

Staff Report

Report To: Corporate Services Committee
Report From: Melissa Clancy, Strategic Human Resources Manager
Meeting Date: May 11, 2023
Report Code: CR-23-048
Subject: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategy

Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-23-048 respecting the corporate Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy, the Corporate Services Committee recommends that City Council receive the report for information purposes.

Highlights:

- The first Corporate Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategy has been developed for the City of Owen Sound.
- Theme of the Strategy is *Inclusion*.
- It takes all of us to create an inclusive work environment.
- Initiatives in the Strategy focus on the planned use of current resources and staff involvement across the City. This strategy will be provided for all employees, as well as publicly

Strategic Plan Alignment:

[Strategic Plan](#) Priority: Safe City - KR4 - Create a comprehensive corporate Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy by December 2022

Climate and Environmental Implications:

There are no anticipated climate or environmental impacts.

Previous Report/Authority:

N/A

Background:

In 2021, City Council, as part of the Strategic Plan Refresh, identified Safe City as a priority for the City. Within that priority was a Key Result to achieve a corporate Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy.

According to the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, diversity is relative to the person, the individual. It is the range of dimensions, qualities, and unique characteristics of an individual. Although we often hear about ethnic and cultural diversity, diversity encompasses a broader scope than that. It also includes sexual diversity (sex, gender, and orientation), generational diversity (age diversity), and functional diversity (physical and intellectual). Many dimensions form a filter through which we view and experience the world and through which others view and interact with us.

Inclusion, on the other hand, would be relative to the community. It would be about creating a culture that promotes equity, celebrates, respects, accepts, and values differences. Equity refers to fair and just practices and policies that ensure all can thrive – it is important to note that equity is different from equality in that equality implies treating everyone as if their experiences are exactly the same.

Why is this important?

Organizations need to foster a culture of inclusion. Being inclusive can also mean innovating and performing as an organization. According to a new report on diversity and inclusion from the International Labour Organization, high levels of equality, diversity, and inclusion go hand in hand with more innovation, productivity, good performance, recruitment and retention of talented recruits, and staff well-being.

While it is cost-effective for an organization to foster a culture of inclusion, including this diversity within companies can present several challenges. In some cases, fostering inclusion may require significant adjustments within organizations. It also means a paradigm shift where the difference between equality and equity becomes meaningful.

Successful inclusion requires everyone. Management and employees must all be partners in the changes that inclusion, equity, and diversity present for all of us to work better together.

Analysis:

To date, the Human Resources team has worked with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion champions to engage staff and external stakeholders in developing the final strategy. A common theme of Inclusion was found throughout all the engagement and consultation activities. Thus the strategy document's overarching name.

Within the strategy document are four pillars of inclusion and action, including:

1. Education and Training
2. Inclusive Communication
3. Workforce and Committees
4. Policies Support Diversity

It should be noted that regardless of where or who leads an action, work is happening throughout the Corporation; it takes all of us to create an inclusive work environment.

Financial Implications:

Initiatives contained in the Strategy focus on the planned use of current resources and staff involvement across the City. The development of the strategy was led by the Strategic Human Resources Manager and created by Staff for Staff. Therefore, an outside consultant's costs of approximately \$25,000 were not required.

Communication Strategy:

This strategy will be provided for all employees via email, hard copy as required, and posted on the City's Intranet – The Sound. Updates on the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategy will be available for all staff, on the City's Intranet page – The Sound, with a link being provided to new employees in the orientation email. Additionally, the strategy will be communicated publicly on the Our City site, and on the City's website with a site-specific to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Consultation:

Senior Leadership Team

City of Owen Sound Employees

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Champions

Community stakeholders through OurCity Community Engagement Platform

Attachments:

Inclusion Strategy

Inclusion Strategy – Accessible Version – [Link](#) -

<https://ourcity.owensound.ca/31050/widgets/151808/documents/104092>

Recommended by:

Melissa Clancy, Strategic Human Resources Manager

Kate Allan, Director of Corporate Services

Submission approved by:

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Melissa Clancy at mclancy@owensound.ca or 519-376-4440 ext. 1214.