VAUGHAN

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan 2022 - 2026

City of Vaughan, Ontario, Canada

Mayor Bevilacqua, with the support and endorsement of all Members of Council, signed the Vaughan Inclusion Charter in January 2021. The Charter reaffirms Council's goal of Active, Safe and Diverse Communities as outlined in the 2018-2022 Term of Council Service Excellence Strategic Plan. The Diversity and Inclusion Task Force and the role of the Diversity and Inclusion Officer were established through endorsement from all Members of Council to develop the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan and implement the Multi-Year Action Plan.

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Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan 2022 - 2026

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We respectfully acknowledge
that the City of Vaughan
is situated in the Territory
and Treaty 13 lands of the
Mississaugas of the Credit First
Nation. We also recognize the
traditional territory of the Huron-
Wendat and the Haudenosaunee.
The City of Vaughan is currently
home to many First Nations,
Métis and Inuit people today.
As representatives of the people
of the City of Vaughan, we are
grateful to have the opportunity
to work and live in this territory.
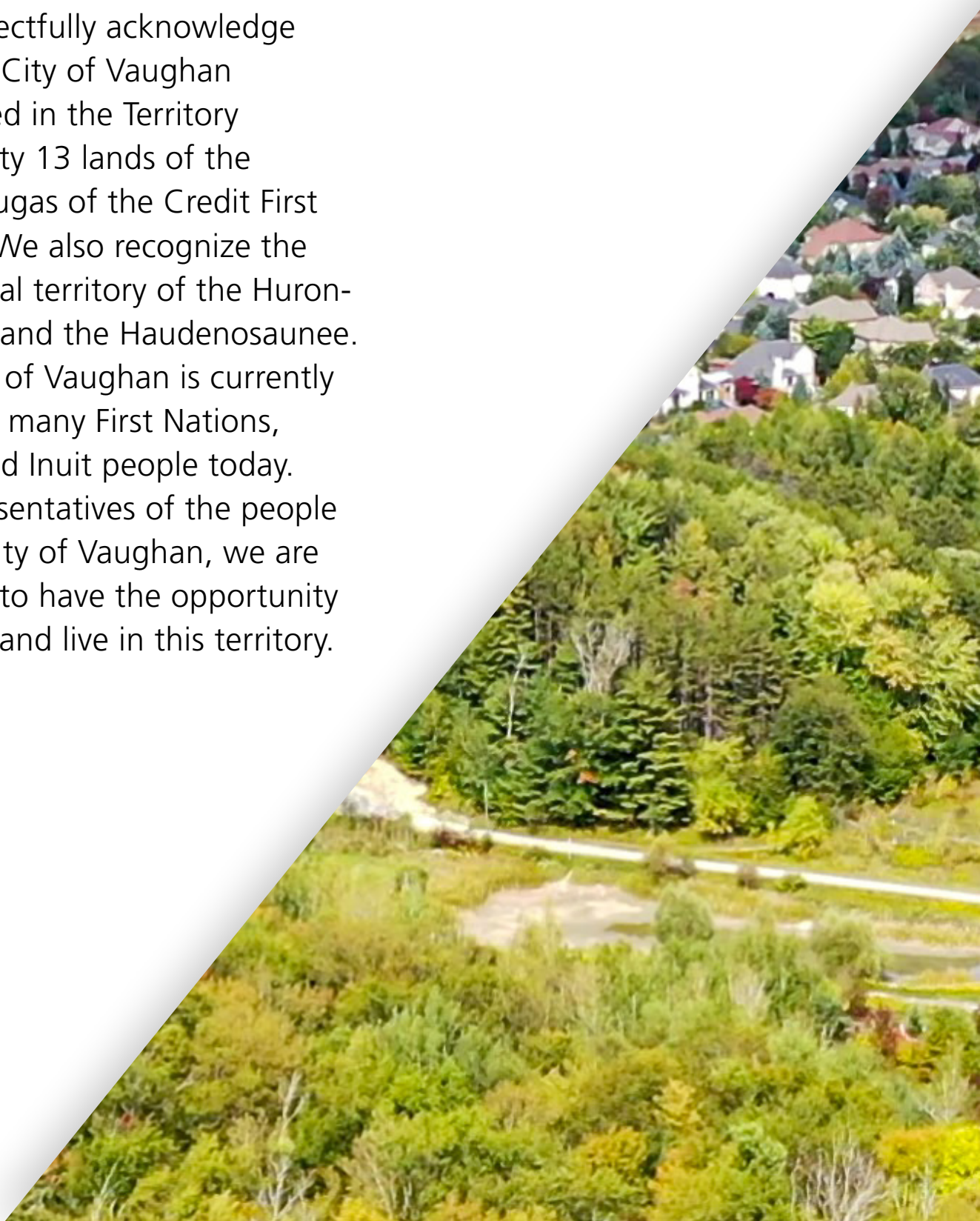
MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

The City of Vaughan's 2022-2026 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan is the roadmap that will guide our ongoing efforts to foster an inclusive, equitable and accessible community for all. It aims to identify forms of discrimination that create barriers to equity and inclusion in the workplace and address inequities in access to services, community participation and civic engagement head-on with meaningful and tangible solutions.

Diversity has and will always be among our greatest strengths. The city is home to citizens who come from around the world and is where more than 105 different languages are spoken. People of all expressions, faiths, religions, cultures and creeds are welcome to actively participate in civic life, be treated with dignity and live free from discrimination. Vaughan's diverse communities have made and continue to make significant contributions to the city's cultural, economic and social fabric, which shapes Vaughan as the beautiful mosaic that we are proud to call home. I am committed to creating an inclusive and barrier-free city where everyone feels safe and is empowered to reach their full potential. We will continue working with citizens, community groups and stakeholders to ensure Vaughan remains an inclusive, dynamic and thriving place to live, work and visit.

As we forge ahead to build a world-class city where everyone feels a sense of belonging, we understand we cannot move forward when some of us are held back. Through this plan, the City will continue working to create a barrier-free community with universal access to programs,

services and facilities to help ensure people from all walks of life are treated in a way that maintains their dignity and independence. We will also persevere in speaking out against injustice and denouncing all forms of racism and hate-based violence. I remain guided by values and principles rooted in my belief that all people have the right to live, worship and love without facing persecution, intolerance or discrimination.

I want to recognize and thank Zincia Francis, the City's first Diversity and Inclusion Officer, Vaughan's Diversity and Inclusion Task Force, our community partners and residents for their meaningful contributions to this critical initiative. By providing opportunities for citizens to get involved, increasing visibility for equity-deserving groups in our communities and rejecting all forms of racism and discrimination, we will help lay the foundation for a more just and inclusive society.

