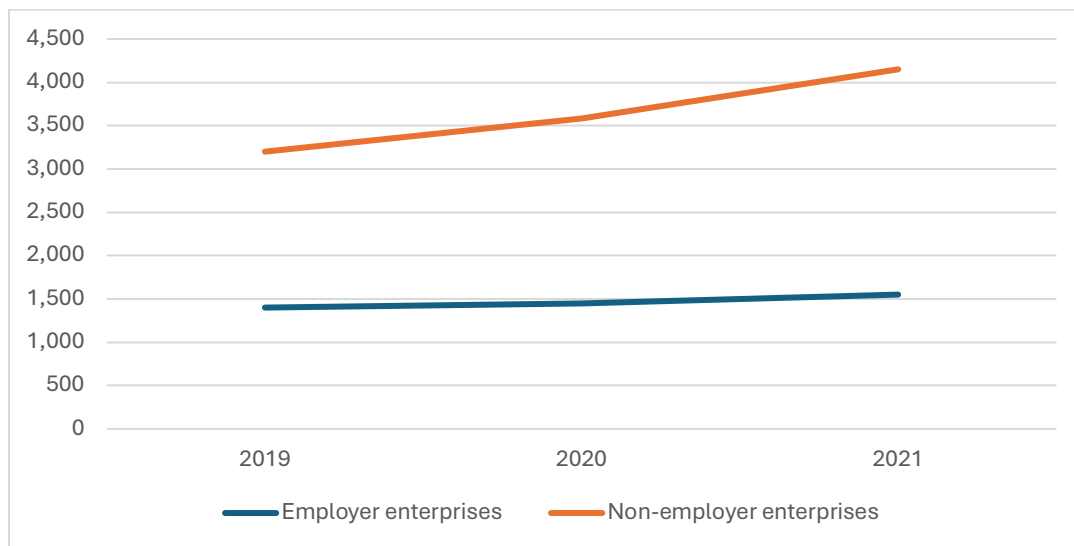


Graph 16. Enterprises by immigrant status characteristics of owners in New Brunswick (arrival)

Source: Statistics Canada. Number of enterprises in Canada, by geography and immigrant status of owner



Graph 17. Total enterprises owned by Immigrants by Revenue Threshold in New Brunswick
Source: Statistics Canada. Number of enterprises in Canada, by geography and immigrant status of owner



Graph 18. Number of businesses owned by immigrants in New Brunswick (employer and non-employer).
Source: Statistics Canada. Number of enterprises in Canada, by geography and immigrant status of owner

The possibility of opening a business, access employment and education opportunities, including having foreign experience and credentials recognized, are closely linked to economic security. Many participants expressed concerns on how their income from employment and/or government assistance did not cover their basic needs and their difficulties finding employment, leading to large amounts of debt they cannot cover. Participants associated insufficient income with high cost of housing rental and food, and/or maintenance costs of a home and/or car. Participants expressed that they relied on income from part-time and casual work without social benefits that could not cover the bills. Also, participants mentioned not being able to apply to jobs due to disability. The latter was raised by many women in relation to their spouse's situation.



Photo 4. Untitled, Anonymous, (2023)

The painting above shows how issues of unemployment are directly connected to integration, and most importantly influence immigrants' mental health. At the same time, the painting reflects the hope that relationships and a peaceful environment will allow the author of this piece to overcome this barrier to integration (Photo 4).

3.3 Access to suitable health care, including mental health care

International immigrants experience barriers when accessing suitable health care such as wait times, stigmatization, costs associated with care and transportation issues. This section focuses on individual experiences at the neighborhood level to better understand how service utilization varies both in terms of the types of services individuals access and how usage changes between daytime and nighttime. Additionally, this section provides insights into how non-communicable diseases are distributed according to neighborhood level and what respondents identified as the most urgent health needs in the Saint John region.

Neighborhoods that had the highest proportion of individuals without a primary care provider included Waterloo Village, South End, and Millidgeville. This may suggest that respondents in these neighborhoods are newer to the region and do not yet have a primary care provider. Most respondents in Crescent Valley, Upper West Side, and the metropolitan area indicated that they did have access to a physician or nurse practitioner. This may suggest that respondents in these areas may reside in the Saint John region for a longer period and have had the opportunity to navigate the health system and establish a relationship with a primary health provider.

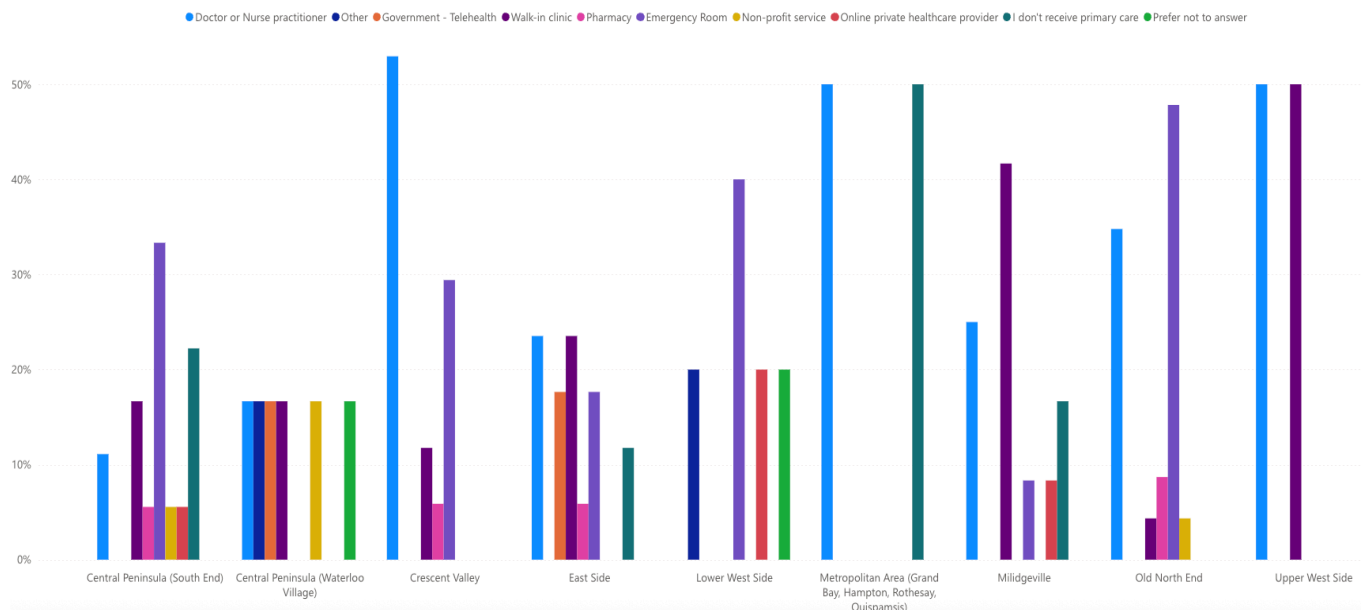
During participant observation, we found disparities at the household level with some family members having regular care providers while other household members did not. This situation, we observed, created many challenges within the household such as the inability to obtain a medical report to access government assistance. As such, the responsibility to provide care for older adults and people with disabilities became the responsibility of the individual and their families, particularly women. We often found that when we asked individuals to describe their health situation they would speak about their parents or household situation. In other words, health was not defined at the individual but rather the household level. In other cases, individuals who had been diagnosed with pre-existing conditions, but without access to either a family doctor or after-hours clinic, were unable to acquire a prescription to manage their health. Additionally, managing special care needs and accessing a medical specialist resulted in not receiving urgent surgery, lack of post-surgery care, and the inability to manage chronic pain.

We also noticed that there is a need to address mental health service gaps especially for international immigrants who have arrived from countries with high levels of conflict and violence. We observed instances where individuals had a disability and experienced bullying within their own community in their host country, causing stress and mental health issues. Mental health concerns were not only present when immigrants arrived from places of violence but also when having parents and spouses left behind. These examples therefore demonstrate the complexity of mental health needs in immigrant communities and indicate the importance of ensuring access to mental health care as part of the settlement and integration process. These issues of mental health are represented in the painting below which represents the isolation and loneliness that can be experienced by international immigrants when integrating into a new community (Photo 5).



Photo 5. Untitled, Anonymous, (2023)

In our surveys, we asked participants who indicated they did not have access to a primary care provider to identify how they access the health system, and our results demonstrated variation by neighborhood (Graph 19).



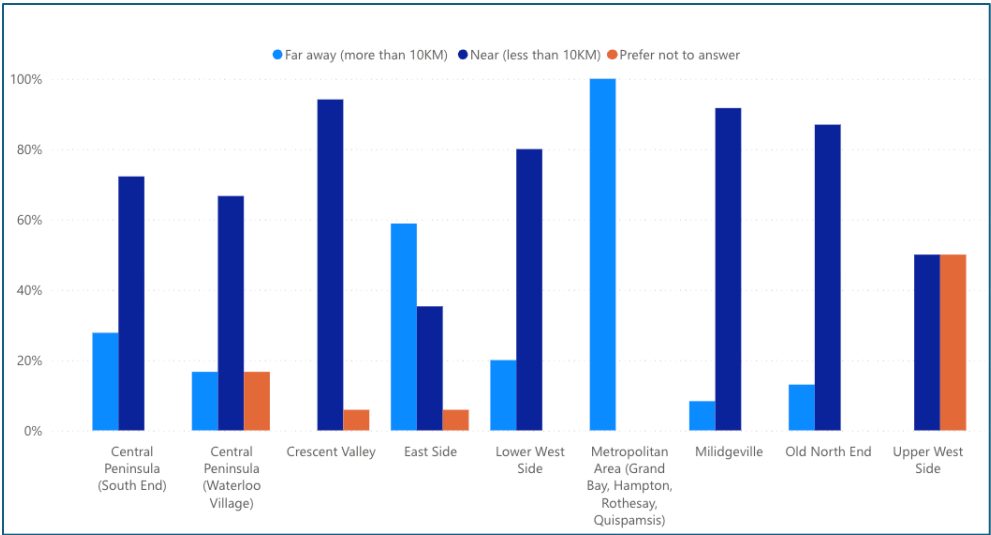
Graph 19. Access to primary healthcare services by neighborhood

The neighborhoods that identified the emergency department as their primary point of access for health care included the Lower West Side, Old North End, and South End. This may indicate that these areas are characterized by a lack of accessible and suitable walk-in or afterhours clinics, unfamiliarity with alternative care options outside of hospital settings or other barriers such as financial,

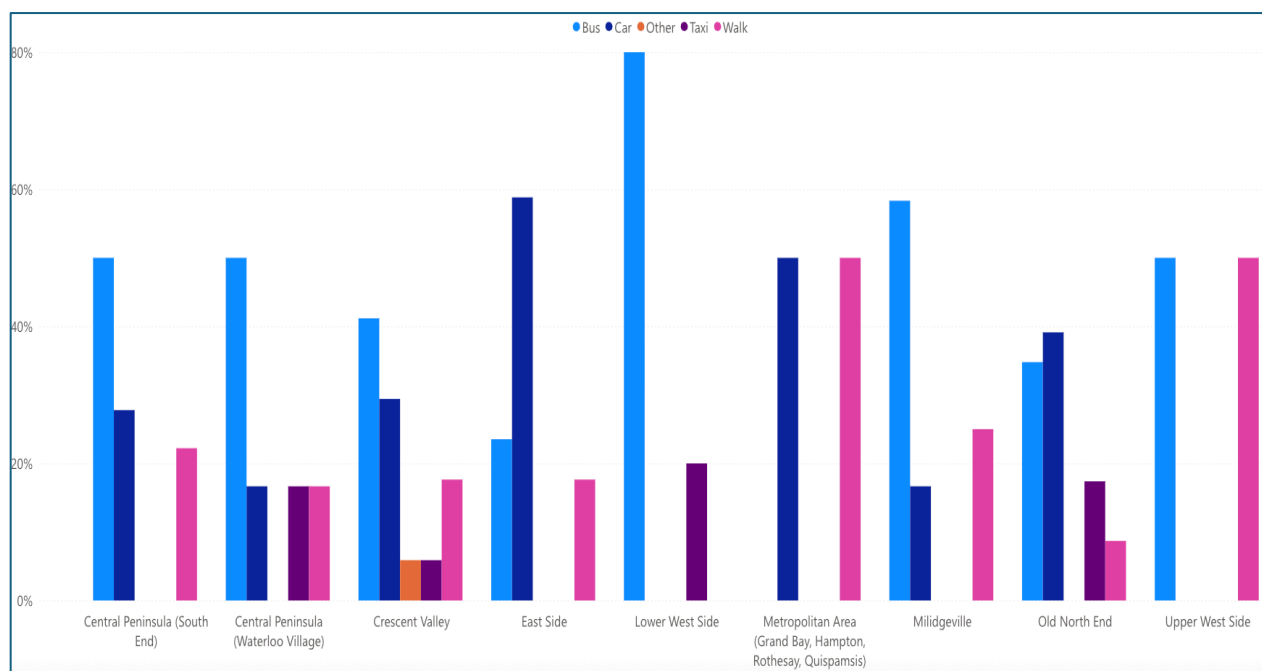
transportation, language, or general distrust of the health system may prevent international immigrants from accessing care until an urgent health crisis presents. While language barriers may appear as a problem at the individual level, this also reflects larger structural barriers within NB health care system and settlement processes. Language and interpretation challenges represent systemic barriers that significantly affect an immigrant's ability to access the health care they require. However, the current structure of funding received from federal and provincial governments prevents ISOs and non-profit organizations from responding to these challenges (Drolet & Teixeira, 2022). For example, there is a lack of formal language training for adults. When training is available, it does not focus on the specific terminology used in health care settings which may present difficulties for non-English/non-French speakers. Though interpretation services have been introduced through Language Line Solutions within Horizon Health facilities, it is unclear if family doctors or clinics outside the hospital setting are using these services (Horizon Health Network, 2024). Additionally, the ability to communicate health related issues such as pain and symptoms in a second language is a significant barrier for international immigrants. These factors emphasize the need for cultural competency training in the health system to ensure care providers can effectively interact with individuals from different cultures.

Neighborhoods that were most likely to use walk-in clinics included Millidgeville, Upper West Side, and the East Side. In the Lower West Side, Millidgeville and the Central Peninsula, international immigrants also chose to use online private providers. The use of online providers may reflect barriers in these areas to accessing the public health care system which may range from transportation issues or long wait times. In general, across all neighborhoods, there was a low rate of pharmacy use which may be caused by several different factors such as a lack of pharmacies in proximity, easily accessible by public transportation, lack of awareness of the scope of care that can be provided by pharmacists or language barriers. During participant observation, many respondents complained about the lack of dental health benefits. When mentioned the new Canadian Dental Care plan, participants were unaware of this. We also found that very few neighborhoods used government telehealth services.

Though not specifically addressed within the WCI framework, surveys showed that proximity to health care facilities affects immigrants' ability to access services. Neighborhoods that were identified as being far away from health services, 10 kilometers or more, included the metropolitan areas and the East Side. Whereas all other neighborhoods reported proximity of less than 10 kilometers (Graph 20). Though it is important to note that while physical distance can serve as a barrier, proximity is also affected by modes of transportation that are available at the neighborhood and individual level. During the day, many survey participants used the bus or walked (Graph 21).



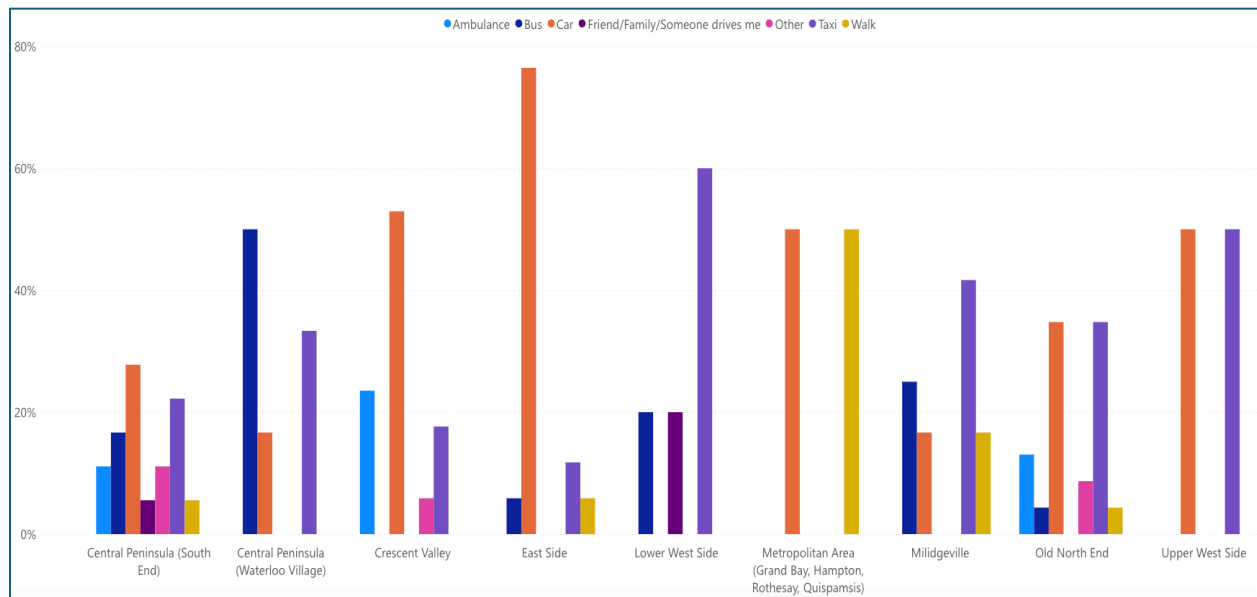
Graph 20. Neighborhood and proximity to health services



Graph 21. Transportation mode to healthcare services by neighborhood (daytime)

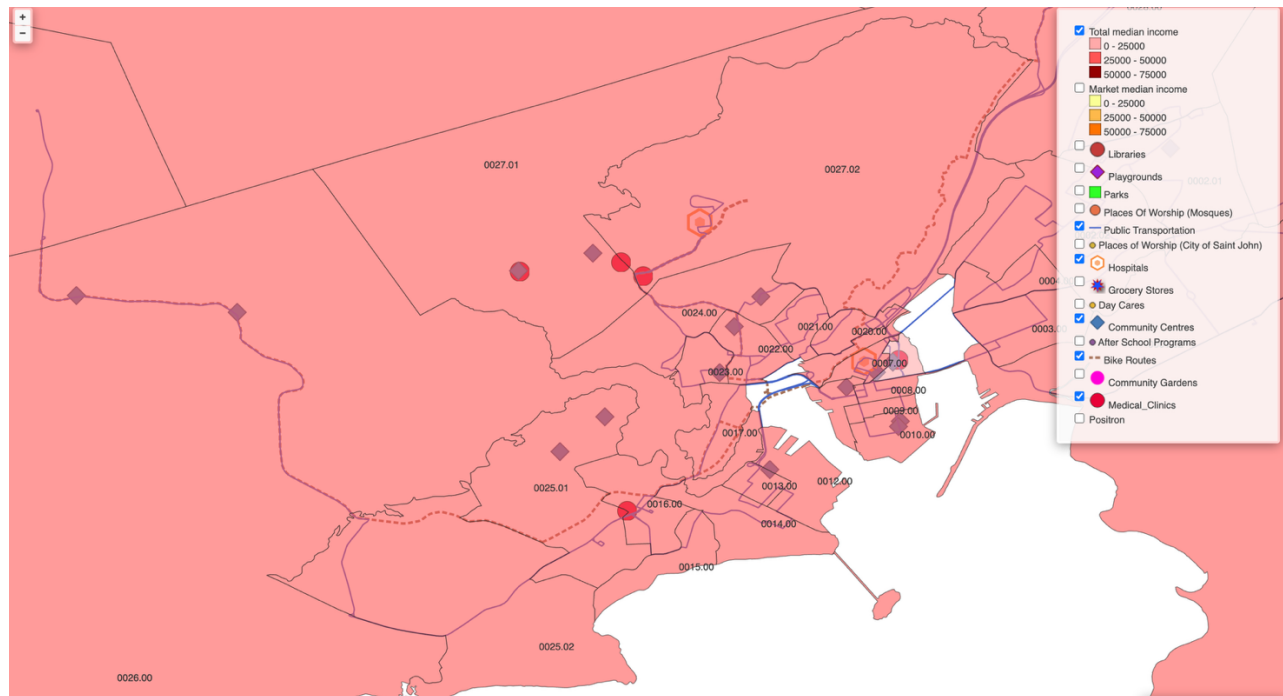
Many respondents on the West Side, Central Peninsula, and Millidgeville used the bus suggesting that in these areas' health facilities are not within walking distance. These findings also suggest that across all neighborhoods international immigrants mainly rely on public and active transportation. Therefore, this underscores the importance of accessible and suitable public transportation to meet health needs. Reliance on public transportation was also supported by our ethnographic work where international immigrants frequently described the challenges of obtaining a driver's license and the costs associated with owning a vehicle. Additionally, the cost of using a taxi was a common barrier mentioned through conversation though the use of a taxi was reported on the Lower West Side. It is therefore unsurprising that the primary mode of transportation amongst international immigrants was identified as walking or using the bus. In Crescent Valley, there was a combination of the dominant modes of transportation previously discussed, walking and using this bus, though we did find instances of the use of a private vehicle. Nonetheless, many respondents from this neighborhood described the challenges of accessing care from this area of the city. This demonstrates that this area is characterized by a lack of health facilities not only within reasonable proximity so individuals can walk but also that bus routes and times around this area are a barrier to accessing health care.

