

Research Report: City of Oshawa Diversity and Inclusion Plan

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1. Purpose

The Oshawa Diversity and Inclusion Plan reflects the City of Oshawa's commitment to:

- Identify and address forms of discrimination that create barriers to service access and community engagement, and inhibit flexibility, participation and equity in the workplace
- Work with marginalized groups to counter historical, attitudinal, structural, and institutional practices that inhibit inclusivity, and
- Implement programs and initiatives and provide services that recognize the full range of human difference and realize the goals of fairness, justice and non-discrimination

2. Introduction

2.1 Background

The City of Oshawa is a growing and changing community. Its population is rapidly becoming more diverse as a result of shifting immigration, migration and urbanization patterns, an aging society, and a growing awareness of the range of human differences. Moreover, with the globalization of production and the growing automation of traditional manufacturing work, the City of Oshawa has experienced widespread economic change, both in the form of declining manufacturing employment and the restructuring of full and part-time work.

These demographic and economic changes require a focused effort to advance inclusive practices and policies, as patterns of unfair treatment and forms of systemic discrimination still take place in different representational and participatory practices, language patterns, beliefs, and institutional/organizational procedures. This Plan marks a systemic response to these imbalances in accessibility, economic status, religious beliefs, ability, gender and gender identity, geographic location, sexual orientation, race, Indigenous ancestry, age and other similar markers of identity.

Several municipalities, locally and nationally, have already recognized the importance of creating a community and corporate diversity and inclusion plan as a way of ensuring that the services they provide meet the needs and aspirations of their ever-diversifying population. These Canadian municipalities include the Town of Ajax, the Region of Durham, the City of Guelph, the City of London, the City of Markham, the City of Ottawa, the City of Edmonton, the Town of Stratford (PEI), the City of Vaughan and the Region of Peel, among others. These plans aim to help residents and employees feel valued and strive to remove barriers so that all members of the community can contribute to and participate within a successful and equitable municipal environment. The Oshawa Diversity and Inclusion Plan develops from these important initiatives while allocating special emphasis to the creation of broad-based economic and social change

through consideration of the systemic, structural and multilayered dimensions of discrimination as well as the rich benefits of inclusive action and the embeddedness of the City in the community. It is in this regard that the Plan provides a strategic framework for embracing diversity in the municipal workplace, and aims to extend the practices of fairness, justice and non-discrimination into all City of Oshawa principles and actions.

If this Plan aims to build on the best practices laid down elsewhere, it is equally an attempt to unite the different initiatives, programs and actions already undertaken by the City to affirm and advance its commitment to equality and inclusivity.

This work includes but is not limited to:

- Complying with legislated requirements under the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation* (I.A.S.R.) and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (A.O.D.A.), the *Employment Standards Act*, the *Human Rights Code* and the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.
- Establishing an Accessibility Coordinator staff position
- Expanding Community Engagement efforts through Connect Oshawa and the Online Communications Strategy
- Supporting and delivering recreation programs for specific diverse groups (e.g., One-on-one support for special needs participants in recreation programs and woman-only swim at Donevan pool)
- Participating in the Advancing Access to Affordable Recreation in Durham (A.A.A.R.D.) and maintaining subsidy programs and City services for low-income households
- Flag raisings and proclamations to celebrate various organizations, events and holidays
- Participating in regional committees aimed at supporting and enhancing diversity and inclusion initiatives including: the Region of Durham Community Partners in Diversity meetings (formerly titled Local Diversity Immigration Partnership Council, or L.D.I.P.C.), and the Durham Region Aboriginal Advisory Circle.
- Consulting with the Region of Durham on the development of an Age-Friendly Strategy.
- Becoming an employer partner with the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (C.C.D.I.)
- Conducting Diversity and Inclusion training through the C.C.D.I. for regular staff and City Council.
- Being a member of the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination (C.C.M.A.R.D.) since 2007, through the Canadian Commission for UNESCO.

- Endorsing the National Council of Canadian Muslims' Charter for Inclusive Communities (City Council meeting of November 28, 2016).
- Developing the Arts, Culture and Heritage Plan in early 2014 aimed at "provid[ing] access [to] and promot[ing] inclusion in Oshawa's cultural life".

In short, this Plan offers an organizational and operational lens intended to filter and inform the City of Oshawa's human relations practices as well as its engagement and connection with the community on the basis that all people, regardless of background, wealth or any other social identifier, are fundamentally equal. The lens reflected in this Plan confirms the City of Oshawa's commitment to encourage recognition of the colliding social identities that shape human interaction and promote awareness and respect for personal differences in attitudes, beliefs, experience, traditions, and approaches to problem solving.

