

Information Report

Service Area	Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
Date	Friday, November 27, 2020
Subject	An update on Guelph's commitment to anti-racism, diversity and inclusion

Executive Summary

Purpose of Report

This information report serves as an update about how our organization is taking action against racial injustice to ensure inclusivity and equity for everyone in Guelph. This report builds on the report from July 24, 2020, [City of Guelph Commitment to Diversity Inclusion and Anti-racism Initiatives](#) and from the November 16, 2020 Council Workshop, [Our Shared Journey: Unpacking systemic Racism](#). We know that this is a long-term commitment and one that must be made in solidarity and collaboration with community organizations and individuals most affected. The City of Guelph continues to work collaboratively with internal and external partners and stakeholders to address the three previously identified areas of work:

1. Supporting community-driven systemic action through the Community Plan.
2. Creating and maintaining an inclusive workplace through the launch of the Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan.
3. Acting on Strategic Plan opportunities to embed anti-racism and inclusion practices and principles into our services, service delivery, policies and decision-making processes.

Key Findings

Incidents of racism continue to persist in our community, our country and around the world. At the same time, there is a new awareness about systemic inequality and an increased desire to create equity of opportunity, safety and inclusion for all in our community.

Through the Community Plan, Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan and the new Strategic Plan, the City is taking action against systemic racism to ensure inclusivity and equity for everyone in Guelph. This work is only possible in collaboration with those most affected and this dialogue must be sustained and open and result in concrete action and change. Given the importance and the community and corporate-wide nature of this work, the CAO's office is providing centralized leadership and oversight.

Financial Implications

The Community Plan and Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan initiatives are funded through existing budget. Additional initiatives will come forward as part of the normal budgeting processes.

Report

Details

This report provides a corporate update on anti-racism, diversity and inclusion activities underway. Staff are being conscious to work across departments rather than in silos, and identify opportunities for collaboration both internally and externally.

This report is organized based on the three previously identified streams:

1. Supporting community-driven systemic action through the Community Plan.
2. Creating and maintaining an inclusive workplace through the launch of the Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan.
3. Acting on Strategic Plan opportunities to embed anti-racism and inclusion practices and principles into our services, service delivery, policies and decision-making processes.

1. Supporting community-driven systemic action through the Community Plan.

Community Plan: Setting the Standard for the Elimination of Systemic Racism

On May 16, 2019, after 18 months of research and extensive community engagement, our community presented [A United Vision: Guelph's Community Plan](#) to City Council. Since then, the Community Plan has shaped many things. It became the foundational vision for the [City's Strategic Plan](#). And it has helped spark conversations at the City and in the community about new opportunities for alignment across sectors for greater collective impact.

For all its strengths and support of diversity and inclusion, Guelph's Community Plan does not specifically address systemic racism. This next stage of the initiative will focus on making those foundational changes and being honest about the realities of systemic racism and working together as a community to eliminate it. This is a visionary goal that the entire community can get behind and be part of.

The Community Plan also continues to support the City to achieve its corporate mission, vision and values and will ensure we are making meaningful progress towards the goals of our Strategic Plan, Future Ready in an inclusive and equitable way.

Supporting Council in their leadership role

Council's role as elected representatives of our community is a critical part of our community success in eliminating systemic racism. As such we continue to keep Council informed and engaged to support ongoing efforts.

Council learning workshop: Our Shared Journey: Unpacking Systemic Racism

On November 16, 2020, Council participated in an important learning opportunity which provided an introduction to systemic racism and an opportunity to hear about the next stages of the Community Plan work. This session was intended to be the start of an important learning and change journey.

The introductory session aimed to achieve the following, that:

- Council has a fulsome understanding of the Community Plan
- Council is equipped with deeper awareness of systemic racism
- Council better understand indigeneity and connection to this journey
- Council begins to identify how best to support this important corporate and community work as we set the standard toward the elimination of systemic racism

The City engaged two local leaders to facilitate and conduct the workshop:

- Marva Wisdom, a local leader and diversity consultant embedded in the Community Plan project, and
- Giidaakunadaad (Nancy) Rowe, a Mississauga, Ojibwe of the Anishinaabek Nation located at New Credit First Nation. Nancy holds an honors BA in Indigenous Studies and Political Science. She is an acknowledged knowledge-keeper and Elder for this territory, an educator, consultant and a Traditional Practitioner of Anishinaabek lifeways, views and customary practices and is currently completing a master's degree of Environmental Resource Studies at the University of Waterloo.

