

Staff Report

Report To: Corporate Services Committee
Report From: Courtney McDonald, Human Resources Specialist
Meeting Date: October 9, 2025
Report Code: CR-25-127
Subject: Joining the Canadian Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities

Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-25-127 respecting Joining the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities, the Corporate Services Committee recommends that City Council endorse the resolution attached to the report.

Highlights:

- The Inclusion Strategy seeks to explore external partnerships with the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities.
- Joining the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities will improve external partnerships and collaboration with municipalities on diversity, equity and inclusion matters.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

[Strategic Plan](#) Priority: This report supports the delivery of Safe City.

Climate and Environmental Implications:

There are no anticipated climate or environmental impacts.

Previous Report/Authority:

[CR-23-048: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategy](#)

Background:

In 2021, City Council approved a Strategic Plan Refresh that prioritizes and recognizes the investment in the City's diversity, equity and inclusion. On May 11, 2023, City Council approved report CR-23-048: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategy. The strategy was originally titled the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy. However, through consultations with staff and external stakeholders, the theme of Inclusion consistently emerged as a central focus. As a result, the strategy was renamed the Inclusion Strategy to better reflect this shared priority. An objective of the strategy is to raise awareness and communicate both internally and externally effectively about diversity, equity and inclusion. To achieve the objective, one of the action items identified was to explore partnerships for inclusion with external organizations, such as the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities, established in 2004.

Analysis:

In Canada, approximately 121 cities are members of the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities. Members of the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities advance various initiatives including:

- Improving practices to promote social inclusion
- Establish policies to eradicate racism and discrimination
- Promote human rights and diversity

The City of Owen Sound will benefit from membership in the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities by:

1. Developing and implementing a comprehensive framework to address racism and various forms of discrimination within their communities.
2. Exchanging best practices and resources with other municipalities across Canada, fostering a collaborative approach to inclusivity.
3. Accessing support and guidance to cultivate a welcoming and inclusive environment, ensuring all residents can actively participate in every aspect of community life.

By joining the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities, municipalities commit to dedicating time and resources to foster more welcoming and inclusive communities. As part of this network, the City of Owen Sound will work

collaboratively to enhance policies aimed at combating racism, discrimination, exclusion, and intolerance.

As part of the 2026 workplan, the Human Resources team will leverage the resources provided by the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities to develop a comprehensive Plan of Action aligned with the Coalition's 10 Common Commitments. Initial priorities will include reviewing and updating existing policies, as well as implementing staff training initiatives focused on equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Financial Implications:

None.

Communication Strategy:

All communication materials will be developed in collaboration with the Communications Division and distributed to staff as appropriate.

Consultation:

Coalition of the Inclusive Municipalities

Attachments:

Declaration to Join the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities

Recommended by:

Courtney McDonald, Human Resources Specialist
Janet Ashfield, Manager of Human Resource
Kate Allan, Director of Corporate Services

Submission approved by:

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Courtney McDonald, Human Resource Specialist at cmcdonald@owensound.ca or 519-376-4440 ext. 1273.