

# STAFF REPORT

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF COBOURG



<b>Report to:</b>	Mayor and Council Members	<b>Priority:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Low
<b>Submitted by:</b>	Brent Larmer Municipal Clerk/Manager of Legislative Services <a href="mailto:blarmer@cobourg.ca">blarmer@cobourg.ca</a>	<b>Meeting Type:</b>  Open Session <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Closed Session <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>November 15, 2021</b>		
<b>Report No.:</b>	Corporate Services-127-21		
<a href="#">Submit comments to Council</a>			

**Subject/Title: The Town of Cobourg’s Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2022 to 2026**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

THAT Council receive the report for information purposes, and;

FURTHER THAT Council adopt and endorse the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2022 to 2026, and;

FURTHER THAT Council direct Staff to send the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2022 to 2026 to the Canadian Commission of UNESCO to meet our requirement for the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities’ Action Plan, and;

FURTHER THAT Council direct Staff to bring forward status reports to Council Meetings on an annual basis presenting an update on the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2022 to 2026, and;

FURTHER THAT Council direct Staff to bring forward reports to Council Meetings on an “as needed” basis presenting status updates, questions, comments, concerns, and celebrations from the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee, and;

FURTHER THAT Council direct Staff to bring forward costs associated with the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2022 to 2026 to the 2022 Budget review process for Council deliberations.

**PEOPLE:** The Town of Cobourg supports and cares for the Social and Physical

## 1. STRATEGIC PLAN

Well-Being of its Citizens

**PLACES:** The Town protects, preserves, and promotes its natural assets, heritage, arts, culture, and tourism.

**PROGRAMS:** The Town provides efficient and effective corporate, community, and business and recreational services for its residents, businesses, and visitors.

**PARTNERSHIP:** The Town engages in strong, sustainable public-private partnerships to improve the quality of life for everyone.

**PROSPERTIY:** The Town plans for, markets, and develops assets for economic growth and financial security.

## 2. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

There have been many different opportunities for the public to participate in drafting the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy. For this final draft, we asked the public about their opinions on where resources and information should be diverted first via survey on Engage Cobourg. We had forty-one (41) survey responses and these were the results. The survey ran from September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021 to October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

For Phase One, this is the order that people wanted to see us divert our time, energy, and resources to the proposed objectives:

1. Develop Leadership Awareness and Accountability,
2. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) as a Strategic Priority,
3. Creation Communication Strategy,
4. Update Policies and Procedures at the Town of Cobourg,
5. Establish Change Agents (internally),
6. Improve Organization Wide Awareness and Understanding, and
7. Increase Cultural Competence (at the Town of Cobourg).

For Phase Two, the order for the proposed objectives was as followed:

1. Identify and Address Barriers to Residents Accessing Programs and Services,
2. Identify and Address Internal and External Perceptions of Harassment and Discrimination,
3. Monitor Services to Ensure they are Accessible, Inclusive, and Equitably Provided,
4. Identify Ways Diversity and Inclusion Can Positively Affect Services Provided,
5. Evaluate Flexibility and Accommodation Practices,
6. Identify and Remove Barriers in Succession Planning,
7. Monitor the Effectiveness of Internal and External Resolutions for Harassment and Discrimination, and
8. Monitor the Demographic Representations at the Town of Cobourg.

For Phase Three, the order for the proposed objectives was as followed:

1. Improve Access to Information and Services,
2. Create Programs that Engage Our Residents,

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

The results of this survey keep in line with what has been heard and discovered through the Service Delivery Review, the Customer Service Survey, and the Organizational Review conducted by KPMG. These areas to be addressed, while increasing equity, diversity, and inclusion, will also serve to address additional issues of organizational talent and management, expected services, and fulfilling mandates set out by Council to our community.

In addition, the draft of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy was brought to the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee to their meeting on October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Council was also provided the opportunity to provide comments and feedback on the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy until October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021. In addition, all Managers were asked to provide feedback on the EDI Strategy until October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

### 3. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present Council with the final Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy which includes updates, changes, and suggestions from the public, Council, and the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy. This report outlines the background, the data that was used to create the EDI Strategy, and the overview of the EDI Strategy’s Phases.

