

Diversity & Inclusion and Inclusive Hiring Policies**Report Purpose**

To provide Council with the Diversity & Inclusion Policy (GOV-002-040) and the Inclusive Hiring Policy (HUM-001-038) for review and approval.

Recommendation

THAT Policy GOV-002-040 Diversity and Inclusion, as set out in Enclosure 2 to the May 12, 2020 Intergovernmental Affairs report, be approved.

THAT Policy HUM-001-038 Inclusive Hiring, as set out in Enclosure 3 to the May 12, 2020 Intergovernmental Affairs report, be approved.

Our Prioritized Strategic Goals

Goal 1 - Build strong communities to support the diverse needs of residents

Goal 6 - Provide facilities and services that are available and accessible to residents

Goal 7 - Provide opportunities for public engagement and communication

ReportBackground:

At Council's direction, Administration has developed a diversity and inclusion policy, an inclusive hiring policy, and a high-level implementation plan. A cross-departmental steering committee and working group were established to accomplish this work.

The main focus to date has been to plan and execute public and internal engagement processes to inform both policies.

Public Engagement

Five focus groups were held involving subject matter experts and representatives from organizations and three sessions were open to the public. In total, there were 55 participants representing 23 organizations. Individual conversations were also held with an Indigenous Elder.

Working group members met with the Accessibility Advisory Committee and Youth Advisory Committee to provide an update and obtain input on the proposed approach to diversity and inclusion. Additional meetings with the Advisory Committees will occur throughout implementation.

A public survey was open from October 7 – 19, 2019 which garnered 464 responses. The results are available in Enclosures 5 and 6.

Employee Engagement

In fall 2018, Human Resources provided eight discovery sessions for people leaders in Strathcona County to get their input on diversity and inclusion. Following the discovery sessions, five employee sessions were held in July and August 2019 to further the conversation and validate key themes from the discovery sessions. In total, 110 people leaders attended the discovery sessions and 115 employees attended employee sessions.

The 2019 Employee Engagement survey included four questions on diversity and inclusion to enhance our understanding of employee perceptions of diversity and inclusion in the workplace. The survey results provide baseline data to verify the County's position on the Diversify and Inclusion Continuum (Enclosure 4, page 7).

Other Public Engagement

The County has heard through several past public engagement processes that inclusion is important to the community. A partial list of previous engagements includes:

- Community Hub
- Youth Needs Assessment
- Social Framework
- Recreation and Culture Strategy
- Universal change rooms for pools
- GARC renovations
- Work with Indigenous groups/artists/elders etc. (Strathcona Wilderness Centre, Gallery @ 501, Beaver Hills etc.)

What we Heard – Consolidated Key Themes (Enclosure 4: Engagement Report)

The following six themes emerged from the engagement processes:

- Communication – Participants consistently explored the impact of words on a culture's understanding and approach to inclusion. Participants also identified two specific areas in which the County can enhance:
 - use inclusive lens when planning and executing communication; and
 - enhance communication to the public about inclusion in relation to our services and programs.
- Partnering – Participants said the County should consider forming alliances with other municipalities and service providers to remove barriers and offer relevant programs and services locally.
- Accessibility – Participants said an individual's sense of inclusion and connection to County programs and services is dependent on their ability to access affordable and accessible transportation, buildings and facilities, information about services and events, and affordable and accessible housing and safe shelter.
- Inclusive Employment – Participants believed developing an inclusive hiring policy will model the way for other business in the community, with the first step conducting an audit of County recruitment processes to identify and remove systemic barriers.

- Integration – Participants expressed the importance of an integrated approach to programs and service delivery in the County. They expressed the need for a holistic approach to reducing barriers to inclusion.
- Shifting Perceptions - Participants expect the County to play a greater role in challenging perceptions of the community as a homogenous culture. They recommended focusing on education, creating inclusive spaces, and creating opportunities and events that welcome and celebrate diversity.

Diversity & Inclusion Survey Results (Enclosure 5)

In October 2019, Administration surveyed residents and visitors to determine their perceptions of diversity and inclusion in Strathcona County. Future surveys will revisit the topic as Strathcona County implements the policies.

An original Diversity and Inclusion questionnaire was created specifically for this survey and consisted of a combination of open-ended and close-ended questions designed to obtain perceptions on the subject.

The data for this survey was collected online through SCOOP and Survey Gizmo. Both online surveys ran between October 7 and October 19, 2019, during which 464 people took part in the survey. The sample for the survey provided overall results accurate to within $\pm 4.5\%$, 19 times out of 20.