As we look toward the future, I am confident that by working together, we will continue moving our city forward without leaving anyone behind.

Sincerely,

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua
Mayor, City of Vaughan

MESSAGE FROM THE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION TASK FORCE

The Diversity and Inclusion Task Force was convened in October 2020 by Council Resolution following local and global attention to anti-Black racisim and movement for equity and social justice. The task force is lead by Chair, Councillor Tony Carella and Vice-chair, Councillor Alan Shefman. The task force's goal is to guide the City of Vaughan in developing policies that promote fairness, mutual respect and an undoubted sense of inclusion among the diverse individuals, communities and stakeholder groups that compose its population. The task force will submit its recommendations to Council by June 2022 on delivering equitable programs and services that reflect its residents' diverse needs and the community's diversity as reflected in municipal hiring and tendering practices.

The task force meets regularly to review current policies, practices, inclusion-related documents and best practices from other communities. We have provided input towards improving the inclusion of Indigenious and equity-deserving communites. The task force also reviewed the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan and the Multi-Year Action Plan. In providing feedback, the task force has stressed the importance of centring the voices and lived experiences of Indigenous and equity-deserving communities through targeted engagement strategies to reflect their voices in the City's programs and services.

The City of Vaughan is immeasurably enriched by the many people from all walks of life that make up this unique and beautiful community. Though we all contribute to the city's economic, social and cultural fabric, we acknowledge that some continue to experience unfair treatment, are denied opportunities and are excluded based on identity and social location. We remember the wise words of Dr. Martin Luther King that injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere; therefore, the task force joins the City in condemning all forms of violence, hatred and discrimination.

The task force believes that equitable policies, practices and services are integral to fostering and supporting a diverse and inclusive workforce and community. We must be intentional and committeed in our efforts to foster inclusion, be mindful of unintentionally reproducing and reinforcing inequities, and hold ourselves accountable to the future, to our children and their children. The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan is one of the many steps we take to foster an inclusive, equitable and accessible community for all. The task force is proud to endorse the City's earnest commitment to meaningful and sustainable change. We ask all residents of Vaughan to join us in this journey to a community where everyone is celebrated, welcomed and supported.

Diversity and Inclusion Task Force Members

Tony Carella,
Ward 2 Councillor
Chair, Diversity and Inclusion Taskforce

Alan Shefman,
Ward 5 Councillor
Vice-chair, Diversity and Inclusion Taskforce
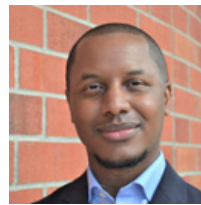
Mr. Barrie
GOODMAN
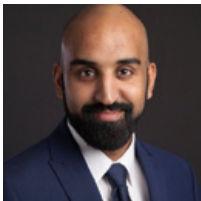
Mr. Darnell
THOMAS

Ms. Drupati
MAHARAJ

Ms. Jennifer
SOLMES
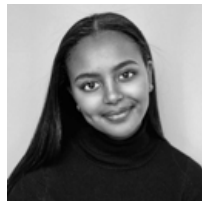
Mr. Jumol A.
ROYES

Ms Aysha
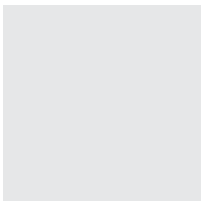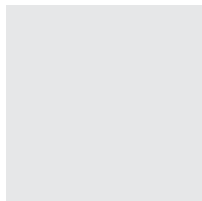ANWAR

Mr. Suhayb
SHAH

Mrs. Wendy
SOLIS

Dr. Avi
BENLOLO
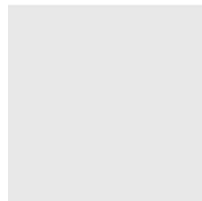
Ms. Hannah
GODEFA

Ms. Karen
FEDER

Mr. Alan
AU-YEUNG

Mrs. Nagina
SHAHSAMAND

Mr. Kulvir
Singh DEOL

Mrs. Amy
ALTWERGER-
DAVID
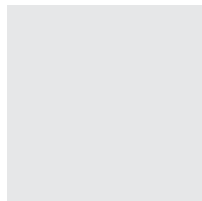
Mr. Amin
KHIZER
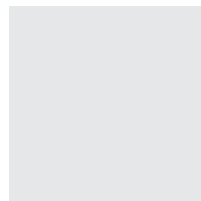
Ms. Maria
CAPULONG

Ms. Miriam
Paz MAOR

MESSAGE FROM THE CITY MANAGER

Addressing all forms of racism, discrimination and bigotry is central to the City of Vaughan's 2022-2026 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan and our corporate culture as a whole.

The City is committed to forging connections and pursuing opportunities that foster a community that is inclusive and truly appreciative of the diversity that enriches us.

I want to extend my deep appreciation to our administration's first-ever Diversity and Inclusion Officer, Zincia Francis. Since joining the City in January 2021, Ms. Francis has been working with passionate and dedicated colleagues and members of the community to strengthen and build upon our existing commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Our team has taken many steps to acknowledge and value the diverse communities in Vaughan, and the significant contributions they make. This includes recognizing Black History Month every February, celebrating Vaughan's annual Culture Days festivities in September, honouring International Women's Day and Pride Month, and much more. The annual Christmas Tree Lighting, Menorah Lightings and Lunar New Year celebrations are also among the many festive events recognizing the different faiths that make up our community.

While many efforts are being taken at the City of Vaughan to foster a culture of inclusion, we recognize there is still more work to be done. Collectively, the City is working towards a shared vision that ensures community members and City employees continue to be heard, appreciated and valued.

Thank you,

Nick Spensieri
City Manager, City of Vaughan

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

The City recognizes and celebrates the human similarities and differences of people and communities who call the City home. The City of Vaughan is home to diverse communities whose significant contributions to the cultural, economic and social fabric make the City what it is today.

Our commitment to diversity includes all groups protected by the Ontario Human Rights Code. We recognize that a community's needs and experiences may reflect intersecting membership in more than one of those groups.

The City recognizes the unique status and diversity of First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities and their right to self-determination.

The City recognizes that advantages and barriers exist; therefore, we do not all start from the same place, nor do we have the same access to all opportunities.

The City recognizes that the impact of systemic, structural and institutional barriers must be addressed for Indigenous and equity-deserving groups to reach their fullest potential and achieve civic engagement.

The City recognizes that inclusion is an active, intentional and continuous process to address inequities in power and privilege.

The City is committed to identifying and addressing barriers to reduce inequities and disparity, and ensuring that everyone has access to the same opportunities.

