The Town of Cobourg's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy

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Introduction

Over the course of the last eight (8) months, there have been numerous activities undertaken in order to understand the current state of practice regarding equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) at the Town of Cobourg. These have included:

1. Initial Internal Benchmarking,
2. External Benchmarking,
3. Leadership Interviews,
4. Document Review (In Progress),
5. Census and Engagement Survey, and
6. Confidential Internal Focus Groups.

Organizational cultures develop over many decades. In many cases, these issues are only surfaced when the organization undertakes the hard work of assessing their inclusivity issues.

The recommendations in this document should be used as the draft of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy for the Town of Cobourg, including goals, action items, and objectives. They will provide the baseline for measurement and progress reports, as well as understanding the EDI journey.

Goals

Based on this information, the following goals were drafted and presented to the public:

1. Identify and address systemic barriers within the Corporation.
2. Create programs to meet the needs of everyone.
3. Engage our diverse communities in a meaningful way.
4. Attract and leverage a diverse workforce.

Each of the Areas to be Addressed and subsequent Recommendations are aligned with the goals to create a fulsome EDI Strategy. However, the timeline for these may be different depending on what resources, tools, and structures are in place.

Different programs and policies will be created based upon the work done by the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee and the public engagement results from the Goals and feedback. These have been incorporated into the recommended actions as listed below and can be incorporated or adjusted based upon the resources provided to the holistic EDI Strategy.

These goals, objectives, and actions will align with the commitments we must meet under the Canadian Commission of UNESCO for the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities. These Common Commitments are:
1. Increasing vigilance against systemic and individual discrimination.
2. Monitoring discrimination in the municipality and taking action to address it.
3. Supporting individuals who experience discrimination.
4. Providing police services that are exemplary institutions for fighting discrimination.
5. Providing equal opportunities as a municipal employer, service provider, and contractor.
6. Supporting measures that promote equity in the labour market.
7. Challenging discrimination and promoting diversity and equal opportunities in housing.
8. Involving citizens by giving them a voice in anti-racism initiatives and decision-making.
9. Challenging discrimination and promoting diversity and equal opportunities in education and other forms of learning.
10. Promoting the respect, knowledge, and appreciation of cultural diversity and the inclusion of Indigenous and racialized communities in the cultural facbric of the municipality.

Timeline

The timeline is a suggestion for each of these, but can be updated based on Council and Senior Management's preferences and the resources that will be allocated to the project. The Phases will overlap with one another and as different projects are started, or information is gathered, it may adjust the timeline or priority of the projects.

The full Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy will start in 2022 and the initial work will be completed in 2026 with updates to be made on an annual or semi-annual basis, depending on resources, information gathered, and priorities from Staff, Council, and the public.

Phases of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy

The areas to be addressed and subsequent recommendations listed here are for the fulsome EDI Strategy. Each of these are recommended to be done; however, the length of time may differ based upon what is completed first, the foundation created, and adapting the information based on experiences with the community as we rollout the EDI Strategy.

The recommendations are based upon information gathered in the process as well as from the public engagement that has taken place. These themes should be understood as "objectives" under the goals that were presented to the public and are listed below; however, there may be additional items that are added based upon feedback and additional programs that need to be conducted based on Council's Strategic Plan.

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy should be broken into three (3) Phases:

1. Phase One: Internal Strengthening of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.
2. Phase Two: Audit and Assess Goods, Programs, Services, and Information.
3. Phase Three: Collaborate and Build More Inclusive Practices for the Town of Cobourg.

Each of these Phases, as well as specific actions, are explained below. It should be noted that these Phases are intertwined – while a lot of the actions may not be started until the next year or the next phase, we are working to build the foundation for everything from one Phase to another. This document will be adjusted depending on capacity, resources, and need to determine the priorities for the community's diverse needs. Further, this will cycle through each of the Phases as we move from Phase Two to Phase Three and need to create more capacity in our Staff members that has been started in Phase One.

Phase One: Internal Strengthening of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Based on the information gathered, there are recommendations that should be used as the foundation for the EDI Strategy. As we start to determine the length of time for the fulsome EDI Strategy, it is essential to give the Staff members at the Town the proper tools, resources, knowledge, and education to help them implement different action items into the community.

To create more cultural competence in leadership and our staff to engage meaningfully with our residents, we first need to work on some internal practices. This will allow our staff members have the tools, resources, and understanding they need to engage meaningfully with our residents and their diverse needs.

We have seven (7) areas that need to be addressed for the most part in 2022 with all being accomplish or have a foundation by the end of 2023:

1. Increase Cultural Competence,
2. Create Communication Strategy,
3. Establish Change Agents,
4. Update Policies and Procedures,

5. Develop Leadership Awareness and Accountability,
6. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) as a Strategic Priority, and
7. Improve Organization-Wide Awareness and Understanding.