During the night the situation across all neighborhoods is different because of the lack of bus services and the general absence of a private vehicle (Graph 22). Though in the Central Peninsula most reported using the bus even at night. In this neighborhood, bus times vary by route, ending between 8pm and 9pm Monday through Friday and 6pm on weekends (Saint John Transit, 2024). Most respondents, especially in Crescent Valley, relied on ambulances. While on the East Side individuals reported using a private car and on the West Side individuals reported using a taxi. These findings suggest that these areas do not have access to after-hours clinics as such individuals rely on emergency services. Consequently, this can result in emergency rooms becoming overwhelmed by individuals using their services for potential non-emergent health reasons because they have no other choice during nighttime.



Graph 22. Transportation mode to healthcare services by neighborhood (nighttime)

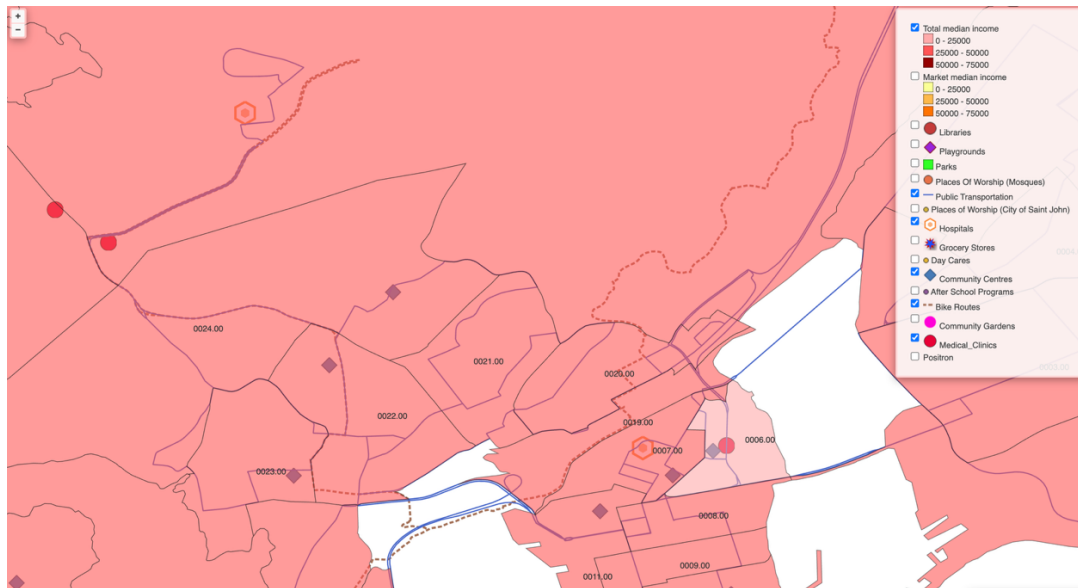
The report maps both health facilities and community centres as the latter have health promotion campaigns and nurse practitioner services. In the Central Peninsula, there is access to a hospital, health clinics, and community centres, allowing residents of low-income areas to access services using both active and public transportation (Map 9).



Map 9. Hospitals, Clinics, and Community Centres Central Peninsula and West Side

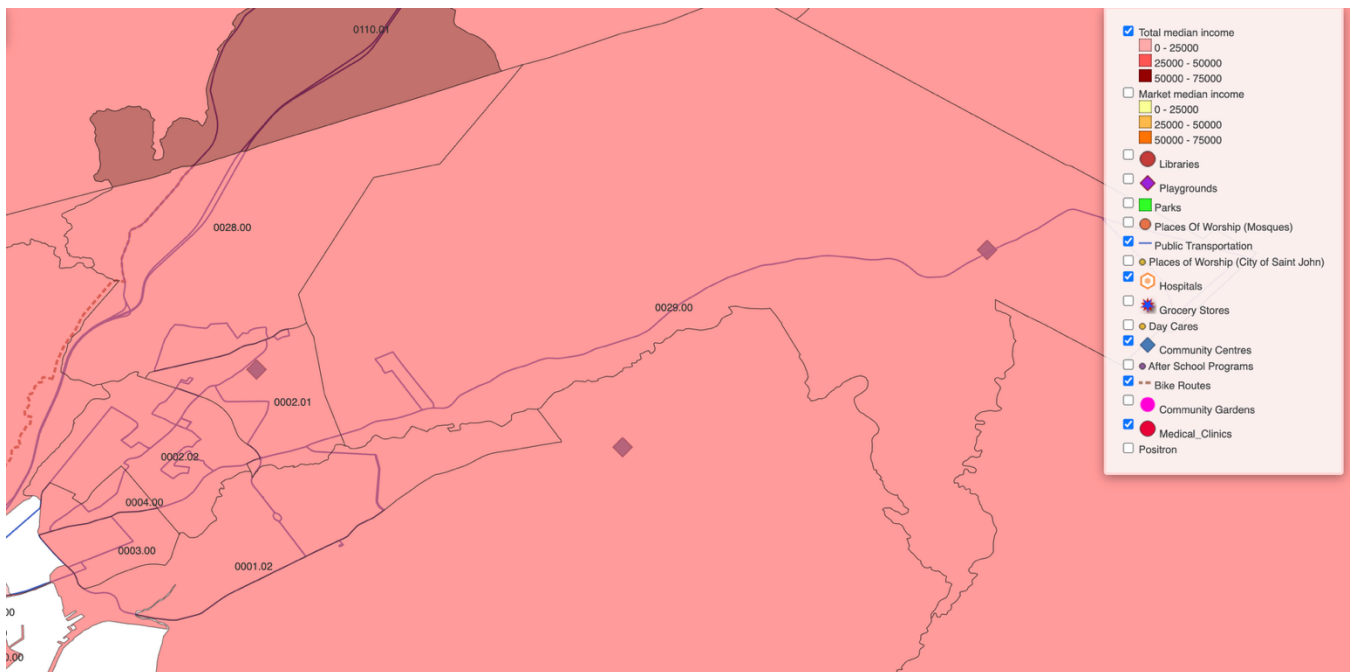
Still, accessibility in low-income areas might change at nighttime given the geography of the South End, lack of public transit at that time and hours of operation for emergency care at the Saint Joseph's regional from 9am to 9pm. In the Millidgeville and North end area, the hospital and clinics are located

in areas with a single bus route option. Although there are three clinics located in the Millidgeville area, the bus route only provide access to one (Map 10).



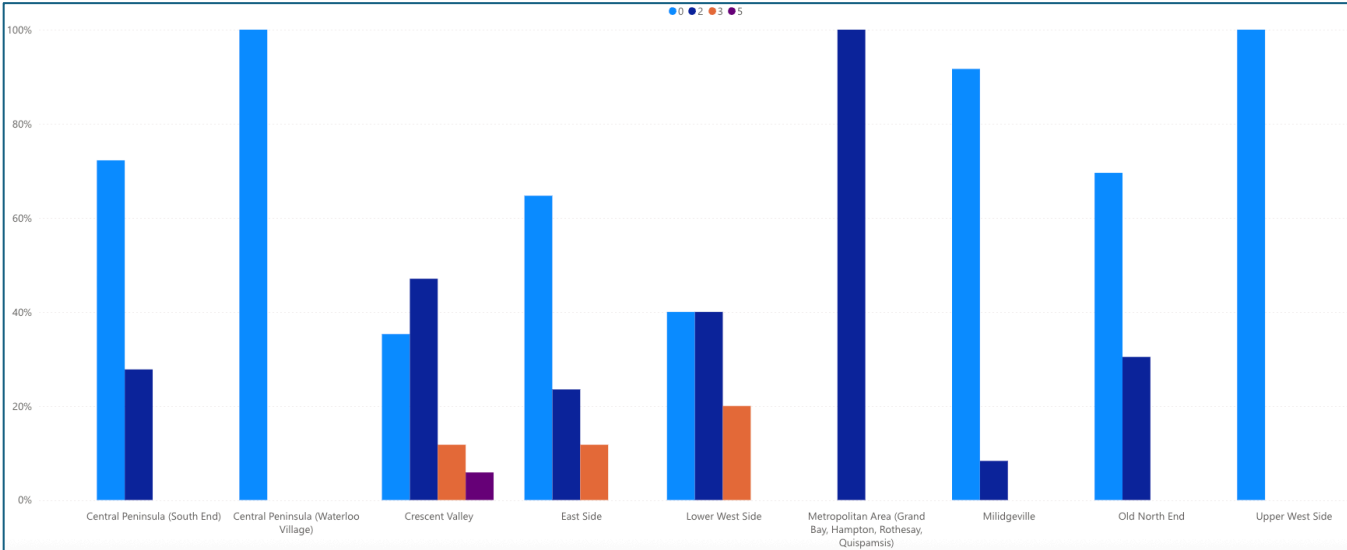
Map 10. Hospitals, Clinics, and Community Centres Millidgeville and North End

Accessibility might also change during nighttime as already described in the case of the Central Peninsula and the surveys. In the case of the East side, there are no hospitals or medical clinics meaning that residents on these areas will have to rely on having a family doctor or/and accessing care in other areas of the city (Map 11). This is similar to the West side where there is only one medical clinic (Map 9).



Map 11. Hospitals, Clinics, and Community Centres East Side

In addition to gaining insight into the major barriers to accessing health services by neighborhood, surveys also identified the prevalence of non-communicable (NCDs) by neighborhoods. We included high blood pressure, diabetes (type-2), COPD, stroke, colorectal cancer, lung cancer, hypothyroidism, and heart disease because they were the most prevalent NCDs in the province in 2022 (Graph 24).

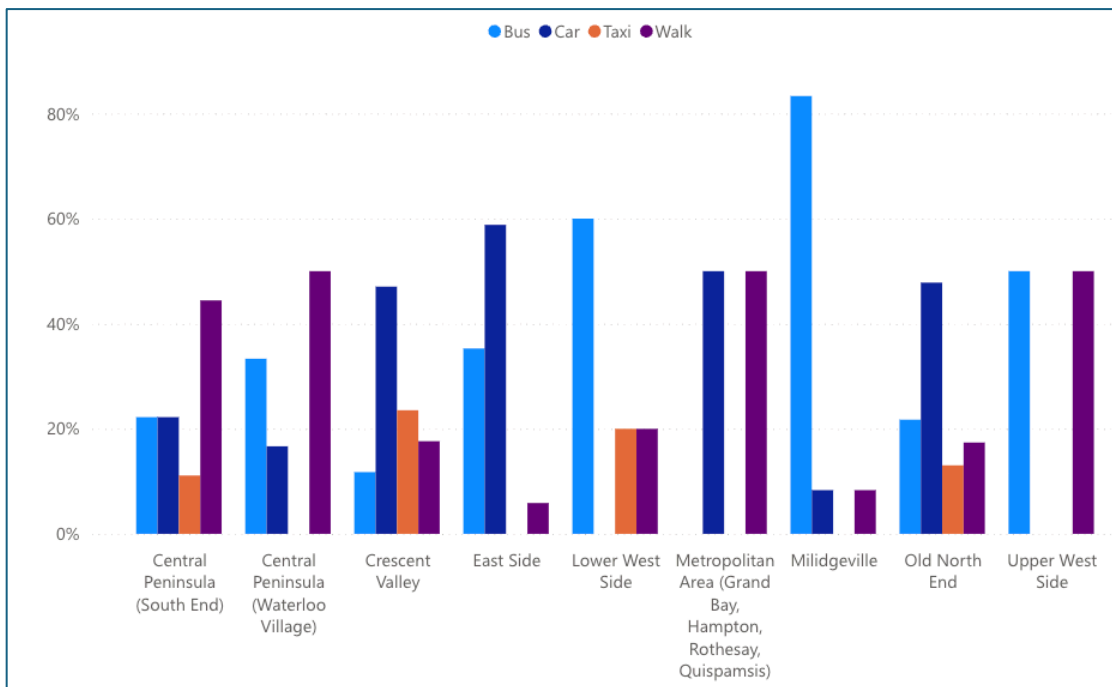


Graph 23. Neighborhoods & number of non-communicable diseases

While many participants reported no disease occurrence, we found that individuals in the metropolitan area reported one to two NCDs, while the highest rate of three or more was found in Crescent Valley, the East Side, and the Lower West Side. Respondents who reported having five or more NCDs lived in Crescent Valley. These findings suggest that significant health disparities exist between neighborhoods. Though some respondents did not report the presence of any NCDs, there might be significant systemic barriers preventing individuals from accessing a suitable health care provider to diagnose and treat health concerns. As previously mentioned, respondents often spoke of their inability to access the health care they require. The concentration of international immigrants diagnosed with three or more NCDs in the East Side, Lower West Side, and Crescent Valley hints at differences in socioeconomic status in these neighborhoods and other factors that contribute to poor health outcomes such as inadequate housing, lack of access to healthy foods, cost of care or proximity to green spaces unfairly affect individuals living in these areas. As indicated by Brown & Armenakyan (2020) and Guo and Guo (2016), the federal and provincial governments focusing on the labour markets can overlook other important factors such as health in the settlement and integration process. A lack of access to health services significantly affects settlement and integration into communities (Rice, 2023). This relationship has been well documented in New Brunswick as a main reason for leaving the province (Hellstrom, 2020, Tastsoglou & Sevgur, 2023) and this concern has been echoed in the 2022 *Succeed and Stay Report* and *Envision Saint John Strategic Planning Kit for the Regional Immigration Strategy*.

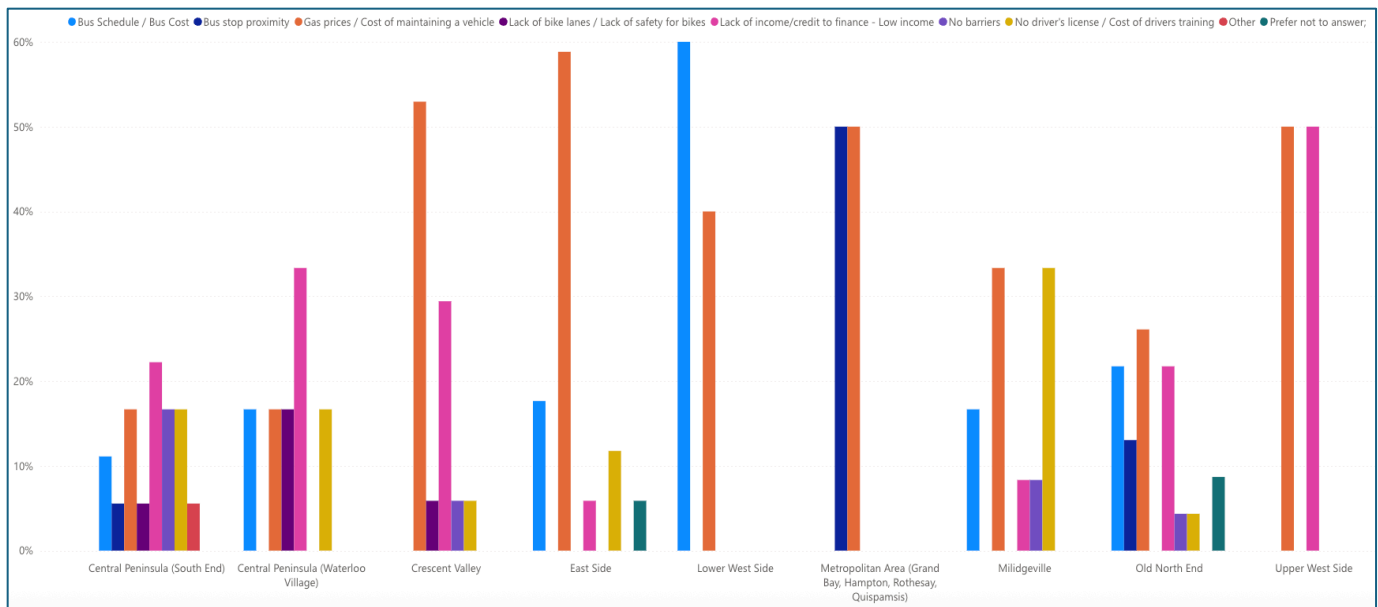
3.4 Access to Transportation

The WCI framework focuses on the importance of access to transportation in creating a welcoming community and as an integral part of affording immigrants the opportunity to access the resources and services required to meet their everyday needs and participate in employment and educational opportunities. The mode of transportation for international immigrants varied according to neighborhood (Graph 24). Most respondents who relied on the bus to move around the city lived in Millidgeville, Lower West Side, and Upper West Side and to some extent the East Side, Old North End and Central Peninsula. Individuals who relied on active transportation, mainly walking, lived in Upper West Side, Metropolitan Areas, and the Central Peninsula. Respondents who relied on a vehicle primarily resided in East Side, Old North End, Metropolitan Area, and Crescent Valley. Respondents also relied on taxis in Crescent Valley, Lower West Side, Old North End and Central Peninsula. However, in our ethnographic work we found that a taxi was not the preferred option due to cost.



Graph 24. Transportation mode by neighborhood

The surveys identified the cost of maintaining a vehicle and the cost of gas as a major mobility barrier (Graph 25), mainly in the East Side, Crescent Valley and metropolitan areas. Similarly, the second major barrier to transportation was a lack of income particularly for residents residing in the Upper West Side, Crescent Valley and the Old North End. This was also the main barrier for residents residing in the Central Peninsula. Additionally, the cost of a driver's license and drivers training was a significant barrier to Millidgeville and the Central Peninsula.

