



GREY BRUCE
LOCAL IMMIGRATION
PARTNERSHIP

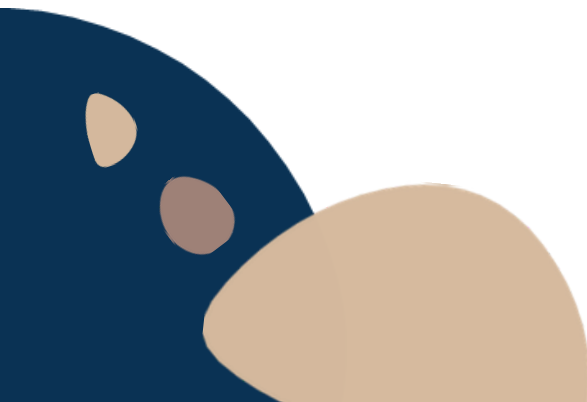
Community Action Plan 2025-2028





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Land Acknowledgement

The Grey Bruce Local Immigration Partnership (GBLIP) acknowledges the Traditional Territory of the Anishinaabek Nation: The People of the Three Fires known as Ojibway, Odawa, and Pottawatomie Nations. We give further thanks to the Chippewas of Saugeen, and the Chippewas of Nawash, now known as the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, as the traditional keepers of this land.

Part of our work at GBLIP is to deconstruct colonial legacies around who is welcome on this land. In this way, we acknowledge the harm done during colonization, as well as its contemporary reverberations. We commit to sharing in the responsibility of cultivating positive relations with the land and all who reside here.

Acknowledgements

Grey Bruce Local Immigration Partnership (GBLIP) is grateful to the many individuals and organizations whose generosity, time, and input shaped this Community Action Plan. At the heart of this work is the active leadership and engagement of the Partnership Council and subcommittees. The contributions of GBLIP partners have developed the foundation of this plan. They have shaped a document that reflects our community's lived experiences, local wisdom, and commitment to one another as we build our collective future.

This work would not be possible without the ongoing support of Grey and Bruce Counties and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). Their steadfast support and investment in GBLIP champion a vision of inclusion, economic vitality and a shared belief that every person deserves to experience belonging in the communities they call home.

To the many community partners who showed up for this process: your presence and collaboration demonstrate what's possible when we work together. You are actively building the kind of region where newcomers and long-term residents alike can flourish.

We extend special thanks to Corinne Walsh and Erika Muñoz of Tuckamore Group Consultants, whose thoughtful guidance and facilitation helped us navigate this journey with clarity and purpose.

This Community Action Plan represents the collective wisdom, energy, and aspirations of our community. As we shift from planning to action, we carry with us the influence of everyone who contributed to this process. Together, we're creating belonging one step at a time.

About GBLIP

The long-term economic success of Grey County and Bruce County (Grey Bruce) is determined by a reliable workforce with the right skills to meet employer needs.¹ In 2019, in response to growing labour challenges across the region, economic development teams from both counties partnered to pursue the creation of a Local Immigration Partnership (LIP). This initiative was driven both by workforce pressures and the steadily increasing number of immigrants choosing to settle in Grey Bruce – highlighting the need for coordinated community-based planning to support newcomer settlement and integration.

LIPs are community-based partnerships that support planning around the needs of newcomers. LIPs are partnerships that:

- Foster a systemic approach to engage settlement programs and other institutions to welcome and integrate newcomers.
- Support community-based knowledge-sharing and local strategic planning.
- Improve coordination of effective services that facilitate newcomer settlement and integration.

Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) confirmed its support for the Grey Bruce Local Immigration Partnership (GBLIP) in February 2020, approving a five-year mandate. Under the direction of Grey County from 2020-2025, IRCC funding enabled coordinated, community-driven planning and collaboration to better support newcomers and respond to evolving local labour market needs. Projects like the GBLIP Welcome Packages, the Diversity and Belongingness Conference (2023), the Positive Messaging Campaign, and the “Conversations for a More Inclusive and Welcoming Community” EDI Training Program have been praised for their effectiveness in promoting inclusion and fostering collaboration in the region.