Increase Cultural Competence

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Complete IDIs with the Leadership Team (Council/SMT/Managers)	The Intercultural Development Inventory® (IDI®) is the premier cross-cultural assessment of intercultural competence that is used by thousands of individuals and organizations to build intercultural competence to achieve international and domestic diversity and inclusion goals and outcomes.	2021 and 2022	Goal #1: Identify and address systemic barriers within the Corporation.	#1, #5, #6, and #9
Conduct further training for leadership on a variety of topics.	Leaders must have the understanding, competence, and resources to be able to discuss a variety of topics related to EDI. This is one of the top goals that was selected by Managers as a need under the "Initial Benchmarking."	2022	Goal #1: Identify and address systemic barriers within the Corporation.	#1, #5, #6, and #9
Train all staff on diversity, inclusion, accessibility, harassment, and discrimination.	Conduct training on different concepts, as well as provide knowledge and understanding for how to	2022	Goal #1: Identify and address systemic barriers within the Corporation.	#1, #5, #6, and #9

Table 1: Increase Cultural Competence

Create Communication Strategy

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Develop messages around IDEA for the Town.	Create a specific vision, mission, and values for the Town of Cobourg's understanding of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to guide the principles of communication. This will guide the visual standards, as well as the wording, messaging, and images that are shared by the Town of Cobourg in an official capacity. Where needed, training will be provided to the communications team to support.	This should be **created by March 2022** and integrated into communications **by July 2022**.	Goal #3: Engage our diverse communities in a meaningful way.	#1, #7, and #10

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Embed IDEA messaging into team meetings and external documents.	Working with the newly created vision, mission, and values for the Town of Cobourg's understanding of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility, these will be embedded into any external documents provided to the public and into the internal team meetings, such as the Management Meeting.	This should be **created by July 2022** and integrated into communications **by August 2022**.	Goal #4: Attract and leverage a diverse workforce.	#1, #7, and #10
Enhance IDEA of public websites and career page.	Work with Communications and other departments to audit the website to ensure that our language, images, and ideas are inclusive.	Audit to be completed **by June 2022** with updates **by September 2022**.	Goal #4: Attract and leverage a diverse workforce.	#1, #7, and #10
Create communications to tell the Town's diversity and inclusion story.	Work with the community and Committees of Council to incorporate stories, topics, and ideas around the history and culture of the Town of Cobourg.	Stories to be compiled during the **remainder of 2021 and beginning of 2022** with the series to **begin mid-2022**.	Goal #3: Engage our diverse communities in a meaningful way.	#1, #7, and #10

Table 2: Create Communication Strategy

Establish Change Agents

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Find employee(s) in each division/department who wish to be a part of the rollout of the EDI Strategy.	Ask employees to participate in different avenues of EDI, whether participating on the internal diversity and inclusion committee or another aspect, to be "Diversity Champions" in their division/department to make communications and implementation easier for the Town as a whole. To ensure that the EDI Strategy rollout is successful, the most senior EDI professional/Diversity Champion should be an equal and influential partner on the senior leadership team.	This should be completed **by the end of 2021 or beginning of 2022**.	Goal #1: Identify and address systemic barriers within the Corporation.	#1, #2, and #3
Create internal diversity and inclusion committee that is "Senior Management Sponsored."	An internal diversity and inclusion committee should be created that includes representation and support from leaders, represents internal stakeholders and rights holders, and impacts EDI efforts. This group will focus on **internal elements** of creating a more inclusive workplace.	This should be **created and implemented by mid-2022**.	Goal #4: Attract and leverage a diverse workforce.	#1, #2, and #3

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Determine need for Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)	Working with the internal diversity and inclusion committee, determine the need for Employee Resource Group(s) for underrepresented and/or vulnerable groups that are: • Sufficiently supported and have dedicated resources for the development and continuation; • Serving as partners and advisors on recruitment, communications, risk management, community engagement, and other organizational topics, and; • Recognized as credible and valuable resources to the Town of Cobourg.	These would be developed in the **second half of 2022**.	Goal #1: Identify and address systemic barriers within the Corporation.	#1, #2, and #3

Table 3: Establish Change Agents

Update Policies and Procedures

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Refresh and update Human Resources policies with an IDEA lens.	Through the Policy Review Team meetings, ideally with the assistance of a full-time or contract Policy Analyst, the Human Resources policies and procedures would be updated by the end of 2022 to ensure that our internal practices are equitable and inclusive.	Complete all of this refresh, revision, and update by **the end of 2022**.	Goal #1: Identify and address systemic barriers within the Corporation.	#1, #2, #3, #5, and #6

Develop a "Diversity and Inclusion Lens" for the Town and implementation plan for rollout.	Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Lenses assist all persons with the development of new programs, policies, procedures, and initiatives at the Town of Cobourg. The aim is to create an inclusive and intersectional approach to ensure that we incorporate EDI principles from the development stage. Specific lenses will be developed in tandem with appropriate departments and include: 1. Communications; 2. Community Engagement; 3. Conflict Resolution; 4. Event Planning; 5. Leading, Supervising, and Managing; 6. Monitoring and Evaluating Performance; 7. Policy Development and Review; 8. Recruiting Staff, Volunteers, and Third-Party Vendors; 9. Request for Proposal and Request for Tender Development;	These will be completed **by the end of 2022** with the assistance of the EDIAC.	Goal #1: Identify and address systemic barriers within the Corporation.	#1, #2, #3, #5, and #6

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
	10. Service and "Product" Development, 11. Strategic Planning, and; 12. Training Staff, Volunteers, and Third-Party Vendors.			
Implement and communicate revisions to existing policies and procedures.	As policies and procedures are updated, provide specific communications about what the changes are, if applicable, and how to implement the changes.	This will be completed as the policies and procedures are **updated throughout 2022**.	Goal #1: Identify and address systemic barriers within the Corporation.	#1, #2, #3, #5, and #6

Table 4: Update Policies and Procedures

Develop Leadership Awareness and Accountability

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Add diversity and inclusion competency performance measures to leaders' performance management.	As we update the Town's performance management system, it is important to add key factors for competence related to EDI. This should include metrics such as: • Retention of individuals across a variety of diversity dimensions; • Participation in EDI training, development, and committees, and; • Ensure that competence on EDI (through training, awareness, etc.) is a pre-requisite for advancement.	These should be analyzed and integrated alongside the organizational and pay equity reviews. • This should be in place by **July 2022**. • Updates or changes should be conducted on **an ongoing basis** as needed.	Goal #4: Attract and leverage a diverse workforce.	#1, #5, and #6.