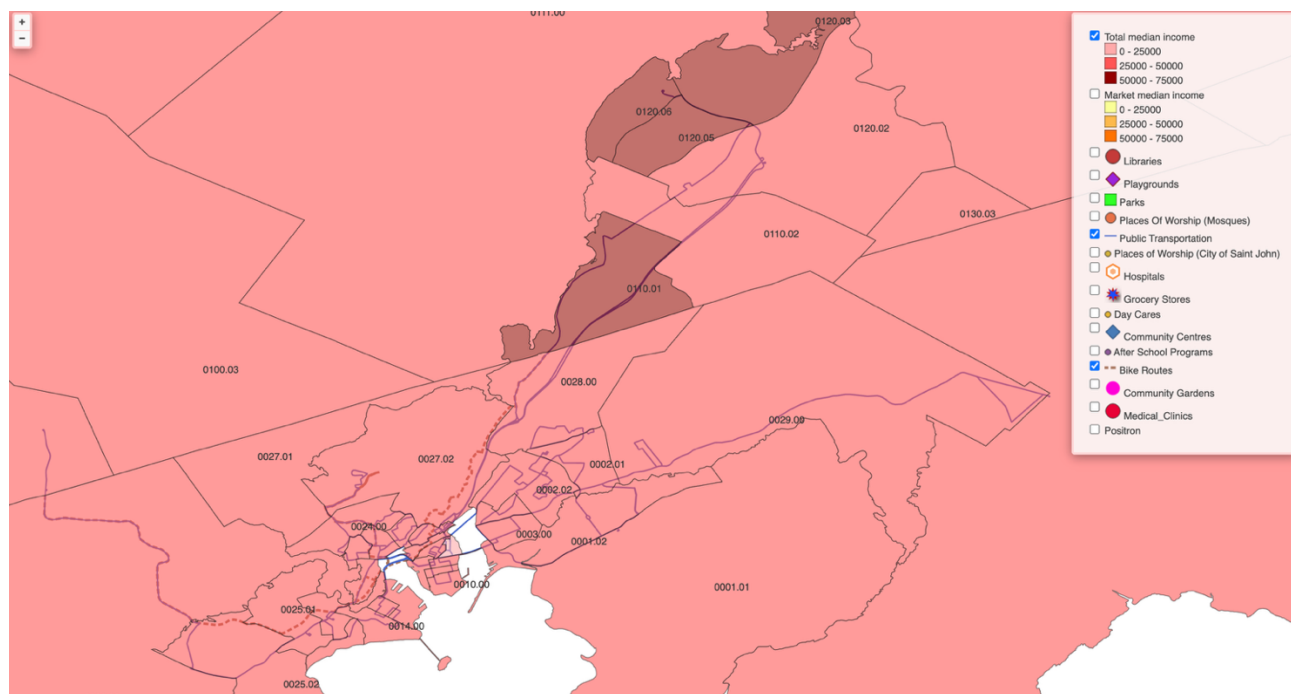
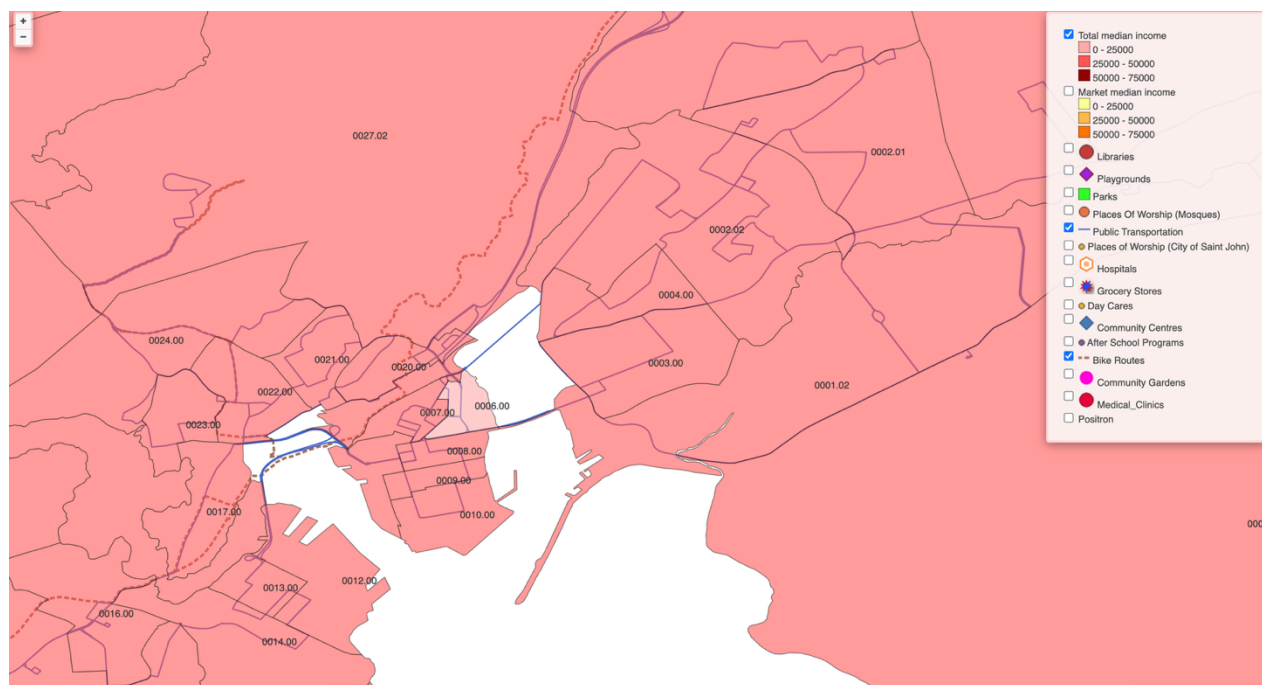


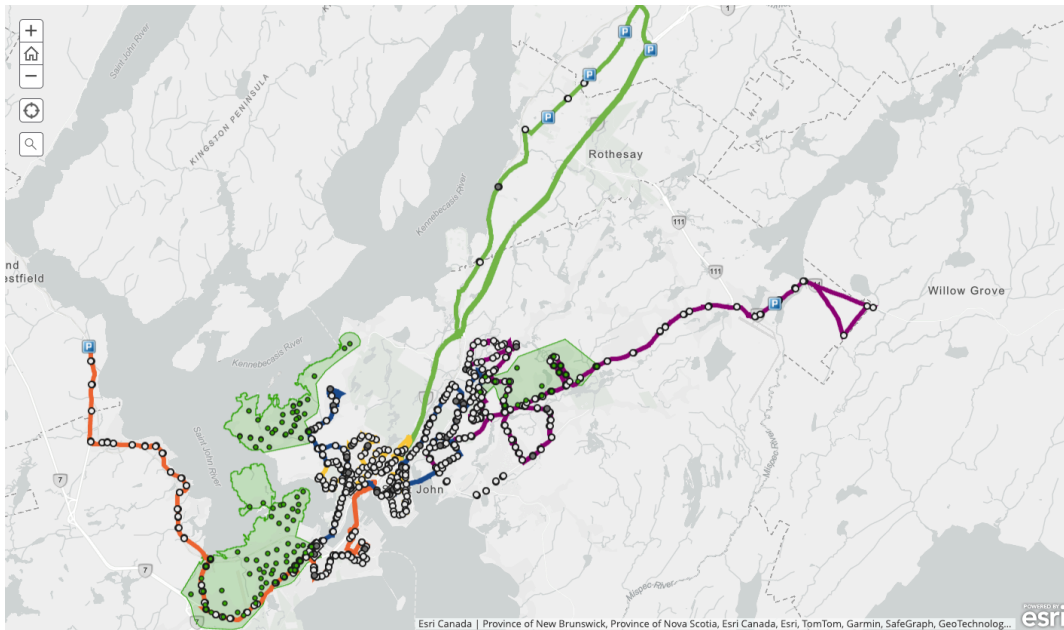
Graph 25. Transportation barriers by neighborhood

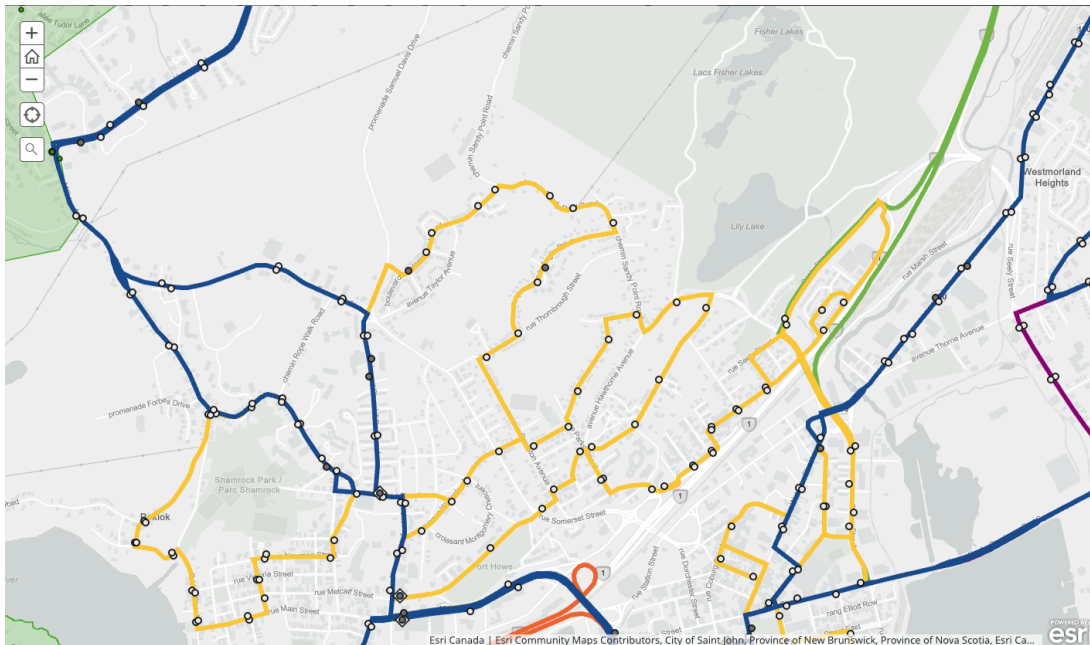
The WCI framework acknowledges that the costs associated with owning a vehicle are particularly challenging for immigrants as they may not qualify for a loan upon their arrival to Canada, they do not have a banking history, they do not have a driver's license and/or their driver's license is not valid in Canada. The barriers to the city's public transportation system were also reflected in the surveys. Respondents in the Lower West Side noted that the bus schedule and cost affected their ability to move around the city whereas people in metropolitan areas were concerned about proximity to a bus stop. This is particularly problematic for small cities as public transportation infrastructure is not as developed as in large ones which consequently affects the attraction and retention of immigrants.

Residents in the Central Peninsula and other areas of low-income area have relatively adequate access to bus stops and routes as it is the point of connections for many routes across the city. Yet, areas of low-income in the North End and the East Side lack this connectivity (Map 12). The larger map of public transit which shows that there is limited accessibility to public transit on the West Side, Millidgeville and East Side. When considering the flex transit system, this does fill some of the gaps in the lack of established routes in the West Side, Millidgeville and parts of the East Side. Yet, it would be important to make an assessment for international immigrants and the population in general about the effectiveness, efficiency and cost (Map 13).

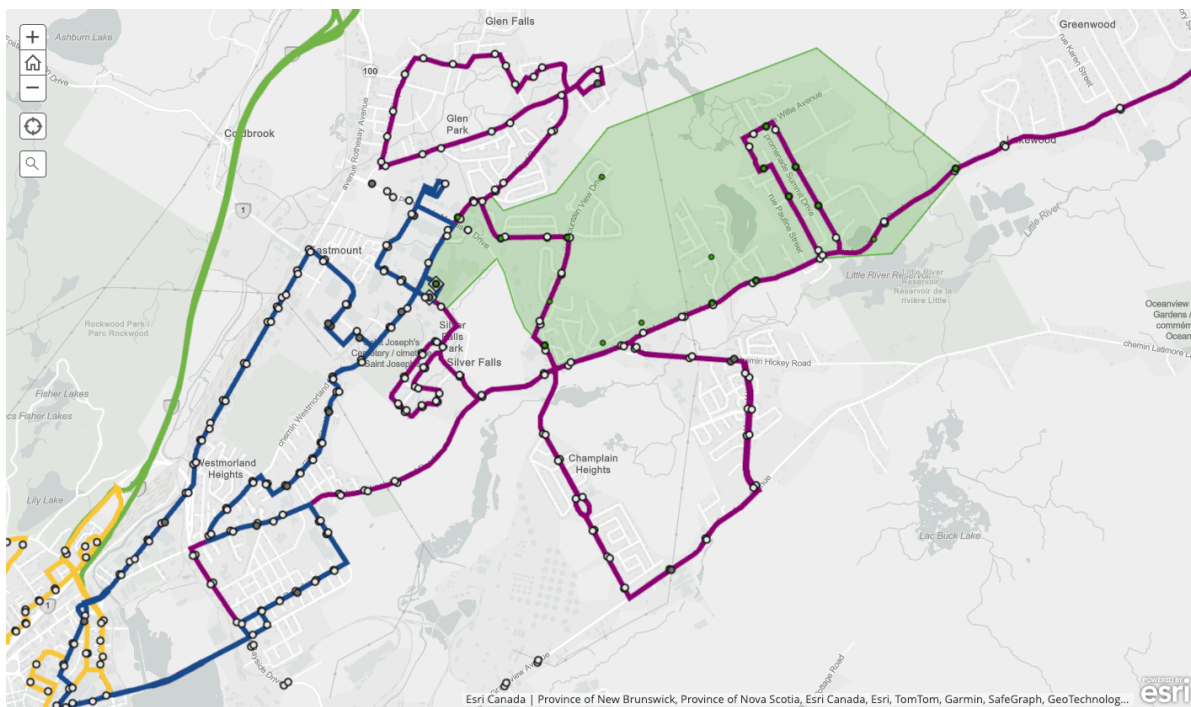
Issues of weather conditions, including priority in snow removal, and access to reliable bus scheduling need to be considered when setting bus stops. According to the maps, there are areas with few sheltered bus stops. This, connected with lack of frequency and unfavorable weather conditions, makes access to public transit a challenge for international immigrants (Map 14, 15, 16, 17, 18). In 2021, some of these concerns were highlighted by racialized individuals and international immigrants in a report on public and active transportation in Saint John (Muñoz-Martínez et al., 2021).







Map 16. Sheltered Bus Stops Millidgeville and North End in grey. Source: City of Saint John open data

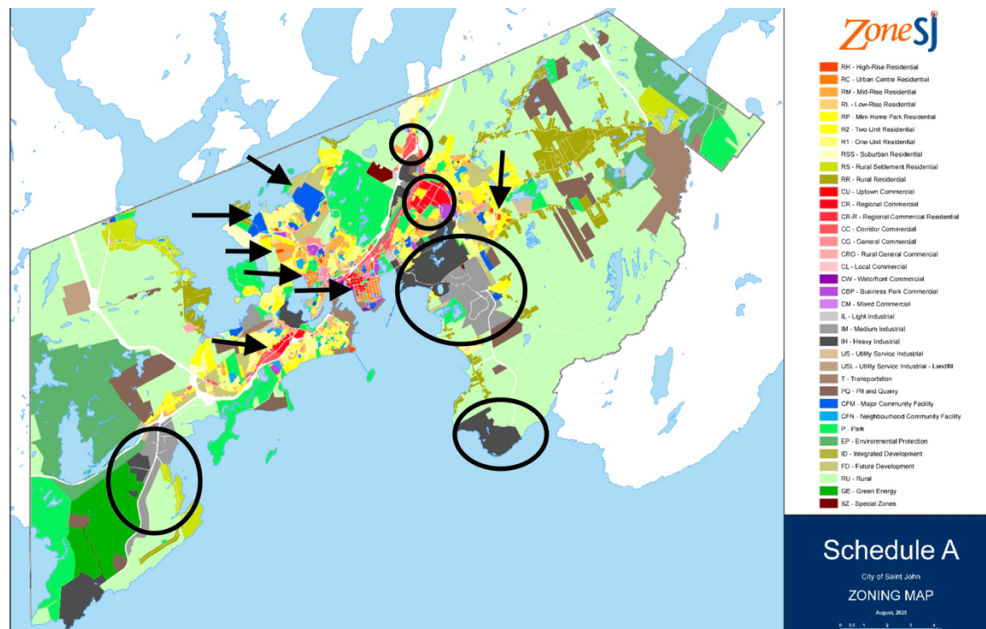


Map 17. Sheltered Bus Stops East Side in grey. Source: City of Saint John open data



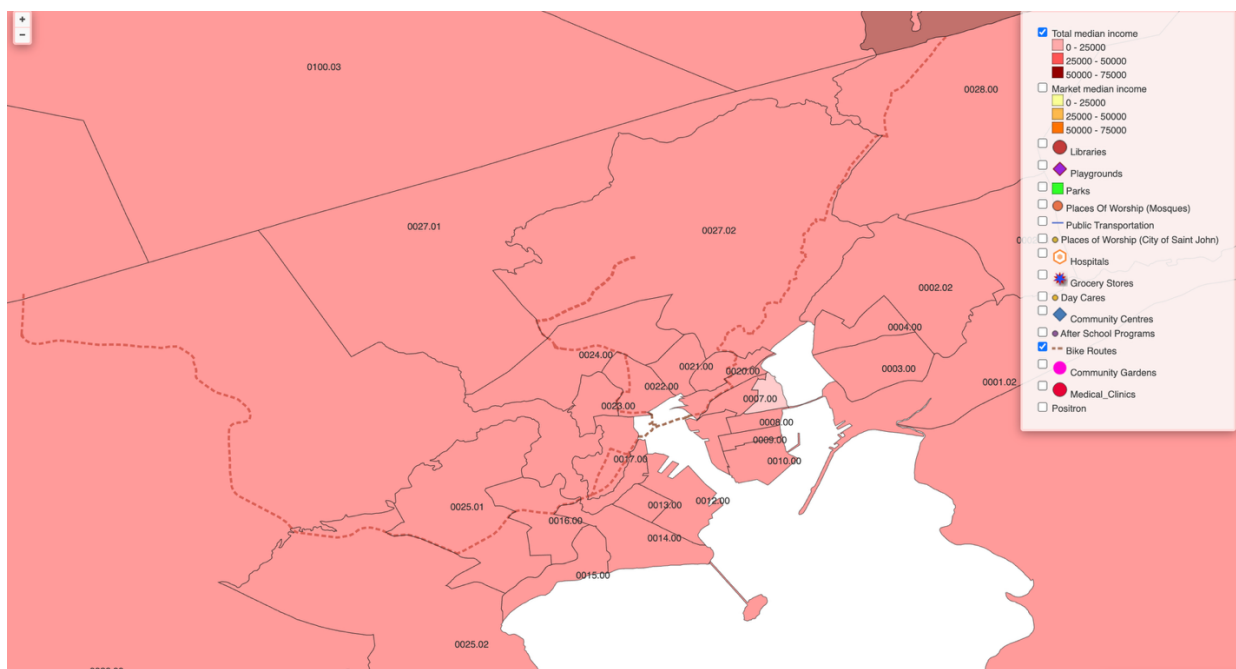
Map 18. Sheltered Bus Stops Central Peninsula in grey. Source: City of Saint John Open Data

When comparing the existing bus routes and the existing zoning in Saint John related to commercial and industrial areas, many of the routes ensure access to some of these areas. Yet issues related to the transit schedule remain as many jobs might fall outside of the hours established in public transit (Map 19). This is also related to frequency as a person might have to wait for a long time to catch the next available bus to get to their job or a potential job opportunity.



Map 19. Job Opportunities Commercial and Industrialized Areas. Source: City of Saint John, ZoneSJ.

With regards to active transportation, research needs to be done in terms of access to sidewalks that connect to different parts of the city safely and sidewalk conditions, especially in the wintertime. While the map shows some continuity in the bike routes, the actual use shows that there are areas in the bike routes that are disconnected from one another (Map 20). To access the next bike route, a bike rider has to enter heavy traffic or unsafe conditions. Yet, bike routes have a lot of potential in terms of addressing transportation concerns for international immigrants especially those that are used to active forms of transportation in their home countries and while providing a cost-effective and healthy alternative form of transportation (for some experiences refer to the 2021 *Moving Through the City* Report). Also, studies have shown that investment in bike infrastructure and active transportation creates employment opportunities and offers attraction and retention features (Garret-Peltier 2011). It would also be important to further support plans for active transportation and infrastructure as developed by MoveSJ at the regional level. It is worth noting that there have been recent developments in Saint John to encourage active forms of transportation (e.g. Main Street). Both active and public transportation is an important issue connecting to the needs of international immigrants as we will explore in other sections of the report. This theme is highlighted in the paintings below, including reliance on private vehicles and a lack of public and active transportation, and it is also addressed in other paintings throughout the report. For instance, below the art workshop participants raise issues on frequency of bus routes and shelters, especially in difficult weather situations (Photo 6, 7, 8).



Map 20. Bike Routes



Photo 6. Untitled, Anonymous (2023).