The City is committed to addressing all forms of oppression, including racism, discrimination and bigotry, which this Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan serves as a broad strategy to redress injustice.

VAUGHAN

Vision

The City of Vaughan strives to foster a culture that is diverse, inclusive and equitable where all citizens, employees, businesses and visitors are provided with accessible opportunities to engage and participate.

Mission

The City's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion mission is to:

- identify and address forms of discrimination that create barriers to equity and inclusion in the workplace.

- respond appropriately to acts of violence, racism, hatred and discrimination in the community

- identify and address inequities in access to service, community and civic engagement, including:

  - Developing a strategic plan to foster a meaningful relationship with Indigenous communities and advance reconciliation

  - Developing a strategy to address anti-Black racism

  - Working with equity-deserving groups to counter historical, attitudinal, structural, systemic and institutional practices that inhibit inclusivity

  - Embedding strategies toward achieving gender parity in management and senior leadership levels

- implement programs, initiatives and services that recognize the diversity of the city of Vaughan.

- work toward fairness, social justice and non-discrimination.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Level	Role
Council	Provide oversight for the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan. Receive annual updates from the City Manager on the municipality's progress toward its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan, key priorities and objectives.
All Staff	Uphold all human rights under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and Ontario Human Rights Code. Make diversity, equity and inclusion part of their everyday workplace practices. Support the work to advance diversity, equity and inclusion.
City Manager	Lead accountability for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan at the municipal level. Receive and review quarterly reports on diversity, equity and inclusion.

Level	Role
Deputy City Managers	Lead the municipality's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan in their portfolios. Ensure that senior leaders support initiatives to achieve diversity, equity and inclusion key priorities and objectives.
Senior Leadership Team	Develop, implement and support their department's diversity, equity and inclusion key priorities and objectives. Ensure managers and supervisors are aware of responsibilities and obligation to support and promote overarching Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan. Provide quarterly update on their departments' diversity, equity and inclusion goals to the Diversity and Inclusion Officer and the Office of Transformation and Strategy.
Managers and Supervisors	Ensure that diversity, equity and inclusion key priorities are reflected in their team's objectives and key results, and are part of programs and services that meet the needs of all residents. Make diversity, equity and inclusion part of their everyday business operations. Address issues regarding diversity, equity and inclusion in a fair, respectful and prompt manner. Work with employees in meeting diversity, equity and inclusion goals in a variety of ways including annual performance plans.

Level	Role
Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer	Support a diverse and inclusive workplace by addressing issues of harassment and discrimination in a fair, respectful and prompt manner. Collaborate with the Diversity and Inclusion Officer to review and monitor existing and proposed policies and practices to ensure full participation of diverse persons in the workplace. Work with the Diversity and Inclusion Officer to ensure an equitable workplace environment and foster a culture of inclusion and belonging. Develop and implement organizational diversity, equity and inclusion training and education plan. Collaborate with the Diversity and Inclusion Officer to develop and promote strategies to build a workforce that is reflective of the communities we serve.
Corporate and Strategic Communications	Communicate diversity, equity and inclusion strategies, initiatives, goals and achievements both internally and externally. Develop and implement a communications plan to increase employee awareness, roles and responsibilities with respect to diversity, equity and inclusion. Collaboratively develop and implement a communication plan with the Diversity and Inclusion Officer to support the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan.
Office of Transformation and Strategy	Work with the Diversity and Inclusion Officer to utilize an outcomes-based approach focusing on tracking and measuring progress annually to better understand and address barriers to equity. Support adoption through change management principles to ensure sustainability.
Diversity and Inclusion Officer	Implement the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Action Plan. Provide subject matter expertise to support departments with respect to diversity, equity and inclusion objectives and key results. Support departments in the implementation and evaluation of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan. Build internal and external relationships to support the municipality's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION KEY PRIORITIES

5 Achieving Equity

4 Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation

3 Equitable Employment

Fostering and Embedding a Culture of Belonging **1**

2 Data-informed Decision-making

Community Engagement and Participation **6**

Continued Accessibility Excellence **7**

1 Fostering and Embedding a Culture of Belonging

The City recognizes that a true sense of belonging is created when diversity, inclusion and equity combine to make all people feel welcome, included and part of the culture. The City is committed to fostering, embedding and sustaining a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion into all aspects of the organization through progressive policies and practices that encourage engagement and belonging, and welcomes all employees to be part of the change.

2 Data-Informed Decision-Making

Achieving diversity, equity and inclusion goals requires identifying and developing appropriate key objectives, related metrics and setting accountability for outcomes. The City will collect data and identify trends, barriers and gaps, and develop and implement solutions meant to address inequities.

3 Equitable Employment

The City is committed to being an inclusive and equitable employer. The Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer (OCHRO) in collaboration with senior leaders and the Diversity and Inclusion Officer will actively identify barriers and take steps to address individual, systemic and institutional barriers to ensure that Indigenous and equity-deserving groups have equal opportunities to gain and retain meaningful employment.