2.2 Benefits of an Inclusive City

This Plan is grounded in the recognition that the full appreciation of human diversity produces widespread societal benefits. These benefits include, but are not limited to:

- **Improved organizational performance** – The Diversity and Inclusion Plan supports and therefore enables more effective implementation of a number of other City initiatives. Commitment to diversity and inclusion also facilitates higher job satisfaction, increased employee engagement, and thus greater productivity and service delivery. Services and programs that meet the needs of our diverse and changing population can also reduce the need to respond to complaints of discrimination.
- **Strengthened social cohesion and social capital** – Inclusivity enhances the likelihood that everyone will feel empowered to actively engage in the community around them. Accessible services and employment opportunities maximize capacities for stronger and safer neighbourhoods and build trust in public institutions and processes. Indeed, there is a direct correlation between social cohesion and reduced demands on our health, education and criminal justice systems.
- **Increased vibrancy** - Diverse cultures create a more robust and exciting cultural milieu in the City, contributing to the arts, culture and cuisine that shape it. Valuing and showcasing this diversity will draw yet more communities, businesses and events to the area, thus contributing to both the cultural and economic dynamism of Oshawa as a destination.
- **Upgraded social and institutional learning** – Diversity enriches the flow and consumption of knowledge and information by opening up space for new perspectives and inspiring reflexive rather than routinized behaviour. As a result, inclusive action stimulates the learning capacity of public and private

organizations, making community institutions more creative, flexible and adaptable.

- **Expanded access to global and domestic talent pools.** Current and future labour force needs will demand increased immigration to fill the gaps in skilled job opportunities. Global competition for this pool of skilled talent requires that Oshawa be recognized as a welcoming place to live, work, learn and play.
- **Enhanced innovative competency** – Diverse communities tend to be more resilient to rapid technological change because they often have a deeper and broader repository of knowledge and expertise. Moreover, diversity equates with creativity in that it allows for multiple voices and perspectives when approaching complex challenges. The resultant ability to think outside the box offers a competitive advantage for the City and for businesses within its borders.
- **Enhanced economic growth** – Diverse communities bring with them culturally specific languages, practices, and connections that enable both the City and local business to flourish by delivering first-rate and socially aware services. Immigration, and in-country migration patterns provide access to new and wider markets domestically and globally. Newcomers, in particular, bring with them technical training and skills that can contribute to the success of local industry and educational institutions, as well as create new businesses and employment opportunities.

2.3 Plan Objectives and Mandate

There are many different viewpoints regarding the formulation of inclusive policy and planning practices. By one view, the establishment of fairness and justice embedded in the attainment of inclusive outcomes creates social antagonism and conflict between historically subordinate and superordinate groups. This view casts inclusion in negative sum terms as involving the elimination of membership barriers and systemic arrangements that privilege some and exclude others (Therborn 2013). A second perspective holds that optimal forms of equalization only result out of the persistence of resource inequality, since economic disparity encourages entrepreneurial initiative.

This Plan embraces a fundamentally different explanation as it is committed to the fulfillment of the collective potential embodied in achieving fairness and justice for all community members and city employees. Even if equality mechanisms have differing results at particular momentary snapshots, they are always moving towards positive outcomes, simply because they are seeking to achieve more equitable and horizontal relationships and processes. This recognition that equal and inclusive communities are not only fair but more successful along a range of economic and social coordinates highlights the positive and indeed productive dimensions of diversity. Furthermore, this Plan gives primacy to the creation of inclusive outcomes. It rejects the terms set out in

alternative approaches for their inability to understand how inequalities reinforce organizational structures and attitudes that impede inclusion.

In its core objectives and Foundational Principles, the Diversity and Inclusion Plan expresses a broader legal, legislative, and socio-political mandate. The Plan affirms many of the core values and principles contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Citizenship Act, the Multiculturalism Act, the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, the Occupational Health and Safety Act, the Truth and Reconciliation Final Report, and Ontario's Anti-Racism Strategic Plan. At base, these documents aim to foster mutual trust and dignity based on the assertion that all human beings are born equal and free.

Furthermore, this Plan expresses the operational guideposts presented in the City of Oshawa's key strategic initiatives. With its focus on removing barriers to accessibility and inclusivity and promoting the equal valuation of all personal and community difference, the Plan flows out of the following policy and planning documents:

- Oshawa Strategic Plan - Our Focus, Our Future, 2015-2019
- Culture Counts: Oshawa's Arts, Culture and Heritage Plan (2014)
- Downtown Oshawa Plan 20Twenty
- Customer Service Strategy (2006)
- 2013-2017 Accessibility Plan and the 2017 Consultation on the 2018 Strategy
- Parks, Recreation, Library and Culture Facility Needs Assessment (2015)
- Community Engagement Toolkit and Administrative Policy
- Online Communications Strategy
- Corporate Communications and Marketing Strategy
- Economic Development Sector Analysis and Cluster Development Strategy

The Plan also aligns with a number of Regional initiatives including:

- Durham Region Diversity and Immigration Community Plan (2016-2019)
- Durham Region Health Neighbourhoods Report (2014)
- Durham Region Age-Friendly Strategy (2017)

While it lies within international, national, provincial and, of course, local practices and juridical norms, this Plan is not just an attempt to achieve legislative coordination and consistency. As it imposes new directions through a fine-grained analysis of the role of specific institutions and activities in both advancing and hampering inclusion, the Plan reflects local patterns and needs and expresses a desire among City officials and staff to act proactively as both champions and agents of change.