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Provide the Senior Management Team with the tools and training they need to be effective change agents of diversity and inclusion.	As we work towards Level 5: Best Practice of the Global Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Benchmarks, we want leadership to work towards: • Leaders are change agents and role models for DEI. To get here, Leaders have to become more familiar and comfortable with EDI. Leaders will receive organizational wide information as well as tailored and specific information based on their gaps in knowledge.	This should start in 2022 and be adjusted to the needs of the group into 2023.	Goal #1: Identify and address systemic barriers within the Corporation.	#1, #2, #3, #5, and #6.
Garner endorsement and strategic input from Senior Management Team to ensure the leaders are advocates for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.	Senior leaders need to be proactive in completing training but also in ensuring their staff members participate, ask questions and engage. Inclusion is about everyone working together toc create an inclusive workplace.	This should be done in 2021 and then ongoing.	Goal #1: Identify and address systemic barriers within the Corporation.	#1, #2, #3, #5, and #6.

Table 5: Develop Leadership Awareness and Accountability Recommendations

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) as a Strategic Priority

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Create an EDI vision and mission that become mandate for the Town of Cobourg.	This needs to be completed by the end of 2021 to demonstrate the basics of EDI importance to the Town of Cobourg. This should be a collective effort to create definitions, information, and a pathway forward.	2021	Goal #1: Identify and address systemic barriers within the Corporation.	#1, #2, #3, and #10
Work to create EDI in all aspects of divisions.	Work with our division leaders to determine the best way to integrate EDI into the systems currently in place.	2023	Goal #1: Identify and address systemic barriers within the Corporation.	#1, #2, #3, and #10

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Ensure that there are adequate financial, time, and human resources to support EDI.	Without having the correct resources in place, it is difficult to move forward. Adequate human resources are needed to lead this project, as well as time commitment from every individual in the Corporation. Where possible, shorter training courses will be used. Further, adequate budget for training, creation of resources, speakers, programs, etc. must be allocated to ensure the success of the EDI Strategy and the EDI journey.	2021 and annually	Goal #2: Create programs to meet the needs of everyone.	#1, #2, #3, and #10

Table 6: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) as a Strategic Priority Recommendations

Improve Organization-Wide Awareness and Understanding

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Educate employees on applying knowledge and skills to working in an inclusive and respectful manner.	Staff members noted that they did not feel confident engaging with the community on issues related to equity, diversity, or inclusion. They specifically stated that more knowledge, education, and awareness was needed for them.	2022 and Ongoing	Goal #1: Identify and address systemic barriers within the Corporation.	#1, #2, #5, #6, and #10

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Divisions should collaborate to ensure a holistic and integrated approach to EDI.	Best practices should be created cross-divisionally and with everyone in mind. This means that all divisions should feel comfortable discussing what works for them, what needs to be updated, and how they wish to engage with EDI to ensure that it is successful and incorporated in their day-to-day work.	2023 and Ongoing	Goal #1: Identify and address systemic barriers within the Corporation.	#1, #2, #5, #6, and #10
Work towards updating the structures for elected and community-facing positions to include more equity (i.e., unions, diversity committee, etc.).	All persons who wish to be in leadership positions that are community-facing and/or in positions of power that are based on elections are provided with equitable and fair opportunity to do so. This may look different for each position depending on barriers and obstacles. However, we can use the success of the Women in Governance Program and other successful and beneficial initiatives to provide: • Resources, • Training, and • Opportunities.	2023 and Ongoing	Goal #4: Attract and leverage a diverse workforce.	#8, #9, and #10

Table 7: Improve Organization-Wide Awareness and Understanding Recommendations

Phase Two: Audit and Assess Goods, Programs, Services, and Information

Once our team has begun to develop the capacity to engage with our community, we can begin to audit and assess the ways in which we do that. Without the fundamental knowledge of, and cultural capacity to engage with, diverse communities, it will be difficult for our Staff to look past their biases to determine the best way forward.

This phase will overlap with the first, as learning, education, and awareness must continue as all phases are implemented. The areas listed below are concerns that were raised during various point of the data gathering and analysis for the EDI Strategy. Many leaders, employees, and community members made note that the current structure of the Town of Cobourg didn't leave room for change, innovation, or diversity of thinking, engaging, or doing.

To ensure that we are taking diverse needs into consideration, we will work to audit and assess the way we create, advertise, adjust, and assess the success of goods, programs, services, and information. This will be coincided with the implementation of the EDI Lens creation and implementation to help our Staff assess using checklists and self-reflection.

There are eight (8) areas that should be address in this Phase during 2023 to 2024:
1. Identify and Address Barriers to Residents Accessing Programs and Services,
2. Identify and Address Internal and External Perceptions of Harassment and Discrimination,
3. Evaluate Flexibility and Accommodation Practices,
4. Identify and Remove Barriers in Succession Planning,
5. Identify Ways Diversity and Inclusion Can Positively Affect Services Provided,
6. Monitor Services to Ensure they are Accessible, Inclusive, and Equitably Provided,
7. Monitor the Demographic Representations at the Town of Cobourg, and
8. Monitor the Effectiveness of Internal and External Resolutions for Harassment and Discrimination.