Employee Life Cycle

- Recruitment Hiring
- Onboarding
- Retention
- Learning and Development
- Performance Management
- Succession Planning, Mentorship & Promotion
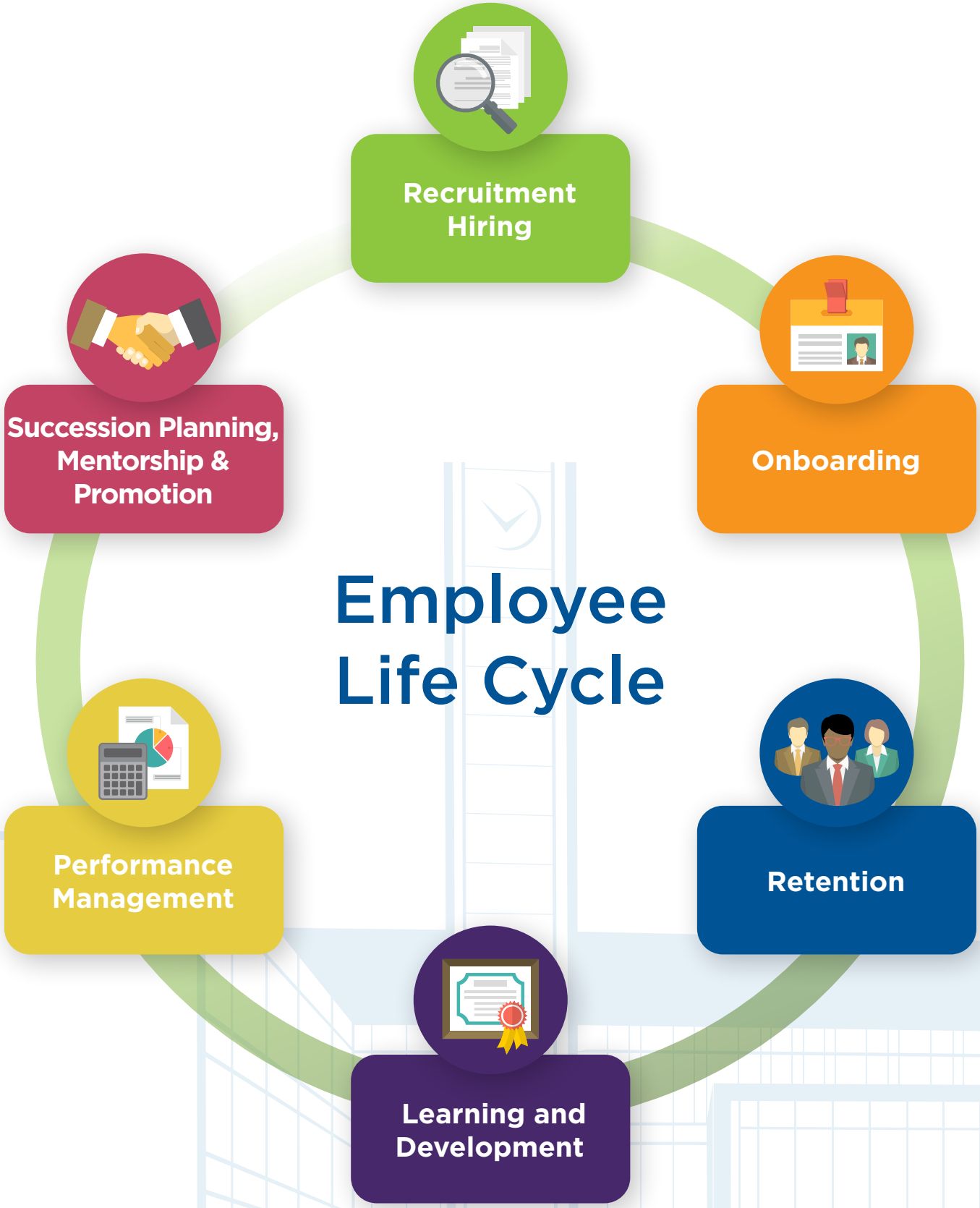
Recruitment and Hiring

The OCHRO will work to identify and remove barriers in the recruitment and hiring process that Indigenous and equity-deserving groups often encounter. The OCHRO will collect applicant identity data respectful of and aligned with the Ontario Human Rights Code and policy to support this effort.

Onboarding

The OCHRO will work collaboratively with departments toward ensuring new employees are aware of the City's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, and understand their role in creating a safe, inclusive, accessible, welcoming and harassment-free environment.

Retention

The OCHRO will work collaboratively with departments to develop strategies for improving retention of employees identifying as belonging to Indigenous and equity-deserving groups, and work to increase opportunities to promote a diverse workforce into leadership roles.

Learning and Development

The OCHRO will build organizational capacity by creating learning sessions for all employees, focusing on existing and emerging leaders. Given that ongoing learning and development is a means to employee engagement, staff responsible for onboarding will utilize the opportunities to help employees understand their obligations to protect and promote human rights and apply an inclusive and equity lens to their work and work environment.

Performance Management

Performance management is an ongoing process between managers and their direct reports to support the strategic objectives of the City effectively. Communicating diversity, equity and inclusion goals, clarifying expectations, setting objectives, identifying goals, providing feedback and reviewing results at all levels of the organization is part of measuring what matters.

The OCHRO will work collaboratively with senior leaders across the organization to ensure that supervisors, managers and directors have the necessary knowledge and tools to lead and manage a diverse workforce, and create an equitable and inclusive environment for employees.

Succession Planning, Mentorship and Promotion

The City will build a diverse talent workforce that is poised to take leadership positions through mentoring, coaching and leadership education programming. This will enable business continuity and knowledge transfer. Like many other employers, the City must prepare for demographic shifts in the workplace so the next generation of employees have the necessary skills, knowledge and abilities for current and future leadership roles. The City will use data to inform succession planning and identify barriers to advancement for employees who are members of Indigenous and equity-deserving groups by setting targets to increase diversity in leadership.

4 Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation

First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples of Turtle Island hold a unique position in Canada. The City of Vaughan recognizes its special relationship with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

Anti-Indigenous racism is a particular type of racism experienced by First Nations, Inuit and Métis people of Canada. Ongoing race-based discrimination, negative stereotyping and injustice are experienced by Indigenous people. This includes ideas and practices that establish, maintain and perpetuate power imbalances, systemic barriers and inequitable outcomes that stem from the legacy of colonial policies and practices in Canada. The City recognizes the legacies of injustice and colonialism against the First Nations, Inuit and Métis people of Canada. The City recognizes Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Report and Calls to Action, and is committed to meaningfully advancing reconciliation. The City also recognizes the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Report and Calls for Justice, and acknowledges that anti-Indigenous racism has contributed to violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