2.4 Challenges and Directives

This Plan recognizes the myriad obstacles and challenges, from economic restraints on city budgets to operational procedures and organizational habits, that stand in the way of greater equity and inclusion. The proposals contained in this Plan attempt, in different ways, to root out these problematic forces by establishing practices and policies that foster the goals of fairness, justice and non-discrimination. So too, the Foundational Principles offered below are intended to inform and direct City practices and policies irrespective of the confines of these proposals. In this latter respect, this Plan must be seen as a living document which will require regular review and updating.

As the heart of this Plan, moreover, is a transformative agenda with roots in different operational and organizational procedures and practices. This Plan draws on City representatives and staff to critically evaluate established practices, to maximize the acquisition and application of new knowledge, and to continually promote open dialogue and debate to achieve equal results, even when this necessitates change and adjustment. The foundation throughout, therefore, is a wider call to action involving, primarily, the ordering of certain City priorities and the relative adaptability and openness of City institutions and programs.

2.5 Methodology and Process

Qualitative and participatory research methods were used to develop this Plan. The project was convened by a Core Steering Committee co-led by City staff from Recreation and Culture Services and Human Resource Services, and UOIT researchers in the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities and the Faculty of Health Sciences. The cross-domain scholars participating on the project committee reflect UOIT's research strengths in the fields of cultural studies, disability studies, critical race theory, labour studies, gender studies, public policy, and sexual diversity studies.

The Diversity and Inclusion Plan emerged out of a multi-layered approach, grounded initially in a literature and best practices assessment. This involved an in-depth review of different approaches to inclusivity, including similar plans in other Ontario communities (e.g. the City of Guelph, the Town of Ajax, the City of London, the City of Markham, the City of Toronto, the City of Ottawa, the Region of Waterloo and the Region of Peel). This was followed up by fieldwork completed by members of the research team, intended to capture the local perspectives on the barriers and supports for diversity and inclusion within the City of Oshawa. Through formal, facilitated consultations with members of Council, City leadership and staff, as well as community organizations and interested community members, the research team gathered input that identified important concerns, emerging issues and desired outcomes. These consultations allowed consideration of both inward- and outward-facing strategies for systemic change and highlighted important plan objectives and priorities. As a result, the goals and principles

advanced by the Plan, as well as the actions it promotes, are strongly reflective of these consultative findings.

The consultation phase of the research took place over a period of eight months from January 2017 to September 2017 and included the following activities and tools:

Phase One - Online Community Survey & Public Consultation: The goal of this phase of the consultation was to gain insight from the community and City employees regarding their understanding and interpretation of diversity and inclusion, their view on what the City is currently doing to support diversity and inclusion, their understanding of the barriers to diversity and inclusion, and what they would like to see the City do in the future to support diversity and inclusion. The survey and consultation was organized through City staff and focused on allowing for the engagement of the broadest possible cross-section of the community in Oshawa. Additionally, community organizations and agencies were invited to give input. Just over 290 individuals viewed the Connect Oshawa survey, with 61 respondents to the survey. A further 120 individuals attended a consultation.

Phase Two – Online Community Survey & Public Consultation: The goal of this phase of the consultation was to gauge the support of the community and employees around suggested actions and recommendations. Residents, community organizations/agencies and employees were asked to rank sample actions in order of importance. There were 209 visitors to the Connect Oshawa site, with 48 contributions to this survey. A further 34 individuals gave input through in-person consultations.

3. Foundational Principles

The Oshawa Diversity and Inclusion Plan aims to create and maintain a barrier-free city. It is constructed around the recognition that municipalities, as key constituents in the advancement and achievement of social-economic justice, must act positively and proactively to achieve the goals of fairness, justice and non-discrimination, both by developing inclusive strategies and by challenging those practices that prevent the attainment of these goals, including those that merely “tolerate” and “accept” human differences.

The following principles emerge from this understanding to provide the general framework for the Oshawa Diversity and Inclusion Plan

3.1. Despite important progress, barriers continue to exist for some City employees and residents

Equality work cannot start from the “disbelief that inequalities exist”. It must rather be guided by the realization that forms of discrimination continue to create barriers to service access and community engagement, as well as impede participation in the

workplace. In short, claiming that equality and inclusivity have been “attained” leads to the promotion of non-action (CAWI 2015).

Evidence from across Canada points to the fact that systemic inequalities continue to shape social, political and economic outcomes. Unfortunately, there is little reason to believe that local policies and practices have succeeded, fully, in confronting these patterns of marginalization and discrimination in Oshawa. The following table, reproduced from *Advancing Equity and Inclusion: A Guide for Municipalities* (2015), therefore, highlights national trends that are likely to be important for City employees and residents. While these data are, in some cases, slightly dated, little has changed in the intervening years. Moreover, some of the trends are, in fact, heightened for Oshawa.

Figure 1: Indicators of the Persistence of Inequality in Canada

Aboriginal women: Almost 1200 Aboriginal women and girls were reported murdered or went missing between 1980 and 2012. The actual number is likely even higher.