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy will fulfill the Town of Cobourg’s requirements under the Canadian Commission for UNESCO’s Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities Plan of Action. Further, it aligns with the newly created Strategic Plan Action Item #2 under People “Leverage Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy to promote inclusion in the community.”

### 4. ORIGIN AND LEGISLATION

#### **Council Resolutions**

On June 29, 2020, Municipal Council passed the following Resolution:

*WHEREAS at the Committee of the Whole Meeting on June 22, 2020 Council considered a Notice of Motion from Councillor Emily Chorley and Councillor Adam Bureau, regarding an Equity and Inclusion Policy for the Town of Cobourg; and*

*WHEREAS the Black Lives Matter movement has highlighted the need for a reaffirmed commitment to confronting racism and removing systemic barriers to equality; and*

*WHEREAS fostering an inclusive and welcoming community is a key tenant of the Town of Cobourg's annual 'Pride Month'; and*

*WHEREAS municipal government can play a leading role in helping to achieve gender equality;*

*NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council instruct Staff to draft an Equity and Inclusion Policy; and*

*FURTHER THAT the policy specifically address the Inclusion of Black, Indigenous and People of Colour, women, people with disabilities, newcomers to Canada, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Two-Spirit, Intersex, and Asexual peoples, as well as those who identify as pansexual, questioning, non-binary, and other gender and sexual minorities (2SLGBTQIAP+) community and other visible minorities; and*

*FURTHER THAT the policy draws upon resources such as 'Advancing Equity and Inclusion: A Guide for Municipalities' and FCM's 'Diverse Voices Toolkit'; and*

*FURTHER THAT the policy includes annual commitments to Equity and Inclusion training for Town of Cobourg Staff, volunteers and Members of Council, engagement of citizens and advisory committees, and communications on progress; and*

*FURTHER THAT Council direct Staff to form an Ad Hoc Committee or a suitable alternative with a terms of reference or terms of engagement consisting of citizen members from these diverse minority populations in order to provide input on the development of the Equity and Inclusion Policy, due back to Council on August 24, 2020 Meeting; and*

*FURTHER THAT the draft policy be presented to Council for consideration by December 7th, 2020.*

On September 14, 2020, Municipal Council passed the following Resolution:

*WHEREAS at the Committee of the Whole Meeting on September 14, 2020 Council considered a memo from the Municipal Clerk/Manager of Legislative Services regarding Diversity, Inclusion and Equity within the Town of Cobourg; and*

*FURTHER THAT Municipal Council on June 29, 2020 provided Staff with a direction to draft and present a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy for the Town of Cobourg that will encourage, promote, and insist upon awareness, equality, and acceptance by all residents and Municipal Staff in the Corporation of the Town of Cobourg; and*

*FURTHER THAT Staff recommend that the Municipal Council not only provide direction for a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy, but that Council engage and establish a leadership approach in responding to a call for more municipal action on supporting Diversity, Inclusion and Equity across the jurisdiction on the Town of Cobourg Community;*

*NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council direct Staff to create supporting governance structures with internal and external stakeholders from the Black, Indigenous and People of Colour, women, people with disabilities, newcomers to Canada, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Two-Spirit, Intersex, and Asexual peoples, as well as those who identify as pansexual, questioning, non-binary, and other gender and sexual minorities (2SLGBTQIAP+) community and other visible minorities; in order to identify and develop priorities, strategies and initiatives to support the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion effort in the Town of Cobourg; and*

*FURTHER THAT Council direct Staff to engage Cobourg's diverse community to help create potential draft terms of reference to advise Council and make recommendations to provide a monitoring and measuring role to help ensure that the Town applies a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion lens to its policies, services and programs; and*

*FURTHER THAT Council direct Staff to make an application to join the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities (CIM) as a commitment to investing time and resources toward creating a more welcoming and inclusive community in which the CIM network brings together municipalities that want to improve their policies against racism, discrimination, exclusion and intolerance and together, the municipalities undertake initiatives to eliminate all forms of discrimination with a view to building open and inclusive societies; and*