The City is committed to establishing and building meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities, addressing anti-Indigenous racism and collaborating with Indigenous communities to reflect Indigenous priorities into City programs and services.
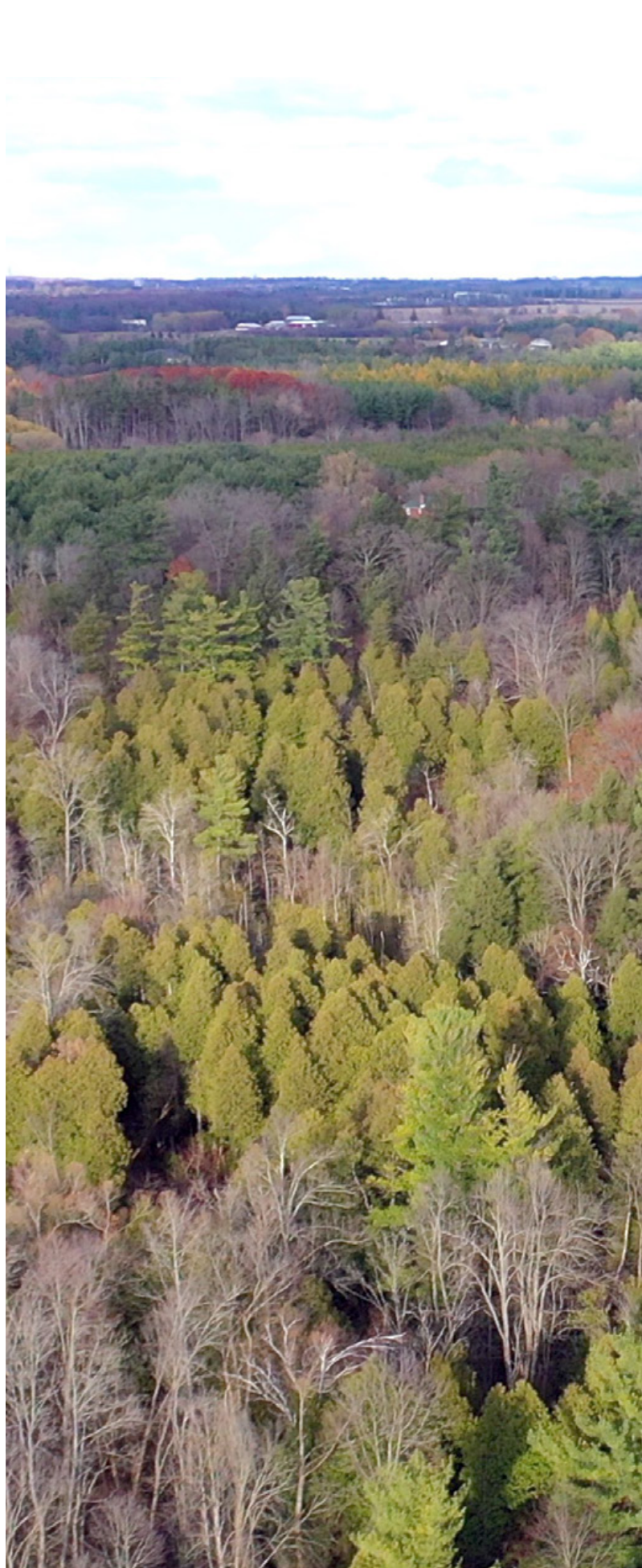
5 Achieving Equity

Municipalities have a responsibility to ensure that residents are treated with respect, feel included and receive equitable services. Addressing social inequities to ensure the inclusion of all residents is not only the right thing to do, but is also cost effective. Equity and inclusion create more sustainable cities where people from all walks of life have the right to, and can participate fully in, social, economic, political and cultural life.

It is important to recognize that many individuals have multiple (social, economic, racial, etc.) identities and often face increased discrimination or systematic barriers based on their intersecting identities. Systemically oppressed groups face tremendous overwhelming barriers to seeking advocacy and justice. The experiences of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples, racialized communities and equity-deserving groups with racism and discrimination can vary. An intersectional approach is necessary to understand and address the specific barriers faced not only by individuals from underrepresented and equity-deserving groups, but also by individuals who are part of more than one underrepresented and equity-deserving group. A complex understanding of how an individual's unique experience of multiple discriminations affects their ability to benefit from policies and programs can yield more equitable policies and programs.

Achieving Equity

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Two-Spirit (LGBTQ2S+) Communities

• Two-spirit People

• Transgender Rights

Religious Intolerance

• Antisemitism

• Islamophobia

Anti-Racism

• Addressing Anti-Black Racism

Anti-Racism

An anti-racist, intersectional approach recognizes all the different ways people and communities experience racism with respect to their identities. An anti-racist framework also recognizes that racism in Canada is grounded in and motivated by anti-Indigenous, anti-Black racism. Therefore, an anti-racist intersectional approach provides a conceptual tool to examine institutional and systemic oppression that Indigenous and equity-deserving communities face because of both their race and identities, while also providing a guiding approach for working with and in communities and systems to create a more just and equitable society.

While all forms of racism are abhorrent, the City recognizes the unique experiences of Indigenous and Black communities tied to legacies of oppression, including colonialism and the enslavement of Black people. Anti-Indigenous racism and anti-Black racism continue to maintain barriers within current systems and institutions in the form of policies, practices, culture, behaviours and beliefs. Addressing anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism requires tackling deeply entrenched, complex social problems defined by collaboration across multiple sectors, including government and community; therefore, focused strategies must be developed to address pervasive forms of racism, discrimination and bigotry.

A targeted universal approach is necessary to address the vilest forms of racism. Targeted universalism means setting universal goals pursued by targeted processes to achieve those goals. Given that all forms of racism can be traced back to and is deeply rooted to colonialism and slavery, in Canada, this means explicitly addressing anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism. Targeted universalism also recognizes that while universal goals are established for all groups concerned, unique strategies must be developed based upon how different groups are situated within structures, culture and across geographies to obtain the universal goal. For example, the rise of anti-Asian racism and antisemitism require responses addressing the particular needs of these communities whilst working to address ant-racism broadly.

Addressing Anti-Black Racism

Anti-Black racism is historic, pervasive and systemic in Canada. It is both visible and invisible. It is entrenched into societal practices that reflect and reinforce beliefs, attitudes, prejudice, stereotyping and/or discrimination directed at people of African descent, and is rooted in their unique history and experience of enslavement and colonization here in Canada. Anti-Black racism is micro (as seen in day-to-day interactions) and structural (as seen in laws and policies). While racism negatively impacts all racialized people, disparities between Black people and other marginalized groups clearly show that Black people continue to be more profoundly impacted by racism.

The City of Vaughan is committed to developing an action plan to address anti-Black racism.

Religious Intolerance

The rights to be treated equally based on creed, and to freely hold and practice creed beliefs of one's choosing, are fundamental human rights in Ontario, protected by the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Different groups, at different times in the history of Canada, have experienced discrimination based on their creed. For example, Indigenous peoples were forced into residential schools that were government-sponsored religious schools, which operated in Ontario from 1880 to 1990. Jewish people were barred from entry to the country, including when fleeing and seeking refuge from Nazi Germany in the Second World War, and were routinely denied access to jobs, facilities and services because of virulent antisemitism. People's experiences of discrimination based on creed often intersect with discrimination based on other identity factors such as race, ethnic origin, citizenship, ancestry, place of origin and sex. Prejudice, antisemitism and Islamophobia have risen in recent times, often shaped by international events and hate forums in social media.

Antisemitism

The City of Vaughan is home to one of the largest Jewish populations in Canada. The City has proclaimed Jan. 27 as International Holocaust Remembrance Day and adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism. The City continues to actively denounce and call out the disturbing rise in antisemitism. Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jewish people, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jewish people. Antisemitism has a long history in Canada, fueling discrimination and unfair treatment against Jewish Canadians, including discrimination in employment, health care and government.

The City will work with Jewish communities in Vaughan to support opportunities to build awareness and educate the public to effectively work toward the elimination of all forms of intolerance, discrimination and bigotry.

