

Motion following Notice of Motion**Inclusive Hiring Program**

THAT Administration investigate the potential for Strathcona County to introduce an inclusive hiring program that would enhance employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities; and that this report be prepared for Council by the end of the first quarter of 2018.

Background

- Strathcona County's vision is to be a welcoming place to live, attracting people of all ages, cultures and walks of life, where families thrive.
- As a leader in the community, the County could be in a position to affect change by setting an example of inclusive hiring practices.
- Currently, there is no formal program or policy within the County (as an employer) to ensure that diversity and inclusion are a recognized priority with regards to staffing considerations.
- One of the priorities of the Community Living Advisory Committee (CLAC) is to identify barriers in the community as experienced by differently-abled citizens.
- CLAC has had discussions on this issue and notes the following:
 - That a consistent barrier to individuals with disabilities is the access to meaningful employment, and the social, economic, and health impacts associated with this.
 - There is limited representation of citizens with disabilities in the workforce, and a need exists for education and awareness for employers, of the benefits of inclusive hiring practices.
 - Employers who are federally regulated (for example, the Government of Canada) are required to take proactive actions to ensure inclusive hiring practices.
 - They must demonstrate efforts to ensure consideration for diversity is a consistent practice in their actions as an employer.
 - These requirements do not exist for provincial, municipal, and most private organizations.
 - As such, employers' approaches to inclusivity vary based on culture, and are often informal.
 - Some organizations offer diversity policies and programs, whereas some, including many municipal governments, have full employment

programs geared to providing universal access to individuals with disabilities.

- Affirmative employment actions have positive impacts upon communities, individuals, and companies.
 - Lack of awareness and systemic discrimination by potential employers remains the primary roadblock; and the Government of Canada reports that over 30% of individuals aged 25-34 with a disability had been refused employment on the basis of their condition.
 - Strathcona County is one of the larger employers within our region.
- Ultimately, CLAC believes that the County's employment base should be representative of the varied constituents which it represents.

Additional Resources:

**Benefits of a shift to inclusive employment - report by a federally appointed panel:*
<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/disability/consultations/rethinking-disabilities.html#h2.5>)

**The City of Edmonton just won an Accessible Cities Award.*
The Rick Hansen Foundation provides some examples of what other cities have done:
<http://www.rickhansen.com/Our-Work/Accessible-Cities-Award>