*FURTHER THAT Council direct Staff to bring forward a report to a December Council Meeting or an earlier meeting presenting a status update on the recommendations approved and outlined within the Staff Report.*

On November 2, 2020, Municipal Council passed the following Resolution:

*THAT Council receive this Memo from the Accessibility Coordinator for information purposes; and*

*FURTHER THAT Council reviews the draft Terms of Reference for the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee of Council and provide input, as necessary; and*

*FURTHER THAT Council directs Staff to begin broad public engagement with the residents of Cobourg on the Terms of Reference for the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee of Council; and*

*FURTHER THAT Council direct Staff to bring forward a final version of the Terms of Reference for the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee of Council to a future Council meeting prior to the end of 2020; and*

*FURTHER THAT Council receive the timeline for the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy development for information purposes; and*

*FURTHER THAT Council participate in the "Initial Benchmarking" step of the development of this strategy.*

On December 14, 2020, Municipal Council passed the following Resolution:

*THAT Council receive this Memo from the Accessibility Coordinator for information purposes; and*

*FURTHER THAT Council approves the final version of the Terms of Reference for the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee of Council; and*

*FURTHER THAT Council authorize the preparation of a By-law to amend By-Law No. 008-2019 to include the Terms of Reference for the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee of Council; and*

*FURTHER THAT Council appoints two (2) Councillors to sit as Voting Members of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee of Council; and*

*FURTHER THAT Council directs Staff to begin the application process for the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee of Council; and*

*FURTHER THAT Council direct Staff to consult with the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee of Council on matters pertaining to the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy for the Town of Cobourg, including public participation; and*

*FURTHER THAT Council sign the Declaration to join the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities on January 4, 2021 as a commemoration to World Braille Day; and*

*FURTHER THAT Council direct Staff to bring forward initial budget amounts to be presented at the 2021 Budget review process for Council deliberations; and*

*FURTHER THAT Council participate in the “Leadership Interviews” as a part of the development of this strategy in the coming months.*

On June 28, 2021, Municipal Council passed the following Resolution:

*THAT Council receive this report for information purposes, and;*

*FURTHER THAT Council approve the facilitation of public forums and town halls to help create the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy for the Town of Cobourg, according to Ontario Health Guidelines for COVID-19, and;*

*FURTHER THAT Council members from the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee participate as moderators and hosts alongside the Accessibility Coordinator, when available.*

## **Canadian and Ontario Legislation**

Canada along with its provinces and territories has an exceptional system of human rights laws and ratified international treaties. Nevertheless, as in other parts of the world, racism and discrimination continue to raise barriers against the development of individuals and groups. Racism and discrimination divide

communities, pose a serious threat to peaceful coexistence and exchange among and within communities, imperil democratic and participatory citizenship, and entrench and aggravate inequalities within society. Racism and discrimination continue to perpetuate the historical disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal peoples and other diverse groups, many of whom are members of Canada's most economically and socially marginalized communities.

The **Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms** stipulates: "Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability".

Under the **Canadian Human Rights Act**, "all individuals should have an opportunity equal with other individuals to make for themselves the lives that they are able and wish to have and to have their needs accommodated, consistent with their duties and obligations as members of society, without being hindered in or prevented from doing so by discriminatory practices based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability or conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted."

The **Citizenship Act** provides that all Canadians, whether by birth or by choice, enjoy equal status, are entitled to the same rights, powers and privileges and are subject to the same obligations, duties, and liabilities.

The **Canadian Multiculturalism Act** provides that the "Government of Canada recognizes the Diversity of Canadians as regards race, national or ethnic origin, colour, and religion as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society and is committed to a policy of multiculturalism designed to preserve and enhance the multicultural heritage of Canadians while working to achieve the equality of all Canadians in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Canada," (Preamble), affirms that multiculturalism "reflects the cultural and racial Diversity of Canadian society and acknowledges the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage" (section 3(1)(a)) and that it represents "a fundamental characteristic of the Canadian heritage and identity and that it provides an invaluable resource in the shaping of Canada's future" (section 3(1)(b)).