Islamophobia

Post 9/11, Muslim people and communities have experienced increased negative stereotyping and discrimination. Islamophobia can be described as hatred and hostility towards Islam and Muslim people. The rise in Islamophobia is causally linked to mass shootings perpetuated against Muslim people in Quebec, Canada, and Christchurch, New Zealand.

The City will work with Muslim communities in Vaughan to support opportunities to build awareness and educate the public to effectively work toward the elimination of all forms of intolerance, discrimination and bigotry.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Two-Spirit (LGBTQ2S+) Communities

Dating from the early colonial era, same-sex relationships were officially illegal and punishable by death and imprisonment. It was not until the 1960s that the civil rights movement led by the lesbian, gay and bisexual community in Canada started to gain momentum and steady gains in rights. For the first time in Canada's history, Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau's government passed Bill C-150 in May 1969, decriminalizing same-sex relationships, specifically gay sex.

Two-Spirit People

Two-Spirit is a translation of the Anishinaabemowin term "niizh manidoowag." The term can broadly reference Indigenous peoples in the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) community. Some Indigenous peoples use Two-Spirit to describe their gender, sexual and spiritual identity. Pre-contact, Two-Spirit people were respected, cherished and honoured members of various First Nations communities. Colonialism and Christianity sought to assimilate or eliminate Two-Spirit people violently. The impact is ongoing with the concerning number of missing and murdered Indigenous Two-Spirit and LGBTQ+ people. From the 1990s to the present, awareness about Two-Spirit people has increased within and outside Indigenous communities. Despite growing awareness, some Two-Spirit people continue to face sexual and gender discrimination and violence in communities that do not accept their identities. A key aspect of the Two-Spirit movement has been to reclaim pre-colonial traditions.

Transgender Rights

The rights of trans, gender diverse and binary people in Canada continue to be at the forefront of the struggle for equality. In 2017, the federal government passed Bill C-16, which amended the Canadian Human Rights Act to include gender identity and gender expression as prohibited grounds of discrimination. It also added gender identity and expression to the Criminal Code to better protect against hate propaganda and hate crimes directed against trans and gender-diverse individuals. While discrimination against LGBTQ+ people persists in many places, significant strides toward mainstream social acceptance and formal legal equality have been made in recent decades. Canada is internationally regarded as a leader in this field. Recent years have seen steady progress on everything from health care to the right to adopt.

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Two-Spirit (LGBTQ2S+) communities comprise some of the most marginalized and vulnerable populations in Canada, Ontario and the Greater Toronto Area. LGBTQ2S+ communities experience higher levels of harassment, discrimination and violence. Recognizing the diversity and intersectionality within the LGBTQ2S+ communities, these groups face unique barriers when accessing programs and services.

The City will work with 2SLGBTQ+ communities in Vaughan to support opportunities to build awareness and educate the public to effectively work toward the elimination of all forms of intolerance, discrimination and bigotry.

6 Community Engagement and Participation

Public participation is a complex process informed by different historical legacies and power imbalances (gender inequality, systemic racism, inaccessible spaces, etc.). The City recognizes that democratic engagement is an integral part of building an inclusive and welcoming city. Therefore, an equity lens will be applied to existing communication and outreach strategies to meaningfully facilitate democratic input. The City recognizes that Indigenous and equity-deserving groups must be engaged to build trust and deepen lines of communication. The City will look for opportunities to engage with community leaders, diverse communities, community partners and municipalities to collaborate on existing projects and initiatives with respect to equity and social justice.

7 Continued Accessibility Excellence

The City of Vaughan is committed to being a community where people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds can thrive. Accessibility advancement is a key component of this commitment. The City's accessibility plans align with legislative requirements, including the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA). The City is committed to moving beyond legislative measures to implement accessibility because it is equitable, inclusive and the right thing to do. The more accessible programs and services are, the more people of all abilities can utilize them.
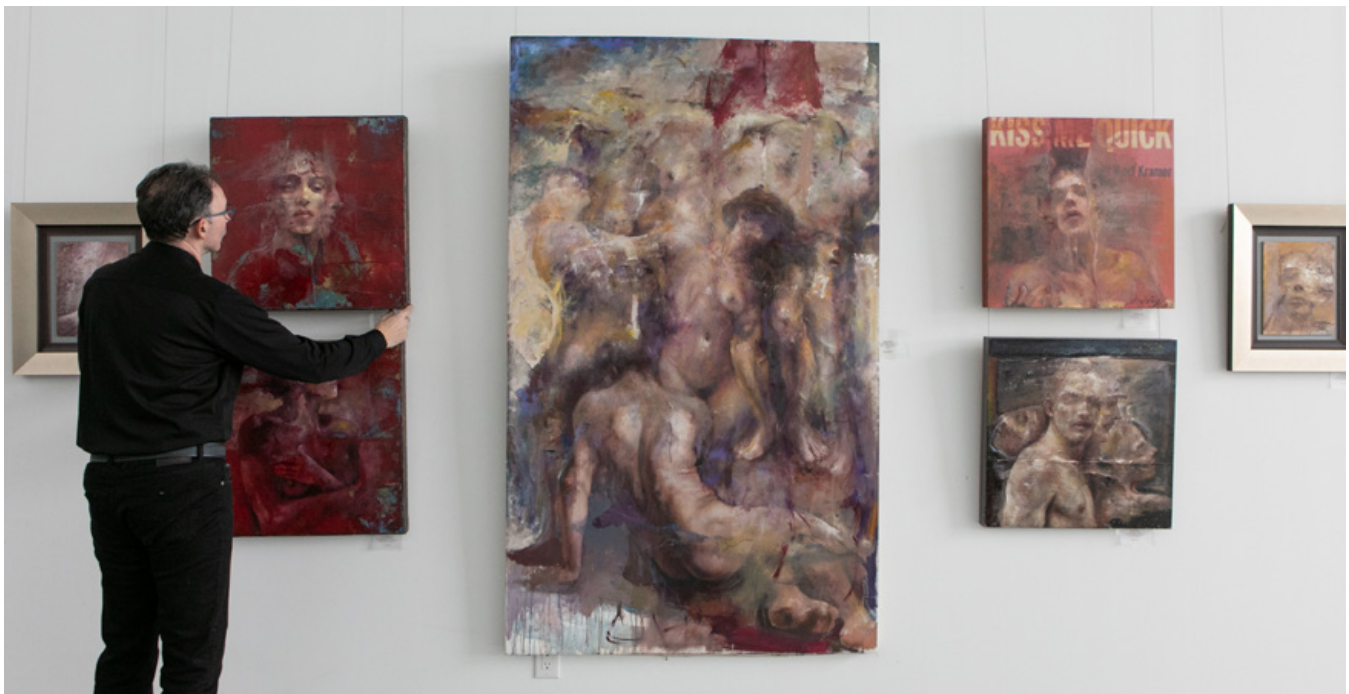
MULTI-YEAR ACTION PLAN: 2022 - 2026

Fostering and Embedding a Culture of Belonging

- Review and revise existing policies and procedures to ensure inclusivity and reduce inequities.
  - Respectful Workplace Policy
  - Workplace Violence Policy
  - Recruitment Policy
  - Code of Conduct
- Include definitions (Appendix) from the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Plan into applicable policies.
- Develop policies and staff report to support an inclusive and equitable workplace.

