

# Information Report

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| Service Area | Office of the Chief Administrative Officer  |
| Date         | Friday, July 24, 2020   |
| Subject      | <b>City of Guelph Commitment to Diversity<br/>Inclusion and Anti-racism Initiatives</b> |

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## Executive Summary

### Purpose of Report

This information report serves as an introduction, to start a formal dialogue about how our organization will take action against racial injustice and ensure inclusivity and equity for everyone in Guelph. 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.

This report will cover three 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

Anti-racism marches across the world and here in Guelph have galvanized our community towards a deep reflection of our role in fighting for equity of opportunity, safety and inclusion for all.

There are immediate opportunities that the Community Plan, Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan and the new Strategic Plan presents for the City to take action against racial injustice and to ensure inclusivity and equity for everyone in Guelph.

This work must happen in collaboration with those most affected and this dialogue must be sustained and open and result in concrete action and change.

Staff will bring forward additional updates on this important body work, with clear implications and recommended action for the organization over the coming months.

Given the importance and corporate-wide nature of this work, the CAO's office will provide centralized leadership and oversight.

### Financial Implications

The Community Plan and Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan initiatives are funded through existing budget. Additional initiatives deriving from work stated in the Strategic Plan will come forward as part of the 2021 – 2024 operating budget.

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# Report

## Details

The anti-racism protest marches across the world and here in Guelph have galvanized our community with a deep reflection on our role in fighting for equity of opportunity, safety, and inclusion for all. Anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism have been especially highlighted by the killing of George Floyd in the United States and with other law enforcement-involved deaths and assaults in Canada. This has served to spark an awakening to the deeply rooted issue of systemic racism.

In our own community, where more than 5,000 people marched in a demonstration in support of Black and Indigenous lives, people and communities are uniting around anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism. Conversations are taking place within organizations and groups throughout the community, including our own, about what needs to happen next to address systemic racism and ensure equity for everyone in an increasingly diverse and growing city.

In addition, our community is currently responding to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated economic downturn. The secondary impacts of this crisis are still being understood, however early research from around the world suggests that this pandemic has disproportionately impacted certain populations for example based on race, gender, income, age and physical or mental health. To fully recover from the pandemic and build a more resilient community, we must collectively surface and address these disparities.

As a municipal government, we have an important opportunity and responsibility to listen, learn and take action to help address these issues as we implement the new Strategic Plan: Guelph. Future Ready. Council will receive the draft Future Ready Action Plan for discussion at a forthcoming workshop on July 27, 2020. This workshop will be an opportunity for Council to provide additional input on the key measures of success and to discuss potential financial strategies to make progress on these important initiatives.

This information report serves as an introduction, to start the formal dialogue about how our organization will take action against racial injustice and ensure inclusivity and equity for everyone in Guelph. 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.

This information report will cover three main areas of work. As additional areas of opportunity are identified, or work progresses, staff will bring forward further updates to Council.

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 principals into our services, service delivery, policies and decision-making processes.

### **Community Plan Review: Setting the community standard for the elimination of systemic racism**

During 2018 and 2019, the City of Guelph developed a Community Plan shaped by the community, owned by the community, and implemented collaboratively with the community. This plan is intended to be a living document to be continuously reviewed, to ensure that we identify and address any gaps in how we build a City of belonging.

It was well-understood that this unique Community Plan “would help guide the work of local government and agencies that serve our community and provide a framework for monitoring our progress”. This plan and the supporting engagement and research have proven to be an invaluable resource for our organization. This community information has been used to support the development of multiple master plans, projects and programs. The plan has also been used by others in the community in their conversations and actions to strengthen Guelph’s future.

Today, we have an opportunity to be even more intentional in moving our City forward with the Community Plan as a foundation on which to build and grow in an inclusive way. Staff have started conversations with community members about how the Community Plan might better reflect this need and explore what it would require for Guelph to ‘set the community standard for the elimination of systemic racism in Canada’.

This work requires close collaboration and agreement with those most affected, including revisiting our goal as stated above, and ensuring that community voices are heard and drive the conversations, in an equitable way.

The Community Plan team will work with broad, representative community leadership and invite their guidance and direction from the outset to fully develop the scope of the work, to validate the overarching goal, and to agree to the next steps.

We anticipate there will be four main components to the Community Plan work, all of which will need to be agreed upon in partnership with community leadership.

1. Facilitating conversations to develop a project scope and direction.
2. Exploring how to measure and report on Guelph’s progress toward inclusion, diversity and anti-racism.
3. Reviewing available data to determine or confirm our most pressing challenges and finding ways to collect data where none exists.
4. Supporting broader conversations, listening to the ones already happening and using community engagement tools.