Building on the success of the first funding term, Grey Bruce applied to renew GBLIP’s funding in 2025. The Community Action Plan herein aims to leverage the momentum of the initial five-year term and further mobilize meaningful action to build system capacity through March 2028. IRCC funding enables the continuation of this important work to improve newcomer integration across Grey Bruce, address persistent barriers to belonging, and strengthen the region’s social and economic resilience.

¹ Grey County and Bruce County will be collectively referred to as Grey Bruce throughout this document.

Background

In recent years, the total number of immigrants has been steadily increasing in Grey Bruce. Findings from the *GBLIP Immigrant Survey 2023*² indicate strengths, challenges, and opportunities for newcomer settlement and integration through an understanding of newcomers' needs and community assets and gaps.

The survey collected responses from immigrants in Grey Bruce to determine trends in experiences of settlement and integration. Findings reveal that while many immigrants feel at home in Grey Bruce within the first two years of arrival, newcomers in particular experienced challenges with establishing a sense of belonging: 37% of respondents reported experiencing a "weak" sense of belonging in their local communities, and 43% of respondents reported experiences of discrimination or unfair treatment in Grey Bruce. The vast majority of respondents (87%) reported that they had felt isolated or alone to some extent over the previous year. Notably, 20% of all respondents reported that, at the time of the survey, they still did not feel at home in Grey Bruce.

The survey results indicate that education, awareness, and representation could help to improve newcomer experiences in the future. Specific recommendations include raising awareness, increasing education, promoting community dialogue, enhancing support for individuals experiencing discrimination, creating systematic social change, and welcoming immigrants to play a greater role in community leadership and planning. These findings reinforce the importance of GBLIP's work and the continued need for intentional efforts to foster welcoming and inclusive communities.

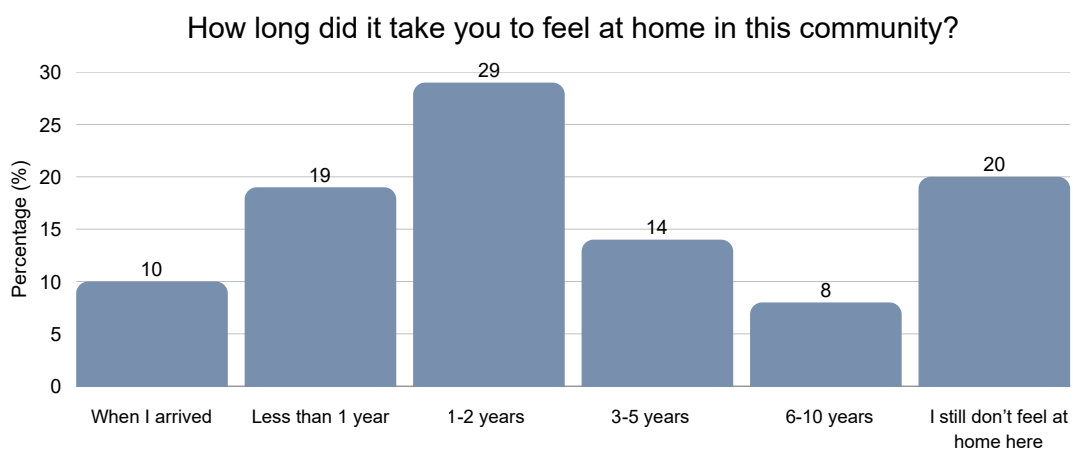


Figure 11 from *Grey Bruce LIP Immigrant Survey 2023: Survey Findings*

Executive Summary

The Grey Bruce Local Immigration Partnership (GBLIP) Community Action Plan reflects a shared commitment to building a region where newcomers feel welcomed, supported, and equipped to thrive. Rooted in collaboration and guided by community wisdom, this plan builds on the momentum of GBLIP's first five years and charts a clear path forward through March 2028.

GBLIP's **vision** is a welcoming community with a shared commitment to diversity and belonging. Our **mission** is to connect and mobilize partners across the region to strengthen local capacity to attract, welcome, and retain newcomers. This work is grounded in values of community, collaboration, equity, inclusion, respect, welcoming, and sustainability.