- Develop learning opportunities for all people leaders and managers to have the necessary information and skills to follow policies related to DEI.
- Develop opportunities for meaningful staff engagement in the City's DEI initiatives, including Employee Resources Groups (ERG).
- Provide ongoing support to citizen advisory task forces and committees.
- Develop commitment statement on DEI for the City.

Data-Informed Decision-Making

- Establish a baseline for City equity data to inform the DEI initiatives.
- Establish OKR for DEI initiatives across the City.
- Utilize DEI data to inform annual updates to the DEI Plan and corresponding Action Plan.

- Aim to achieve best practice for attaching identity-based data to employee profiles (while being mindful of and adhering to the Ontario Human Rights Code and privacy legislation) to establish a baseline and measure progress.

Recruitment and Hiring

- Implement targeted job advertisements to increase workforce representation from Indigenous and equity-deserving groups.

- Expand recruitment and hiring strategies to increase diversity at SLT and SLTE.

- Review the recruitment process and application site to ensure it complies with Ontario Human Rights Code, Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and Anti-Racism Data Standards.

- Develop guidelines to ensure job postings are equitable and inclusive.

- Ensure Equity Statement is included in all job postings.

- Develop opportunities (internships, co-op placements, etc.) to reduce barriers (i.e., Criteria for Equivalency) to hiring applicants from low-income communities and those who are negatively impacted by socioeconomic factors such as income, education, employment and community safety and social supports.

- Review candidate screening and selection process to limit unconscious bias.

- Explore feasibility of Redacted Application Process to limit unconscious bias in hiring.

- Review and, where necessary, implement changes to the interview and assessment process.

- Expand interview matrix to include DEI competency.

- Include unconscious bias awareness as a proficiency criterion.

- Include emotional intelligence as a proficiency criterion.

- Include understanding and experience of DEI as a proficiency criterion for all people managers.

- Utilize existing data to analyze and improve recruitment and hiring strategies.

Onboarding

- Ensure onboarding for all staff and for senior leaders is inclusive and equitable.

- Provide information on available DEI and human rights-related learning for all staff and new employees at onboarding.

- Provide information on existing ERGs at onboarding for new employees.

Retention

- Utilize existing data to analyze and improve promotion and retention strategies.

Learning and Development

- Ensure all staff have access to training on the Ontario Human Rights Code.

- Design and deliver comprehensive DEI Learning Plan to all staff aimed at increasing awareness of equity-related training, including:

  - Unconscious Bias
  - Unconscious Bias in Recruiting, Hiring, Retention and Promotions
  - DEI Fundamentals
  - Systemic Racism in Canada

- Expand DEI-related training to topics, including, but not limited to, 2SLBGTQ+ communities, anti-Asian racism, disability, antisemitism, etc.

- Provide DEI-related training for senior leadership, Mayor and Council.

Performance Management

- Develop and implement DEI learning goals for various levels of the organization.

Succession Planning, Mentorship and Promotion

- Develop strategies to ensure succession planning includes a targeted approach to diversifying leadership.

- Develop targeted opportunities for emerging leaders from Indigenous and equity-deserving groups' advancement through existing succession and mentorship programs.

Achieving Equity

Anti-Racism

- Engage with diverse Black communities in the City to develop and implement strategy and action plan to address Anti-Black racism.

Religious Intolerance

- Engage Jewish communities in Vaughan to identify, develop and support opportunities to build awareness and educate the public to effectively work toward the elimination of all forms of intolerance, discrimination and bigotry.

- Engage Muslim communities in Vaughan to identify, develop and support opportunities to build awareness and educate the public to effectively work toward the elimination of all forms of intolerance, discrimination and bigotry.

2SLGBTQ+ Communities

- Engage 2SLGBTQ+ communities in Vaughan to support opportunities to build awareness and educate the public to effectively work toward the elimination of all forms of intolerance, discrimination and bigotry.

Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation

- Review and develop acknowledgment of Indigenous people and land in consultation with Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

- Continue to build meaningful relationships with Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation to develop a Memorandum of Understanding.

- Foster commitment to enhancing relationships with Indigenous people and land.

Community Engagement and Participation

- Collaboratively work with the Corporate and Strategic Communications department to develop a community engagement and targeted outreach strategy.

Continued Accessibility Excellence

- Develop Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2023 - 2026)

- Continue to support and lead existing accessibility initiatives and events.

- Ensure all new employee onboarding materials are in accessible format.

- Develop guidelines to ensure learning and development programs meet accessibility standards.

- Develop a strategic plan to targeted and intentional approach to recruit, hire and retain people with disabilities.

- Update Accessibility Site Plan Checklist.

- Universal changerooms at new community centres.

APPENDIX: DEFINITIONS

Anti-Black Racism

Anti-Black racism is prejudice, attitudes, beliefs, stereotyping and discrimination that is directed at people of African descent and is rooted in their unique history and experience of enslavement and its legacy. Anti-Black racism is deeply entrenched in Canadian institutions, policies and practices, to the extent that anti-Black racism is either functionally normalized or rendered invisible to the larger white society. Anti-Black racism is manifest in the current social, economic and political marginalization of African Canadians, which includes unequal opportunities, lower socioeconomic status, higher unemployment, significant poverty rates and overrepresentation in the criminal justice system.

Anti-Indigenous Racism

Anti-Indigenous racism is the ongoing race-based discrimination, negative stereotyping and injustice experienced by Indigenous Peoples within Canada. It includes ideas and practices that establish, maintain and perpetuate power imbalances, systemic barriers and inequitable outcomes that stem from the legacy of colonial policies and practices in Canada. Systemic anti-Indigenous racism is evident in discriminatory federal policies such as the Indian Act and the residential school system. It is also manifest in the overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in provincial criminal justice and child welfare systems, as well as inequitable outcomes in education, well-being and health. Individual lived experiences of anti-Indigenous racism can be seen in the rise in acts of hostility and violence directed at Indigenous people.