Identify and Address Barriers to Residents Accessing Programs and Services

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Audit our current programs and services to understand current use.	It is important to note what is being used, how we are advertising, and what updates or changes could be made to have more use to them. This will be done in conjunction with the Parks and Recreation department.	2023	Goal #1: Identify and address systemic barriers within the Corporation.	#8, #9, and #10
Update, change, add, and remove programs and services based on the audit.	These updates and changes, while driven by the audit conducted, will also be based upon resources (both financial and human). Some of the changes and/or updates may come with a budgetary request, either through the year or for the next year, depending on estimated costs.	2024 and Ongoing	Goal #2: Create programs to meet the needs of everyone.	#8, #9, and #10

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Work to create more awareness around the programs and services provided by the Town through inclusive communications.	Based on the information determined in the audit, the Parks and Recreation department and the Communications department will work together to create more inclusive language around certain programs and/or try different mediums to reach a different group of people.	2024 and Ongoing	Goal #3: Engage our diverse communities in a meaningful way.	#8, #9, and #10
Work to expand support of resources for organizations supporting historically underfunded communities in Cobourg.	The Town will continue to advertise and support other businesses and organizations that provide different services and resources to residents, especially around newcomers, Indigenous persons, mental health, etc. This will be done in conjunction with the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee of Council.	2024 and Ongoing	Goal #2: Create programs that meet the needs of everyone.	#8, #9, and #10
Work to expand the opportunity to work with our Indigenous residents and partners.	Implement the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action that relate to municipalities as well as aspects of the UNDRIP.	2023 and Ongoing	Goal #3: Engage our diverse communities in a meaningful way.	#8, #9, and #10

Table 8: Identify and Address Barriers to Residents Accessing Programs and Services

Identify and Address Internal and External Perceptions of Harassment and Discrimination

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Work internally to ensure that all Staff members are aware of the Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy and Procedure.	Conduct training with all staff about what is required by them under the policy, how to report cases, and what the timelines may be based on different types of cases. This should include a specific course for Managers on their responsibilities as management and how to properly conduct the initial parts to investigations. In addition, all Staff members should be trained on the Ontario Human Rights Code and the areas of the Occupational Health and Safety Act surrounding Workplace Violence and Harassment.	2022	Goal #1: Identify and address systemic barriers within the Corporation.	#1, #2, #3, #5, and #6

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Work to highlight language around protection of Staff into agreements for the Town of Cobourg.	Language around the protection and rights of staff when dealing with violence, harassment, and discrimination should be highlighted and included in service agreements with: • Leases, • Rentals, • Memberships, • Registrations, and • Any other agreements between residents and/or community members and the Town of Cobourg that could put Staff in the direct path of violence, harassment, and discrimination.	2024	Goal #2: Create programs that meet the needs of everyone.	#1, #2, #3, #5, and #6
Test different methods of communication around the results of an investigation to see how persons react to them.	Work to ensure that all language used to communicate harassment, violence, and discrimination results are inclusive.	2024 and Ongoing	Goal #1: Identify and address systemic barriers in the Corporation.	#1, #2, #3, #5, and #6

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Work with different community groups that rally around causes to determine how they react to perceived cases of violence, harassment, and discrimination.	Following the footsteps of other municipalities and communities, consider implementing signage and a communication strategy around topics such as: • Hate Has No Home Here • Black Mental Health Campaigns • Welcome a Newcomer	2024 and Ongoing	Goal #1: Identify and address systemic barriers in the Corporation.	#1, #2, #3, #5, #6, #8, and #9

Table 9: Address Internal and External Perceptions of Harassment and Discrimination Recommendations

Evaluate Flexibility and Accommodation Practices

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Review policies and procedures to determine if there are barriers to requesting or receiving accommodations.	Review the information that is given to employees upon hire and workplace injury to ensure that it is presented factually and with all the information that is required. This may include training on the policies and procedures for Managers about the type of information that should and **should not** be collected for accommodations. There is a need to continue the training, such as through John Draper, for Managers and all Senior Staff on building accommodations and inclusive workplace practices and spaces for all persons with disabilities.	2022 and Ongoing	Goal #1: Identify and address systemic barriers within the Corporation.	#1, #2, #3, #5, and #6

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Refine and revise policies and procedures to ensure that there are no barriers to advancement for those who request or receive accommodations.	Work to dismantle the stigma around requesting flexibility and accommodations when it comes to the advancement of their careers. Managers and staff should be given training and education around equity and how different persons need different tools and resources, but that does not mean that they are not capable of conducting their work.	2022 and Ongoing	Goal #4: Attract and leverage a diverse workforce.	#1, #2, #3, #5, and #6

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Work to break down the stigma surrounding needing flexibility and/or accommodations in the workplace.	Work to dismantle the stigma around requesting flexibility and accommodations when it comes to the advancement of their careers. This should be especially examined in terms of taking parental leave. There appears to be a trade-off for women between being a mother and being a successful women in business, in some organizations. Coworkers and bosses will perceive, whether real or imagined, a trade-off between a woman being competence and her being "warm" and empathetic.	2023 and Ongoing	Goal #1: Identify and address systemic barriers within the Corporation.	#1, #2, #3, #5, and #6