At the session, Council discussed the important roles they can play to galvanize the community and encourage collective action toward ending systemic racism. Moving forward Council will support the Community Plan in the following ways:

- Attending and listening to Community Plan conversations
- Support identifying groups and leaders interested in joining these conversations and this effort
- Support the convening of conversations/sessions/ workshops with stakeholders and constituents
- Amplifying communication efforts, using their channels and networks to share what's learned and opportunities to collaborate
- Opportunity to broaden your insight in how you deliberate on decisions that impact equity seeking groups in our city

This workshop was the first of many opportunities for Council to continue to support anti-racism efforts as part of the Community Plan.

Community Plan context, approach, progress and next steps

The new context of our work

The development of the Community Plan involved working in non-traditional ways and engaged community leadership in an authentic process of co-creation. Continuing this approach is going to be essential to the success of anti-systemic racism work. The City's role in supporting these community wide efforts is continually evolving and redefines the bounds of what leadership and service traditionally look like, and demonstrating how engagement can become increasingly culturally sensitive and open to working in ways that are respectful of cultural norms and practices of others.

Ultimately, the City is looking to work alongside the community to transform our government and other local systems to reflect the diverse community we live in and to ensure that this understanding of our diversity is reflected in service delivery, staffing, policies and governance structures. Engaging equity seeking groups will help the community shape government and other important local systems in positive ways.

This approach will enable the community to set the standard for the elimination of systemic racism by:

- Listening and learning what systemic practices need to evolve to be responsive to the needs of equity seeking groups.
- Helping identify gaps in information and offering support and resources
- Working with community partners, groups and leaders to develop collective capacity for sustained, prolonged effort to address systemic racism that has developed over the course of generations.
- Understand the root causes and symptoms of systemic racism and work with the broader community to develop a plan to make change.
- Better understanding of our connected identities, how they intersect and the compelling case for allyship in this work.

Sustained and long-term action takes time

It is recognized that real change takes time, and community change processes must be responsive to diverse cultural and knowledge systems. These elements must guide the pace and path of the work. In a traditional government setting, the goals, the methodology, the timeline, the outputs and outcomes of a process like this would normally be firmly documented and locked in at the start of any process. It is important to recognize that this approach has many benefits in various contexts, however in this case is not a realistic expectation and in fact could be detrimental to the sustained transformation that we seek. We need to build trust and avoid harm. Embracing dialogue and diverse cultural and knowledge systems will be important to guide this work and will create an innovative new model for other communities to learn from in their journey to eliminate systemic racism.

The team has taken a slow, methodical approach to ensure that conversations are happening with the right people in a growing number of groups. This approach has

been appreciated and continues to lead to stronger relationships, deeper learning and next conversations.

Working Principles

It will be important to follow the principles below to be able to act credibly as a supportive platform for community voice and action.

1. Listen first,
2. Learn and adapt,
3. Follow the community's lead, and
4. Do no harm.

As engagement continues, these working principles will be explored and developed further to ensure they continue to guide this work appropriately.

The Approach: Community leadership and collaboration

Because the organizational and individual learning curves are steep, and the work is increasingly being led by the community, the process must be grounded by community leadership, with each stage building on the success and challenges of the preceding steps.

This complex work requires building partnerships, collaborations and deeper relationships with:

1. Those most affected by systemic racism
2. City of Guelph elected officials, senior leadership and all staff
3. Community partners, organizations, educational institutions, community organizations and businesses
4. Community at large including those who live, work and study here

The City has engaged Marva Wisdom, a local community leader and consultant to conduct the early scoping phases of the initiative. Early engagement is validating the importance of the following elements as key to the success of the Community Plan initiative and the next steps:

- Dialogue: Conversations must build from different points of understanding and experiences. The results of those developing conversations will be the basis of the plan to set the community standard for the elimination of systemic racism.
- Learning: Everyone learns through this work across communities about our national and local histories of racism and colonialism, the complexity and intersectionality of our communities, and how equity seeking communities experience their lives in Guelph.
- Understanding: Gaining an understanding of our current landscape related to anti-systemic racism will help build from what's already happening and the capacity that already exists in Guelph. Answers can be mapped to the following questions:
 - Who is already working to address systemic racism?