Aboriginal workers: The median income of the Aboriginal population in 2005 was only 2/3 of that of the non-Aboriginal population.

Culturally Deaf People: Lack of recognition of the unique language, perspective and culture of deaf people limits full participation in city life.

Francophone Canadians: Unequal access to health services in French can result in worsening health conditions for Francophones.

LGBTQ* youth: Sexual harassment is a major concern in schools as 49% of trans students, 33% of lesbian students, and 40% of gay male students reported incidents in 2010.

Lone parenting women: Women who leave a partner to raise children on their own are 5 times more likely to live in poverty than if they had stayed with their partner.

People with disabilities: Housing need is 6% higher for people with disabilities and 2/3 of those in need are women.

Racialized people: Almost 1/2 of the population living in low and very low-income neighbourhoods are racialized and 1/2 of the reported hate crimes in 2012 were motivated by race or ethnicity.

Single seniors: Almost 1/3 of seniors live in housing that fails to meet appropriate standards, including affordability.

Women: Only 1/4 of Councillors and mayors across Canada are women. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities has set the bar at a minimum of 30% by 2026 to reflect women’s perspectives.

Women workers: Women who work full-time earn only 71 cents for every dollar earned by men. Women earn about 2/3 of the average lifetime earnings of men, despite a longer life expectancy of four years.

*Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning

3.2. The experience of exclusion and marginalization is best captured through an intersectional frame of analysis

Though it is essential to recognize and understand particular processes of discrimination - such as ableism, racism, heterosexism, transphobia, ethnocentrism, classism, ageism and homophobia - it is also necessary to consider how these processes interact with each other to shape lived experience (CAWI 2015). As a method of social inquiry, the intersectional approach seeks to highlight the complexity of lived reality from the standpoint of people who contend with oppression. Intersectional analysis challenges the validity of representational dualisms (e.g., man/woman; gay/straight, abled/disabled; rich/poor) by advancing the understanding that social experience is formed through overlapping and interlocking patterns of power and discrimination. On this basis, it offers a more holistic approach that draws attention to the many practices that inform and condition discriminatory behaviour.

In terms of achieving diversity and inclusion goals, the intersectional approach produces “more complete information on the origins, root causes and characteristics of social issues” leading to “more effective and efficient responses... for solving persistent and growing social inequalities” (Hankivsky 2014, 7; CAWI 2015).

3.3. Equality outcomes require equity practices

The goal of achieving fairness, justice and non-discrimination begins with the recognition and understanding that all people are fundamentally equal. Yet, this does not mean that the process of achieving equality involved in disassembling and challenging practices that lead to inequality can be accomplished by simply deleting restrictive hierarchies or flattening membership boundaries. Such equal treatment practices often serve to nourish and reinforce inequalities as they fail to acknowledge the persistence of systemic barriers.

Resolving these problems requires not merely identifying the different socio-historical patterns of marginalization that shape lived experience, but also creating different supports and mechanisms to accommodate the particular ways that these structures and interactive dynamics actually shape the social landscape. It is the presence and functional integration of complex exclusionary mechanisms that highlights the importance of treating disadvantaged groups equitably. In short, equality is not the same as equity. Equality of treatment neglects the fact that people have different needs

and capacities. Equity considerations express the equality of all people through recognition of these diverse histories, experiences and needs of different oppressed groups.

3.4. The goal of fostering inclusion and fully recognizing the value of diversity requires understanding the unity of city, and community life and practice

Although it speaks to important differences, especially regarding access to authority and decision-making power, the opposition between the Community of Oshawa on the one hand and the City of Oshawa on the other is, in important ways, more imagined than real. Contained in the distinction between public and private life is the failure to understand the complex ways that the City is actually rooted in the community. Members of City Council are, after all, elected by residents, and are themselves both public servants and private members of the community. Moreover, City staff develop policy through community consultation and deliberation and often, like their elected counterparts, live within the City boundaries. This also means that their activity as public representatives is informed, in part, through their experiences of living in the community.

This embeddedness of the City in the community means that any practice “internal” to the City impacts its relationship and connectivity to the community as well as the community itself, just as any practice “internal” to the community influences the City apparatus. It follows from this that a full and comprehensive approach to inclusion and non-discrimination requires a dual mandate, both to foster equality in the community by eliminating barriers to City services and practices, and to combat exclusion and bias in the City workplace. In other words, this Plan recognizes that the goals of fairness and non-discrimination can only be realized locally when the lens of diversity and inclusion is applied both to the City’s human relations practices and to its engagement with the community as a service provider and regulator.

This principle carries further important implications for the development and coordination of local services, as City residents are equally impacted when Regional programs are misaligned with the goals contained in this Plan. This means that intergovernmental relations between the City of Oshawa and the Regional Municipality of Durham should also be coordinated and managed in the interests of fostering inclusive practices and achieving inclusive outcomes.

