Regina Open Door Society Inc.

Executive Directors Report

April 2025

Update on IRCC/Provincial Funding/Federal

- All of the RODS contracts with IRCC have been signed, with negotiations underway to reinstate the RAP funds for the Housing Coordinator Position. The reduction in the RAP staffing has been felt immediately, with challenges with staffing after hours arrivals and focused efforts on housing.
- Agencies in Regina are now able to share their contract assignments and service levels with other partner agencies in the Regina area. Partner agencies have been impacted, with reductions in services and staffing. Of note, Rooted Connections no longer offers IRCC funded employment programming, that has shifted to RIWC. RIWC no longer provides case management, RODS has an expanded role there, and Rooted Connections maintains their previous role. Immigrant Women of Saskatoon continue to perform NARS and LARC Assessments, but with an expanded role for delivery agencies to also perform need assessments.
- GAR arrival numbers continue to be at a fast pace, exceeding the plan set out by IRCC. Arrival stats can be found later in the report.
- We have been informed that 2 of our 3 IRCC Contract Officers will be changing, with some carry over with the officers who negotiated the CFP contract agreements.
- The Language Team has been busy pulling together a cost recovery language program to offer to Learners who either have completed Stage 1, are on a wait list, or may be affected by the pending closure of LINC Stage 2. The new program, **ENACT (Empowering Newcomers through Access to Community and Training)** is hoped to launch in May 2025. Potential clients are now registering online.
- We will begin to look at relaunching volunteer taught language classes in the new fiscal year.

Update on IRCC/Provincial Funding/Federal

- On March 19th, the Government of Saskatchewan announced the new budget, and within the budget it referenced spending cuts to service providers funded by Immigration and Career Training. This pending reduction is a result of the Federal Government reducing the Labour Market Transfer Agreement Funding by $17.6 million dollars in the current fiscal year, backfilled by the Province for one year only. RODS was advised that all affected agencies have now been notified of funding reductions, and given that we were not notified as an affected agency, we anticipate a status quo budget.

Reception House, Smith Street Properties & Daycare

- We have now been approved by IRCC to dispose of identified capital assets purchased with IRCC capital funds. Some items will be donated to Habitat for Humanity, some will be moved to the Donahue Building and the rest recycled or taken to the landfill. Once this is complete, the Reception House will be listed for sale by Avison Young.
- The RODS building at 1855 Smith Street and adjacent parking lot have been listed for sale with Avison Young at an asking price of $1,590,000.00. Linely Schaefer and his sales team have been provided access to the building outside of operating hours, but they have requested that I accompanying the sales staff on any showings.
- Efforts continue to explore options to support a relocation of the RODS Daycare to the Woodbine Building within a viable revenue model. Details can be found within the Information Item within the Board Package on Daycare Seat Expansion and Possible Relocation. The crux is that we have proceeded to apply for the additional 25 seats for the Daycare operation out of a new location at the Woodbine Building.
- Pressure continues to mount regarding the Province of Saskatchewan failing to sign the extension of the $10 a day daycare agreement with the Federal Government. https://www.ctvnews.ca/regina/article/childcare-advocates-parents-rally-at-sask-legislative-building-with-10-daycare-deal-still-unsigned/

RODS Update

- RODS continues to explore external grant funding to establish a refugee employment track within the Employment Services Team. Given the literacy needs and low language levels of many of our GAR clients they tend to not qualify for the LINC Benchmark Level 4 requirement of the current program. RODS will be re-engaging with the NorthPine Foundation (NorthpineFoundation.ca). The Foundation is interested in funding a refugee employment program, and wants to include ICT and Social Services in the discussions to leverage opportunities for program sustainability.
- GAR Arrivals Update

  A total of 247 GAR clients arrived between April 1, 2024 – March 18, 2025 (216 were GARs + 31 were secondary GAR migrants). Somalia, Syria, Congo, Afghanistan, Eritrea and Ethiopia are the primary countries of origin.

  A total of 57 GAR client arrivals have arrived from January 1/25 to April 17/25

  There have been a total of 19 GAR client arrivals from April 1/25 to April 17/25

  There are 1 GAR client arrivals pending to the end of April 2025
- We have met with all RODS staff to share the Board decisions to sell both the Reception House at 1610 Toronto Street and 1855 Smith Street, as well as the work underway to relocate the RODS Daycare. We met with the RODS Daycare staff separately given their inability to attend all staff meetings. Staff were also informed of the RODS Board approved new salary grid and cost of living increases.

Other Information of Interest

- The Quebec Government and Federal Opposition Parties continue to call for action on the high number of asylum seekers/refugee claimants entering Canada, as well a possible plan to have asylum seekers/refugee claimants relocated to other parts of Canada. https://apple.news/ABjlv3axDQxO-zGo9D6Hgfw
- The Province of Saskatchewan has yet to sign the new $10 a day daycare agreement with the Federal Government. Pressure form the Daycare community continues to mount. https://www.ctvnews.ca/regina/article/childcare-advocates-parents-rally-at-sask-legislative-building-with-10-daycare-deal-still-unsigned/
- Public concern is now coming forth on the damage to and seeming lack of focus within the Federal Immigration program. https://www.msn.com/en-ca/money/topstories/the-next-canadian-government-will-have-to-deal-with-an-immigration-system-that-has-lost-its-brand/ar-AA1CGQn4?ocid=socialshare