Provincial and territorial human rights codes are premised on the principle that all human beings are equal in worth and dignity, and are entitled to equal protection of the law, as well as that every person has a right to full and equal recognition and exercise of their human rights and freedoms, without distinction, exclusion or preference based on some or all of the following grounds: race, colour, ancestry, ethnic origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, civil, marital or family status, age, religion, political belief, language, ethnic or national origin, social condition, or disability. Discrimination exists where such a distinction, exclusion or preference has the effect of nullifying or impairing such rights, and human rights codes prohibit discrimination and harassment.

## 5. BACKGROUND

Throughout the last nine (9) months, we have been working to understand the current needs of the Town of Cobourg to create a more equitable, inclusive, and diverse community and workplace.

This has been done fully in-house which has saved us the cost of consultants and allowed us the flexibility of implementing programs, like the Women in Governance Program, during the creation of the EDI Strategy.

We have used a variety of techniques to understand the current state of practice around equity, diversity, and inclusion both in the workplace and in the community including:

1. Analyzing other municipalities practices to determine where we are in comparison;
2. Assessing our initial benchmark of practices using the Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmarks;
3. Interviewing our leadership (Town Council and Senior Staff) about their understanding of equity, diversity, and inclusion;
4. Creating a tool to analyze our policies through an equity, diversity, and inclusion lens;
5. Surveying our current workforce to learn more about the diversity within the workplace;
6. Creating an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee of Council which provides advice and recommendations to Council, and;
7. Engaging the public on the EDI Advisory Committee of Council's Terms of Reference and the draft goals of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy.

Each of these processes have taken place over the last nine (9) months. While many reports have come to Council about this, a brief overview of each of the areas and how they impacted the EDI Strategy are below.

### **Initial Internal Benchmarking**

Using the Global Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Benchmarks (GDEIB), and the corresponding GDIB Assessment Checklist, determine the Town of Cobourg's current level of diversity and culture of inclusion.

This process was conducted between January and March 2021. The Council report was provided at the Committee of the Whole meeting on March 29, 2021 that outlined where the Town of Cobourg is within all the categories of the GDEIB.



Based on the information gathered through this initial benchmarking exercise, it is clear that there is still work to be done at the Town of Cobourg. As part of this exercise, the participants were asked to highlight the benchmarks that they would like to see implemented as part of the EDI Strategy – or in the long term – to understand where the first steps forward should be. These were taken into consideration as the data is collected and analyzed to create the full recommendations for an EDI Strategy.

### **External Benchmarking**

Review other Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategies and Plans from other municipalities, non-profit, and for-profit organizations to see the scope of goals and objectives.

A variety of municipalities across Canada and the United States were analyzed for their policies, procedures, and initiatives surrounding equity, diversity, and inclusion, which included justice, Indigenous awareness, anti-racism, and anti-oppression work.

Further, organizations that specialize in these areas were also reviewed to determine their actions, progress reports, and the strategies, initiatives, programs, and policies they have enacted.

These were used to help guide definitions, goals, objectives, and some of the recommended actions in the EDI Strategy.

### **Community Engagement and Feedback**

Conduct community engagement and listening sessions to learn about the important topics that should be addressed for the community in Cobourg.

We have hosted two (2) full sessions of feedback on Engage Cobourg – one for the EDI Advisory Committee, which included a section for people to discuss the types of areas that they would like to see the Town cover in an EDI Strategy, and another for the EDI Strategy Goals. The feedback for the EDI Strategy Goals also included public town hall sessions for people to participate live in a virtual forum.

There will be another session for public engagement for the full EDI Strategy. Further, Staff is investigating ways to incorporate more public engagement as the EDI Strategy is implemented to have a continuous listening and feedback, which will also assist with implementing new programs, adapting to the needs of the community, and adjusting what we currently have in place.

### **Leadership Interviews**

Interviews with those in top leadership and management positions should be conducted, including with Council, to determine cultural competence as well as their understanding of topics related to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion through their unique experience and lens.

Information on the Leadership Interviews was presented to Council at a Closed Session as it contained personal information. The main takeaway was that there is more to be done for our leadership to be more culturally competent and accountable for EDI. This, and all other information and recommendations, have been incorporated into the EDI Strategy.