3.5. Language influences practice and action

It is broadly understood that policies and practices are initiated through broader institutional and organizational assemblages and that inclusive policies require inclusive institutional rules, norms, and codes of conduct. What is perhaps less well understood is that language – which is also normative - can also serve to erect or maintain exclusionary barriers, or, conversely, foster inclusionary practices. Language practices

reflect and create meaning systems or interpretative frameworks for understanding the complexity of the world. Communication involves selecting discourses informed by the “vantage point of particular positions in the social world” (Jessop 2010, 344). As different words and discourses are repeatedly used, their “contested origins” are often obscured so that patterns of discrimination are carried within different forms of expression (Jessop 2010, 340).

As a result, the language we use can, even if unintentionally, serve to reinforce and consolidate exclusion and signal recognition/non-recognition of particular communities. This acknowledgment of language as a mechanism or instrument of power shows the need to constantly evaluate and open up “common sense” language practices as an integral part of the inclusive, barrier-free outcomes supported by this Plan.

3.6. Inclusion requires participatory action and democratically informed community engagement

It is important for municipalities to adopt inclusive hiring strategies, and develop mechanisms to help the make-up of council and the city leadership team reflect the diversity of the community. Such practices potentially limit the oppressive influence of power informed discursive and structural relations.

Yet, inclusionary practices cannot simply be imposed through top-down mechanisms of control that merely gesture towards accountability and transparency, not least because dominant views of “otherness” are often embedded in regularized institutional practices. Rather, the principles and goals guiding this Plan require maximum forms of community participation and democratic engagement in the decision-making processes. Community engagement practices expand the learning and transformative capacity of public organizations by extending knowledge flows and help to cultivate relationships of trust and affinity between city officials and community leaders (The Council Initiative on Public Engagement 2017).

Ultimately, therefore, inclusive practices require an open, responsive and transparent public space for dialogue, argumentation and partnership where people can freely challenge the presentation of truth contained in different language practices, reveal the patterns of intersecting power that influence their connection to the city (and their lived experience more generally) and, of course, directly contribute to the decision process as equal participants rather than as customers or consumers of public goods. And for these community assemblies to be effective in breaking down extant patterns of discrimination and in repairing and improving fractured relations they must not only exist but strongly inform the development of municipal policies and practices.

The development and implementation of this Plan, therefore, demands a particular type of City-community rootedness or connectivity. This must be informed by the practice of inclusion and openness and the goals of fairness, justice and non-discrimination.

4. Strategic Directions

4.1. Leadership (L)

The sort of transformational change suggested by this Plan demands strong leadership capable of creating the conditions that encourage and enable people to be a part of that change. Council, the senior leadership team and champions throughout the City can accomplish this by consistently role-modelling inclusive practices and behaviours, communicating the values and purpose of the Plan and providing the resources necessary to achieve the goals of the Plan. This points, in particular, to the importance of establishing a Diversity and Inclusion Officer and developing a dedicated Diversity and Inclusion Staff Team to support implementation of the actions of the Plan.

Action Items:

- L1** Create the permanent position of Diversity and Inclusion Officer to be located within the central administration to support the implementation of the Diversity and Inclusion Plan.
- L2** Monitor human resource needs and consider the development of an appropriately funded and staffed Diversity Office as the Diversity and Inclusion Plan moves forward in its implementation.
- L3** Create a Staff Diversity Inclusion Team to assist with the actions identified in the Plan and monitor the City's progress in establishing an open and supportive environment for diverse groups.
- L4** Adapt and implement a diversity and inclusion lens and establish measures to ensure that this lens is fully utilized by each Department and Branch; incorporate action items of the Diversity and Inclusion Plan into Department Business Plans.
- L5** Develop diversity and inclusion performance and achievement measures for Managers and Directors to assess achievement of goals associated with the Plan; implement regular diversity and inclusion audits for Departments, Branches and City Council.
- L6** Link the Diversity and Inclusion Plan to existing City initiatives, and to Provincial and Federal priorities and legislation; audit internal City processes and practices that might pose a barrier to achieving the recommended actions in the Plan.
- L7** Continue to partner with the Region of Durham on a wide variety of initiatives related to diversity and inclusion [e.g. involvement in the Local Diversity and Immigration Partnership Council (LDIPC), poverty reduction strategies, accessible public transit, addressing the Health Neighbourhoods Report, etc.].
- L8** Continue to encourage a diversity of representation within City leadership; encourage diverse engagement in civic politics.

- L9** Introduce administrative policies and measures aimed at encouraging a diversity of representation on the City's Boards and Committees.
- L10** Establish relationships with community champions or leaders of diverse communities.
- L11** Increase the City's involvement with the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination (CCMARD).
- L12** Support senior leaders in their capacity to communicate the significance of diversity and inclusion as a central corporate policy and to offer active, visible guidance.
- L13** Continue to enhance integrated service delivery methods to assist in service access and information; consider the development of a Community Hub to provide central access to important public services and community activities and programs.
- L14** Establish formal procedures and guidelines for responding to acts of discrimination and hate occurring in the community.
- L15** Ensure that City practices do not assist groups/organizations that encourage or endorse discriminatory behavior.
- L16** Ensure that the language associated with all City services and programs is properly expressive of the principles reflected in the Diversity and Inclusion Plan.
- L17** Ensure the community is informed when official equity decisions will come before Council.
- L18** Provide inclusive leadership training for senior leadership, including members of Council.
- L19** Investigate opportunities to offer literacy and translation services to limit barriers to participation and inclusion.
- L20** Enhance and further develop the existing practice of acknowledging Indigenous lands at all public events.