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Work to review positions as they are posted to determine the ability to have flexibility in work location.	As we have seen with COVID-19, many positions can be done remotely. While we work to not only increase diversity, but work to attract and retain staff members, there should be an analysis of the need to have the position in the office constantly or if it could be hybrid or fully remote. This may mean a change in how we measure performance, including working through Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).	2024 and Ongoing	Goal #4: Attract and leverage a diverse workforce.	#1, #2, #3, #5, and #6

Table 10: Evaluate Flexibility and Accommodation Practices Recommendations

Identify and Remove Barriers in Succession Planning

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Review current Human Resources hiring policies and job postings to see if there are any matters that could unknowingly be barriers to qualified diverse applicants.	As part of the review of all the Human Resources policies, the job postings should also be analyzed to ensure there are no unintentional barriers to hiring qualified applicants. This should include viewing them through an EDI Lens and looking for inclusion of requirements that are not bona-fide occupational requirements.	2022 and Ongoing	Goal #4: Attract and leverage a diverse workforce.	#5 and #6

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Conduct ongoing employee demographic surveys.	Conduct the Workforce Census and Inclusion Survey on an ongoing basis to see what changes, stays the same, and use this as a metric for demographic representation as well as sense of belonging for different identity groups.	2023, and then every two years.	Goal #4: Attract and leverage a diverse workforce.	#2, #5, and #6
Work with unions to find creative solutions where seniority issues have been identified as an issue to promotions.	Work with the unions and the collective agreements to ensure there are no unintentional barriers for all persons. Determine Cobourg specific best practices for incorporating new skills as well as historical knowledge into the job postings to ensure that there is no unintentional or perceived discrimination.	2024	Goal #4: Attract and leverage a diverse workforce.	#5 and #6

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Work to identify systemic barriers facing under-represented groups.	The Town of Cobourg should begin to incorporate best practices, including recruiting from representative labour markets, as well as from those that feed into the surrounding areas. Further, there is a need to see how the pulse and inclusion survey change year over year for different demographic groups to see if there is low or high engagement for people with different diversity dimensions, especially those that are historically underrepresented.	2024	Goal #4: Attract and leverage a diverse workforce.	#5 and #6

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Research best practices to effectively address and remove potential barriers to success.	Provide Human Resources and Hiring Managers with the tools, training, and resources they need to understand how people from different cultures and backgrounds may respond to interview questions and methods. Work to advertise to a vast variety of organizations and diversity networks to reach a broad pool of diverse talent. Ensure that all questions are relevant, job specific, and phrased without colloquial wording, jargon, or idioms.	2025	Goal #4: Attract and leverage a diverse workforce.	#3, #5, and #6

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Identify and work to strengthen a culture of inclusion and address barriers to career advancement.	Conduct evaluations of recruiting practices to ensure that candidates from different groups and identities are given equitable opportunities. Begin to implement measures of success throughout the recruitment process, such as the percentage of diverse and underrepresented applicants at each stage. Promote the equity, diversity, and inclusion of the hiring process throughout the recruitment procedure.	2025	Goal #4: Attract and leverage a diverse workforce.	#5 and #6
Work to identify and address the gender pay gap at the Town of Cobourg.	Begin to analyze the pay scale and pay at the Town of Cobourg. Identify areas that could be considerably closed for the gender pay gap. Consider reporting the Gender Pay Gap on an annual basis, using best practices for disclosures, as well as Diversity Reporting in Higher level positions in organizations.	2023	Goal #4: Attract and leverage a diverse workforce.	#5 and #6

Table 11: Identify and Remove Barriers in Succession Planning Recommendations

Identify Ways Diversity and Inclusion Can Positively Affect Services Provided

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Analyze the preexisting programs that attract residents to understand what components work.	During the audit of services, work to determine the difference between the high attendance and low attendance programs. Further, analyze the high vs low engagement projects through the Communications Department and Engage Cobourg. There is also the potential to analyze if there are more or less persons at specific Public Planning Meetings to understand where and why people in the community engage.	2024	Goal #2: Create programs that meet the needs of everyone.	#1, #2, #3, #8, and #10
Take proactive steps to understand unique work environments at the Town of Cobourg.	Work with different divisions to understand their situations, how they engage with residents, how they work with other divisions, and what their unique legislative and/or by-law requirements are.	2024 and Ongoing	Goal #1: Identify and address systemic barriers within the Corporation.	#1, #2, #3, #8, and #10
Mentor and assist departments in identifying how equity, diversity, and inclusion can positively address challenges.	Through this analysis, we can work together to come up with solutions to ensure an inclusive work environment for the staff and residents who work with them.	2024 and Ongoing	Goal #4: Attract and leverage a diverse workforce.	#1, #2, #3, #8, and #10

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Work with divisions to incorporate specific departmental action items to assist with promoting inclusion and reducing barriers to success.	Beyond the scope of the EDI Strategy, each department should have their own goals to increase EDI in their department. Each department's needs will be different depending on their outputs. This will not be completed until the full policy and procedure update has been completed and Staff feel comfortable with their EDI knowledge.	2025	Goal #1: Identify and address systemic barriers within the Corporation.	#1, #2, #3, #8, and #10

Table 12: Identify Ways Diversity and Inclusion Can Positively Affect Services Provided Recommendations

Monitor Services to Ensure they are Accessible, Inclusive, and Equitably Provided

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Audit buildings to bring them to Rick Hansen Gold Standard Certification for accessibility.	By becoming a RHFAC certified building, we can: • Gain market differentiation and a competitive advantage, • Attract more diverse visitors, staff, and customers, • Build sustainable, inclusive spaces without costly retrofits, • Be a visionary leader in equity, diversity, and inclusion, and • Benefit everyone with improved access	2024	Goal #2: Create programs that meet the needs of everyone.	#1, #2, #3, and #10