The plan identifies three **strategic priorities** that will guide collective action in the coming years:

Fostering Community Collaboration focuses on strengthening partnerships, improving coordination, and enhancing access to shared tools and information so that services and resources are aligned for maximum impact.

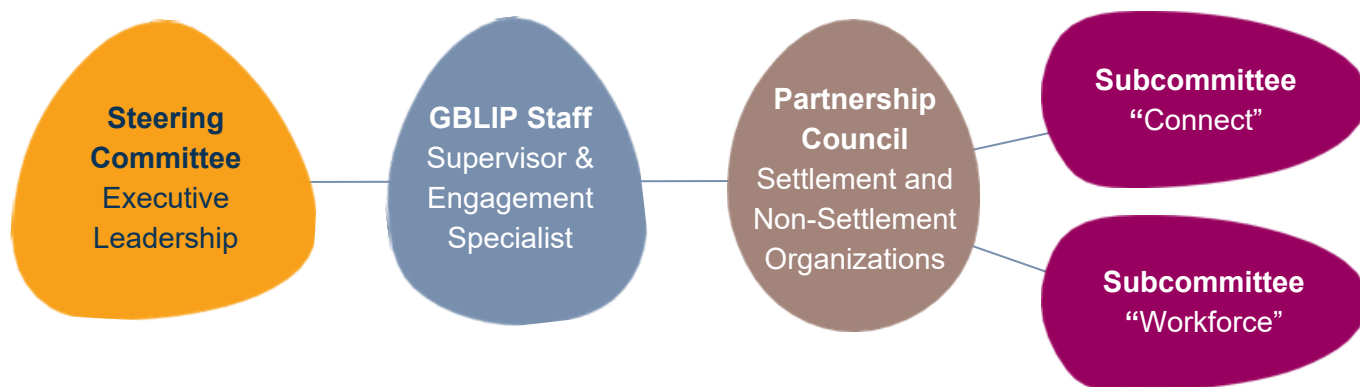
Employer Engagement and Workforce Integration respond to persistent labour shortages by supporting employers with education, resources, and inclusive practices that help newcomers access meaningful employment and succeed in the workplace.

Welcoming Communities emphasizes that belonging requires ongoing intention - creating opportunities for connection, challenging misconceptions, and fostering a culture where all residents feel valued and included.

Developed through a participatory process of listening sessions, consultations, and partner input, this Community Action Plan represents a collective commitment to shaping a more inclusive future. Together, GBLIP and its partners will continue building the conditions for newcomers and long-term residents alike to flourish across Grey Bruce.

GBLIP Structure

GBLIP is a collaborative system: staff convene and coordinate Partnership Council and subcommittee meetings and initiatives, Partnership Council develops and advises on initiatives, subcommittees support project implementation, and the Steering Committee gives final approval on all GBLIP initiatives.



The GBLIP system works to:

- Leverage available community resources to support newcomer outcomes.
- Strengthen the ability of the community to be more welcoming and inclusive of newcomers.
- Advance IRCC priorities in Gender Equality, Anti-Racism, and Truth & Reconciliation.

GBLIP Staff

Partnership Council

Coordinate	Educate	Research & Report	Collaborate	Engage	Share Knowledge
Convene meetings	Organize and deliver workshops and seminars	Conduct research through interest-holder engagement and third-party consultation	Co-lead or participate in subcommittees	Promote GBLIP initiatives within home organization	Attend workshops and seminars
Ensure cross-sector engagement	Coordinate knowledge-sharing events	Collect data, track, and report outcomes	Partner on joint initiatives	Champion inclusive policies	Contribute to data collection and dissemination
Coordinate strategic planning	Create and disseminate educational material		Support CoP development	Host or support community events	Help identify needs and gaps
					Consult on strategic initiatives



GBLIP's Vision, Mission, and Values

GBLIP's Community Action Plan is rooted in clarity about who we are and where we're going. It is guided by a clear vision of the future we are working toward, a purpose-driven mission and the shared values that motivate our actions.