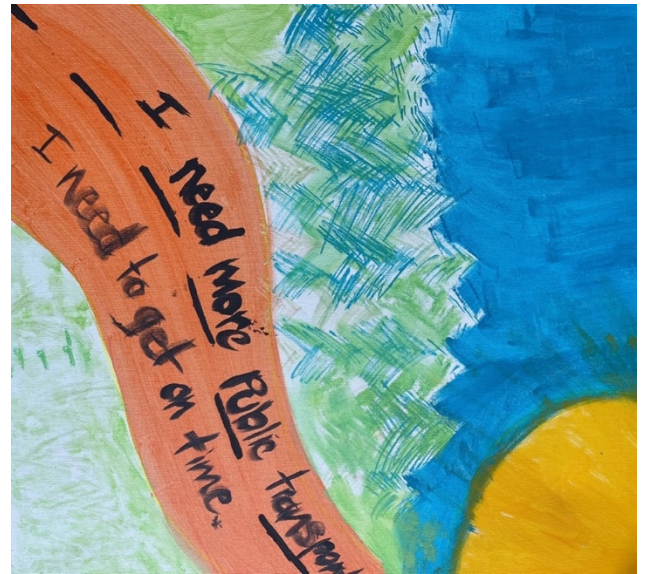


Photo 7. Untitled, Anonymous, (2023)

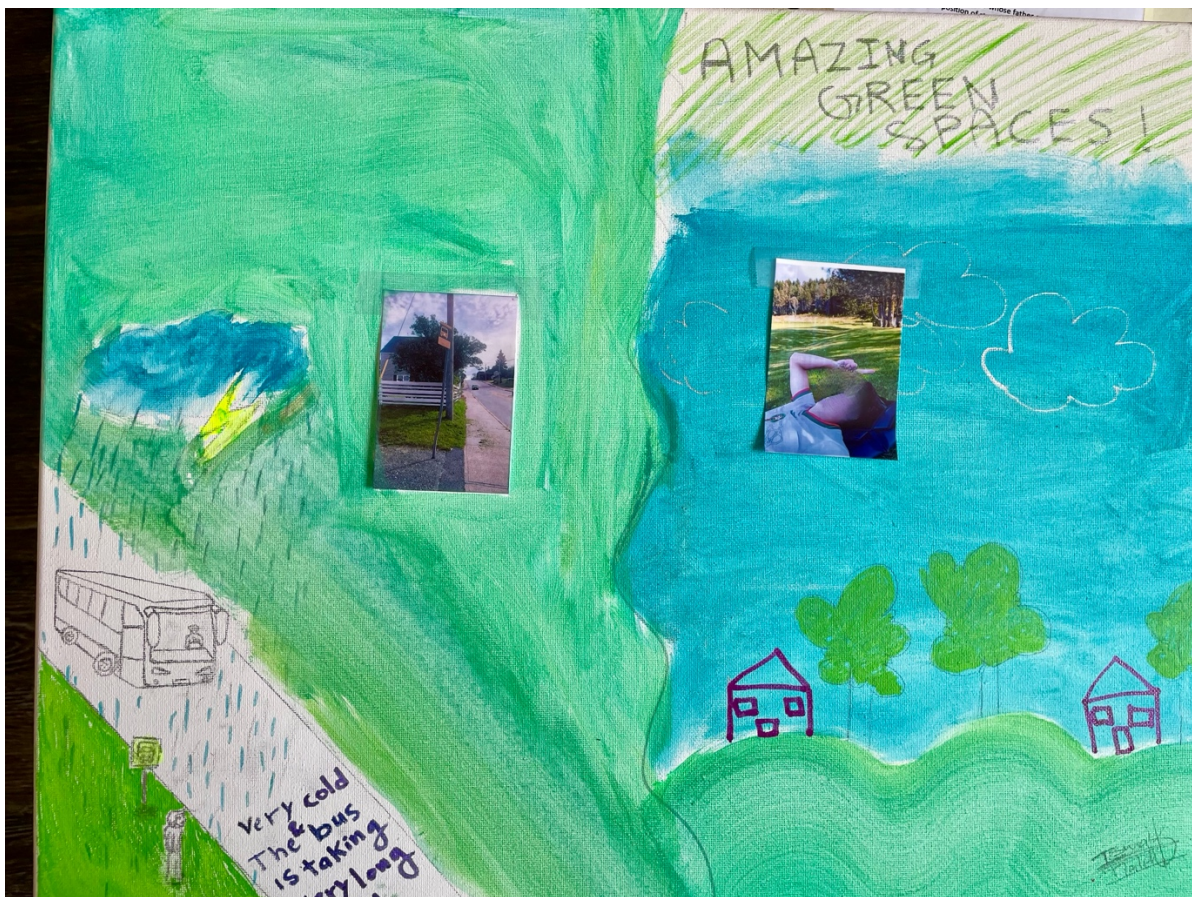


Photo 8. Untitled, by Ismail (2023)

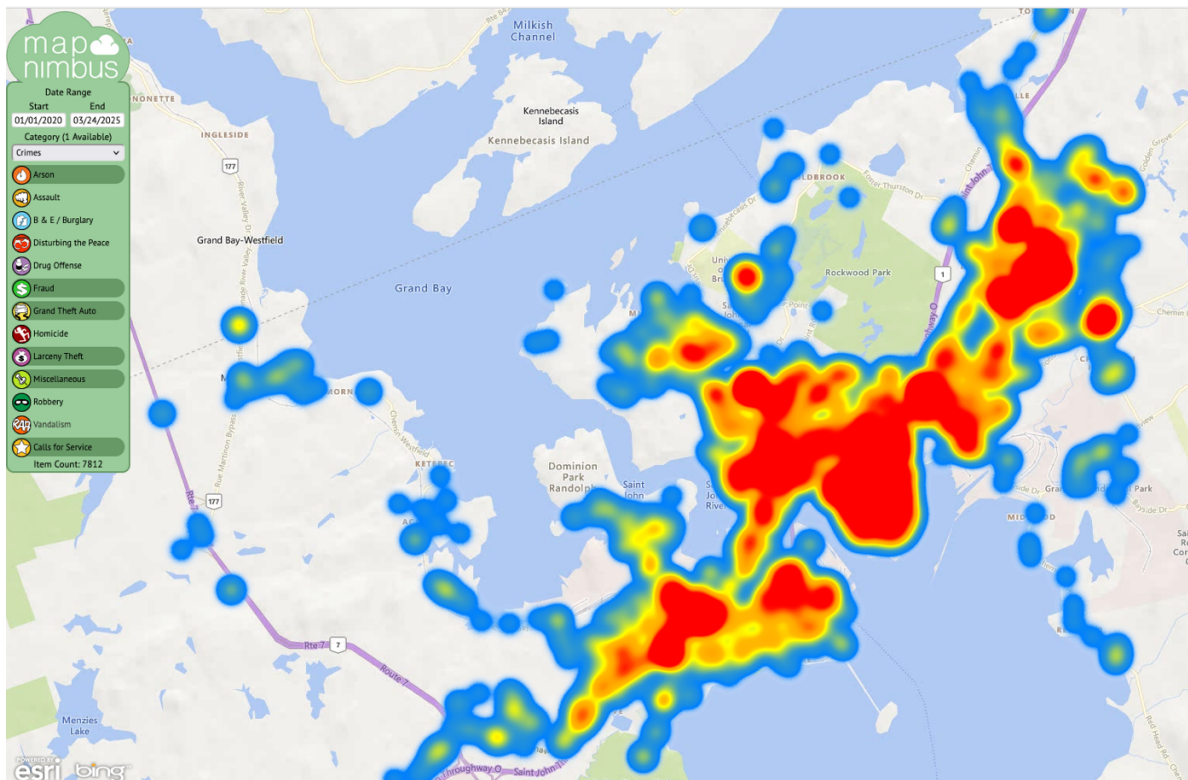
This is consistent with the 2022 *Succeed and Stay* report findings, which highlight how the lack of frequency, convenient times, stops and high cost of public transit was a significant barrier for international immigrants, especially for those of recent arrival, and particularly for those living in the Saint John CMA. Access to transportation also affects the ability for immigrants to settle and integrate into the community and create social connections (Guo & Guo, 2016; Zhuang, 2021). Further, effective public infrastructure, such as efficient public transportation systems, reduces urban exclusion and is part of creating social networks between immigrants and locals (Allen, 2020; McLaren, 2023).

3.5 Equitable Neighborhoods

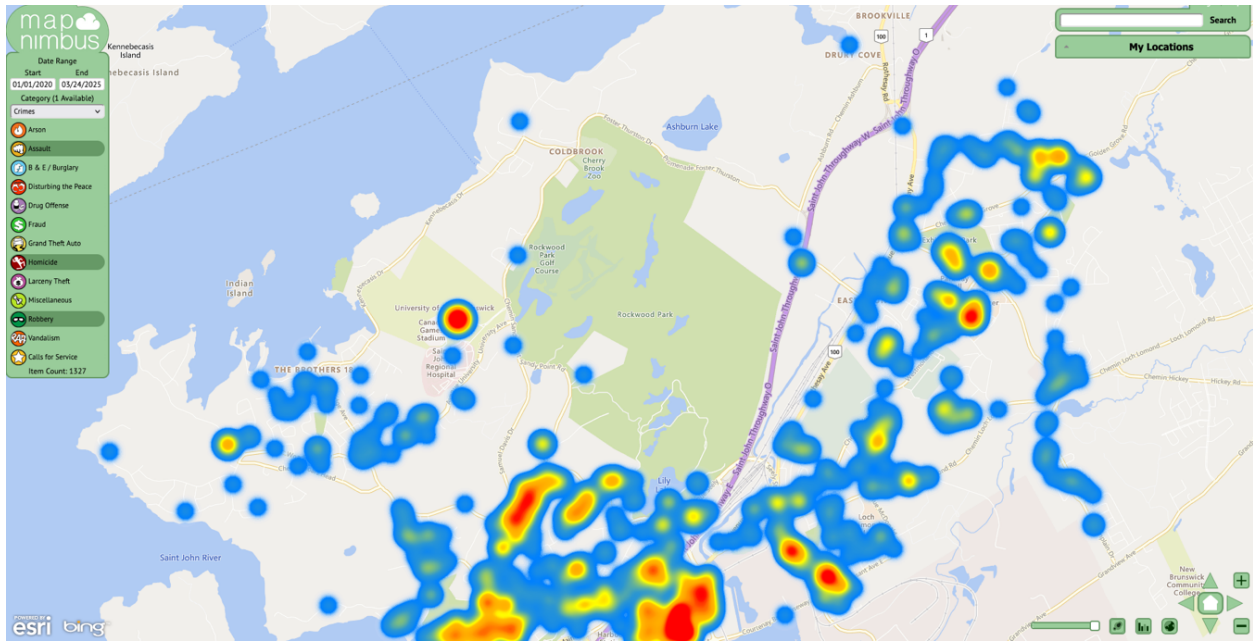
According to WCI, neighborhood characteristics are central to making immigrants feel welcomed, enhancing quality of life through safety, proximity to essential services, resources, and amenities, and safety. The WCI framework addresses key indicators such as safety, environment, food security, and access to public facilities and community organizations.

Crime and safety

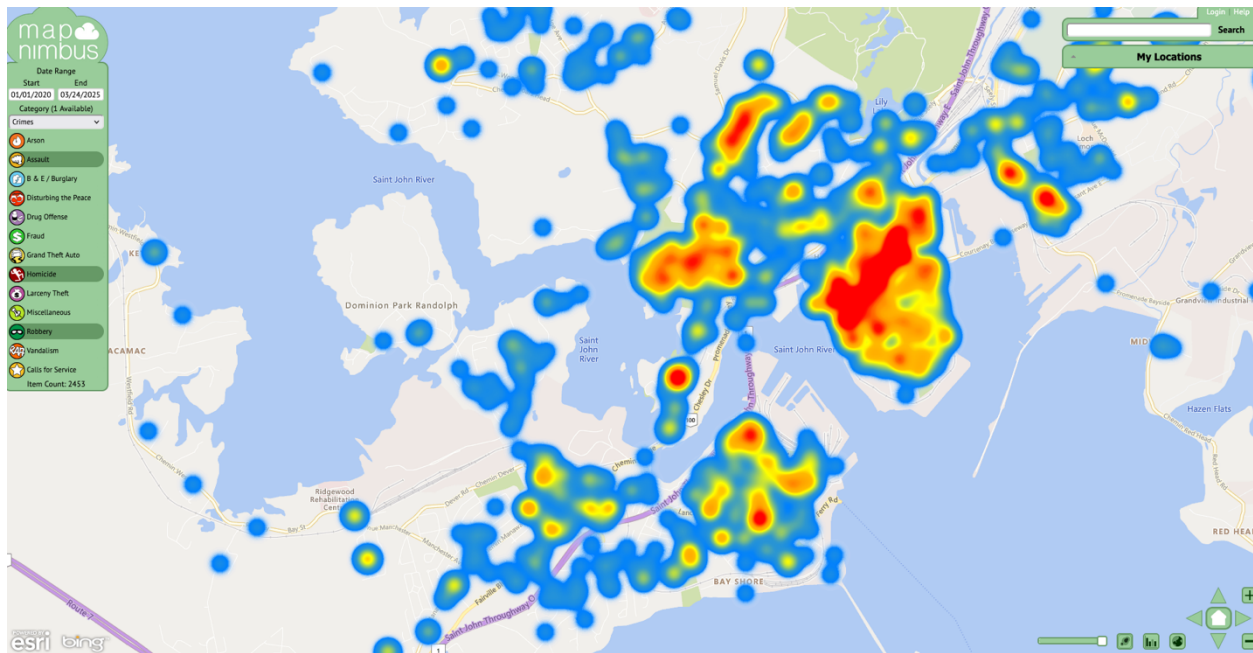
In relation to neighborhood safety, most immigrants that participated in the surveys live, study and/or work in areas of high levels of crime. In the past 5 years, crimes of assault homicide, and robbery have concentrated in the areas where international immigrants reside, mainly the central peninsula, North End, Crescent Valley, Lower West Side and the university area (see Map 21). The heat map also shows high rates of crime close to commercial area in the East side where international immigrants and non-immigrants do their shopping and/or work (Map 22). This finding should not add to the stigmatization of immigrants as the cause of crime. Rather, this indicates that they reside in these areas because market rental might be low, or this is where social/subsidized housing and jobs are located.



Map 21. Heat map of crime in Saint John, NB from 2020 to 2025 for arson, fraud, grand theft auto, larceny theft, miscellaneous and calls for service. Source: Saint John Police Department. Crime Heat Map Available at: <http://www.mapnimbus.com/DataNimbusClient.html?Client=City%20of%20Saint%20John>



Map 22. Crime Heat Map (Millidgeville and East side) from 2020 to 2025 for assault, homicide and robbery. Source: Saint John Police Department.



Map 23. Crime Heat Map (Central Peninsula, West side and North end) from 2020 to 2025 for assault, homicide and robbery. Source: Saint John Police Department.

Environment

In relation to the environment, according to the Government of New Brunswick Air Quality Monitoring results of 2021 and 2022, the West Side and the East side have relatively high to medium levels of sulphur dioxide and fine particle matter. For instance, the monitor station closer to the Central Peninsula and Mount Pleasant reported an annual average of $5.3 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ for particle matter, whereas the stations reported an average of $5.6 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ and $6.9 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ in East Side and West Side respectively, around $3 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$

close to the annual limits. The same year, the East side reached levels of sulphur dioxide from 58 to 111ppb per hour daily, the West Side had 41ppb per hour daily when the limits are 70ppb per hour daily. In comparison, the Central Peninsula and Mount Pleasant had 22ppb of sulphur dioxide in the same period. The monitor station in Champlain Heights detected 0.364 ppb annual average for benzene, and 0.113 in Forest Hills for the same chemical whereas the standard for benzene limits is 0.14ppb. While this means harm to the health of those residents in surrounding areas, more research needs to be done in relation to medium and long term of exposure of these chemicals of the larger population of the Saint John CMA.

This also coincides with some of the areas of low total median income and median market income, which rely on child benefits and government transfers (Map 2; Map 3; Map 8). Such environmental exposure might contribute to health issues and ability to work not only for international immigrants but also for the general population as the city is still not divided by “sacrifice zones (communities, often low-income and/or minority communities, that bear disproportionately high levels of environmental pollution and health risks due to industrial activities, despite the adverse impacts on their health) in terms of racialization such as in the United States and other cities in Canada (Lerner 2010; Wiebe et al. 2024). While the city of Saint John has an asset map to address climate change, issues of air quality still fall under provincial jurisdiction. The way in which the city and municipalities may be able to influence air quality would be through promotion of carbon sinks and modifications in zoning to keep industrial pollution from industrial areas away from residential areas.

Information Box 1

Particulate Matter (PM)

- Particulate matter is measured in micrometers (μm) and categorized mainly into PM10 (particles with diameters $\leq 10 \mu\text{m}$) and PM2.5 (particles with diameters $\leq 2.5 \mu\text{m}$). PM can penetrate deep into the lungs and even enter the bloodstream. Health impacts include respiratory issues, aggravated asthma, decreased lung function, nonfatal heart attacks, and premature death in individuals with heart or lung diseases (Government of Canada 2025; Health Canada 2025).

Sulfur Oxides (SOx)

- Sulfur dioxide (SO_2) is measured in parts per billion (ppb). Short-term exposure to SO_2 can cause respiratory problems, particularly in individuals with asthma. Long-term exposure can lead to the formation of fine particulate matter, contributing to further respiratory and cardiovascular issues (Government of Canada 2025; Health Canada 2025). SO_2 also contributes to acid rain, which can harm ecosystems.

Benzene

- Benzene levels are measured in in parts per billion (ppb). Acute exposure to benzene can cause dizziness, headaches, and respiratory irritation. Chronic exposure is linked to blood disorders like anemia and increased risk of leukemia. Benzene is classified as a known human carcinogen (Government of Canada 2025; Health Canada 2025).

One of the paintings reflects the overwhelming sight of heavy industry by international immigrants when they arrive in Saint John. Interestingly, the creator sees the heavy industry behind fences (Photo 9).



Photo 9. "Saint John's sight," By Viktoria Yerenko, (2022).

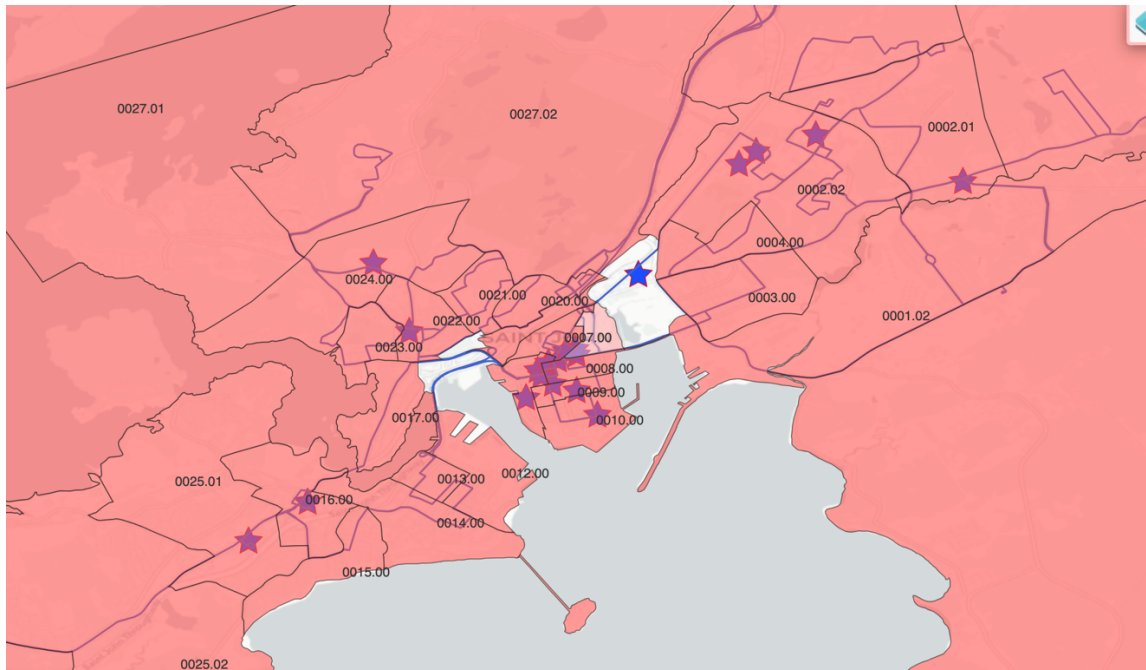
Food security

In relation to access to nutritious affordable food, participants in Millidgeville, the metropolitan area and Upper West side, expressed there was access to affordable healthy food available to them. It is worth noting that those neighborhoods have relatively higher incomes, own cars and have large grocery stores in their proximity. A participant in the art workshop noted that there is a lot of processed foods available as well as the reliance on private vehicles when accessing essential services and amenities throughout the city (Photo 10). In the surveys, those participants that considered lack of affordability of healthy food a concern were in low-income neighborhoods with no access to affordable public transit and other forms of active transportation (Graph 26; Map 2, 3, 8, 12, 13, 24). While there are bus routes that might go through these grocery stores issues of frequency, shelter and accessibility all year round should be assessed (Map 24).