- Who has expertise, capacity, space and resources available for support?
- Who needs urgent help?
- What are our goals and how can we achieve them?
- Sharing: Being open and letting each other know about the opportunities to engage, contribute and act. This will amplify understanding of good and emerging effective practices.
- Action: Without action, established trust will erode over time. While racism has been integrated into cultural and institutional systems over generations, short-term actions will be cumulative, resulting in lasting change and transformation.

Three step community conversations

Community conversations are critical throughout this work. Engaging with communities within their spaces and groups provides the opportunity for those communities to safely discuss how they experience racism and surface solutions as they see it, based on their common lived experience. This also allows for stronger buy-in and commitment to the journey toward the goal of eliminating systemic racism.

Over the past two months the team have begun early outreach and are continuing the work that involves the following three steps.

Step 1. Initial outreach to those most affected by systemic racism

- Initial conversations, small group meetings and presentations to convey the City's readiness for action and change
- Measuring support and willingness to engage with the City and Community Plan approach

Step 2. Conversations within individual communities: groups like the Muslim Society of Guelph and Guelph Black Heritage Society and others hosting conversations with members of their communities. Communities certainly cross into different groups and individuals may end up in multiple conversations.

- Identifying champions of change: engaging, leading and facilitating dialogue
- Testing goals set out for this work through dialogue
- Gaining a deeper understanding of the local impact of systemic racism
- Surface work already happening to support anti-racism efforts and identify potential action areas for investment, and support.

Step 3. Whole community conversations: bringing various communities together for a concentrated conversation—the timing and format of this discussion will be determined by leaders of various communities. This conversation could be augmented by online conversations lead by community leaders and supported by elected officials.

- Discuss the steps that need to be taken to eliminate systemic racism

- Assess, test and validate what we've heard. Learn enough to be able to develop a plan on how to move forward as a community to make lasting, meaningful, comprehensive change.
- To begin the process of action and change.

Progress to date and next steps

Since the July 24, 2020 Information Report, we have reached out to the people and organizations most affected by systemic racism in our community—Guelph's Black, Indigenous, People of Colour (BIPOC) communities (step 1).

The community members, organizations, and leaders that Marva and staff are reaching out to are helping us understand the breadth and depth of the issues and choices before us—the areas of greatest need and what steps we need to take together.

We are encouraged with the progress of our initial outreach and first conversations. These initial conversations throughout the community have determined groups, organizations, and individual commitment to the goal of setting the standard for eliminating systemic racism.

To date, in-depth conversations have been had with leaders from:

- Guelph Black Heritage Society
- Black Lives Matter Guelph
- Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation
- Muslim Society of Guelph
- University of Guelph
 - Senior administration
 - Athletics department
 - Guelph Black Professional Students Association
 - Sociology & Anthropology Department
 - Office of Diversity and Human Rights
- Local Immigration Partnership
- Guelph Neighbourhood Support Coalition
- Upper Grand District School Board
- Wellington Catholic District School Board
- Community Health Centre
- Guelph General Hospital
- Guelph and Area Ontario Health Team
- Rainbow Diversity Institute
- Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo, Wellington
- Integrated Youth Services
- Guelph Community Foundation
- Guelph Chamber of Commerce
- United Way Guelph Wellington Dufferin
- Toward Common Ground
- Guelph Film Festival

Indigenous outreach:

An essential component of the initial outreach was to engage with First Peoples and this outreach both intends to build new relationships while continuing to strengthen those relationships already in place. Indigenous voices must be involved in leading

this effort if as a community and government we are to make comprehensive progress towards eliminating systemic racism.

In addition to outreach and early calls with existing relationships, Marva Wisdom met with the Curriculum Leader for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education at the Upper Grand District School Board. Their support led to the introduction to and subsequent development of a new relationship with Nancy Rowe who is a Knowledge Keeper, grandmother and Elder of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation.

Although only one voice, Nancy has a deep understanding of the region's Indigenous community and approaches for effective engagement. Nancy has expressed her support for the Community Plan approach and co-facilitated Council's introductory learning session "Our Shared Journey: Unpacking Systemic Racism" as an early step.