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Leverage the <u>Town of Cobourg's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan</u> to attract persons with disabilities to our services.	Build upon the successes of the programs in the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan to adapt programs, goods, and services to meet the needs of persons with disabilities.	2024	Goal #2: Create programs that meet the needs of everyone.	#1, #2, #3, and #10
Gather feedback from all persons about the accessibility of our programs and services we offer.	Working with the Accessibility Advisory Committee and the current reporting and feedback system, understand the types of barriers that people with disabilities face when accessing information, programs, services, and goods.	2022 and Ongoing	Goal #3: Engage our diverse communities in a meaningful way.	#1, #2, #3, and #10

Table 13: Monitor Services to Ensure they are Accessible, Inclusive, and Equitably Provided Recommendations

Monitor the Demographic Representations at the Town of Cobourg

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Use the information from Statistics Canada to understand our current demographics.	By understanding trends in the data of our demographics at the Town of Cobourg, we can look to trends in hiring, business opportunities, and the types of programs or services that we can offer in the future.	2023	Goal #2: Create programs that meet the needs of everyone.	#1, #2, and #3

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Work with the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee of Council to monitor and understand the demographics.	One of the items on the Work Plan for the EDIAC is to understand and monitor the demographics as well as run our their own surveys to get into the more nuanced understanding of the Town's demographics.	2024	Goal #3: Engage our diverse communities in a meaningful way.	#8, #9, and #10
Analyze the demographics of the Town in comparison to us as an employer.	Determine where gaps may be, how to fill them, and what our goals for hiring in the future will be.	2024	Goal #4: Attract and leverage a diverse workforce.	#5 and #6

Table 14: Monitor the Demographic Representations at the Town of Cobourg Recommendations

Monitor the Effectiveness of Internal and External Resolutions for Harassment and Discrimination

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Create a feedback forum for persons to express concerns about violence, harassment, and discrimination in a more transparent way.	By providing an opportunity for people to discuss, when comfortable, their experiences will allow others to understand their behavior and how it impact people as well as reminding others who face discrimination that they are not alone. This work should be done in consultation with our organization and non-profit partners.	2024	Goal #1: Identify and address systemic barriers at the Corporation.	#8, #9, and #10

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Work on creating alternative solutions for conflict resolution.	Train all front-line staff on Mental Health First Aid, Non-Violent Conflict Resolution, and other topics related to deescalating encounters with the public and Staff.	2024	Goal #2: Create programs that meet the needs of everyone.	#1, #2, #3, and #10

Table 15: Monitor the Effectiveness of Internal and External Resolutions for Harassment and Discrimination Recommendations

Phase Three: Collaborate and Build More Inclusive Practices for the Town of Cobourg

While we are auditing and assessing our current goods, programs, services, and information, it is imperative to implement some new ideas to see if they meet the needs of the community. This will include creating more awareness for EDI topics in the community and working with the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee of Council.

This Phase may adjust and overlap with Phase Two – as we collaborate and build practices, which could include more goods, programs, services, and information that need to be audited and assessed.

This Phase will also include more awareness, understanding, and collaboration with external partners such as our urban Indigenous population as well as Alderville First Nations. While we work on the foundations to do so, and continue to implement ideas from the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples throughout Phase One and Phase Two.

There are eight (8) areas that should be address in this Phase, with some starting in 2022 and the majority starting in 2024 to 2026:

1. Create More Opportunities for Education and Awareness on EDI Topics for Residents,
2. Create More Opportunities to Engage Youth and Seniors,
3. Create Programs that Engage Our Residents,
4. Improve Access to Information and Services,
5. Incorporate Additional Celebrations into the Town's Public Celebrations,
6. Provide Opportunities to Welcome Newcomers to the Town of Cobourg,
7. Strengthen Social and Economic Development Through Partnerships, and
8. Work with Our Community Partners to Engage Residents in a Meaningful Way.

Create More Opportunities for Education and Awareness on EDI Topics for Residents

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Explore opportunities for creating speaking events and educational opportunities for the public.	Building upon the success of the Women in Governance Program's Speaker Series, create more opportunities for the public to engage in free discussion and dialogue around EDI topics.	2022 and Ongoing	Goal #2: Create programs to meet the needs of everyone.	#8, #9, and #10
Explore opportunities to create public engagement opportunities to have residents their opinions.	Hosting continuous public forums to gain feedback from residents on current programs, as well as what they wish to see happen next.	2023 and Ongoing	Goal #3: Engage our diverse communities in meaningful ways.	#1, #2, #3, #8, #9, and #10
Explore opportunities to work with Alderville and surrounding Friendship Centres to educate residents on Indigenous issues.	Work to create Communities of Practice with our Indigenous communities that are meaningful to them and create opportunities for our residents to learn.	2024	Goal #2: Create programs to meet the needs of everyone.	#1, #2, #3, #8, #9, and #10
Work with the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee of Council to create opportunities for learning.	Work with the EDIAC to create opportunities for all our Committees and Boards, as well as our residents on topics that are meaningful to them based on feedback from the public, Council, and staff.	2023	Goal #2: Create programs to meet the needs of everyone.	#1, #2, #3, #8, #9, and #10

Table 16: Create More Opportunities for Education and Awareness on EDI Topics for Residents Recommendations

