

Oshawa Community Diversity Equity & Inclusion Committee

Meeting Date: Tuesday, October 28, 2025

Meeting Time: 7 P.M. to 9 P.M.

Location: City Hall Committee Room, 50 Centre St. S., Oshawa, ON L1H 3Z7

Present: Saumya Bhasin, Elle de Lyon, Leah Norman, Jacob Powless, Lee Rosen, Donald Shields

Regrets: **Regrets:** Maria Chinelli, Nadea Clarke (Vice-Chair), Sadie Goddard-Durant, Christine Goodwin, Ayesha Khan, Ariela Kong, Fleursha Milfort, Pam Reines (Chair), Kweku Winful

Staff: Vanessa Abban, Brent Howell, Quinn Ingram, Sana Kohistani, Peter Piraino

Meeting Notes

1. Welcome
 - V. Abban opened the meeting in the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair.
2. Land Acknowledgement
 - L. Norman read the Land Acknowledgement.
3. African Ancestral Acknowledgement
 - V. Abban read the African Ancestral Acknowledgement.
4. Approval of Agenda
 - D. Shields moved to approve the agenda. Members agreed.
5. City Update
 - V. Abban Informed members that Fleursha Winfort has stepped down from the committee.
 - Members agreed to proceed with the highest-scored candidate to assume the vacancy.
 - The committee will be holding elections for Chair and Vice Chair at the next meeting, each position will serve a one-year term. Members are encouraged to express interest prior to the meeting. The member with the highest score will be selected.
 - V. Abban provided an update on current City initiatives.

- The Employee Demographic Census has been extended and is being concluded at the end of this week.
- An upcoming Cultural Plan consultation will be scheduled as a virtual meeting to provide members the opportunity to share feedback.

6. Oshawa's Forestry Master Plan Engagement (Brent Howell)

- B. Howell, Forestry Supervisor, and P. Piraino presented on the development of Oshawa's 20-year Forestry Master Plan. The plan focuses on long term sustainability, biodiversity, and tree equity.
 - The vision is to foster a healthy and resilient environment for future generations.
 - The Forestry Master Plan will include tree maintenance, planting, canopy management, and storm response strategies.
 - Members asked questions about tree canopy diversity, particularly the City's goal to reduce Norway Maple Coverage to below 10% to increase species diversity.
 - It was noted that canopy assessments are reviewed every five years.
 - Discussion included the potential for updates to by-laws affecting trees on private property, with staff noting that these may be reviewed alongside the Forestry Master Plan.
 - Staff encouraged feedback through the online feedback form. from the Committee to ensure community engagement informs the Forestry Master Plan.

7. Community Hate Reporting Tool Feedback

- V. Abban provided an overview of the Region's Hate Reporting Tool and Anti-Hate campaign, developed in collaboration with Victim Services of Durham Region. The tool is designed to be an accessible and anonymous platform modeled after the Ottawa Victim Services portal. The Region has requested feedback.
- The committee feedback included:
 - The tool should make clear whether its primary purpose is data collection, victim support, or both.

- Members emphasized the importance of language accessibility, recommending that translation features be available in top community languages.
- Suggestions were made for clearer communication of available resources, including support contacts and outcomes after submission.
- Members recommended the inclusion of a human connection component (e.g., a follow-up from trained staff) for users seeking support.
- Accessibility and inclusion were highlighted as priorities: ensuring color contrast, mobile-first design, and diverse user testing.
- The Committee discussed privacy considerations, including data storage, disposal, and the intentional separation from police reporting systems.
- Members recommended that community partners, schools, and public websites promote the tool for broad visibility and sustained use.

8. D.E.I Awards

- The Committee discussed ongoing work on the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Champions Awards Program. In this meeting the edits and feedback from members were reviewed and discussed.
 - For the Business Champion Award, members discussed defining what constitutes a meaningful demonstration of DEI values, emphasizing transformative impact and measurable outcomes.
 - For the Community Champion Category, members agreed to take out the term “equity-deserving” from the draft for the purpose of clarity and inclusivity.

9. D.E.I Forum Follow-up

- Item deferred.

10. Adjournment

- Members agreed to adjourn the meeting.

The next meeting is November 25, 2025, 7 P.M. – 9 P.M. (Virtual)