The team continues to reach out to existing relationships that have been built over the years by staff across the organization.

Broader stakeholder outreach:

Through direct communication we are encouraging people (via a Community Plan list of 350 partners and community members) to reach out to the City. The project team is interested in finding those who are working to eliminate systemic racism in our community or who represent an organization, institution or business that wants to support change and help eliminate systemic racism in our community.

The project team have had a tremendous response from many in the community across sectors. A growing number have responded to the outreach:

- Research for Change
- Guelph Family Health Team
- Guelph Police Services
- Innovation Guelph
- PIN People and Information Network
- DENSO Mfg Canada
- Guelph Chamber of Commerce
- Dialectic
- Guelph Arts Council
- Downtown Guelph Business Association
- Art Not Shame
- Our Food Futures
- Ignatius Jesuit Centre
- Toward Common Ground
- Guelph Public Library
- Guelph Museums
- GW Coalition for Social Justice
- Capacity 3 Gallery
- The Making Box

The project team has received tremendous feedback with the willingness to provide leadership toward ongoing conversations. These responses continue to assure the team that the support needed to champion this goal and continue engagement beyond the formal conversation process. There is also considerable appetite to work across sectors to learn from each other and build our collective capacity.

A follow up survey will be sent to these partners to gain a better understanding of existing work they are undertaking so that we can begin to identify areas of strength as a community and start the process of learning from one another and aligning our collective efforts.

Step 2 and 3: The next series of conversations (step 2) are scheduled throughout November and December. This series includes a conversation with a focus on the Black community will be organized and lead by the Guelph Black Heritage Society and involve Black Lives Matter Guelph. It is anticipated that step 3 will continue early into 2021.

Data Collection and Measurement

One area the Community Plan approach can support is the collection of data to better understand our community and the realities of systemic racism and where progress is and isn't being made. There is some data available on this topic at larger geographies such as, the Environics Institute, in collaboration with several partners, released the final survey report, "[Canadian public opinion about racism and discrimination](#)" which details the results from two public opinion surveys undertaken in summer and fall 2020, however there is limited comparable data locally.

This is a topic area that has surfaced numerous times in early outreach and there is an appetite to work together to address these foundational needs. The collection of better data will support the community to track its progress over time as it strives to set the community standard for the elimination of racism. The first steps in this process will be to identify organizational or institutional partners to become involved in and to steer this important element of the work. More details of the scope of this element will follow in subsequent updates.

2. Creating and maintaining an inclusive workplace through the launch of the Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan.

Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan Update

The Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan has a vision of the City of Guelph as a workplace where people feel welcome, valued and engaged in their service to our teams and community. The Plan was developed in 2018, using a consultation with our employees and leaders and using existing employee experience data and best practices in workplace diversity and inclusion. The Plan has three focus areas and defined success indicators detailed below that support our Human Resources department and leaders to focus and understand our progress.

Focus areas

Indicators

Commit to an inclusive culture

Employees develop more clarity about the behaviours that help us to create an inclusive workplace.

Leaders are talking about our Plan with more confidence and frequency.

Flexible mindset and work practices

Employee engagement data is showing progress towards greater and more consistent levels of engagement.

Demographic data on workforce across the talent management

trajectory is more reflective of the labour market.

Networks and industry partnerships

A GBDI audit shows upward progress with recognizing, valuing and embedding inclusion competencies within our employment practices.

Network and industry partners have greater awareness of the progress of the Diversity and Inclusion Plan.

Commitment to an inclusive culture

Our 2020 focus is on ensuring employees and leaders understand our commitment to our corporate value of inclusion, and the importance of anti-racism and addressing systemic racism.

This process includes various communication, learning and development strategies that started with the Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan launch in the summer. All of our employee engagement and learning activities such as onboarding and orientation programs, Corporate Management Team (CMT) meetings, a monthly learning focus, and Service Area Town Halls include learning activities about inclusive behaviours and our Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan. Leaders are sharing this learning with their teams. Human Resources Advisors are supporting their clients with participation and success with the plan's goals.

The Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan implementation will continue to engage with our leaders and workforce. Engagement helps ensure the actions are relevant to the workforce's needs today and in the future. Recruitment is currently underway for a cross-functional and diverse group of employees and leaders, presently called the Welcome Workplace team (WWT). They will guide the various projects within the plan, show allyship and advocate for needed changes, and be champions in recognizing our progress as we work towards our goals. An intentional effort is underway to support employees underrepresented within our workplace to participate in this team. This focus includes employees who have disabilities, or are Black, Indigenous, identify as racialized or LGBTQ2+, to participate in this opportunity. This team meets for the first time in late November and engages in an onboarding program in early January.

Flexible mindset and work practices

Being flexible challenges us to work in ways that could be new or not often done. Our commitment to anti-racism, diversity and inclusion will require more robust, new or more consistent skills in being flexible in our mindset and working together. This commitment to flexibility moves us towards mindsets and practices that are intentional and accountable in integrating and reflecting our current and potential workforce's multiple needs, perspectives, and experiences. Employees and leaders alike have continued support through this change. The launch of the Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan in the summer introduced key inclusion behaviours that will be the foundation of this work. In 2020, the Human Resources department

introduces two new initiatives that develop flexibility and support our leaders and employees in developing and practicing more inclusive mindsets and work practices.

The City is preparing to pilot an online continuous performance system with the non-union (NUME) employee group in 2021. This move from a paper-based to an electronic and mobile-friendly platform offers greater flexibility for meaningful and useful performance development discussions between leaders and their team members. The process uses an online interface similar to current web applications and social media to help employees spend 15 minutes of employee time for an update and 5 minutes of leader time to review.

This platform addresses bias, or set patterns of behaviour. It helps leaders and employees to reduce recency bias, halo effect, and other common biases in the performance review process. The pilot process will reinforce the importance of regular check-ins, which help the leader better understand employee challenges and provide support quickly.

The performance review process emphasizes positive psychology principles and uses a strengths-based approach. Robust reporting from the system will allow us to look for trends to address through additional training and development. The pilot of this tool should support our NUME leaders in developing their flexibility and skill with developing their teams' strengths and ultimately helping the organization better understand the talent and potential of our NUME employees.

The Plan's goals require new or revised employee programs, and work will begin with developing a religious inclusion guideline. The guideline will support leaders and employees with information and practices that help create a workplace culture where employees of faith and without faith are welcomed and reflected in the workplace. The process will start in December with an educational activity and a project team's development to help create the guideline.

The project team approach will be a pilot for a more inclusive approach to employee program and guideline development. We will continue these efforts in 2021 to implement an inclusive framework for all new or updated employee policies and programs.

Networks and industry partnerships

Partnerships are essential for all the work we do at the City of Guelph. Consultation and teamwork across departments, teams, professional associations, government levels, and within the different stakeholder groups in our community guide the development of all our programs. The Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan implementation fosters and develops partnerships to help:

- Human Resources team and leaders learn and share inclusive practices,
- Increase familiarity with the talent and potential of the full scope of the labour market,
- Grow the reputation of The City of Guelph as a municipal employer committed to anti-racism, diversity, and inclusion. We will be a leading

employer, where employees are welcomed and engaged in their service to our community.

Partnerships with our community support the City of Guelph with understanding, as well as attracting and developing the next generation of municipal employees. In 2020, the Human Resources department formed a partnership with the Experiential Learning office at the University of Guelph. The Clerks department has started an experiential learning activity to help the team understand the experience that various parts of our diverse community have with the electoral process. The research will support more inclusive voter engagement strategies for the next municipal election. The University has already planned to add this research to the curriculum, building more awareness about students' municipal careers and interests. Human Resources will continue to promote the value of experiential learning opportunities to their clients as they support them with forecasting their future talent needs. Several programs were re-launched in the summer, including:

- Review and promotion of youth-focused grants for summer employment.
- Co-op with post-secondary institutions and high schools
- Municipal internship for immigrants at Guelph (MII@Guelph) program
- Mentorship Alliance with Lutherwood

Additional strategic outreach and engagement activities will commence as part of the inclusive recruitment project consultation efforts.

In the summer and early fall, the Human Resources team participated in labour market education and outreach activities planned by the local Chamber of Commerce, Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo, Wellington and Dufferin, Communitech, the Local Immigration Partnership of Guelph-Wellington, and the Ontario Municipal Human Resources Professional Association online conference. Diversity, inclusion and resiliency were common themes and priorities for labour market recovery. Several employees at the City of Guelph are also active with municipal communities of practice and professional association sub-committees that focus on inclusive employment practices.