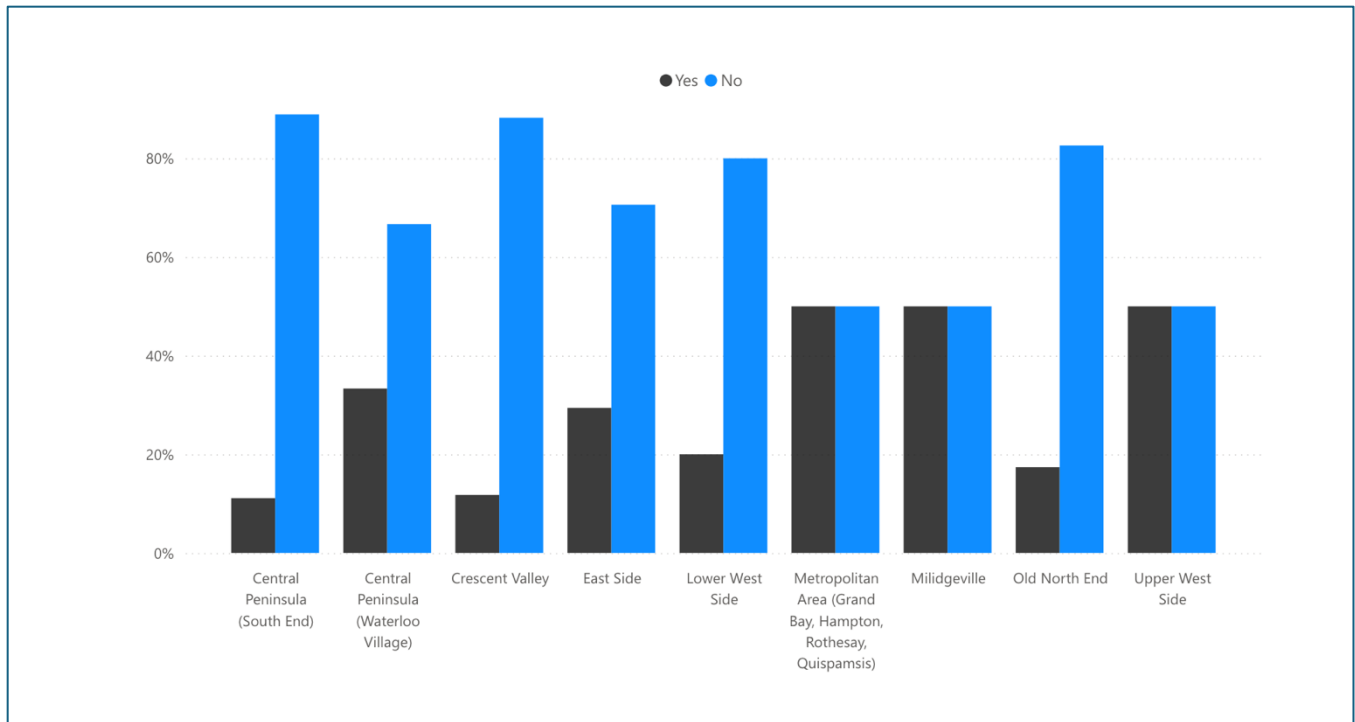
In the Central Peninsula the map highlights there are grocery stores available (Map 24). While a few of these businesses sell world foods, many of these establishments are convenience stores that lack fresh produce. While the City Market offers fresh produce, many participants opted for grocery shopping at Giant Tiger for its affordability. Yet in the other areas of the city, people rely on large grocery stores, where the cost of food might into given the concentration of food distribution in a few big box stores (Map 24).



Photo 10. Untitled, Anonymous, (2023)



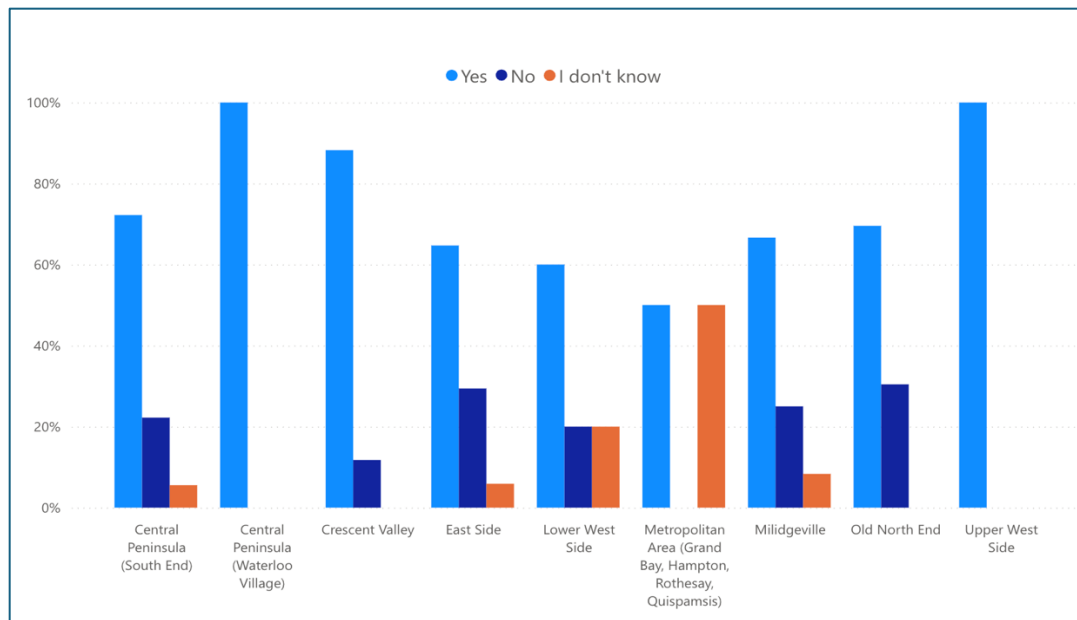
Map 24. Grocery Stores in Saint John with public transit routes (This map is missing two newly opened grocery stores in East Side)



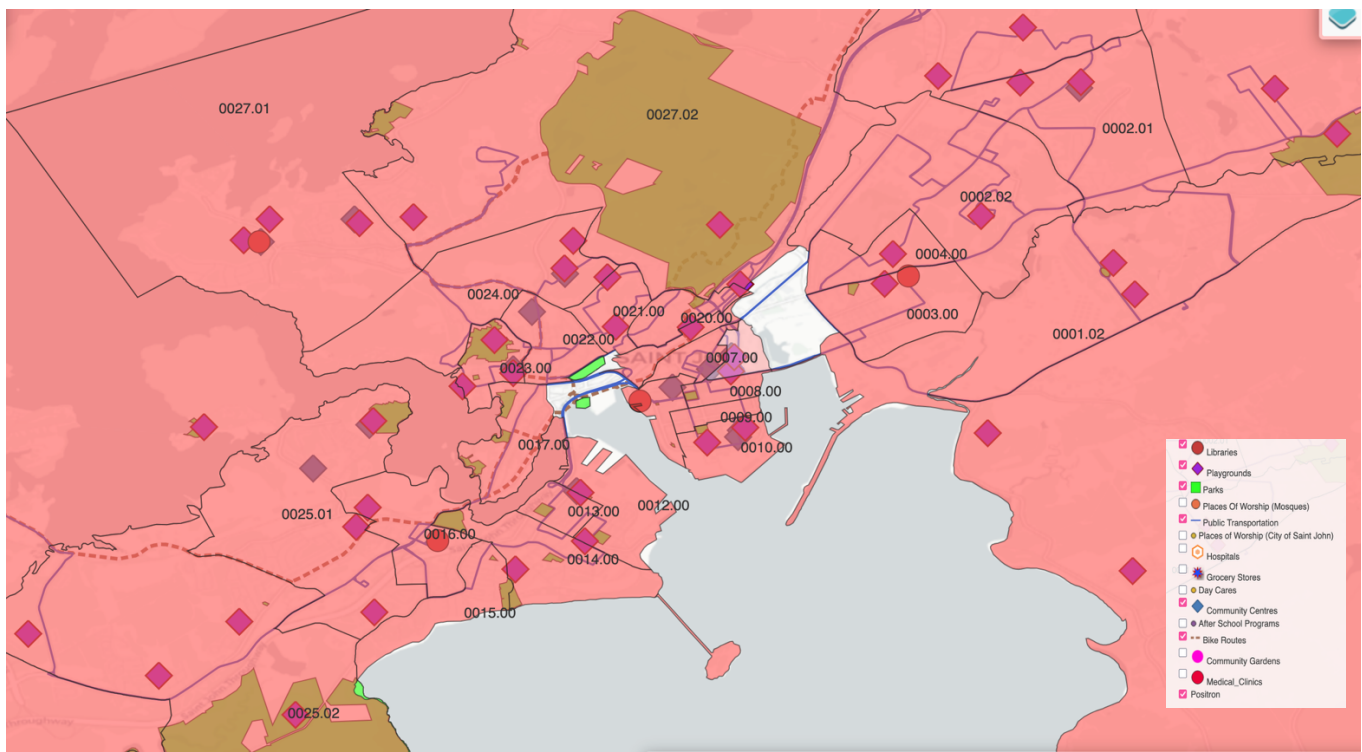
Graph 26. Availability of healthy and affordable food by neighbourhood

Public facilities and community organizations

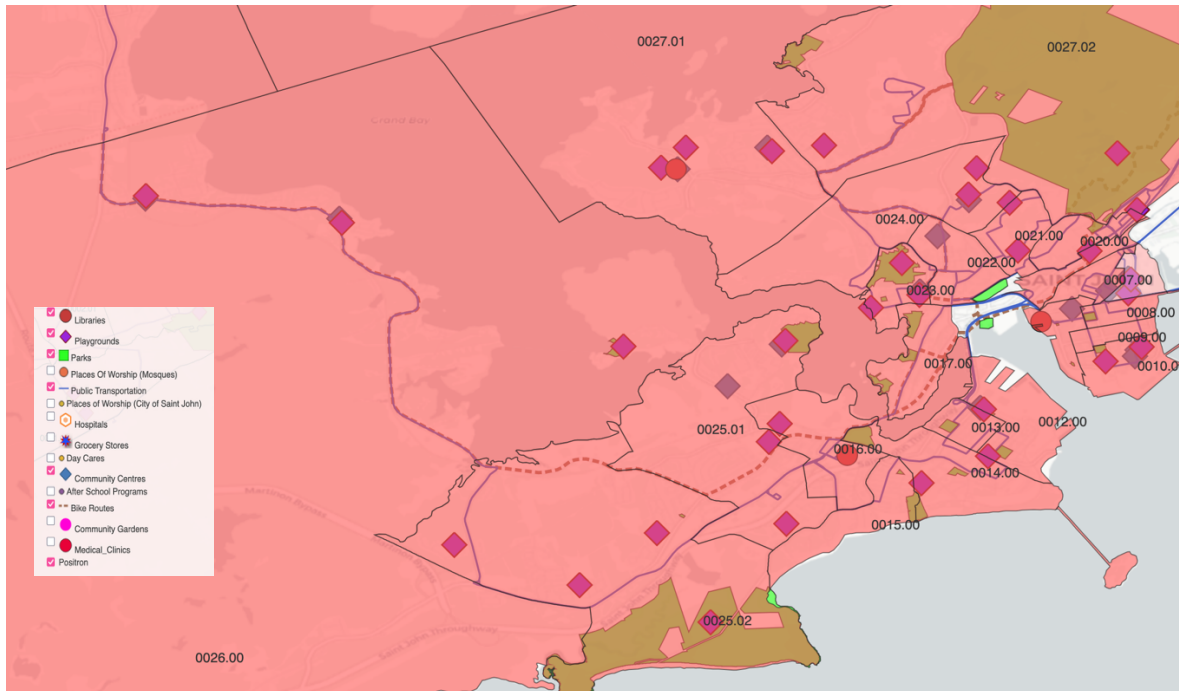
In relation to neighborhood public facilities and community organizations, our findings are divided by access to green space, parks and community centers, daycares and after-school hours centers, places of worship, and mobility in the city. In terms of access to greenspaces by neighborhoods, we discussed safety in terms of accessibility such as being able to walk without being run over by a car or being in danger of falling due to sidewalk conditions. Many participants reported feeling safe when walking to access green spaces or biking to green spaces. Many participants that expressed a lack of safety lived in the East side, South End and Old North End, particularly women, which suggests the importance of understanding gendered aspects of city planning (Graph 27; Kern 2021). It is worth noting that our surveys were mostly conducted during the fall and summer, when access to green spaces is less difficult, especially through active transportation. The map below also shows access through public transportation to playgrounds and community gardens including in low-income areas particularly in the Central Peninsula, Millidgeville and certain areas of West Side (Map 25, 26, 27). Yet, there is still a lack of accessibility in the West Side in terms of public transportation (Map 27).



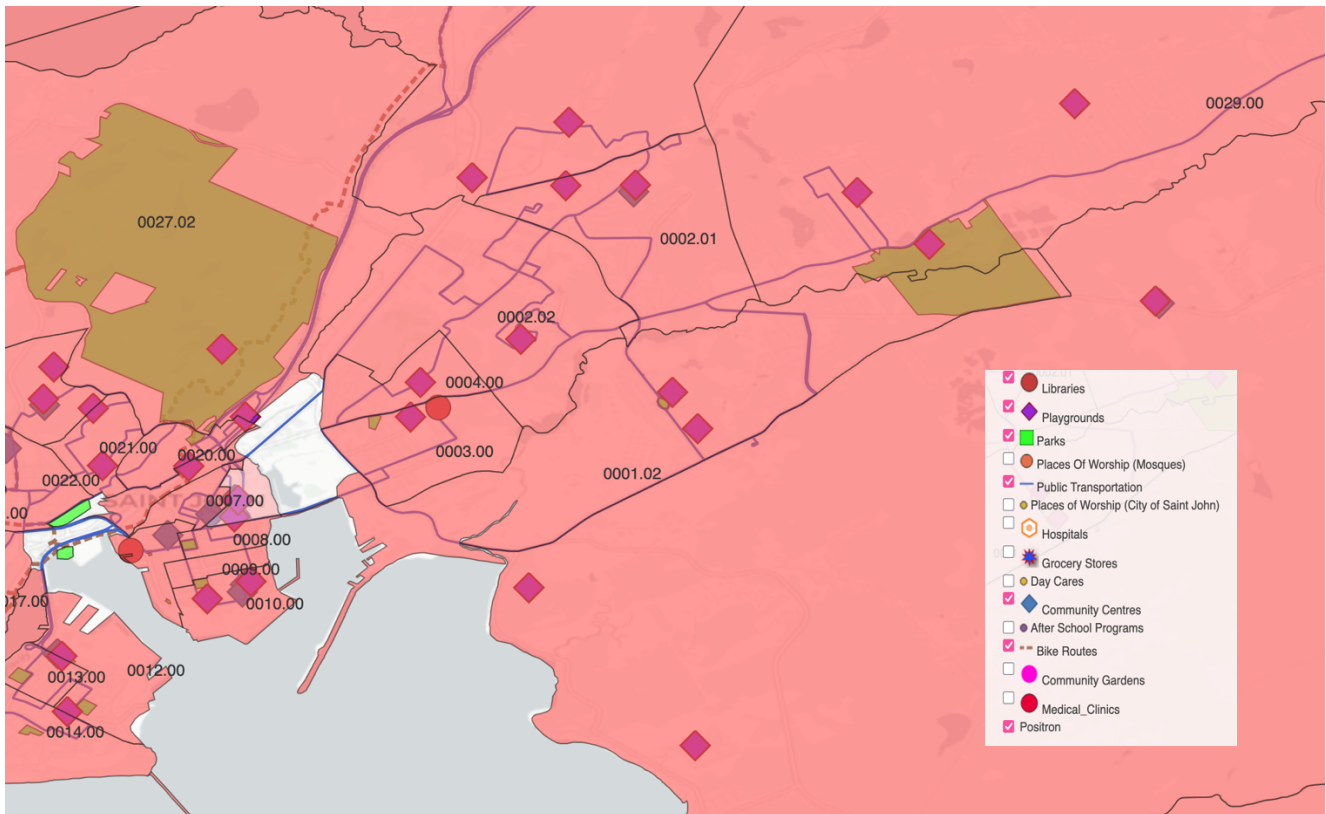
Graph 27. Safety walking/biking to greenspace by neighborhood



Map 25. Parks, Playgrounds, Libraries, Community Centres, Community Gardens in Central Peninsula, Crescent Valley, Millidgeville and North End with public transit and bike routes.



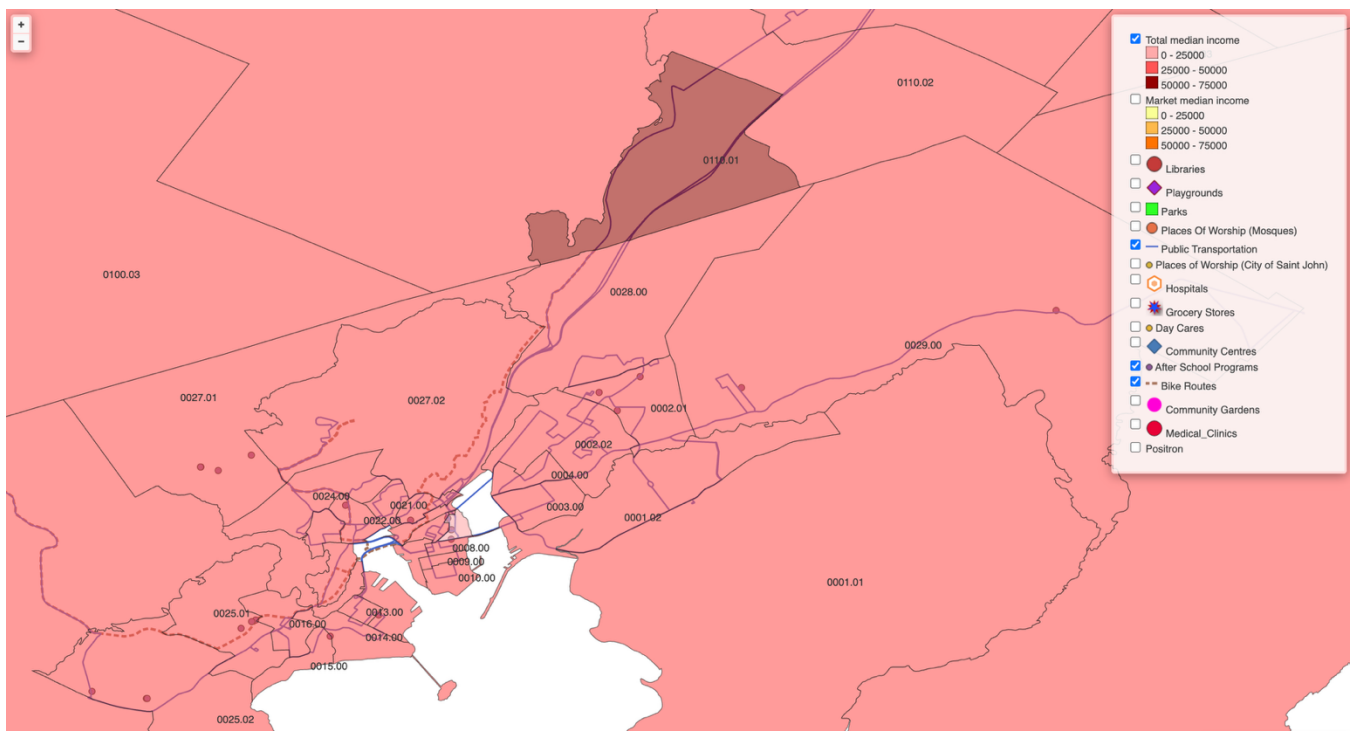
Map 26. Parks, Playgrounds, Libraries, Community Centres, Community Gardens in West Side with public transit and bike routes.



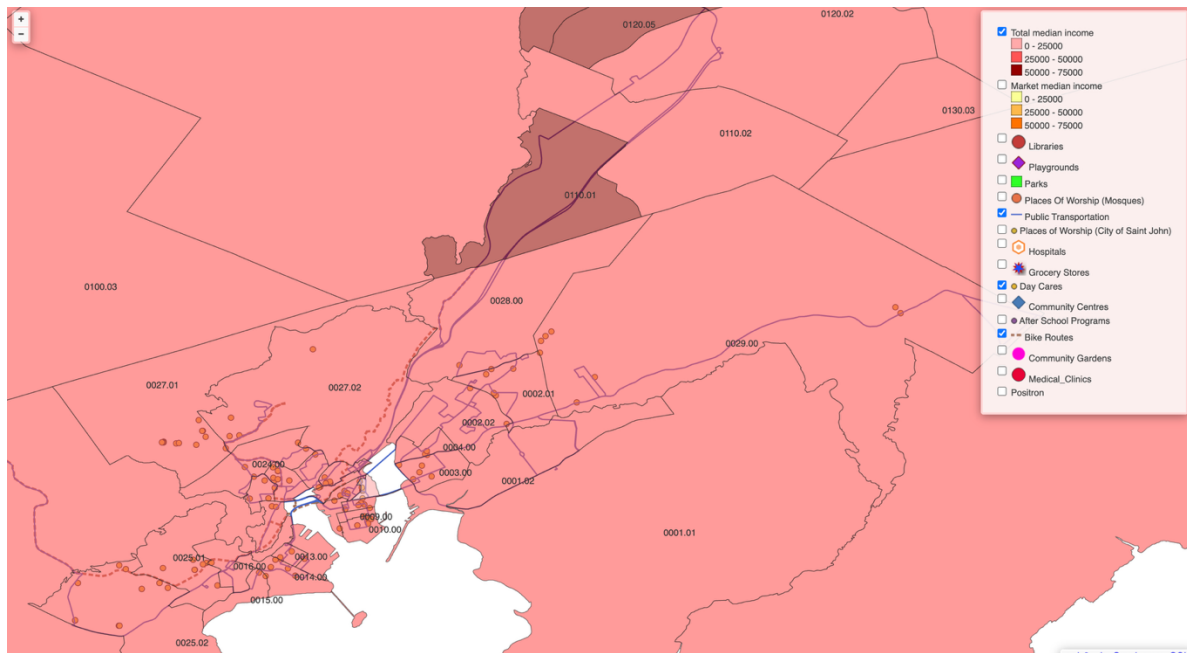
Map 27. Parks, Playgrounds, Libraries, Community Centres, Community Gardens in East Side with public transit and bike routes

The use of public facilities during the wintertime was raised by participants, particularly through informal conversations and participatory mapping (see below). In this sense, public libraries are important inclusive spaces for international immigrants. Yet, there are only four libraries in the city of Saint John, and one in Quispamsis and Rothesay, and limited number of community centres which either lack space or the funding to provide a larger offering that includes immigrant communities. Indoor recreational spaces are particularly important for international immigrants that are still adjusting to the weather conditions especially for families that require free or low-cost activities for their families. In that sense it would be important to look in the expansion plans for indoor sites in the *PlaySJ Master Plan* and explore whether this includes child friendly activities and their programming and infrastructures are welcoming to international immigrants especially those of recent arrival.