Anti-racism

Anti-racism is defined as the work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic and social life. Anti-racism tends to be an individualized approach and set up in opposition to individual racist behaviours and impacts.

Antisemitism

Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jewish people, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jewish people. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.

Discrimination

Discrimination happens when a person experiences negative treatment or impact, intentional or not, because of their gender identity or gender expression. It can be direct and obvious or subtle and hidden, but harmful just the same. It can also happen on a bigger systemic level, such as organizational rules or policies that look neutral, but end up excluding trans people. Friends, family or others who face discrimination because of their association with a trans person are also protected.

Equity

An equity approach recognizes that distinct groups may need varied treatment in order to share the same advantages. Equity initiatives seek to create the conditions for a "level playing field" by addressing these exclusions.

Equity-deserving Groups

Equity-deserving groups are communities that experience significant collective barriers in participating in society. This could include attitudinal, historic, social and environmental barriers based on age, ethnicity, disability, economic status, gender, nationality, race, sexual orientation and transgender status, etc. Equity-deserving groups are those that identify barriers to equal access, opportunities and resources due to disadvantage and discrimination, and actively seek social justice and reparation.

Francophone

In Canada, the term francophone refers to someone whose first language is French: it is the one they use most often to speak, read, write and think, and the one they use most often at home. Outside of Quebec, most Canadians communicate in English. As a result, the term francophone is often employed in the context of French-speaking linguistic minority communities. Many provinces, including Ontario, have sizeable and long-established francophone minority populations. On Feb. 22, 2016, Premier Kathleen Wynne issued an official apology, on behalf of the Government of Ontario, to Franco-Ontarians for Regulation 17 and the provincial government's longstanding policy of assimilating French Canadians. In 1986, the Legislative Assembly passed the French Language Services Act. French is recognized as an official language by the Act and provided legal status in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and guaranteed the public the right to receive government services in French in 22 regions.

Gender Expression

Gender expression is how a person publicly presents their gender. This can include behaviour and outward appearance, such as dress, hair, makeup, body language and voice. A person's chosen name and pronoun are also common ways of expressing gender.

Gender Identity

Gender identity is each person's internal and individual experience of gender. It is their sense of being a woman, a man, both, neither or anywhere along the gender spectrum. A person's gender identity may be the same as or different from their birth-assigned sex. Gender identity is fundamentally different from a person's sexual orientation.

Harassment

Harassment is a form of discrimination. It can include sexually explicit or other inappropriate comments, questions, jokes, name-calling, images, email and social media, transphobic, homophobic or other bullying, sexual advances, touching and other unwelcome and ongoing behaviour that insults, demeans, harms or threatens a person in some way. Assault or other violent behaviour is also a criminal matter. Trans people and other persons can experience harassing behaviour because of their gender identity or expression (gender-based harassment) and/or their sex (sexual harassment).

Historically, Persistently or Systemically Marginalized

Institutions throughout Canada were created at a time when societal norms privileged and included some groups and disadvantaged and excluded others. In Canada, these disadvantaged groups have been defined as Indigenous people, Black people, women, people with disabilities, racialized people and 2SLGBTQIA+ people. This history is connected to the legacy of day-to-day barriers that contributed to the past and perpetuate current inequities that compound over time. Systems, in the form of policies, practices,

culture, behaviours and beliefs, continue to maintain these barriers. It is often not an individual intention, but rather a systematic effort to discriminate. It is an unconscious, unrecognized practice of doing things as they have always been done (and recreating the historical exclusions).

Implicit/Unconscious Bias

Also known as unconscious or hidden bias, implicit biases are negative associations that people unknowingly hold. They are expressed automatically, without conscious awareness. Many studies have indicated that implicit biases affect individuals' attitudes and actions, thus creating real-world implications, even though individuals may not be aware that those biases exist within themselves. Notably, implicit biases have been shown to trump individuals' stated commitments to equality and fairness, thereby producing behaviours that diverge from the explicit attitudes that many people profess. The Implicit Association Test (IAT) is often used to measure implicit biases with regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion and other topics.

Inclusion

Acknowledging and valuing people's differences so as to enrich social planning, decision-making and quality of life for everyone. In an inclusive municipality, we each have a sense of belonging, acceptance and are recognized as valued and contributing members of society. Real inclusion takes place when those already included in the "mainstream" learn from those who are excluded and initiate change.

Intersectionality

The intersection, or crossover, of our many identities affects how each of us experiences the municipality. These intersections occur within a context of connected systems and structures of power (e.g., laws, policies, state governments, other political and economic unions, religious institutions, media). Individuals have multiple identities whereby a person can simultaneously experience privilege and oppression. For example, a Black woman in Canada does not experience gender inequalities in exactly the same way as a white woman, nor racial oppression identical to that experienced by a Black man. Each race and gender intersection produces a qualitatively distinct life.

Islamophobia

Fear, prejudice, hatred or dislike directed against Islam or Muslims, or towards Islamic culture.

Privilege

The experience of freedoms, rights, benefits, advantages, access and/or opportunities afforded to members of a dominant group in a society or in a given context.

Sexual orientation

Sexual orientation is a personal characteristic that informs identity. It covers the range of human sexuality from lesbian and gay, to bisexual and heterosexual. Sexual orientation is different from gender identity, which is protected under the ground of "sex."

Stereotypes

Assumptions that generalize how all people in a particular group are the same, without considering individual differences. Stereotypes are often based on misconceptions or incomplete information.

Structural/Institutional Oppression

The normalization and legitimization of an array of dynamics — historical, cultural, institutional and interpersonal — that routinely advantage dominant groups (white, Christian, heterosexual, able-bodied, etc.) while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for groups facing oppression (women, LGBTQ+ people, Black, Indigenous, etc.). Structural oppression is diffused and infused in all aspects of society, including its history, culture, politics, economics and entire social fabric. Structural oppression is more difficult to locate in a particular institution because it involves the reinforcing effects of multiple institutions and cultural norms, past and present, continually reproducing old and producing new forms of oppression. Structural racism is the most profound and pervasive form of oppression.

Systemic Barriers

Obstacles that exclude groups or communities of people from full participation in, and the benefits of, social, economic and political life. They may be hidden or unintentional but are built into the way society works. Existing policies, practices and procedures, as well as assumptions and stereotypes, reinforce them.

Systemic Oppression

Oppression is systematic and has historical antecedents; it is the intentional disadvantaging of groups of people based on their identity while advantaging members of the dominant group (gender, race, class, sexual orientation, language, etc.).

VAUGHAN