The following statements serve as a compass for the Partnership. They guide decision-making processes and support us in setting priorities to ensure alignment as we navigate the years ahead. They also serve as a reminder about why this work matters.

In developing the new Community Action Plan, GBLIP integrated feedback from partner consultations to articulate and renew these foundational elements:

Vision: Grey Bruce is a welcoming community with a shared commitment to diversity and belonging.

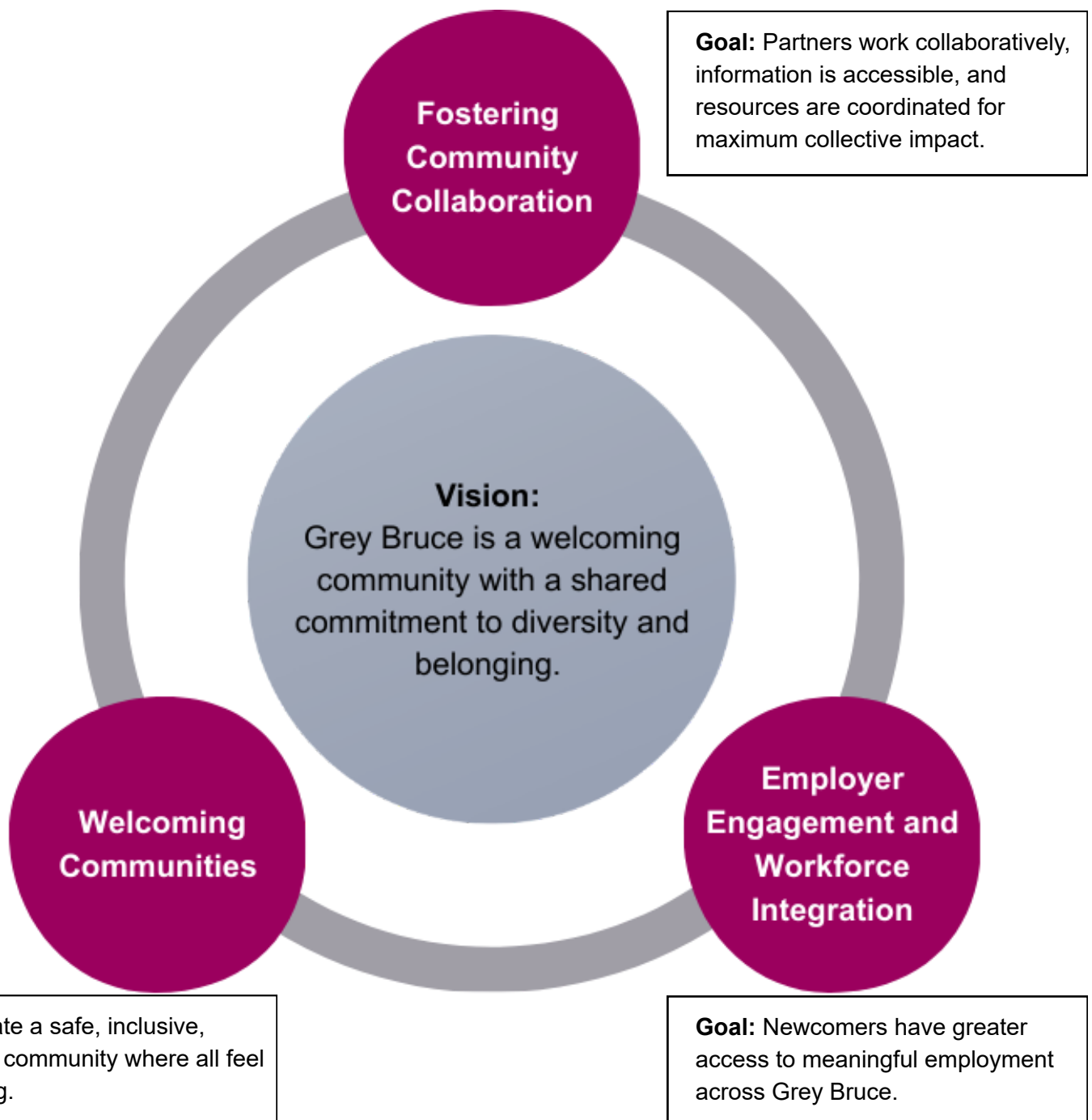
Mission: GBLIP connects and mobilizes partners across Grey Bruce to strengthen the community's capacity to attract, welcome, and retain newcomers.

