

For Information

REPORT TITLE: **Revised Culture Strategy and Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Development**

FROM: Kathryn Lockyer, Acting Commissioner of Corporate Services

OBJECTIVE

To inform the Diversity, Equity and Anti-Racism Committee about work related to the development of the Region's organizational Culture and organizational Diversity and Inclusion Strategies.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The Region of Peel has committed to a vision of ***Community for Life***, where everyone enjoys a sense of belonging and access to the services and opportunities they need to thrive at each stage of their lives.
- Key organizational strategies will support the outcomes of the Region's 20-year Strategic Plan, including the following two organizational strategies: the Culture Strategy and the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.
- Key inputs to the development of the organizational Diversity and Inclusion Strategy include: data and evidence; stakeholder engagement; and legislation impacting programs and services.
- An internal advisory committee, inclusive of representation across the organization, has been created to guide the development and implementation of the Strategies.
- The Region of Peel has secured the expertise of an external objective party to support the development and completion of a workforce census and employment systems review – critical inputs into the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

DISCUSSION

1. Background

This report has been brought forward from the Diversity, Equity and Anti-Racism Committee meeting on November 17, 2019, where quorum was not met. This report has been revised to reflect updated and current information.

The Region of Peel is committed to its vision of a ***Community for Life***, where everyone enjoys a sense of belonging and access to the services and opportunities they need to thrive at each stage of their lives. To deliver on this commitment, key strategies must guide the work of the organization. These include, but are not limited to:

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- An organizational Culture Strategy which articulates how staff will work collectively to achieve the outcomes of the Region's 20-year Strategic Plan. In 2017, an organizational Culture Strategy was endorsed, and implementation began in 2018.

Lessons learned from this initial implementation highlighted opportunities for improvements, which resulted in the need for a strategy refresh.

This Culture Strategy, which is foundational to the success of the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, will support staff to respond to the evolving needs of the community. The full Culture Strategy and implementation plan is included as Appendix I.

- An organizational Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, which will be a key enabler to developing a diverse and inclusive workplace that values and respects differences, recognizes the unique contributions and abilities of all people and facilitates innovative thinking to ensure programs and services address the diverse needs of the community. The strategy will be finalized in Q4 of 2020 and will be presented to the Diversity, Equity and Anti-Racism Committee in early 2021.

These strategies support the outcomes of the Corporate Social Responsibility Framework, particularly that the Region will improve as a socially responsible employer. They also directly align with the Region's 20-year Strategic Plan, specifically in the areas of:

- **Living** – with an outcome of having access to culturally appropriate services and contributing to community well-being
- **Thriving** – with an outcome of living in a community that embraces diversity and inclusion
- **Leading** – with an outcome of the Region of Peel being a model and progressive employer

The Region of Peel is one of the most diverse communities in Canada. According to the 2016 Census:

- 51.1 per cent of Peel's population are immigrants
- Peel had the highest percentage of visible minorities within the Greater Toronto Area at 62.3 per cent, broken down by municipality as:
 - Brampton – 73.3 per cent
 - Mississauga – 57.2 per cent
 - Caledon – 18.7 per cent

a) Definitions

Diversity refers to a broad range of individual attributes such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, and other ideologies. The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that every individual is unique and recognizing that individual differences contribute to diversity of thought and perspective. When embraced, diversity is a strength that can enhance creativity, innovation and service delivery.

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Inclusion is an action. It is the act of making all individuals in an organization or society feel valued, respected and accepted. Inclusion is about creating an environment that embraces and values individual differences.

2. Inputs into the Development of the Region's Diversity and inclusion Strategy

The development of an organizational Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Strategy is a key component to moving the Region towards achieving its vision of **Community for Life**. Several activities will serve as inputs to the development of the Strategy.

a) Data and Evidence

To create a D&I Strategy that results in meaningful outcomes for the organization, data is required. Two key activities that will allow the organization to move forward with a strategy for Peel are:

i. Workforce Census:

- Data collection to understand the composition of the workforce and alignment to positions and job levels.
- To be administered by the end of Q2 2020.

ii. Employment Systems Review:

- To identify systemic barriers in the organization's policies and practices, as it relates to recruitment, promotion and pay.
- To be completed by the end of Q4 2020.

b) Stakeholder Engagement

The Region will be collecting demographic data via external Client Satisfaction Surveys. This data will allow the organization to determine who uses its services and programs, and to help identify potential inequities in policies and programs.

As the D&I Strategy will address the needs of the community, both external and internal, it will be imperative to engage stakeholders at various stages in the development of the strategy. This will assist the Region to identify and plan how best to address the community's needs.

c) Legislation Impacting Programs and Services

Over the years, the Province has introduced legislation related to diversity and inclusion that have had broad reaching impact for organizations and for Canadians, like the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and several Ontario Human Rights Code policy changes. These types of changes will be key inputs into the organization's Culture and D&I Strategies.

3. Diversity, Equity and Anti-Racism Committee

On December 13, 2018, Regional Council approved the establishment of the Diversity, Equity and Anti-Racism Committee (DEAR Committee) to advise Regional Council about systemic barriers and diversity issues, both externally and internally, that may impact Regional programs and services. The Culture and D&I Strategies will be key guides to future organizational plans and activities, which support diversity and inclusion and enable the organization to achieve its vision of Community for Life.

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The DEAR Committee will be kept abreast of plans and activities that move the organization towards its vision of a **Community for Life** where everyone enjoys a sense of belonging and access to the services they need to thrive at every stage of their lives.

4. Next Steps

The Region of Peel is securing the expertise of an external objective party to support the development and completion of a workforce census and employment systems review. Qualitative and quantitative data will be used to inform the development of a Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Strategy for the organization.

An internal advisory committee inclusive of representation across the organization has been created to guide the development and implementation of the D&I Strategy through each phase of the work.

The D&I Strategy will be shared with the DEAR committee for endorsement in 2021.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

It is estimated that the development and implementation of a Workforce Census and an Employment Systems Review will cost approximately \$125,000, which will be funded through the 2020 Human Resources operating budget.

CONCLUSION

Activities related to diversity and inclusion (e.g. workforce census, employment systems review) will serve as inputs into the development of the organizational Culture and Diversity and Inclusion Strategies. The organizational Culture and Diversity and Inclusion Strategies are key components to guide the work that will support achieving the outcomes of the Region's 20-year Strategic Plan and vision of Community for Life, where everyone enjoys a sense of belonging and access to the services and opportunities they need to thrive through each stage of their lives.

APPENDICES

Appendix I – Culture Strategy – 2018-2022

For further information regarding this report, please contact Juliet Jackson, Director – Office of Culture & Inclusion, Ext. 6741, Juliet.Jackson@peelregion.ca.

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Reviewed and/or approved in workflow by:
Department Commissioner and Division Director.

Final approval is by the Chief Administrative Officer.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Nancy Polsinelli". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "N" and "P".

N. Polsinelli, Interim Chief Administrative Officer