Diversity & Inclusion Survey Demographic Results (Enclosure 6)

In addition to the survey information provided in Enclosure 5, Administration also analyzed the available demographics to provide additional context to the survey result.

The accuracy of demographic information is based on the information voluntarily provided by the respondents in their profiles. None of the analysis done would be able to identify any individual responder.

Overall results from the surveys:

- Respondents feel it is very important for people who are in some ways different from the majority (e.g. look, feel, and/or think differently) to have equal opportunities to thrive in Strathcona County, but at the same time, considerably fewer are in agreement that this is occurring
- Agreement that Strathcona County values the differences of individuals is far lower than the emphasis people place on the importance that this occurs
- Respondents are clearly undecided as to how diverse they believed Strathcona County is, but majority feel it is important to be diverse.

Enclosure 5 and 6 are posted to the County's external webpage in accordance with the County's Public Engagement Policy.

Diversity & Inclusion Policy (Enclosure 2)

The Diversity and Inclusion policy is a high-level policy designed to guide the County in the development of programs and services going forward. If supported, this policy will enable a diversity and inclusion lens to be applied to programs and services as they are developed and reviewed.

Once the Diversity & Inclusion policy is approved, the Social Inclusion policy will be brought forward for rescission.

Inclusive Hiring Policy (Enclosure 3)

The inclusive hiring policy is designed to provide a framework which supports the County in attracting a diverse, engaged, and talented workforce. This process will take place in a competitive environment that provides equitable opportunity for participation.

Implementation Plan

If the policies are approved, Family and Community Services will take the lead on implementation of the Diversity and Inclusion policy and coordinate across all Departments. Human Resources will continue to have the lead on the Inclusive Hiring Policy. The following table provides a summary of the proposed 2020/21 implementation actions and leadership required to support implementation of the Diversity & Inclusion and Inclusive Hiring policies:

Action	Lead Department
Develop a plan to coordinate a focus on D&I across all departments and develop supporting resources to implement the D&I Policy internally and externally	Family and Community Services
Develop and implement education and awareness resources for staff (e.g., unconscious bias training)	Human Resources (supported by Family and Community Services)
Review the County's recruitment processes and practices	Human Resources
Develop initial recommendation for a hiring program for people with disabilities	Human Resources

Funds were set aside in the 2020 and 2021 budgets to enable the above actions. The intent is to go through the budget process for 2021 and seek further direction and funding for 2022.

In addition, Intergovernmental Affairs is utilizing existing resources to hire an Indigenous Policy intern on a part-time and temporary basis to examine best practices for strengthening relationships with our Indigenous residents and neighbours.

Council and Committee History

2019-10-22	Draft policies were presented to Priorities Committee for feedback.
2018-11-27	Council approved "THAT an extension from the end of 2018 to the fourth quarter 2019 for the development of an Inclusive Hiring Policy be approved."
2018-04-10	Council approved "THAT Administration: <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Develop, for Council's consideration by the end of 2019, a broad policy on diversity and inclusion in the County, including an outline of the priority initiatives that would be needed to achieve the outcomes under the policy;b. Undertake internal and external consultation on the proposed diversity and inclusion policy;c. Develop, for Council's consideration by the end of 2018 <i>[extension to 2019 was approved by Council on November 27, 2018]</i>, a broad inclusive hiring policy that will address any gaps in the County's current hiring practices;d. Undertake internal and external consultation on the proposed inclusive hiring policy; ande. Include estimated resources in the 2019 budget that would be needed to undertake initiatives to begin implementation of the inclusive hiring policy."
2017-09-12	Council approved "THAT Administration prepare, for Council's consideration, an Action Plan to be submitted to CCMARD*, based upon the Recommended Action Steps, set out in the September 12, 2017 report, titled Canadian Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination."
2017-07-4	Council approved "THAT administration provide a report to Council, by the end of the first quarter of 2018, on the potential for Strathcona County to introduce an inclusive hiring program that would enhance employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities, and that the report include a plan for consultation with key stakeholders and other municipalities that have undertaken similar programs."

Other Impacts

Policy: To be determined.

Legislative/Legal: None.

Interdepartmental: Continued interdepartmental work on this subject, centralizing diversity and inclusion work.

Master Plan/Framework: To be determined.

Alternative

1. Return one, or both, of the Policies to Administration for changes or additional engagement.

Communication Plan

To be determined.

Enclosures

- 1 Diversity and Inclusion presentation
- 2 GOV-002-040 Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- 3 HUM-001-038 Inclusive Hiring Policy
- 4 Engagement Report
- 5 Diversity and Inclusion Survey Results
- 6 Diversity and Inclusion Survey Demographic Comparison