Create More Opportunities to Engage Youth and Seniors

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitments
Work with appropriate rights holders and stakeholders to create a youth engagement strategy.	One of Council's goals, as well as the EDIAC's Work Plan goals, is to create more opportunities for youth in governance. The goal is to work with our community to provide more opportunities for our youth.	2024	Goal #3: Engage our diverse communities in a meaningful way.	#1, #2, #3, #9, and #10
Work with appropriate rights holders and stakeholders to create a senior engagement strategy.	One of Council's goals, as well as the EDIAC's Work Plan goals, is to create more opportunities for seniors in governance. The goal is to work with our community to provide more opportunities for our seniors.	2024	Goal #3: Engage our diverse communities in a meaningful way.	#1, #2, #3, #9, and #10
Continue to determine best practices in the Age Friendly Communities guide to increase the ability for persons of all ages to live in Cobourg.	Building off the success of the Inclusive Communities Grant Program, work to implement more of the strategies and best practices of the Age Friendly Communities guide.	2022 and Ongoing	Goal #2: Create programs that meet the needs of everyone.	#1, #2, #3, #9, and #10

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitments
Determine the need for a Youth Advisory Committee of Council.	Working based on best practices with other municipalities as well as how our youth wish to engage with us, explore the opportunity to have a Youth Advisory Committee and/or work with our other Boards and Committees to incorporate youth.	2022	Goal #3: Engage our diverse communities in a meaningful way.	#1, #2, #3, #9, and #10

Table 17: Create More Opportunities to Engage Youth and Seniors Recommendations

Create Programs that Engage Our Residents

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitments
Explore communication options that appeal to people of diverse backgrounds.	Work to understand what appeals to our community and how they best understand communication. This will include providing our communication team with specific training and resources to test a variety of communication methods.	2025	Goal #3: Engage our diverse communities in a meaningful way.	#8, #9, and #10

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitments
Build upon the success of the video remote interpreting and expand to all areas of customer service.	Build upon the pilot project for the video remote interpreting to expand to other areas of customer service, including all of Fire and Police Services. Different areas should be implemented over the years until all customer-facing areas have this implemented by the end of 2026.	2022 and Ongoing	Goal #2: Create programs to meet the needs of everyone.	#8, #9, and #10
Work to create, change, adjust, or remove programs for our community based on the audits completed.	Using the information that is consistently gathered from feedback and usage of the current programs, create, change, adjust, or remove programs. This could include a variation on the Women in Governance Program that is made for Indigenous, Racialized, Men, etc. to become more involved in government.	2025	Goal #2: Create programs to meet the needs of everyone.	#1, #2, #3, #8, and #10
Work to create an Indigenous employment program that support our urban Indigenous community and Alderville First Nations.	Work to provide meaningful and gainful employment to our urban Indigenous and Alderville First Nations neighbours that supplies them with understanding of their chosen field.	2025	Goal #4: Attract and leverage a diverse workforce.	#5 and #6

Table 18: Create Programs that Engage Our Residents Recommendations

Improve Access to Information and Services

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Ensuring existing and new information available to the public is up to date, in plain language, and in an accessible format.	Based on the legislative requirements of the Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, all information needs to be in an accessible format. The website should be audited on an ongoing basis with training provided to all staff, not just website content creators on creating accessible documents. Further, all communications sent internally or externally should be in an accessible format.	2022 and Ongoing	Goal #3: Engage our diverse communities in a meaningful way.	#1, #2, #8, #9, and #10
Enhance external communications to increase awareness of programs and services.	Accessible information should be sent out using inclusive language to promote our programs, services, goods, and information.	2023 and Ongoing	Goal #2: Create programs to meet the needs of everyone.	#1, #2, #8, #9, and #10
Research and consider implementation of tools to increase access to the website.	Consider implementing additional features, such as Browse Aloud, automatic translators, and other ways for the information to be portrayed in a format that is accessible and inclusive.	2023	Goal #3: Engage our diverse communities in a meaningful way.	#1, #2, #8, #9, and #10

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Research and consider implementation of tools to increase access to key documents.	Consider highlighting key documents in areas that are easy to find. This should include all public facing by-laws, policies, procedures, union job postings, and Council documents. These should be in an accessible format and provided to the public as soon as possible after they have been updated.	2024	Goal #3: Engage our diverse communities in a meaningful way.	#1, #8, and #10

Table 19: Improve Access to Information and Services Recommendations

Incorporate Additional Celebrations into the Town's Public Celebrations

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Plan, encourage, and support events that promote and celebrate understanding and diversity.	Working with the EDIAC, the Town will create a database of religious, cultural, and awareness days. By doing so, it will make it easier for Staff to bring proclamations to Council to ensure awareness on the topics. Beyond this, the Town will promote different celebrations in different mediums (social, radio, newspaper, etc.) This list should be updated on an annual basis and with feedback from the community.	2025	Goal #2: Create programs to meet the needs of everyone.	#1, #2, and #10
Create and distribute a Corporate Diversity Calendar that recognizes key dates, celebrations, and holy days of all religions and faiths.	An internal calendar will be distributed based on the information gathered from the public and other knowledge to allow our staff to have the knowledge necessary to promote and celebrate different diversity.	2022 and Ongoing	Goal #2: Create programs to meet the needs of everyone.	#1, #2, and #10

Table 20: Incorporate Additional Celebrations into the Town's Public Celebrations Recommendations