In terms of afterschool care, the map shows a limited number of afterschool programs with some accessibility through public transit (Map 28). Yet, low-income neighborhoods lack that accessibility. In terms of daycares, many in the Central Peninsula are located along public transit routes and this is the same case in the East Side (Map 29). Yet access to public transit in Millidgeville, West Side and North End area remain limited. This is consistent with the findings in previous reports that show issues of afterschool and day care as a major barrier to settlement and retention.

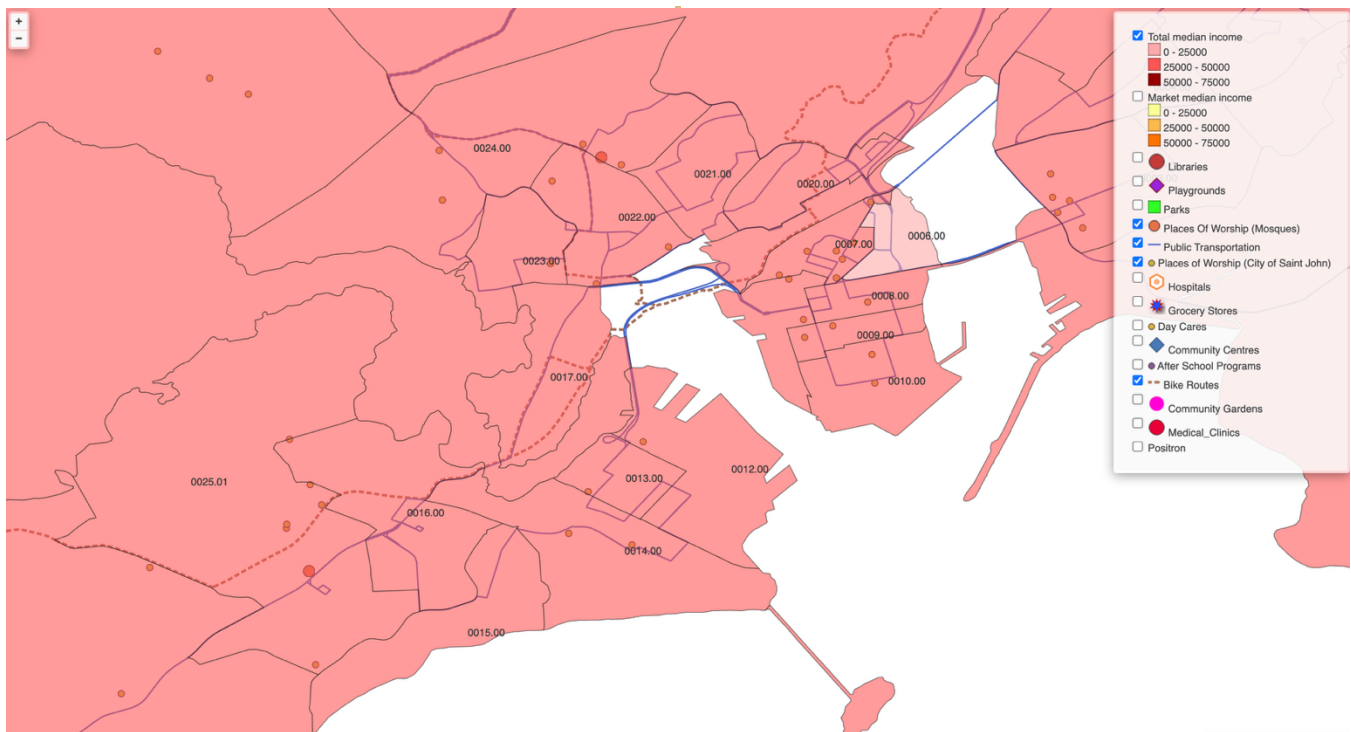


Map 28. Afterschool programs with public transit and bike routes in Saint John

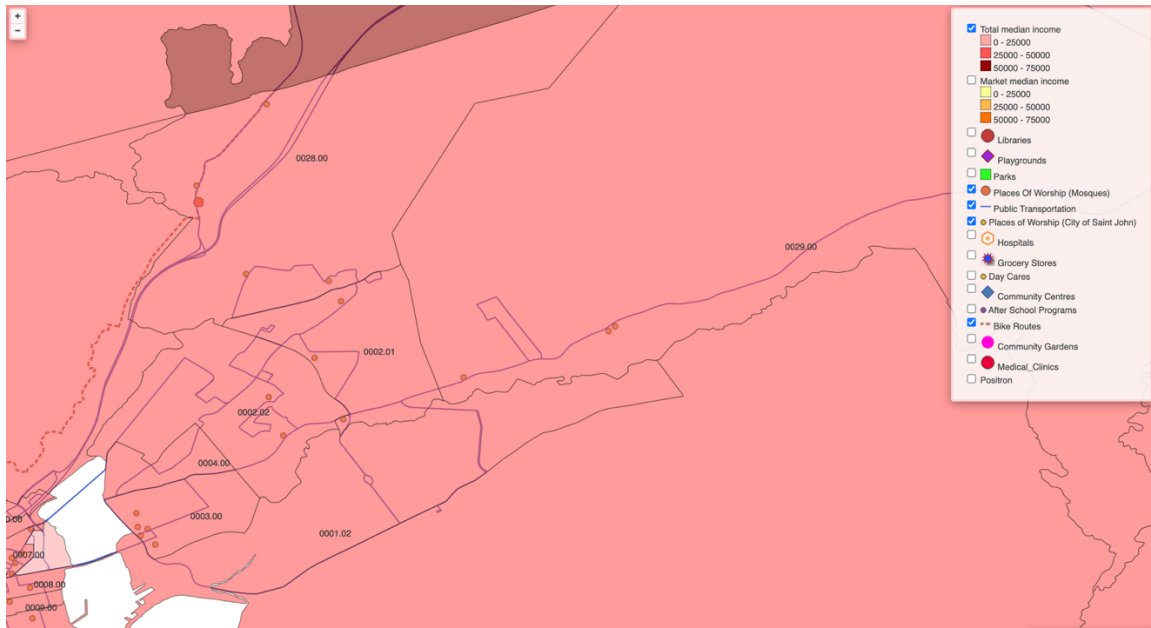


Map 29. Daycares with public transit and bike routes in Saint John Saint John

In terms of places of worship, the map shows some accessibility through public transit and bike routes to places of worship.



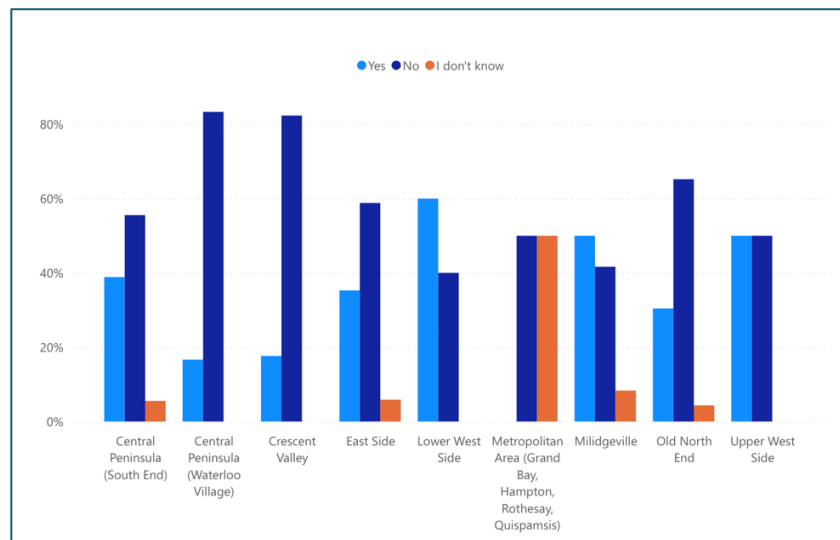
Map 30. Places of Worship with public transit and bike routes in the West Side, North End, Crescent Valley, Millidgeville, and Central Peninsula



Map 31. Places of Worship with public transit and bike routes in East Side.

While the map shows that there are bus routes covering these spaces, there is the issue of frequency, scheduling and bus stops. For instance, the access for university students to place of worship is limited because of the lack of frequency of buses during the weekends when spiritual gatherings happen. Also, some routes do not operate on the weekends. While the NB Muslim Association Mosque is on the route of the KV Comex, there is no bus stop for that Mosque leaving in that sense people attending those places of worship must rely on taxis, family or friends, or personal vehicles to access those spaces.

Most people reported that they did not find difficulty moving through the city particularly in Crescent Valley, North End and Central Peninsula (Graph 29). It is worth noting that access to services and businesses and several public transits stops are located mostly in mixed-use areas mentioned above. The areas where the people finding moving through the city difficult exceed those that did not agree with this statement were in the West Side and Millidgeville. This perhaps is connected to the lack of mixed-use zoning and lack of frequency and number of bus routes, particularly on the weekends.



Graph 28. Difficulty moving through the city by neighborhood

In participatory mapping, we asked participants to discuss and identify their neighborhood's assets, problems and vision through participatory mapping. First, the assets most participants identified included safety, friendly neighborhood/ community, and quiet neighborhoods surrounded by nature. Additionally, neighborhood residents enjoyed the proximity to amenities. Second, the problems that participants identified in their neighbourhoods included a lack of access to public transportation, long distances to essential services and resources such as healthcare, childcare, and religious services, the inability to access affordable food and housing, a lack of cleanliness, poor air quality, and experiences of language barriers when trying to navigate the city. Third, participants identified the vision for what they want to see in their neighborhoods. Participants expressed that they would like better access to public greenspaces, active and public transportation, and other essential services and resources such as healthcare, grocery stores, religious centers and community centers for recreational activities. Additionally, accessibility within the city was considered as a central concern, especially for the aging population, individuals with disabilities, and children. Participants also envisioned better access to suitable and affordable housing and job opportunities. There are also differences in terms of neighborhoods (See table below).

Neighborhood	Problems	Assets	Vision
Central Peninsula	Lack of public transit, problematic drug use, lack of safety and air quality, inadequate and unaffordable housing, lack of stores with needed items and/or stores closing too early, and no presence of people in the evenings	Events, restaurants access to bus stops, Harbour passage and ability to walk to stores as well as friendly neighbors	Health care facility available during the day and night, a supermarket opened all day long, affordable recreational spaces in the winter, parks with several uses, more frequent public transit with more routes and a movie theater.
North End (including Mount Pleasant)	Garbage, unfriendly neighbors, lack of a nearby playground and culturally appropriate food, no public transit on the weekends. Social barriers for teenagers, expensive food, lack of transit frequency, lack of access to Muslim religious services, lack of access to language training, inadequate and unaffordable housing.	Proximity to uptown, school, and green space. Access to grocery store, services, small city size, proximity to ocean, good neighbors.	Community centre, cleaner streets, more public health services and a wheel-chair friendly city. Religious access, halal restaurants, more medical services, affordable housing, bike paths outdoor activities for teenagers all year long
Millidgeville	Adequate, affordable housing	Friendliness, proximity to bus stop	Areas for cooking.
Upper and Lower West side	Unemployment, difficulty moving through the city without a car, parking	Quiet neighborhood	Access postsecondary education, proximity to playground.
East side	Lack of health care, no services/activities for children all year long, fumes from cannabis, flooding.	Safety, access to commercial areas by car, nature.	Health services, bike routes, more playgrounds, activities for children in the winter.
Rothsay/Quispamsis	Access to public transit	Friendliness	Part-time jobs on weekends in the vicinity.

Participatory mapping shows how the place of work and residence of participant were far from each other, with some exceptions in the Central Peninsula. This is similar in the case of access of postsecondary education, except for international students already living in university residence. This implies that more supports need to be in place for public and active transportation as international

immigrants in their recent arrival to Saint John might face barriers moving through the city as discussed in the transportation section.

For access to interactive map, follow [this link](#).

The following paintings also illustrates some of the ambivalent feelings regarding urban services. While the participants appreciate access to nature in the city, they were also dissatisfied with municipal garbage collection and the cleanliness of their neighborhood.



Photo 11. Untitled, by Hasraa (2023)



Photo 12. Untitled, by Saeed (2023)

The research results of this section reflect existing findings of the general literature, which highlights the importance of zoning, municipal services and the level of the neighborhood as a central part of settlement and integration. In the same way, the literature focused on the Saint John CMA coincides with the research participants' concerns regarding availability of active and public transportation (frequency, affordability, access) as well as access to daycare and afterschool care access. The general and the local literature recognize the need for all year-round public spaces that allow people to adapt to the weather conditions while enjoying recreational activities, particularly for youth. This section contributes to the existing analyses of the region by emphasising not only on the existence of active and public transportation services but also their infrastructures (sidewalks, shelters, bus stop locations) and their connections to places of worship, schools, daycares and afterschool care and stores with healthy, nutritious and culturally appropriate food. Such approach, along with zoning practices, can assist in diminishing greenhouse emissions to offset some of the current environmental effects of the local industry on people's health.

3.6 Coordination and Collaboration Among Community Organizations and Different Levels of Government Working Toward Welcoming Communities

The WCI framework places an emphasis on this indicator in relation to information exchange, coordination and level of integration of various actors involved in immigrant issues across different sectors, levels of government and community organizations. It also focuses on avoiding duplicated efforts and minimizing competition for funding and resources and includes ways to assess the level of coordination and collaboration, such as referral rates, service duplication, and the availability of consultation mechanisms. This is insightful and has been done through asset mapping in previous reports focusing on the Saint John CMA (see literature review). We seek to complement existing research by looking at jurisdictions as sources of funding and the resulting challenges in terms of planning and collaboration (see Figure 7). It is also worth noting that the literature on the Saint John CMA and the WCI framework highlights negative implications of duplication and fragmented services. Yet, we noticed that duplication of services might not be entirely negative as they can create more accessible and diverse support networks for international immigrants, ensuring they have multiple avenues for assistance that best suit their individual circumstances. While duplication of support services for immigrants can create challenges, it can also promote access from a client-centered perspective.

As mentioned, this section focuses on levels of government funding rather than existing programs and collaborations between ISOs and provincial and federal departments. This has implications on duplicated and/or fragmented programming by ISOs and the difficulties of municipalities to cope with increasing demand of services. In relation to the federal jurisdiction, the settlement program under IRCC fund services to assist immigrant and refugees such as information and referrals, language training, and assistance in finding employment. Funding is provided to immigration service organizations (ISOs) across Canada (except Quebec) through a National Call for Proposals (CFP) process. The program also supports Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) and Zonal Immigration Partnerships (ZIPs) to foster welcoming and inclusive communities. Additionally, the Réseaux en immigration francophones (RIF) are funded to support the integration of French-speaking newcomers in Francophone minority communities. The program is ongoing, and funds are appropriated annually.

The federal resettlement assistance program (RAP) provides direct financial support and funds the provision of immediate and essential services to government-assisted refugees (GARs) and other eligible recipients (outside of Quebec). This includes services at the port of entry, temporary accommodation, and help finding permanent housing, as well as life skills training and links to essential federal and provincial programs. The RAP also supports certain activities in Canada related to the private sponsorship of refugees. In addition, essential services are supported through contributions to service provider organizations. The federal Interim Housing Assistance Program (IHAP) provides funding to provinces and, where necessary, municipal governments, to address extraordinary interim housing needs resulting from increased asylum seeker arrivals. The Francophone Immigration Support Program (FISP) aims to better integrate the Francophone perspective into the immigration process outside of Quebec through grants and contributions in three areas: collaborative selection projects, promotion of Francophone minority communities abroad, and case studies, innovations, and applied research.

Provinces also financially support employment-related activities and participate, to a lesser extent than the federal government, in funding ISOs. This also depends on provinces' bilateral immigration agreements with the federal government. In New Brunswick, the Immigrant Settlement Support Funding Program funds non-profit organizations to assist with the settlement, integration and retention of newcomers in New Brunswick's communities; facilitate the integration of newcomers into the local labour force; and/or promote and encourage understanding of the benefits of newcomers to New Brunswick's economy, and cultural and social lives. It is divided into two categories: 1) community capacity settlement funding increase and enhance the ISO's capacity to deliver services in their regions and 2) settlement and multiculturalism services funding to assist ISO in carrying out projects or

programs. Also, provinces, through their direct social and infrastructural spending or funding of municipalities, have the capacity to influence integration and settlement, as stated in the literature. This includes health care, social development assistance and education spending.

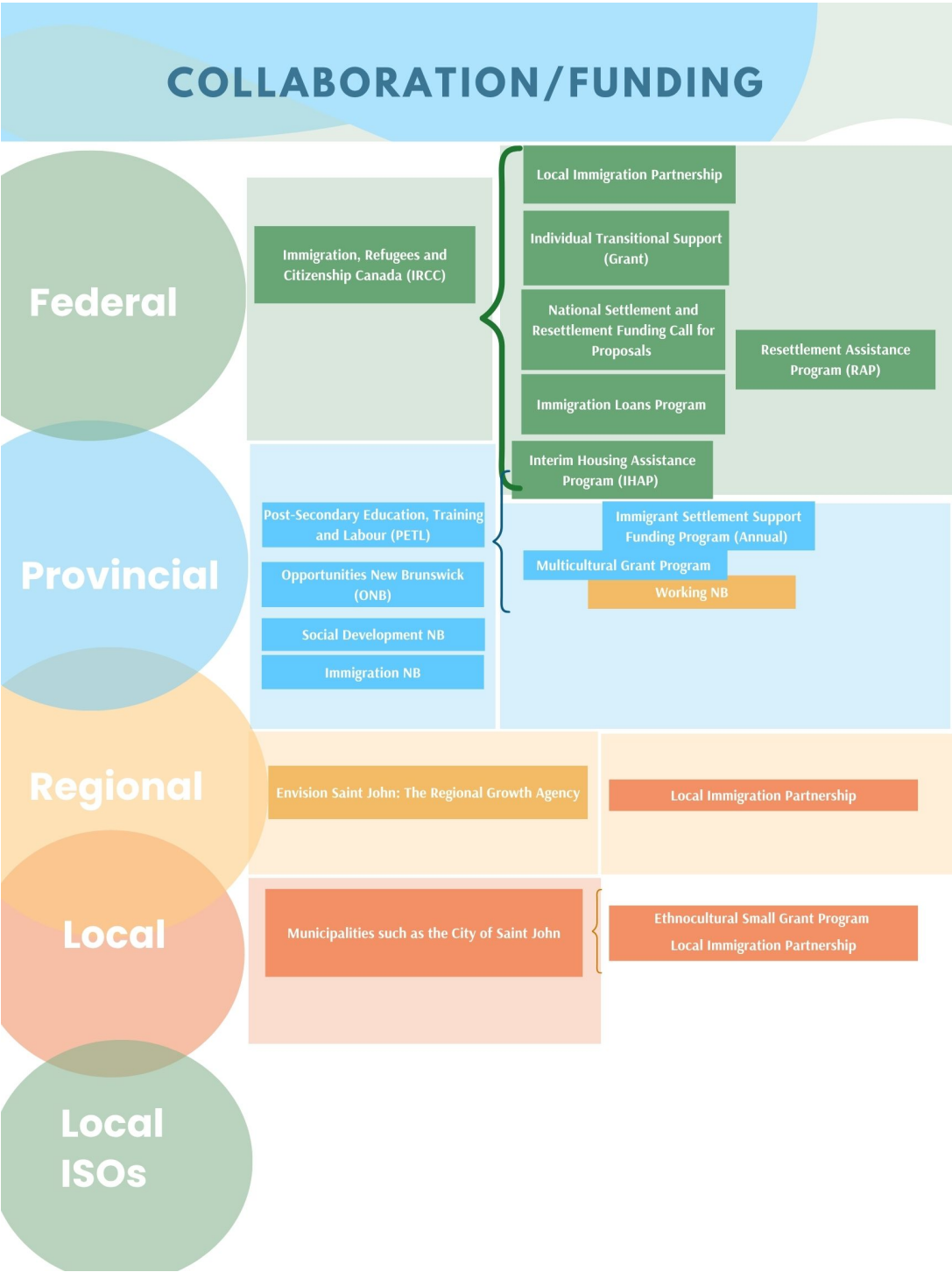


Figure 7. Funding and immigration-related programs across jurisdictions.