Values:

- **Community** – The needs and aspirations of the entire community are at the heart of our work.
 - **Collaboration** – We bring together diverse partners and perspectives to achieve more together.
 - **Equity** – We work to create systems, opportunities, and initiatives that are accessible to all.
 - **Inclusion** – We build spaces, services, and systems that are accessible and responsive to people at all intersections of identity so that everyone has a place at the table.
 - **Respect** – We honour the experiences, strengths, perspectives, and needs of each person and approach our shared work with curiosity and openness.
 - **Welcoming** – We work to create a community in which the dignity of each person is valued, and all community members trust that they belong and can thrive.
 - **Sustainability** – We are committed to continuous, incremental improvement, taking small steps consistently to achieve sustainable progress.
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Overview of Strategic Priorities

In the coming years, GBLIP will focus its efforts in three key areas:



Priority: Fostering Community Collaboration

Goal:

Partners work collaboratively, information is accessible, and resources are coordinated for maximum collective impact.

GBLIP is not a direct service provider – it is a convener, a connector, and a catalyst. Our power and impact are felt in the possibilities that emerge when diverse interest-holders convene around a shared purpose. The effectiveness of our work relies on the strength of our partnership.

When we collaborate well, we multiply our collective impact. Collaboration is achieved through seamless information exchange, establishing trust between partners, and coordinating rather than duplicating services. Through consistent engagement with our Partnership Council and subcommittees, we can develop systems that are easy to navigate and build a community that is responsive to newcomer needs. Through effective collaboration, service providers are supported and connected, our limited resources go further, and our shared efforts affect better outcomes.

To support collaboration and maximize impact, GBLIP will undertake projects and initiatives with a focus on strengthening systemic connectivity, including:

Developing and curating tools, materials, and resources that enhance collaboration and streamline processes (e.g. launching a Partner Portal: A Centralized Access Point for GBLIP Partners).

Hosting and expanding the Partnership by recruiting and onboarding new community partners with shared objectives and strategic alignments.

Disseminating a quarterly newsletter to relay news, policy updates, and information on local initiatives, events, and organizations.

Fostering Community Collaboration is the foundation that makes our other priorities possible. Investing in how we work together is investing in better outcomes for the partnership, newcomers, and Grey Bruce as a whole.

Priority: Employer Engagement & Workforce Integration

Goal:

Newcomers have greater access to meaningful employment across Grey Bruce.

Like many rural regions, Grey Bruce faces persistent labour shortages. As employers struggle to fill positions and businesses forgo opportunities because they are short-staffed, newcomers arrive in our community with skills, credentials, professional experience, and a deep desire to contribute. Bridging this gap between employers and newcomers creates economic prosperity across the region.

Through this Community Action Plan, GBLIP will engage employers and support workforce integration through the following key initiatives:

Equipping employers with education, information, and materials to create environments where newcomers can succeed (e.g., workshops, systems, tools, resources, research, policy support).

Raising employer awareness and providing education to support hiring practices through communications campaigns, workshops and seminars (e.g. immigration statuses, legal processes, debunking misinformation, combating anti-immigrant sentiment).

Updating local Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion training for employers to enhance cultural competency toward improved newcomer integration and retention.

Together, these initiatives will help to build a workforce ecosystem where newcomer talent is recognized and utilized.

Priority: Welcoming Communities

Goal:

Create a safe, inclusive, welcoming community where all feel they belong.

A welcoming community doesn't happen by accident. It takes intention, effort, and a shared commitment to creating the kind of place where people feel they truly belong. For newcomers who are seeking a place to call home, finding a welcoming community can make the difference between staying and leaving.

Throughout the consultation process, partners affirmed that belonging is at the heart of community. People put down roots in places where they are seen, valued, and accepted – where neighbours know their names, someone asks how they're doing, and friendships are made to last. Welcome isn't a one-time greeting at the door, it's an ongoing relationship that unfolds over time.