Staff will bring back regular updates to Council on progress and the City’s contributions to this important work and the implications for City services, policies and decision-making frameworks in the future.

## **City of Guelph Diversity and Inclusion Plan**

The City of Guelph's Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan aims to build a more inclusive and engaged workplace, where employees seek and value diversity as a strength for their work. To enable equity of experience for the community, our organization must embody diversity and inclusion in its culture and its workforce. The plan builds on the knowledge we have from our employees' engagement, the ideas of our teams, and is further informed by the results of an employment systems review and our relative strengths and challenges with recruiting in a way that attracts diverse candidates, and develops employees who are reflective of the labour market. The resulting plan is a developing roadmap that details the commitments and actions needed to anticipate and act in the service of an engaged workforce that innovates, shows resilience and is competitive within a changing labour market.

### **Attracting and developing talent that is reflective of the labour market**

A review of our census data against labour market data, in addition to an employment system review, showed several areas of opportunities to be more reflective of the labour market. This data is especially helpful as teams plan strategic recruitment and internal talent development activities for changes associated with potential retirements, COVID-19 recovery or service change demands, and our new Strategic Plan priorities. The census data review shows the largest gap of under-representation was with people who identified with the census category of "visible minorities" across all types of work at The City of Guelph, and people who identified as women in roles that are typically associated with CUPE 241, CUPE 973 and ATU 1189 roles. Human Resources (HR) is using this data, and has developed several partnerships, strategic outreach campaigns, mentorship and internship programs in the past years. A review of our external recruitment 2014 - 2019, shows an increase with recruitment of women in skilled craft and trades, and professionals and technicians who identify with the census category of visible minorities. Significant opportunities remain with attraction, development and retention of employees who identify with the census category of visible minorities, have disabilities and those that identify as Indigenous, First Nations, Inuk (Inuit) or Métis. The census data will continue to support our efforts as we move into implementation of our Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan.

### **Employee Engagement**

In the years leading towards the newest Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan, our employee engagement is trending more positively.

- In 2014, engagement survey results showed that 42 per cent of employees were engaged/nearly engaged.
- In 2016, 40 per cent of employees were engaged/nearly engaged.
- For 2019, a new engagement survey methodology measured engaged/nearly engaged employees at 66.4 per cent. The engagement drivers that performed highest were Co-worker Relationships (66 per cent), Working Environment (60 per cent), and Benefits (54 per cent).

Although employee engagement appears to be increasing, the demographic engagement data shows some identity groups continue to experience lower

engagement. There may be a potential trend with some underrepresented groups being least engaged and scoring lower across the survey.

- people who are trans gender (n=5, 20 per cent engaged/nearly engaged),
- people with a disability (n=57, 40 per cent engaged/nearly engaged).

However we are seeing similar engagement for individuals compared to overall levels with people identifying as a visible minority (n=92, 72 per cent engaged/nearly engaged), and people who identify as Indigenous, First Nations, Inuk (Inuit) or Métis (n=11, 72 per cent engaged/nearly engaged).

The focus areas of the Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan, and our 2020 Action Items include:

### **1. Commit to an inclusive culture**

Commitment, the first priority area of the Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan, focuses on developing the City as a diverse and inclusive workplace. At the City, we will embed a diversity and inclusion approach into our culture through our leaders, employee engagement and policy development.

#### **2020 Action Items**

- Start an inclusive leadership development series to establish the behaviours needed to lead an inclusive organization.
- Embed diversity and inclusion messages into Executive Team communications (Town Hall meeting content, CAO email updates to employees, DCAO communications to Service Areas, etc.).
- Recruit a Welcome Workplace Team to provide guidance for the implementation of the plan.
- Develop and start to report on the metrics needed to track our journey.
- Recognize change, share stories of inclusion and innovation more widely with our workplace and community.

### **2. Flexible mindset and work practices**

Having a flexible workplace will help our employees and leaders to recognize and value diversity, and practice the inclusive skills. Flexibility also includes providing training opportunities for employees that will support their professional development, and foster an innovative, resilient workplace.

#### **2020 Action Items**

- Engage in dialogue and consultation to develop anti-racism, conflict resolution and history of residential school training called for in the Truth and Reconciliation Report and through the advocacy of our community.
- Launch employee resource groups (ERGs). These groups informally build a community of employees who have common experience, and interest in developing their careers at The City of Guelph. The groups participate in mentoring, networking, learning and sharing of ideas to support internal talent growth, retention and engagement. The ideas are often used to help develop more inclusive employee experiences and can also be used to access insight with service or program design.