### **Document Review**

All documents, policies, and processes should be reviewed under an Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) lens to provide insights into any unintentional organizational or systemic barriers at the Town of Cobourg.

With the internal Policy Review Team, reviewing the documents, policies, and processes has been an ongoing process. As noted in the EDI Strategy, this should be as completed as possible by the end of 2023 or 2024 to ensure that we have the structures in place that are as inclusive as possible.

As policies have been created, revised, and updated, they have been done so using an IDEA lens that has been customized to the needs of the Town of Cobourg. This process will be ongoing as we create, update, revisit, and revise documents, policies, by-laws, collective agreements, RFPs, etc.

### **Census and Engagement Survey**

Survey the current workforce to learn more about the Diversity within the workplace as well as how engaged and included they feel.

After receiving the information from the Census and Engagement Survey, it was decided that it would remain confidential and private as to not allow for the sensitive and private data of the employees to be shared with anyone.

The Survey asked our employees to highlight anything that would make it easier for them to engage or participate with an EDI Strategy and overwhelmingly the responses to these questions included more information, education, and awareness. The entire first Phase was created using the information gathered through the Census and Engagement Survey.

### **Strategy Development**

Work with appropriate stakeholders and rights holders to develop the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy.

This is the part of the Strategy development that we are currently working on. The recommendations have been provided to our Senior Leadership team, and now Council, for their discussion about the ones that should be prioritized.

Ideally, all would be incorporated as they are spread out over the next five (5) years and build a foundation from one Phase and recommendation to the next.

## **6. ANALYSIS**

Based on all this information, the attached EDI Strategy was created. This EDI Strategy will also meet the requirements for the Town of Cobourg's Action Plan

under the Canadian Commission of UNESCO. In the attached Strategy, each recommendation has more information, a proposed timeline, the associated EDI Strategy Goal, and the associated Common Commitment(s) under the Canadian Commission of UNESCO's Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities.

The themes 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 in the attached document. 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.

This Phase will have seven (7) areas to be addressed. There are twenty two (22) recommended actions to take place throughout 2022 and 2023.

### **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.

This Phase will have eight (8) areas to be addressed. There are thirty two (32) recommended actions to take place throughout 2023 to 2024.

### **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.

This Phase will have eight (8) areas to be addressed. There are twenty seven (27) recommended actions to take place throughout 2024 to 2026.

### **Measuring Progress**

There are a total of eighty one (81) recommended actions for the EDI Strategy that will start to progress the Town of Cobourg further into their EDI journey.

The hope is that these actions will move the Town of Cobourg from Level 1 or 2 in many of the GDEIB categories to Level 2 or 3. This will be monitored on an ongoing basis using the GDEIB Checklists and tools that were used for the Initial Benchmarking.

As programs are implemented, they will have their own specific metrics and measures for success, which can be adapted, adjusted, and chosen based upon what “success” means for each of those programs.

Progress reports will be given on an ongoing basis, either through specific program updates and/or bi-annual EDI Strategy updates.

### **Final EDI Strategy**

Council was provided with four (4) weeks to provide feedback and suggestions on the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy. These, along with suggestions provided by the public and the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee of Council were incorporated into the final product that is attached to this report.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/BUDGET IMPACTS**

There is currently no financial implications for the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy. Any costs associated with creating the EDI Strategy have been covered by the EDI Budget from 2021. However, it should be noted that there should be adequate financial, human, and time resources provided to the EDI Strategy and subsequent programs for them to have significant impact.

By creating the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy in-house, the Town of Cobourg has saved over \$100,000 in consulting fees. In addition, by creating it in-house, we have been able to adapt and implement programs like the Women in Governance Program while drafting the full strategy.

A detailed budget will be provided during the 2022 Budget Deliberations for the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy.

## **8. 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). With Council's new Strategic Plan incorporating Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, there is a need for a strong commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion. This type of commitment requires more than the verbal commitment to the practices.

**Note:**

***Special thanks and appreciation to all the hard work on the Report and EDI Strategy by – Jamie Kamer, Accessibility Coordinator.***