Provide Opportunities to Welcome Newcomers to the Town of Cobourg

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Build off of the "Start Here" Welcome Pages to welcome our new residents in a similar manner.	Work with different real estate agencies as well as settlement agencies to provided new residents with information about the Town of Cobourg as a way to welcome them to the community.	2025	Goal #3: Engage our diverse communities in a meaningful way.	#1, #3, #8, and #10
Host welcome events for people who have recently moved to Cobourg.	Mirroring other events that have occurred in the past, host events to welcome residents to the community. This should be done in collaboration with organizations and faith centres to ensure that all feel welcomed and engaged. This will provide information about who to contact, types of resources and organizations, and a first impression to the Town of Cobourg that will begin to build trust.	2025	Goal #3: Engage our diverse communities in a meaningful way.	#1, #3, #8, and #10

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Provide education to the community to help newcomers be more active in the community through volunteering, employment, Boards, Committees, etc.	Through these different processes, provide information to residents about the different opportunities in the area surrounding employment, volunteering, and assisting the Town through Boards, Committees, and being an elected official.	2025	Goal #3: Engage our diverse communities in a meaningful way.	#1, #3, #8, and #10

Table 21: Provide Opportunities to Welcome Newcomers to the Town of Cobourg

Strengthen Social and Economic Development Through Partnerships

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Identify opportunities for partnerships with local service providers and faith organization to explore ways of reducing barriers faced by diverse communities.	Work with the Economic Department, Venture 13, and other organizations to create a meaningful way to engage our diverse community. This should include new programs, infrastructure, and information that is tailored to the needs of our community based on the incoming demographics.	2026	Goal #3: Engage our diverse communities in a meaningful way.	#1, #3, #8, and #10
Partner with organizations involved in addressing the needs of internationally trained candidates with international credentials to assist in meeting our employment needs.	Work with employment agencies specifically working with internationally trained candidates in the area to help them find gainful employment at the Town of Cobourg or within the boundaries.	2026	Goal #3: Engage our diverse communities in a meaningful way.	#1, #3, #8, and #10

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Collaborate with employment agencies to provide resources and training opportunities for diverse communities.	Work within existing programs to help historically underrepresented populations in Cobourg find gainful employment. This could include sponsoring specific programs or working to provide the employment opportunity.	2026	Goal #4: Attract and leverage a diverse workforce.	#1, #3, #8, and #10

Table 22: Strengthen Social and Economic Development Through Partnership Recommendations

Work with Our Community Partners to Engage Residents in a Meaningful Way

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Work with community partners and organizations that provide support to underrepresented communities to gain trust.	Develop and continue relationships with community partners and organizations to gain trust with underrepresented communities. By doing so, the Town of Cobourg will be able to start to gain the trust of these communities to further engage them in issues and topics that matter to them. Further, we will be able to educate all residents on topics, issues, and resources in the community that could assist them with their needs.	2024	Goal #3: Engage our diverse communities in meaningful ways.	#1, #2, #3, #8, and #10

Recommendation	More Information	Timeline	Goal	Common Commitment
Refine our Request for Proposal and Request for Quotation process to include more Supplier Diversity.	Using best practices to work with businesses that are owned by underrepresented communities, we can refine and revise the RFP and RFQ language. This is one of the best practices in the Global Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Benchmark to incorporate diversity into the businesses that we work with.	2024	Goal #2: Create programs that meet the needs of everyone.	#1, #2, and #3
Explore opportunities for further ways to engage the community beyond Engage Cobourg and social media.	Work to incorporate other elements of public participation, including more public forums, citizen juries, roundtable discussions, and other best practices based on the International Association for Public Participation. IAP2 is working on more information to be more inclusive to diverse and vulnerable populations into public participation. This should be incorporated into all public engagement strategies and should be promoted to be more inclusive to those who do not use, have, or access social media and/or the internet.	2024	Goal #3: Engage our diverse communities in a meaningful way.	#1, #2, #3, #8, and #10

Table 23: Work with Our Community Partners to Engage Residents in a Meaningful Way Recommendations

Next Steps

Council will be provided three (3) weeks to review and provide feedback either in writing, in person, or via a virtual meeting with the Accessibility Coordinator, to determine the full scope of what will be included in the EDI Strategy. While it is recommended all of these recommendations are taken into the EDI Strategy and consideration, others can be prioritized or eliminated based upon Council's Strategic Plan and resources dedicated to the project.

Once this has been completed, the draft of the EDI Strategy will be presented to the EDI Advisory Committee of Council for their feedback and input. It will be sent to Council as well before starting a public engagement process of understanding the priorities and feedback from our residents.

After this has been conducted, it will be brought back to Council as a final document to approve alongside recommendations for the 2022 Budget to correspond to the objectives and programs.

The full strategy should be approved by November 2021 and will then be sent to the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities as our working Community Action Plan.

Conclusion

There is work to still be done in creating the stepping stones for our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion journey. With the recommendations listed above, we are working towards Level 5: Best Practices on the Global Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Benchmarks (GDEIB). These objectives and recommendations should be completed over the next five (5) to ten (10) years.

As more information is gathered and we continue on the journey towards Best Practice, these objectives and recommendations may change. This means that the main driver will include regular monitoring of our current practices against the GDEIB to ensure that we are progressing towards Best Practice. These will be presented at Council on a semi-annual basis to demonstrate what we have done, where we are headed next, and what steps will have been taken. Any confidential matters will be address through appropriate internal and external channels, including at Management Team Meetings, Directors Meetings, and Closed Sessions of Council, as necessary or appropriate.

The success of any Strategic Project, Plan, or Priority, is based upon the amount of resources (personnel, time, and financial). A strong commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion requires more than the verbal commitment to the practices.