The residents of Grey Bruce already offer hospitality and a neighbourly spirit that contributes to a felt sense of community throughout the region. Continuing to build and shape a community where everyone feels connected requires leaning into this hospitality with action. With this in mind, GBLIP aims to create real opportunities for connection, challenge the misconceptions that create distance between people, and amplify the stories of newcomers to convey their contributions to the broader community.

In the next couple of years, GBLIP's efforts will support this goal through the delivery of:

The Diversity and Belongingness Conference to bring together community partners and service providers for knowledge-sharing, networking and raising cultural awareness.

A Speaker Series providing opportunities for education and skill-building to promote the practical application of relevant and timely resources and information.

These initiatives will deliver ongoing opportunities to bring the community together, share knowledge and new ideas, and support cultural awareness across Grey Bruce.

How GBLIP Developed the Community Action Plan

The development of GBLIP's Community Action Plan unfolded over the past year in a participatory process designed to engage the Partnership Council, subcommittees, and Steering Committee. The process was intentionally designed to be inclusive, collaborative, and community-driven, drawing on the experience, expertise and ambitions of settlement and non-settlement service providers and community partners.

The process began with one-on-one listening sessions between GBLIP staff and partners. These meetings created space for reflection, shared learning, and fostered a better understanding of priorities, challenges, and opportunities. These initial conversations informed a Community Consultation Day, where members gathered virtually for deeper discussion and collective discernment. To ensure broad participation, this input was supplemented through an online survey available for those who were unable to attend or who wished to contribute additional ideas. Feedback was then integrated into a cohesive draft Community Action Plan, which was reviewed and approved by the Steering Committee prior to its launch. We look forward to bringing the Community Action Plan to life to guide our collective work in the coming years.



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³ Figure features a word cloud generated by a poll of partner participants at GBLIP's Community Action Plan Consultation Day event held in December 2025, showing participants' responses to the question, "What are the principles that guide GBLIP?"

GBLIP Members

We attribute the strength of this Community Action Plan to the people and organizations who guide, support, and advance the work of GBLIP. The following individuals and organizations are active members of the GBLIP Council whose leadership, collaboration, and commitment continue to shape a more inclusive and welcoming community.

- Beaver Valley Bruce Trail Club
- Bluewater District School Board
- Bruce Community Futures Development Corporation
- Bruce County Economic Development
- Bruce County Human Services
- Bruce County Public Library
- Bruce Grey Child Family Services
- Bruce Power
- Christmas on the Bay
- City of Owen Sound
- Collège Boréal
- Community Foundations Grey Bruce
- Conseil Scolaire Catholique Providence
- Elephant Thoughts
- Employment Services BGHP
- Fanshawe College
- Four County Market Planning Board
- Georgian College
- Grey Bruce Public Health
- Grey County
- Grey County Early Learning and Childcare
- Grey County Economic Development
- Life Directions Employment Services (South East Grey Support Services)
- Municipality of Arran-Elderslie
- Municipality of Brockton
- Municipality of Grey Highlands
- Municipality of Kincardine
- Municipality of Meaford
- Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula
- Municipality of South Bruce
- M'Wikwedong Indigenous Friendship Centre
- Newcomer Centre of Peel
- Nuclear Innovation Institute
- OMAFRA Community Economic Development
- Organization of Canadian Nuclear Industries
- Owen Sound & North Grey Union Public Library
- Owen Sound Police
- Peninsula Bruce Trail Club
- QUILL Learning Network
- Saugeen Economic Development Corporation
- South East Grey Community Health Centre
- Southgate Ruth Hargrave Memorial Library
- Swajan Samanvay Sanatan Centre
- The Agency
- Town of The Blue Mountains
- Town of Hanover
- Town of Saugeen Shores
- Town of South Bruce Peninsula
- Township of Georgian Bluffs
- Township of Huron-Kinloss
- Township of Southgate
- United Way Bruce Grey
- Welcoming Communities Grey Bruce
- YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce - Employment Services
- YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce - Settlement and Language Services



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