In early 2020, plans were underway to start a working group of community partners, Human Resources Advisors, and leaders to help the City of Guelph have a more inclusive recruitment process. Leadership vacancies in Human Resources and the prioritization of the COVID-19 response and supporting actions put the plan on hold.

The project scope includes reviewing internal and external recruitment activities and actions will be phased in and assessed over the Plan's three years. This project is a necessary action that will help the City attract, develop and retain a workforce that reflects the labour market. This project will also be a rich learning experience for Human Resources and leaders within the organization.

3. Acting on Strategic Plan opportunities to embed anti-racism and inclusion practices and principles into our services, service delivery, policies and decision-making processes.

Departments across the city are working to address equality and issues of systemic racism in day to day programs and service delivery. The individual program updates provided below represent current areas of focus and identified opportunities to date. It is anticipated that as we listen and learn more from our residents, our customers and our partners we will uncover more opportunities to be reviewed and addressed. Ending systemic racism is a long-term commitment across our organization and we are only beginning to understand our opportunities for learning and change.

a) Increasing Diversity on Guelph's Agencies, Boards and Committees

As part of the City's [commitment to diversity, inclusion and anti-racism](#), the City Clerk's Office held a webinar on "Increasing Diversity on Guelph's Committees" on August 20, 2020 with invited guests from community groups and organizations who represent traditionally underrepresented groups. During that webinar the City Clerk's Office committed to partner with the community groups in the recruitment of more Black, Indigenous, people of colour, people who identify as members of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Two Spirit (LGBTQ2+) community and other underrepresented groups on the City's committees.

The City Clerk's Office also conducted a survey of existing members of the various advisory committees, local boards, agencies, commissions and associations to collect information related to race, gender and disability. The survey data shows that significant gaps exist in the representation of certain groups on the City's advisory committees, local boards, agencies, commissions and associations, specifically visible minorities, persons with a disability, and persons who identify as a gender other than male or female in comparison to similar data from the community as a whole. Additional details on this data collection can be found in the November 2020 [Public Appointments to Advisory Committees, Local Boards, Agencies, Commissions and Associations report](#). The City Clerk's Office will continue collecting and reporting on this data in future appointment reports.

Beyond improving representation on committees, a better understanding of the experience that committee members have after appointment is necessary, including level of engagement, the perception of how their work contributes to City Council's decision-making, and whether any barriers to participation exist after being appointed. Further data and information gathering regarding the experience of existing and newly appointed committee members will be used to inform future recommendations to City Council regarding potential changes to policies governing advisory committees, local boards, agencies, commissions and associations.

b) Exploring compensation for people with lived experience in the City's community engagement process

The City has begun working with community partners to understand and respond to a growing imperative for governments to compensate people with lived experience where their experience and perspective is sought to inform decision-making.

This body of work will result in a draft policy which, if adopted, could guide the organization in removing barriers to meaningful participation from groups traditionally underrepresented. Compensating people with lived experience where their experience is explicitly sought by the City is in alignment with the City of Guelph Community Plan and the Diversity and Inclusion Plan.

c) Modernizing and improving customer service

The City acknowledges that it has to do better at placing citizens at the centre of municipal service design in order to deliver services that truly reflect the needs of underrepresented groups. By delivering existing services and designing new ones from the point of view of equity-seeking groups—including those who identify as Black, Indigenous, people of colour, and members of LGBTQ2+—the City can better serve those in our community who have long faced systemic barriers. In addition, the City continues to fulfill its commitments under the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act](#) and associated regulations and, in doing so, is working to ensure services are accessible to persons with disabilities.

d) Supporting BIPOC businesses to strengthen our local economy

As part of efforts to support local businesses owned by BIPOC entrepreneurs, Guelph Shops will be adding Business Spotlight Profiles to the website (guelphshops.ca). These 500-750 word business spotlight profiles will give business owners the opportunity to provide information about themselves, their business, why they chose Guelph, etc.