4.2. Community Engagement and Participation (CE)

The Oshawa Diversity and Inclusion Plan recognizes democratic engagement as an integral part of building an inclusive and welcoming City. But it also understands public participation as a complex process informed, in part, by different historical legacies and power imbalances. As a result, the Plan requires new institutional channels and communicative and outreach processes to meaningfully facilitate democratic input and calls on community members to continue to encourage political activity and demonstrate a desire to participate. Central to this approach are proactive programs designed to build trust and deepen lines of communication with marginalized and oppressed groups. This is the necessary basis upon which can be built effective new

mechanisms for community consultation, as well as evaluative tools to assess the ongoing usefulness of these mechanisms in drawing input from all members of the community.

Action Items:

CE1 Develop a Community Engagement and Targeted Outreach Strategy aimed at identifying obstacles to participation, finding different ways of engaging with equity groups and strengthening community participation in decision-making processes across the corporation; as part of this strategy, consider appointing a Community Engagement Advisor to liaise and support all Departments and Branches in community engagement and outreach initiatives.

CE2 Establish a Community Consultative Committee to support the implementation and on-going development of diversity and inclusion projects.

CE3 Develop different community consultative panels on important social and policy issues.

CE4 Enhance and ensure use of Community Participation Tools across the corporation that can be used to guide community involvement in decision-making.

CE5 Consult with community groups to develop Community Engagement Measures that can be used to assess the City's progress across the corporation in achieving its public engagement goals.

CE6 Organize an annual or semi-annual meeting with individuals and organizations from marginalized groups to review City programs and services in accordance with current and expected needs.

CE7 Investigate opportunities under the Teaching City framework for a Teaching Laboratory at City Hall to foster the exchange of knowledge; partner with local educational institutions and community organizations to encourage open dialogue and innovative discovery.

CE8 Actively encourage members of diversity groups to engage in City politics and administration through the development of a Community Mentoring Program.

CE9 Develop an Inclusive Language Manual to promote inclusive action and direct the City's internal and external communications.

CE10 Develop online surveys to obtain community input on diversity and inclusion issues.

CE11 Consider geographic diversity through City facilities, services and event offerings; offer events in a variety of areas throughout the City.

CE12 Develop culturally appropriate, inclusive and accessible forms, programs and policies.

CE13 Work with the Region to develop an enhanced City Welcome Kit for new residents.

4.3. Community Development (CD)

Community members must act collectively to develop solutions to the problems they share. When communities are empowered they can determine change to help meet the goals of fairness, justice and non-discrimination. Expanding community capacity involves establishing mechanisms to strengthen neighbourhoods and building partnerships with organizations that work with marginalized groups and community members. The Oshawa Diversity and Inclusion Plan identifies community development as critical to achieving a partnership with the community through these and other mechanisms to promote equality, dialogue and empowerment.

Action Items:

CD1 Apply a diversity and inclusion lens to all City programs and services; commit to exploring how City initiatives impact equity groups.

CD2 Build and strengthen relationships with community members and organizations that work with marginalized groups; establish a strategy to identify, engage with and address community relations; actively seek out ideas for new events that appeal to, support or reflect diverse groups.

CD3 Work with the Region on the creation of a Community Development Plan aimed at enhancing understanding of the complex challenges faced by different local communities and neighbourhoods and addressing community needs through engagement, accessibility, partnership and resource development.

CD4 Work with a variety of public sector and non-profit organizations to develop a poverty reduction strategy for priority neighbourhoods.

CD5 Apply a diversity lens to all aspects of land use policy and planning.

CD6 Investigate the feasibility of a Community Connections Centre to encourage cross-cultural partnership, advance cultural expression and support community outreach and learning; partner with community members and organizations to build a strategy for the inclusive design and operation of the Centre.

CD7 Investigate grant programming changes aimed at enhanced support for community building and diversity related initiatives.

CD8 Continue to ensure images in City publications are properly representative of the City's diverse population.

CD9 Continue to support the development of Community Gardens.