### **3. Networks and industry partnerships**

Partnerships are important for all the work we do at the City. These partnerships help us to develop our skills with recognizing, developing, attracting and retaining the talented people we need now and into the future.

#### **2020 Action Items**

- Engage with our community, local employment serving organizations and professional networks to understand how the recruitment process is experienced. The information will help HR and leaders to take action in making our internal and external recruitment processes more inclusive, and yielding the calibre of talent that our services and teams demand.
- Build relationships to learn and share experience as we develop more inclusive HR policy and employee programs (performance reviews, religious inclusion, flexible work options, etc.).

#### **Tracking our Journey**

The Global Benchmark for Diversity and Inclusion (GBDI) offers several leading indicators to help understand our progress. Our goals for 2022, include:

- Employee engagement data will show progress towards greater and more consistent levels of engagement.
- Demographic data on workforce across the talent management trajectory that is more reflective of the labour market.
- The Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan vision and goals, as well as the requirement to embed equity, prevent harassment, and reduce discrimination, are fully supported and rewarded.
- Leaders hold themselves and others responsible for achieving the Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan goals and objectives.
- The Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan vision and goals, as well as the requirement to embed equity, prevent harassment, and reduce discrimination, are fully supported and rewarded.

#### **Acting on opportunities in our Strategic Plan**

The City acknowledges its role and responsibility to take action against systemic racism to achieve diversity, inclusion and equity in policy, programs and strategies. The City's vision, mission and values, our new Strategic Plan and the Community Plan provide the foundation and decision-making frameworks to help us achieve this.

The City, through the strategic planning process, reviewed its corporate vision, mission and values (VMV). This process incorporated the input of over 450 employees and engaged a broad cross section of our organization in various engagement activities. The result of this engagement was that employees were clear that our VMV needed to better reflect a shared commitment to inclusion and diversity. The City now has a new vision, mission and set of values that guide our work and will be used as a foundation to important organizational systems such as policy, programs and strategies. This is an important step and signals our intent to work in partnership with the community to make our organization welcoming and responsive to everyone; Black, Indigenous, people of colour, people who identify as

members of LGBTTIQQ community, those who have disabilities and other underrepresented groups.

We acknowledge that there are clear gaps to address and opportunities to be more effective. These efforts require a long-term commitment with a corporate-wide response, and meaningful collaboration with representative diverse groups of people in an open, honest and responsive way to effect the change that's needed.

In recognition of the importance and corporate-wide nature of this work, the CAO's Office will provide centralized leadership and oversee the coordination of various diversity and inclusion initiatives, with the CAO acting as the executive sponsor. Consistent with our vision, mission and values, this approach will provide leadership and visibility to ensure we extend our commitment to diversity and inclusion to all of our internal and external interactions.

The Strategic Plan provides specific opportunities for us to support diversity, inclusion and anti-racism action. Although the organization does have a strong foundation to build from in meeting legislated requirements (examples include: accessibility, community engagement, the new Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan, museum and recreational programming), there are certainly gaps and areas that we can address more comprehensively and explicitly. Currently, the City does not have a central coordinating body or clear definitive view to ensure all external facing services, policies or decision-making frameworks consistently achieve high inclusion and equity standards.

In addition, there are some examples of initiatives in our Guelph. Future Ready Action Plan and being undertaken to support the Strategic Plan that will be important levers to support inclusion and equity moving forward:

- Service Simplified and the creation of a digital service team
- Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan
- Multiple master plans and policy developments (including Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Official Plan, Economic Development Strategy)
- Our Food Future: Grow Back Better
- Review of Agencies, Boards and Committee membership
- A focus on data and improved business analytics
- Innovation and continuous improvement activities

As the Future Ready Action Plans are finalized over the coming months staff will report back to Council with clear plans to surface systemic gaps and provide recommendations for consideration.

## **Conclusion**

As stated earlier, this information report signals the renewed focus of an intentional and sustained conversation about how the City can work in collaboration with community and other organizations to take action against systemic racism, and support diversity and inclusion initiatives.

There are immediate opportunities in the work of the Community Plan, Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan and Strategic Plan. Staff will continue to provide updates to Council and the community as this work progresses.

## **Financial Implications**

The Community Plan and Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan initiatives are funded through existing budget. Additional initiatives deriving from work stated in the Strategic Plan will come forward as part of the 2021 – 2024 operating budget.

## **Consultations**

This report was prepared in consultation with the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion who have supported the development of the Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan.

A comprehensive engagement plan in partnership with the community and partner organizations which will support the initiatives and efforts outlined in this report.

## **Strategic Plan Alignment**

The work identified in this report directly aligns to two priority areas of working together for our future. Specifically, 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.

## **Attachments**

None.

## **Departmental Approval**

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