Such description pinpoints to the predominant role of the federal government in providing financial resources directly to ISOs and individuals, in the case of GARs. And the bilateral agreements between the federal government and provinces on immigration might include clauses related to federal and provincial financial commitments. Also, federal transfers are distributed to provinces according to a National Settlement Funding Formula, which allocates funding based on a three-year average of immigrant landings per jurisdiction, with additional weight given to refugees. As the literature on multilevel governance emphasises, this federal-provincial arrangements bypasses the municipalities. In the case of New Brunswick, it is unclear whether provincial transfers to municipalities considers increasing needs coming from international immigration. For instance, in the Jupia Consulting study, Saint John's refugee population was above the provincial average. The question is whether this consideration was included in the provincial transfers to Saint John and its surrounding areas.

While local organizations receive funding to assist with settlement and integration, the lack of resources at the municipal level might hinder the efforts of ISOs. For example, many participants in the surveys found that there is a lack of affordable and effective public transit system, making it difficult to reach places of potential employment, recreation and/or language training facilitated by ISOs. Also, income needs to be spent on driving lessons, obtaining a driving license and purchasing a vehicle instead of more urgent needs such as health and food.

As mentioned in the literature, there is the issue of length of funding for ISOs which in average ranges from one year to three years, which make it difficult to give continuity to ISOs programming and increases the burden on ISOs given the amount of work involved in grant application writing. In addition, the mandates in some of these programs might not meet the changing needs of the immigrant population. The painting below demonstrates the essential role that ISOs, in this case the Saint John Newcomers Centre, have in supporting the integration of immigrants into the community as a place to assist with navigation and connect to local services (Photo 13). For that reason, long-term funding mechanisms need to be considered, and the role of municipalities need to be further included in decision-making regarding immigration.



Photo 13. Untitled, by Saraswathi, (2022).

4. Conclusions and recommendations

The painting below echoes some of the messages in informal conversations with research participants, particularly their ambivalent feelings in the process of settling (Photo 14). International immigrants look forward to belonging to the community and value their host city, while at the same time dealing with sense of longing and loss of the community they left. Hence the importance on a focus on welcoming communities' indicators with a critical urban lens.



Photo 14. "My heart in the Middle of Two Beautiful Places" by Susana, (2022).

This report discusses the changing landscapes of international immigrant settlement and integration in Saint John through a combination of literature review, ethnographic work, participatory mapping, art workshops and survey data. By applying the WCI framework and a critical urban studies lens, the research shows both persistent and emerging themes shaping the lived experiences of immigrants in small and mid-sized cities.

Previous reports on the Saint John CMA and this study show ongoing concerns regarding housing affordability and suitability; employment barriers including unemployment, non-recognition of foreign credentials and work experience; access to healthcare that also considers mental health services and culturally competent care; and transportation inequities particularly frequency, affordability and infrastructure.

This study highlight's new themes in the lived experience of immigrants in the Saint John CMA including access to healthcare being hindered by systemic barriers such as transportation; fragmented funding structures that continue to limit the capacity of municipalities and ISOs to respond effectively to local needs; gendered dimensions of integration especially among women with low literacy and/or high levels of caregiving responsibilities; environmental justice concerns regarding exposure to pollution in low-income neighborhoods which intersect with housing and health disparities; and neighborhoods-level disparities in access to services, safety, and infrastructure.

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Ongoing themes (Existing Literature on Immigration and the Saint John CMA)</i>	<i>Emerging Themes (Report)</i>
Housing	Affordability and Availability, other types of housing.	Overcrowding, structural issues, tenant experiences
Transportation	Transit efficiency and affordability	Route gaps, night access, connectivity with other infrastructures, services and job opportunities, gendered impacts. Active transportation.
Employment & Education	Credential recognition, labor mismatch, systemic barriers	Illiteracy, informal work, remittances, gendered access
Healthcare	Access, cultural competency	Local access points, mental health, household disparities
Equitable Neighborhoods	Access to green space	Crime, pollution, food access, participatory mapping, zoning
Collaboration	Focus on duplication of services and lack of information exchange	Focus on funding instability and its effects on ISO capacity, municipal limitations

The following section shows key findings in each section of the report according to the seven WCI indicators.

Housing

- **Affordability and Overcrowding:** A significant number of international immigrants live in overcrowded conditions, especially in priority neighborhoods like Crescent Valley, the Old North End, and the Central Peninsula. Many households include more than four adults and/or five or more children, often sharing limited bedroom space. Over half (51%) of respondents live in market rental housing, while only 32% reside in public or subsidized housing.
- **Rising Rental Costs:** Affordability has become a growing concern. Participants reported involuntary sharing of accommodations due to high costs and low vacancy rates.
- **Structural and Safety Issues/suitability:** Common problems include heating failures, major repairs, pests, ventilation issues, and water damage. Some participants expressed concern about water quality, particularly in Waterloo Village and the Old North End. Many housing units are not suitable for older adults or people with disabilities. Lack of accessible housing is compounded by limited access to family doctors, which are required for housing-related medical documentation.
- **Disparities by Immigration Stream and Racialization:** Refugees and racialized immigrants are more likely to live in low-income, high-density neighborhoods. Participants expressed fear of reporting issues due to concerns about their immigration status or eviction.
- **Policy and Planning Gaps:** Inclusionary zoning intended to promote mixed-income neighborhoods may inadvertently contribute to gentrification.

Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship Opportunities

- **Educational Attainment Gaps/ Continuum of Need:** Many participants only have high school or less, with some—especially women—experiencing illiteracy in both their first language and official languages. Even after obtaining citizenship, many immigrants require interpretation and language support, indicating that integration is an ongoing process.
- **Adult Education Gaps:** There is a lack of accessible, gender-informed adult education and language training programs, especially for those who arrived through the refugee stream. While there are programs for newcomer youth, adult immigrants have fewer educational resources available.
- **Underemployment and Mismatch:** Many immigrants, including those with graduate degrees and professional experience, are underemployed or working in sectors unrelated to their qualifications.
- **Credential Recognition Barriers:** Immigrants face significant challenges in having their foreign credentials and work experience recognized, even in non-regulated professions.
- **Precarious Work:** Casual and part-time employment is common, especially in lower-income neighborhoods like Crescent Valley and the Old North End, making government transfers more central to people's livelihoods.
- **Income Disparities:** Immigrants with higher education earn significantly less than their non-immigrant counterparts with similar qualifications.
- **Remittances and Debt:** Some immigrants receive financial support from family abroad or use personal savings to sustain settlement, highlighting economic insecurity.
- **Low Business Ownership/Small-Scale Operations:** Immigrant-owned businesses are still a minority in New Brunswick, though there has been a slight increase. Most immigrant-owned businesses generate less than \$30,000 annually and are concentrated in low-margin sectors like retail and hospitality. There is a higher rate of self-employment among immigrants.

Access to suitable healthcare

- **Primary Care Gaps/use of emergency room:** Many immigrants, especially in Waterloo Village, South End, and Millidgeville, lack access to a regular family doctor or nurse practitioner. In the Lower West Side, Old North End, and South End, immigrants often rely on emergency services due to lack of walk-in or after-hours clinics. Walk-in clinics are more commonly used in Millidgeville, Upper West Side, and East Side. Online private providers are used in areas with limited physical access to care.
- **Mental Health Needs:** Immigrants from conflict zones and those separated from family experience significant mental health challenges, including trauma, stress, and isolation.
- **Disability and Chronic Conditions:** Immigrants with disabilities or chronic pain face barriers to care, including bullying, lack of accessible housing, and difficulty obtaining medical documents.
- **Household-Level Disparities:** Within families, some members have access to care while others do not, complicating caregiving and access to services.
- **Language Barriers/ Cultural Competency Gaps:** Difficulty communicating symptoms and navigating the healthcare system due to limited English/French proficiency. While some interpretation services exist (e.g., Language Line), their availability outside hospitals is unclear. There is a need for more culturally sensitive care and training for healthcare providers.
- **Distance to Services:** Some neighborhoods (e.g., East Side) are more than 10 km from healthcare facilities, limiting access.
- **Transportation Barriers:** Immigrants often rely on walking or public transit. At night, lack of bus service forces reliance on ambulances or taxis. Transportation costs and lack of infrastructure (e.g., shelters, frequent routes) further hinder access to care.
- **Health Disparities by Neighborhood:** High rates of NCDs (e.g., diabetes, hypertension) are reported in Crescent Valley, East Side, and Lower West Side. Low-income neighborhoods show worse health outcomes, linked to environmental, economic, and social factors. Some immigrants may not report health issues due to lack of diagnosis or fear of stigma.

Access to transportation

- **Need for Public Transit:** Many international immigrants, especially women, rely on public transportation to access work, school, healthcare, and essential services.
- **Neighborhood Variations/Spatial inequalities:** Bus use is highest in Millidgeville, Lower and Upper West Side, East Side, Old North End, and Central Peninsula. Walking is common in the Central Peninsula, Upper West Side, and metropolitan area. Private vehicle use is more prevalent in the East Side, Old North End, Crescent Valley and metropolitan area. Many job opportunities are located in commercial and industrial zones that are not well-served by transit. Transit schedules often do not align with shift work or non-standard hours
- **Cost-Related Barriers:** High costs of vehicle ownership, gas, driver's licenses, and training are major obstacles. These costs disproportionately affect residents in Crescent Valley, East Side, and Central Peninsula.
- **Public Transit Limitations:** Infrequent service, limited routes, and early cut-off times (especially evenings and weekends) hinder mobility. Some areas, like the North End and East Side, lack adequate bus connectivity.
- **Accessibility Issues:** Lack of sheltered bus stops and poor sidewalk conditions, especially in winter, reduce safety and usability. Flex transit helps fill some gaps but needs evaluation for effectiveness and equity.
- **Active Transportation:** Existing bike routes are disconnected and often unsafe, requiring riders to navigate through heavy traffic. Investment in continuous, safe bike infrastructure could support cost-effective mobility and health. Poor sidewalk maintenance, especially in winter, limits safe walking access to services.

Equitable Neighbourhoods

- **Safety and Crime:** Immigrants often live, work, or study in neighborhoods with high rates of assault, robbery, and homicide—especially the Central Peninsula, North End, Crescent Valley, Lower West Side, and university areas. The report cautions against associating immigrants with crime, noting that these areas are often chosen due to affordability or availability of housing.
- **Environmental Justice:** The East and West Sides of Saint John show elevated levels of sulfur dioxide and fine particulate matter, nearing or exceeding recommended limits. Some neighborhoods exceed safe benzene levels, a known carcinogen. These pollution levels overlap with low-income areas, raising concerns about health equity.
- **Food Disparities:** Higher-income neighborhoods (e.g., Millidgeville, Upper West Side) have better access to affordable, healthy food. In areas like Crescent Valley and the Old North End, residents face affordability issues and limited access to nutritious food, often relying on convenience stores.
- **Greenspace and Public Facilities:** While many neighborhoods have access to parks and community gardens, winter conditions and poor sidewalk maintenance limit use. Women in the East Side, South End, and Old North End report feeling unsafe walking or biking to green spaces. There are few indoor recreational spaces for families, especially in winter. Only five libraries in the Saint John CMA and limited community centers exist, many lacking space or funding to serve immigrant communities.
- **Daycare and Afterschool:** Low-income neighborhoods lack accessible daycare and afterschool programs, especially those reachable by public transit.
- **Places of Worship and Mobility:** While many places of worship are on bus routes, weekend service is limited or nonexistent, making access difficult. Some neighborhoods, especially the West Side and Millidgeville, report difficulty moving through the city due to limited transit and zoning.

Coordination and Collaboration Among Community Organizations and Different Levels of Government Working Toward Welcoming Communities

- **Fragmented Services/Funding Complexity:** The report highlights that while service duplication is often seen as inefficient, in practice, it can enhance accessibility for immigrants by offering multiple entry points of support. Coordination is hindered by fragmented and conditional funding streams from federal and provincial governments, which often do not align with local needs or allow for flexibility. Most ISO funding is short-term (1–3 years), limiting long-term planning and program continuity. Funding might exclude critical services like interpretation in healthcare or legal settings, forcing ISO staff to work unpaid overtime.
- **Lack of Formal Role/ Underfunded Responsibilities of Municipalities:** Municipalities like Saint John are not formally included in immigration policy design or funding decisions, despite being central to service delivery. Municipalities face increasing demands (e.g., transit, housing, recreation) without corresponding increases in funding or authority.
- **Mismatch with Local Realities:** Federal and provincial funding formulas (e.g., based on immigrant landings) may not reflect the actual service needs in cities like Saint John.

Based on these key findings, the report presents the following recommendations.

General

- Explore best practices included in the Welcoming Communities Toolkit (2024) and adaptations and applications in the Saint John CMA
- Evaluate what policies and actions have been taken at different levels of government towards addressing ongoing themes
- Further expand collaboration with UNB Saint John through a Canada Research Chair on Immigration and expansion of the Promise Partnership with a focus on adult education with a gender lens.
- Integrate priority neighborhoods' community centres and faith-based organizations into communications, programming and policies related to local integration and settlement as they contribute to this and/or have existing programming and infrastructure to collaborate with ISOs and local government (Appendix 2).
- Create educational material about inclusive cities for international immigrants and locals. In both cases, the normalization of car-dependent communities and urban design based on suburbanization, socio-economic rural-urban and intra urban segregation and high-speed roads might not allow residents of the city and its CMA to value infrastructural developments and regulations related to socially inclusive and sustainable cities.

1. Data & Planning

- a. Create a system of data collection in collaboration with Envision Saint John, ISOs, the municipalities of the Saint John CMA, the Government of New Brunswick and DataNB to have prompt and available data to inform programming and policy and services related to international immigration.
- b. Enquire into how/if the number of people arriving to the Saint John CMA through the refugee migration refugee stream was accounted into the distribution of resources to cities by the province (with resources from federal government).
- c. Explore funding mechanisms for ISOs and municipalities that focus on long-term planning and flexibility to allow organizations to adapt to different immigration settlement and integration scenarios.
- d. Increase the formal role of the municipalities in the Saint John CMA in immigration strategy with federal and provincial government (see examples of Annex and MOU in Ontario).

- e. Ensure that zoning by-laws have an equity approach and municipal plans such as MoveSJ and PlaySJ includes an immigration and equity approach (see examples in Toronto's Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy and Superkilen Park in Copenhagen, Denmark).
- f. Increase the number of public facilities for family and youth activities during the winter, including mobile libraries in areas far away from existing public libraries.
- g. Supports to small immigrant business in the same way as Back Streets initiative in Boston, Massachusetts which assists small business owners navigate city services and access training programs and helps with real estate and financing.

2. Housing & Development

- a. Explore whether municipalities of the Saint John CMA can access the federal interim housing assistance program.
- b. Implement local initiatives, like the CCI Ottawa's Welcome House, that assists international immigrants in navigating the local housing market, including assisting with apartment viewings, landlord negotiations, and arranging utility services.
- c. Develop information material for municipal and provincial services in the main languages that immigrants speak particularly in voice or video format including information related to tenants' rights.
- d. Review existing municipal bylaws to explore the adoption of inclusionary zoning that would require a minimum percentage of affordable housing units.

3. Language Training & Credential Recognition

- a. Revisit recent cuts in language training programs for immigrants as both language training and adult education opportunities are key for international immigrants' settlement and integration even after obtaining citizenship.
- b. Develop adult education programs for immigrants that did not attend elementary or secondary school in their country of origin. A and B are also important to diminish the load on the children who take on the role of translators and cultural brokers between their adult family and the host community.
- c. Explore policy innovations related to foreign credential recognition such as the BC Office for International Credential Recognition and the Nova Scotia International Medical Graduate in the healthcare sector.
- d. Research how Prior Learning and Recognition (PLAR) coordinated by Campus NB can help international immigrants further advance into post-secondary education.
- e. Include gender-informed initiatives that foster the participation of both young and adult women in education, for instance child-care supports while enrolling in education programs.

4. Access to Physical & Mental Health Services

- a. Access to culturally competent health services that address the specific needs of refugees and immigrants such as language barriers, trauma, and diverse health concerns. Such as programs like Refugee-Health in Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario and the Refugee Engagement and Community Health (REACH) Clinic in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.
- b. Develop audio and visual guides to explain how to navigate the health system and explain symptoms within an intercultural communication framework, ensuring accessibility in the main languages of international immigrants.

- c. Expand the Language Line Solutions, provided at the Saint John Regional, to local community health centers and clinics.
- d. Access to mental health services that specialize in managing care for those immigrating from places of violence and conflict.
- e. Include cultural competency training in the health sector that considers familiarity with accents.

5. Public and Active Transportation

- a. Expand public transportation routes to improve access to underserved areas, including the West Side, Millidgeville, East Side, and Old North End.
- b. Extend public transportation hours and increase frequency, particularly during evenings and weekends, to align with local employment hours, including shift work and cultural and spiritual activities.
- c. Expand the number of shelters in stops.
- d. Install in each bus stop a map and schedule of the route.
- e. Explore program implementation related to affordable and accessible public transportation such as the Displaced Persons and Refugee Transit Program in Ottawa-Carleton, Ontario and the Affordable Transit Program in Peel, Ontario.
- f. Develop publicly available transit guides in video and audio format to explain bus routes and maps, fares, and transfers such as the How to Ride Transit (Multilingual Guides & Videos) in Halifax, Nova Scotia.
- g. Review existing cycling infrastructure to identify safety concerns and connectivity gaps, especially in high-traffic areas, and implement protected bike lanes and safety enhancements to support active transportation such as the one in Main Street in different parts of the Saint John CMA.
- h. Prioritize routes that link residential areas with schools, employment areas, and commercial spaces to improve accessibility and encourage active transportation all year round.
- i. Explore policy changes that recognize prior driving experience of international immigrants to help them attain more easily a Class 5 driver's license such as the Licensed Driver Education Course in Prince Edward Island.
- j. Explore the development of a free driver training program to support international immigrants in attaining their driver's license, modeled after initiatives like Ontario's G1 Licence Study Support for Newcomers.

The report's surveys are not statistically representative of the immigrant population in the Saint John CMA, including its distribution across neighborhoods. And more work needs to be done on the 17 indicators of the WCI framework, including work on quantitative data (appendix 1). Also, research is required for understanding the challenges of younger populations and older adults in immigrant communities. Yet, the report's diverse methods and its WCI framework provides a place-based lens to understand spatial and temporal dimensions of the local immigration experience in Saint John and some parts of its CMA. A critical urban studies perspective with a focus on neighborhoods allows us to understand the international immigrant community in the Saint John as a heterogenous group rather than a homogenous unit, whose everyday experiences are shaped by racialization, income, education, gender and the conditions of their country of origin. This allows us to examine broader factors affecting integration and welcoming communities as reciprocal process between immigrants and their host cities.

Appendix 1. Further study on WCI and the Greater Saint John

The study commissioned by Envision Saint John "Diverse Cities: Urban Experiences and International Migration in Saint John, NB," part of a larger project on Urban Inequalities and International Migration funded by Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, aimed at analyzing several aspects of the immigration experience in the Greater Saint John area through the lens of the Welcoming Community Initiative (WCI) Framework. Yet, the study of each indicator and subset of variables entails further exploration that requires a larger research team, set of supports and time. This appendix includes the indicators and subset variables that were not examined and points to possible venues, researchers and existing and potential research that can study the aspects of the WCI framework left unanalyzed. Also, it is worth noting that some of these variables can be addressed through roundtables with policymakers. This document is divided in two. In the first part, it addresses the indicators that were included in the report as well as the subset variables that were not examined. In the second part, it points to the indicators that were not included in the report and a general summary of the subset indicators.

Indicators included in report and variables that need further exploration

Access to Affordable, Adequate, and Suitable Housing

Variables for further study	Possible sources of information and analysis
Availability of subsidized, non-profit, and co-op housing; evidence of housing stability; rate of homeownership; rate of unsheltered homelessness/unhoused; rate of "hidden homelessness" (e.g., involuntary "doubling-up," couch surfing, sharing accommodations)	While some general information exists in Statistics Canada and CMHC public database, the data is not disaggregated by immigration status. Information from previous years was also provided by 2021 <i>The City of Saint John Newcomer Housing Study</i> . Yet, updated information is required and more specific statistical data requested to statistics Canada and CMHC. Collaboration can also be requested from the HOME-RL centre at UNB Saint John.
Level of knowledge about the housing market and how to obtain housing in Canada; level of knowledge of rights and responsibilities as tenants and homeowners; level of satisfaction with information for immigrants about housing markets in Canada and tenants' rights and responsibilities, and one's current housing situation.	This information can be collected through periodic surveys in immigrant settlement organizations (ISOs) and data requested from nonprofit organizations managing shelters and working on housing issues such as Outflow and Saint John Human Development Council.