- CD10** Continue to recognize high holidays and festivals celebrated by culturally diverse communities and enhance participation in awareness days and months through collaborations, City communication vehicles and program development.
- CD11** Showcase diverse figures and role models in art murals, statues and displays in public spaces throughout the community.
- CD12** Sign on as a Living Wage Employer to encourage the development of a good jobs economy.
- CD13** Enhance free, accessible and low-cost rental opportunities for community groups and members to provide educational services and enhance diversity-based awareness.
- CD14** Continue to participate in the Advancing Affordable Access to Recreation in Durham (AAARD) Committee and promote subsidy programs for recreation programs.
- CD15** Promote and organize different seminars, forums and workshops to encourage informed discussion on important diversity and inclusion issues, both in the community and in the workplace.
- CD16** Identify and develop community diversity and inclusion sponsors and champions; recognize local leaders and institutions that advance the goals of equity and non-discrimination.
- CD17** Explore community access to healthy food options; examine the presence of “food deserts” and other goods and services gaps in the City; participate in the Durham Climate Change Action Plan food security working group.
- CD18** Consider the development of a Human Rights/Peace Garden

4.4. Human Resource Development (HR)

To ensure both an inclusive workplace and inclusive services to the community, staff at all levels of the City must be prepared to learn and to model values, communication patterns and practices that signal a safe and welcoming environment. The City should strive to be an employer of choice because of its visible commitment to valuing the diversity of its staff and of the residents of the City. This will necessitate attention to inclusive hiring, retention and promotion practices, as well as ongoing access to resources and training.

Action Items:

4.4.1 Inclusive Workplace Culture

- HR1** Undertake a Workplace Climate Survey to explore and chart staff experience regarding the representation and experience of workplace climate and culture.

- HR2** Undertake an Employee Census to collect data on staff diversity.
- HR3** Clearly display the Diversity and Inclusion Plan on the City’s public website and intranet.
- HR4** Cultivate champions in the workplace to support diversity and inclusion goals and objectives.
- HR5** Establish diversity-related recognition as a way of creating a workplace culture that celebrates equity outcomes.
- HR6** Develop approaches and practices within the workplace to foster an integrative culture and sense of belonging.
- HR7** Encourage each Department and Branch to establish diversity and inclusion objectives that align with the Corporate approach.
- HR8** Enforce existing workplace harassment and discrimination policy and the internal complaints procedure, ensuring freedom from reprisals.

4.4.2 Hiring and Promotion

- HR9** Integrate equity and inclusion principles into job descriptions.
- HR10** Consider the use of name-blind applications.
- HR11** Review hiring and promotion practices through the framework of the diversity and inclusion lens to maximize representation of all communities.
- HR12** Train hiring managers on lawful hiring and the consequences of systemic discrimination and unconscious bias.
- HR13** Ensure that outreach and recruitment strategies are constructed to reflect the diversity of the community; use a blend of different resources (i.e., social media, community organizations) to create diverse application pools.
- HR14** Consider the feasibility of establishing diverse hiring panels.
- HR15** Develop a multiyear Recruitment Outreach Plan with emphasis on the gaps identified in the workplace census results.
- HR16** Enhance recruitment strategies to recognize diverse cultural groups and their responses to interview questions and situations through the continued use of social media and related technologies; identify and eradicate potential biases or barriers in jobs postings and questions used in job interviews.

4.4.3 Retention and Succession Planning

- HR17** Identify and address systemic barriers to professional development.
- HR18** Promote the creation of work practices that encourage innovation and expand diversity of thought.

- HR19** Provide equal access to all suitable career advancement opportunities.
- HR20** Continue to improve talent management strategies, such as succession planning, coaching and mentoring programs, to encourage employee engagement and enhance organizational capacity.
- HR21** Support and encourage active participation on the Staff Inclusion Team.
- HR22** Establish flexible work programs and policies to meet the diversity of staff needs.

4.4.4 Building Capacity

- HR23** Include the Diversity & Inclusion Officer in meetings on workplace policy as an essential contributor.
- HR24** Enhance education and training initiatives to ensure City of Oshawa employees are aware of the issues and can apply the responsibilities and protections articulated in the Ontario Human Rights Code.
- HR25** Create and implement an encompassing internal Diversity and Inclusion Communication Plan; communicate and monitor the Plan's ongoing development.
- HR26** Develop guidelines for inclusive language for paperwork, forms, communication and services.
- HR27** Enhance education for all staff on diversity issues; offer cultural competency training (e.g., unconscious bias training).
- HR28** Provide a welcoming space for staff to openly and safely discuss diversity and inclusion related issues, challenges and opportunities.
- HR29** Engage regularly with customer service staff to discuss and examine actions to advance the accessibility and availability of City services.

4.5. Education and Awareness (E)

This Plan recognizes the importance of education and awareness of diversity and inclusion for City Council members, City employees, and community members. Providing education and promoting awareness of diversity and inclusion will help identify and build appropriate mechanisms to achieve equality, inclusivity and fairness for all groups and community members in Oshawa.

Action Items:

- E1** Connect the Diversity and Inclusion Plan to other important City initiatives.
- E2** Collect demographic-based data as a baseline to track trends; regularly monitor relevant economic, social and census data from Statistics Canada.

- E3** Develop a communication strategy to promote and inform community members regarding different diversity and inclusion programs; educate and increase awareness among employees and the community about diversity issues and the need for change. Among the potential strategies to support this objective are training modules, cross-cultural communications, empathic listening skills training, diversity awareness training.
- E4** Create a publicly accessible diversity and inclusion newsletter that includes a diversity and inclusion factsheet.
- E5** Develop and continuously adjust the City’s marketing and promotional strategy to reflect diversity and inclusion achievements.
- E6** Work with community organizations to promote knowledge and awareness of healthy living practices; focus attention on the priority neighbourhoods identified by the Durham Region Health Neighbourhoods Report.
- E7** Post relevant diversity and inclusion knowledge resources (e.g., case studies, e-books, journal articles) on the City’s intranet and public website.
- E8** Create an awareness program about the diversity of our community.