Economic Development and Tourism is connecting in with various organizations to identify BIPOC business owners/entrepreneurs to feature in spotlights which are anticipated to begin in December. These spotlights will be proposed through the Economic Development newsletter, social media and other media channels where applicable.

e) Our Food Future supporting inclusivity

One of Our Food Futures Guiding Principles is to be accessible and inclusive. Many of the key collaborators in the Our Food Future initiative are taking action to ensure that diverse communities are engaged in their programs and service delivery. For instance 10C is implementing internal guiding principles centred on equity while Provision Coalition released public communications opening conversations about structural inequities in the food system.

Increasing access to affordable, nutritious foods

- **Food from Home = Food for Home:** Currently, one in five people living in the Guelph area are immigrants. Based on the 2016 Guelph-Wellington Immigrant Survey Report, 42 per cent of respondents do not always have access to healthy food. They also lack access to ethnic and culturally specific foodstuffs. Some fruits and vegetables are difficult to find or unaffordable: things like sorrel and callaloo and epazote. In other cases, the varieties available in Canada don't taste the same as those in their home country. Yet a number of these food items can be grown right here, and many newcomers have farming skills. What they lack is access to any growing space. Food

from Home = Food for Home provides access to gardening space and education, building capacity for newcomers in our community to produce and distribute culturally appropriate foods.

- **Guelph-Wellington Urban Agriculture Challenge:** In order to attract a diverse array of applicants, 10C and the Smart Cities Office created promotional materials for the program in 5 different languages and circulated the materials via Immigration services.

Supporting new and existing food businesses

- **The SEED:** A project of the Guelph Community Health Centre, The SEED is an award-winning project that runs several programs and social enterprises. These include community food markets, cooking workshops, food distribution to schools and food pantries, and more.

Taking action to strengthen food system resiliency

- **Food System Resiliency Table:** To assist with post-COVID-19 economic recovery efforts, we are convening a small group of our Community Steering Committee to create a Food Resiliency Table. The goal of this group is to support the development of a resilient regional food system that contributes to a green recovery from COVID-19. This group includes residents and key collaborators from the Our Food Future network. Together, they gather intelligence on the regional agri-food sector, develop recommendations or programs to support short-term and mid-term needs, and champion the 10-point Grow Back Better recovery plan.

f) Museum initiatives update

Guelph Museums and the Guelph Black Heritage Society are committed to preserving local Black history and the experiences of Guelph individuals, families, and communities at this pivotal time. Together, we look to raise awareness about the impacts of racism and show solidarity for the families most impacted. Through Rapid Response Collecting, Guelph Museums is collecting contemporary objects and personal expressions reflective of this significant social movement. This type of collecting will help us to preserve truths about how we are living in this moment.

Through Young Canada Works grant funding, Guelph Museums was able to bring on board a BIPOC Heritages Curatorial Assistant for 10 months. Unfortunately, not a permanent position at the museum, it nevertheless enables us to continue to explore and expand on our founding story. This Curatorial Assistant, working closely with all Museum staff, will help us better understand the complete and inclusive history of our community. It is one way we honour the commitment to solidarity and reconciliation.

g) UNESCO Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities

Throughout this report, it is clear that the organization is making progress to align its efforts to combat racism and discrimination of all kinds. The City is now poised to take the important step to join 82 other municipalities across Canada to join the UNESCO Coalition for Inclusive Municipalities. This coalition supports members to improve their practices and policies to promote social inclusion, to eradicate all forms of racism and discrimination through policies and other action, and also to promote human rights and diversity.

Prospective members must build a case for membership and gain a formal Council resolution and declaration. Municipalities must also show how they will develop an action plan that supports 10 commitments. In Q1, 2021, Council will receive a formal staff report outlining more details on the coalition with a formal motion for Council to support Guelph's intention to join.

Financial Implications

The Community Plan and Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan initiatives are funded through existing budget. Additional initiatives will come forward as part of the normal budgeting processes.

Consultations

This report has been developed in consultation with the CAO's Office, Corporate Services, Infrastructure, Development and Enterprise, and Public Services.

Strategic Plan Alignment

The work identified in this report directly aligns to the Strategic Plan. Through the Working Together for our Future priority, this work will improve our ability to attract and develop accountable employees who work collaboratively and creatively to deliver services, as well as improve how the City communicates with residents and delivers services. In addition, this work aligns with the Powering our Future priority. Specifically, to help businesses succeed and add value to the community.

Attachments

None

Departmental Approval

None

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