Employment and Entrepreneurship Opportunities

Variables for further study	Possible sources of information and analysis
• Availability of reliable information in both official languages and other top languages of new arrivals about workers' rights in Canada and reliable information in both official languages and other top languages of new arrivals about supports and services available for immigrant employment and entrepreneurship.	Request this information to Opportunities NB and Working NB.
• Level of knowledge of workers' rights in Canada, supports and services available for immigrant employment and entrepreneurship and satisfaction with availability and quality of entrepreneurship opportunities in the community information for immigrants about workers' rights in Canada and about supports and services for immigrant employment and entrepreneurship	Surveys through ISOs.

Access to Suitable Health Care, Including Mental Health Care

Variables for further study	Possible sources of information and analysis
Availability of (mental) health care services in both official languages and other top languages of new arrivals, and interpretation and translation services and reliable information in both official languages and other top languages of new arrivals about how to access (mental) health care services in the community, availability and accessibility of specialized services to meet the (mental) health care needs of multi-barriered groups, reliable information in both official languages and other top languages of new arrivals about how to access specialized (mental) health care services for multi-barriered groups in the community; rate of coverage for prescription drugs, paramedical specialists (e.g., physiotherapy, counselling), medical devices, and dental and vision care	Request information from Horizon.
Level of knowledge about (mental) health care services in the community and how to access; health care providers' level of awareness and understanding of mental health symptoms among immigrants; level of satisfaction with the approachability of the health care system and health care providers, the quality of health care services provided, interpersonal quality of care, the delivery and quality of specialized services in meeting the (mental) health care needs of multi-barriered groups, information for immigrants about how to access (mental) health care services in the community.	Propose a research project to Faculty of Nursing, UNB' School of Health; the Patient-Centred Care Centre at UNB campus Saint John and Dalhousie Medical School campus Saint John to conduct interviews with practitioners and clients on these issues.

Access to Transportation

Variables for further study	Possible sources of information and analysis
Delivery and quality of accessible transit services for immigrants with disabilities, interpersonal treatment from transit operators and staff and from other passengers when using public transit (e.g., courtesy and respect, patience with language/communication barriers if seeking assistance, experiences of interpersonal discrimination)	Request this information to Saint John Transit and propose that some of these indicators become part of their internal reviews.

Educational opportunities

Variables that need further study	Possible sources of information and analysis
Availability of educational opportunities for adults (e.g., language, computer, job skills, and workers' rights classes; programs for upgrading education levels; post-secondary options), offered in both official languages.	While the report covers some aspects of it, further information can be requested to ISOs, community centres, public library branches and faith-based organizations.
Availability of reliable information in both official languages and other top languages of new arrivals about educational pathways for adults (e.g., credential recognition/equivalency certificates,	This could be done by requesting PETL Ministry to provide this information in a policy roundtable.

educational opportunities for upgrading and (re)training, post-secondary programs); availability of reliable information in both official languages and other top languages of new arrivals about educational opportunities in the community; availability of educational supports and programs for multi-barriered adults; rate of enrollment, attendance and completion of educational programs	
Level of knowledge of educational pathways and of educational opportunities in the community and how to access them for adults; availability of supports that improve access to educational opportunities for adults (e.g., childcare, transportation, loans and scholarships, flexible delivery options and timing, help accessing international credential and degree recognition)	Surveys in ISOs
Evidence of effectiveness of educational programs in achieving curriculum objectives for adults; level of satisfaction with educational programs in achieving curriculum objectives, information about educational pathways and about educational opportunities in the community, the availability and quality of supports that facilitate enrollment in and improve access to educational opportunities, the availability and quality of supports and programs for multi-barriered groups	Surveys in collaboration with NBCC and UNB Saint John
Children/Youth Rate of school attendance and secondary school completion; availability of schools for French speakers in local community, settlement Workers in Schools, trained translators and interpreters in schools to bridge communication, comprehensive and well-supported English-Language Learner programs and French-Language Learner programs in schools, educational supports and programs for immigrant children and youth with disabilities, educational supports and programs for refugee children and youth, breakfast/lunch programs in schools and outerwear programs in schools, reliable information for parents/caregivers in both official languages and other top languages of new arrivals about the local school system(s); level of parental/caregiver engagement and awareness of children's educational and social opportunities and experiences and academic achievement and classroom engagement; evidence of effectiveness of educational supports, resources, and opportunities in schools to support student learning; evidence of social inclusion through participation in extra-curricular activities, sense of safety in school settings, social exclusion through discrimination, racism, bullying, conflicts, and violence in school settings, equitable, inclusive, and culturally responsive school leadership, curriculum, and pedagogy, equitable and inclusive school environments, intercultural competency among teachers and staff	Consultations with Southwest Anglophone district

Level of satisfaction with information about the local school system(s), delivery and quality of educational programs, availability and quality of educational supports, resources, and opportunities in schools to support student learning, availability and quality of supports and programs for immigrant children and youth with disabilities, and quality of supports and programs for refugee children and youth, responses to and condemnation of incidents of discrimination, racism, bullying, and violence in school settings, intercultural competence among teachers and staff	Surveys in ISOs and community centres and faith-based organizations.
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Coordination and Collaboration Among Community Organizations and Different Levels of Government Working Toward Welcoming Communities

Variables for further study	Possible sources of information and analysis
Rate of referrals among organizations serving immigrants within a community; rate of participation and representation of organizations serving immigrants in consultation and collaborative decision-making initiatives at the local, regional, provincial, and national levels; evidence of effectiveness of coordinated collaborative initiatives; level of satisfaction with the rate of referrals among organizations serving immigrants, mechanisms for consultation and collaboration, participation and representation in consultations and collaborations, coordination and collaboration initiatives	This information can be collected through the Saint John LIP

Indicators not included

Ongoing Commitment to Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression

Variables for study	Possible sources of information and analysis
Evidence of communities' involvement in identifying and addressing systemic racism and oppression and assessment of the effectiveness of this community-driven approach; public commitment and transparency and ongoing public declarations and actions against racism and oppression; monitoring and reporting of measurable outcomes; public education and awareness; initiatives to celebrate and raise awareness of diverse racial, cultural, and religious traditions, especially among immigrants, programs to build solidarity across diverse communities and evaluation of the impact of these initiatives; accessible systems for reporting racism and intersecting discrimination, data on reporting rates, responses and condemnations from municipal and community leaders, effectiveness of these responses; availability and accessibility of anti-racism and anti-oppression policies, training, and resources across public service institutions, employers and employees, local media, general public and effectiveness of these programs; and community satisfaction indicators.	This study will be extensive and require an analysis of the grey literature in New Brunswick and official documents to discuss current views, policies and programs at the provincial and local level by government and nonprofit organizations. This will also require a study of community involvement in decision making and the elaboration of assessment tools that local and provincial government agencies and nonprofits can implement periodically in their organizations and then provide this information to a third-party for analysis.

Positive Attitudes Toward Immigrants of All Racial, Cultural, and Religious Backgrounds

Variables for study	Possible sources of information and analysis
Positive attitudes toward immigration and racial, cultural, and religious diversity; positive perceptions of immigrants from all backgrounds and their intersections; rate of hate crimes targeting immigrants and rate of discrimination against immigrants; evidence of social cohesion between immigrants and non-immigrants; efforts by mainstream organizations to be inclusive and accommodating and support from community leaders across sectors for immigrant concerns; satisfaction levels with respect and value shown to immigrants by the community, inclusivity efforts by organizations and institutions and support from community leaders for immigrant interests.	Surveys and focus groups can be developed to assess attitudes towards immigrants as well as connections between immigrant and non-immigrant communities, information from research on access to immigrant-serving agencies and municipal services can be used to evaluate institutional inclusivity, and information regarding hate crimes and discrimination can be accessed through the police data, and data from schools as well as interviews, surveys and ethnographic work.

Access to Immigrant-Serving Agencies that Meet Immigrants' Needs

Variables for study	Possible sources of information and analysis
Reliable multilingual information about agencies, their services, and how to access them, immigrants' knowledge of available services and how to use them, agencies' success in meeting immigrants' needs, equitable and culturally responsive services, evidence of intercultural competency among agency staff, availability and effectiveness of services for multi-barriered group, availability of supports like childcare, transportation, translation, interpretation, and flexible service options and satisfaction levels with quality and delivery of general and specialized services and interpersonal treatment by staff.	Municipalities and ISOs as well as non-profits can develop assessment tools to periodically evaluate these indicators.

Access to Services and Supports for French-Speaking Immigrants by French Speakers

Variables for study	Possible sources of information and analysis
Presence of French immigrant-serving agencies offering diverse services both in-person and online, and reliable information about these agencies, immigrants' knowledge of available French-language services and agencies, agencies' success in meeting the needs of French-speaking immigrants, availability and effectiveness of services for multi-barriered groups and facilitate service use, perceptions of formal and informal connections among recent, established, and non-immigrant French-speaking communities and satisfaction levels with quality and delivery of general and specialized services, interpersonal treatment by agency staff.	This information could be requested from Centre d'accueil et d'accompagnement francophone des immigrants du Sud-Est du Nouveau-Brunswick (CAFI) and Association Régionale de la Communauté francophone (ARCf) de Saint-Jean.

Immigrant-Responsive Municipal Features and Services

Variables for study	Possible sources of information and analysis
Presence of immigrant-sensitive services, both in-person and online, including multilingual and accessible formats, reliable information about municipal services in official and top newcomer languages, existence of policies, programs, and services tailored to diverse immigrant needs, including French-speaking immigrants, immigrants' knowledge of and engagement with municipal services, service Effectiveness to support settlement and integration, intercultural competence of municipal staff, municipal promotion of immigrants' contributions and evidence of its impact and immigrants satisfaction levels with interpersonal treatment and quality and delivery of services.	These indicators can become part of the internal assessment of the municipalities of the Greater Saint John.

Opportunities to Form and Join Social and Community Networks

Variables for study	Possible sources of information and analysis
Immigrants' involvement in neighborhood activities, local events, online community groups, and culturally specific gatherings, intercultural understanding, perceived connections among recent immigrants, established immigrants, and non-immigrants, with attention to French-speaking communities, indicators of loneliness or exclusion among immigrants, immigrants' satisfaction with availability and quality of community activities and networks and intercultural understanding and social connections.	Some of this research has been addressed in the 2020 report <i>Succeed and Stay: Understanding the Experiences and Perspectives of Greater Saint John's Immigrant Population: From Settlement to Retention</i> and 2020 <i>Succeed and Stay: In-Depth Immigrant Interviews Analysis</i>

Access to Inclusive Public Spaces, Facilities, and Programs

Variables for study	Possible sources of information and analysis
Assessment of inclusive access to programs and public spaces by studying usage rate, information availability in multilingual form, community awareness about programs and spaces, immigrants' feelings of inclusion in public spaces and programs, staff intercultural competence, immigrants' satisfaction with the quality, accessibility, and interpersonal treatment in public spaces and programs.	Ethnography of public spaces and programs can be carried out through experiential learning in the course POLS 3632 Politics and the City at UNB Saint John with the guidance of the municipalities of the Greater Saint John. Levels of satisfaction with public space inclusivity and staff's intercultural awareness can be internally assessed by ISOs, nonprofits and municipalities.

Immigrant-responsive Police and Justice System

Variables for study	Possible sources of information and analysis
Police indicators: Availability of multilingual, reliable information about police services and how to access them, immigrants' perception and understanding of police, quality and responsiveness of police services across neighborhoods and immigrant groups, availability of interpreters and translation to facilitate access, officers' confidence in serving immigrant communities and immigrants' involvement in police work, delivery of culturally responsive services and absence/presence of racism or discrimination and immigrants' satisfaction with police services. Justice system: Multilingual information about the justice system and how to navigate it; immigrants' knowledge of Canadian law, rights, and responsibilities; trust in the justice system and perceptions of fairness; cultural responsiveness, affordability, and equity in legal services; immigrant involvement in legal professions and availability of support services, evidence of discrimination or racism within the justice system; Immigrants' satisfaction with legal services, support, information, and interpersonal treatment.	Some of this work has been carried out by the Saint John Newcomers Centre through their Legal Rights project funded by Justice Canada and the report on anti-racism commissioned to the SJNC by the KV police and Elizabeth Fry Society.

Positive Indigenous-Immigrant Relations and Understanding

Variables for study	Possible sources of information and analysis
Presence of positive relationships and perceptions between immigrants and Indigenous peoples, frequency and severity of discriminatory incidents or conflicts between the two groups, access to accurate, multilingual information for immigrants about Indigenous peoples' history, cultures, and rights, immigrants' understanding of and respect for Indigenous peoples' heritage and contributions, existence of safe, inclusive spaces (e.g., workshops, meetings) for dialogue and collaboration, Indigenous peoples' participation in welcoming and integrating immigrants, feedback from both groups on a) quality of information provided to immigrants, b) effectiveness of intercultural spaces, c) Indigenous involvement with immigrants, d) Immigrants' engagement with Indigenous communities	This will require critical methodologies that respect Indigenous worldviews. Rachel Bryant and Hepzibah Muñoz-Martínez from UNB Saint John and Walastakwew storyteller and educator Gina Brooks from Cariboo Club are currently in conversations to develop treaty education material for newcomers through a SSHRC Partnership Engagement Grant.

Access to Diverse Religious and Ethnocultural Organizations

Variables for study	Possible sources of information and analysis
Availability and accessibility of diverse religious and ethnocultural organizations and amenities, multilingual information about services and how to access them, immigrant knowledge and involvement in these organizations, social connections between immigrants and both co-ethnic/co-religionist communities and non-immigrant members, effectiveness of settlement support and specialized services for multi-barriered groups (e.g., racialized women, youth, 2SLGBTQI+, refugees), satisfaction with services, interpersonal treatment, and leadership inclusivity within these organizations.	While the report "Diverse Cities", included mobility and geographic access to religious organizations in the city of Saint John, it is missing access to other ethnocultural organizations in the city as the latter do not necessarily have a physical location. Rather ethnocultural have events and social media networks such as WhatsApp where information sharing and community building take place. It is also worth noting that faith-based organizations are missing in the studies of the immigration in the Greater Saint John area despite their large contribution to immigration settlement and integration. This will require mapping these organizations and their activities. In the case of multi-barriered groups, ISOs and local government organizations could make internal assessments of how their services address these groups. Likewise, focus-groups and surveys can be carried out to identify level of satisfaction with these services.

Civic and Political Participation Opportunities

Variables for study	Possible sources of information and analysis
Access to reliable information in official and immigrant languages, immigrants' knowledge of participation opportunities, citizenship acquisition rates, participation in political processes and voter registration, representation in government and leadership roles, involvement in community organizations and volunteering, engagement in political activism, equitable and culturally responsive access to participation opportunities, satisfaction with services and opportunities related to citizenship, civic engagement, and representation.	Aspects of these variables have been studied by Professor Joanna Everitt at UNB campus Saint John in her research and Rachael Ahadzi in her recent MA Thesis. Further collaboration on civic engagement and political participation can be sought with the Politics program and Education program at UNB Saint John.

Equitable Media Coverage, Representation, and Content

Variables for study	Possible sources of information and analysis
Availability of media in immigrant languages (beyond official ones), frequency and tone of coverage on immigration and diversity, immigrant participation in media production, absence of bias and negative stereotypes, community satisfaction with media representation of immigrants.	Aspects of these variables have been studied by Professor Joanna Everitt at UNB campus Saint John and Gül Çalışkan's project Promise of Home at Saint Thomas University.

Appendix 2. Community Centres and Faith-Based Organizations' Programs 2025

S.J East Food Bank

Contact: 506 633 8298, sjefb648@gmail.com

Serves food to clients in East SJ. Open Tuesdays and Fridays 12:15pm – 2:45pm.

KV Food Basket

Contact: 506 847 5854, kvfoodbasket@gmail.com

Provides groceries. Every Tuesday from 9:00am – 11:30am.

Rivercross Mission Outreach

Contact: 506 642 8060, rivercrosschurch61@gmail.com

North End Food Bank on Tuesday mornings. Hot brunch Tuesday 10:15am - 11:45am and hot lunch Thursday at 11:45am.

Calvary Temple Church

Contact: 506 634 1688, ctsjmainoffice@gmail.com

Offers KD day every Tuesday from 12:00pm to 1:15pm for high school students uptown.

Romero House

Contact: 506 642 744, romerohouse@rogers.com

Serves meals every day of the year from 9:30am-1:00pm.

St. Vincent Paul

Contact: 506 634-3097 stvp146@gmail.com

Network of food banks, soup kitchens, and second-hand clothing. Open Monday-Friday 9:00am-5:00pm. Food bank open Tuesday & Friday 9:30am-10:45am. Community meal Wednesday, March 26th at 11:30am.

Teen Resource Centre

Contact: 506 638 2372, info@trc4youth.ca

Academic Support: Monday – Thursday, 3:30 – 6PM. Drop-in after school: 3pm to 6:30pm Monday-Thursday, 3pm to 5pm Fridays during school year, 1pm to 5pm during summer.

Hillcrest Baptist Church

Contact: 506 635 8000, office@hillcrestsj.ca

Soul Food ministry provides free lunches Tuesdays and Fridays 11:00am - 12:00pm. Caring Closet open Tuesdays & Fridays 10am - 1pm.

Outflow Training and Employment

Contact: 506 658 8050, info@outflowsj.com

Men Shelter open 24/7, 365 days. Evening meals 5 nights a week.

Saint John Learning Exchange

Contact: 506 648 0202, data@sjle.org

Youth and adult education. Monday – Friday, 8:30AM – 4:30PM.

Teen Resource/Pathways to Education

Contact: 506 632 5765, pathways@trc4youth.ca

Free tutoring, financial support, scholarship, and social support. Monday – Friday, 9:00am – 5:00pm.

Family Resource Centre

Contact: 506 633 2182, silvia.borsic@frc-crfaaintjohn.com

Programs for adults and caregivers with children. Some programs offer child-minding and transportation.

Pregnancy Resource Centre

Contact: 506 634 1867, info@prcsj.ca

Support for pregnancy-related challenges including free tests, classes, support programs, and material aid.

PULSE.INC

Contact: 506 632-6807 info@pulsesj.ca

Parent chat Wednesday 8:15am – 10:00am. Drop-in nurse Thursday 9:00am – 12:00pm. Food club 12:00pm – 4:00pm. Tax support 10:00am – 12:00pm, 1:00pm – 4:00pm. Community cleanups, pantry, summer lunch connections, food purchasing club and community policing.

Carleton Community Centre

Contact: (506) 658-2920 info@carletoncommunitycentre.ca

Programs include volleyball, yoga, pickleball, cheer, basketball, art club, playgroup, zoomers, tax clinic, bike-share, food bank, food purchasing club. Weekly schedule varies by day,

SJ Stone Church

Contact: 506-634-1474, stjstone@nb.aibn.com

Youth Connection Friday 6:00-8:00pm. Men's Breakfast 1st Saturday 8:00am. Drop-In Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 1:00-4:00pm. Free laundry Tuesday-Friday 9:00-11:30am. Foodie Friday 10:30 – 1:00pm; Tuesdays and Thursdays Nurse practitioner 1-4pm, free haircuts every other Thursday 1pm.

Crescent Valley Resource Centre

Contact: 506 693-8513 crescentvalleyresourcecentre@gmail.com

Open Monday – Friday, 9:00am-4:30pm. Breakfast Wednesday & Friday 9:00am -10:00am. Playgroup Tuesday 10:00am - 12pm. Clothing Room Monday, Wednesday, Friday 1pm - 3pm. Nurse practitioner Tuesday 1:00-3:00 pm. Other services include food, diapers, resume help, tutoring, crafts, emotional support, nurse clinic, food purchasing club.

One Change Inc

Contact: (506) 658-2980 info@onechange.ca

Thursday: Youth Tech 3:00pm – 4:00pm, Cheer (6-10yo) 4:15pm – 5:30pm, Cheer (10+) 5:45pm – 7:15pm.
Tuesday: Disc Golf 3:00pm – 4:00pm, Dramatic Arts 4:30pm – 5:30pm, Crochet Club 5:30pm – 6:15pm, Teen Tech 6:15pm – 7:15pm. Food purchasing club and community policing.

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