5. Assessment and Accountability (AA)

Reflected in this Plan is a commitment to sustained change – the objective throughout is a lasting climate of fairness and non-discrimination based on the careful development and reorganization of City policies, practices and priorities. As the diversity and inclusion lens is blended into Corporate plans, and as data are collected to monitor progress, and communities incorporated into the decision-making process, the tracks of enduring change will be increasingly set in stone, even in the face of political shifts, staff change and resource scarcity.

It is recognized, however, that these actions may not be enough to realize the goals outlined above. The vision and strategies expressed by this Plan require a set of evaluation tools that allow policy makers and community members to see the benefits of equity and inclusion, effectively monitor and direct implementation progress, and identify ongoing gaps and emerging opportunities. The evaluation process affirmed by this Plan thus requires the establishment of standard measurement tools and regular public reporting mechanisms, as well as the build-up of an independent and autonomous organizational system that allows for the communication of dissent and helps enforce accountability.

Action Items:

5.1 Measurement and Review

- AA1** Develop an annual assessment tool to evaluate the implementation of

diversity and inclusion initiatives against the directives laid out in the action plan; partner with key community stakeholders and diversity groups to determine evaluative methods to gauge success/outcomes.

AA2 Engage with diversity groups to develop a diversity and inclusion impact assessment tool for use in developing new policy.

AA3 Establish regular reviews of all policies to ensure they meet the requirements and goals set out in the Diversity and Inclusion Plan.

5.2 Annual Reporting

AA4 Develop a publicly circulated Annual Report overviewing progress on diversity and inclusion actions that includes a corresponding Report Card as part of the City's regular business planning and reporting cycle.

5.3 Sustainability and Management

AA5 Continuously review Corporate reporting and decision-making procedures to ensure internal accountability and adherence to the goals and actions set out in the Diversity and Inclusion Plan; implement, as needed, new organizational mechanisms with sufficient authority, funding and independence to maximize the attainment of diversity and inclusion goals and actions.

AA6 Enhance internal diversity and inclusion complaints procedure to help monitor Plan progress, encourage feedback and identify problematic behavior/conduct; design procedures to produce a fair process and freedom from reprisal.

AA7 Develop a community feedback mechanism to help monitor Plan progress; build community feedback into annual diversity and inclusion reporting.

6. Glossary of Terms

Ableism - A system of oppression that privileges able-bodied people based on what is socially constructed as "normal". This system de-humanizes and de-values individuals based on one's ability to contribute to society's economic output. The result is the creation of social and physical barriers as well as discrimination for those with disabilities, which prevent them from full participation in society.

Classism - The division of people into a binary system in which poor, low-income and working class people are exploited based on real or perceived income, status and background differentials.

Discrimination - The act of differentiating between people on the basis of social hierarchies and historical forms of prejudice.

Diversity - The natural state of the world. When referring to humans, diversity refers to the composition of various genders, races, ethnicities, statuses, abilities, ages, sexual orientations, classes, beliefs, ideologies and other states of being.

Equity - Ensuring that all people have the resources or opportunities to succeed. It recognizes that true justice may demand treating people differently since they have different needs and capacities.

Equality work - The mental and physical labour involved in the pursuit of a fair and just society.

Ethnocentrism - Judging another's culture by the customs and values of one's own culture.

Homophobia - The unfounded and ahistorical fear of those who have sex and romantic relationships with the same sex, or who are perceived to, which results in the social and institutional exclusion of those people, their culture and lifestyle and may often lead to harassment and violence. Homophobia is related to gender roles and norms in society and, therefore, presents itself differently depending on the society.

Inclusion - The process of bringing in and making space for those who are marginalized by those with privilege.

Marginalization - The exclusion of people based on their identity and social and economic status.

Oppression - Mutually re-enforcing systems of supremacy that create a binary in which a dominant group benefits from the exploitation of a marginalized group. These multi-layered systems deprive people of choice while reinforcing the dominant group's control over institutions and ideology thereby permeating all aspects of social life.

Systemic discrimination - A pattern of behaviour and practice that, either intentionally or unintentionally, leads to the inclusion and exclusion of people based on identity groups, thereby reinforcing social hierarchies.

Social Identities - The social organizing of people based on race, sex, social background, religion, etc.

Social Capital - Access to actual or potential resources within society, whether earned or unearned based on networks of trust. These networks can often include or exclude people based on their status.

Racialized - The status of being "othered" according to an ascribed ethnic or racial identity in relation to the perceived superiority of whiteness.

Transphobia - The unfounded fear of trans* people and those who are perceived as trans* which results in the loss of status, making trans* people more susceptible to harassment and violence.

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