



City of  
**Peterborough**

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**To:** Members of the General Committee

**From:** Richard Freymond  
Commissioner of Corporate and Legislative Services

**Meeting Date:** November 12, 2019

**Subject:** Report CLSHR19-005  
Joining the Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and  
Discrimination

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## **Purpose**

A report to recommend the City of Peterborough join the Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination.

## **Recommendations**

That Council approve the recommendations outlined in Report CLSHR19-005 dated November 12, 2019, of the Commissioner of Corporate and Legislative Services, as follows:

- a) That Council endorse the Declaration to join the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination as described in Appendix A to Report CLSHR19-005 and that the Mayor be authorized to sign the Declaration on behalf of the City of Peterborough; and
- b) That staff be directed to provide a report to Council no later than December 2020 with a status update including any new priorities and/or proposed actions and timelines, reflective of the Common Commitments as listed in Appendix B to Report CLSHR19-005.

## Budget and Financial Implications

There are no immediate budget and financial implications in joining the Coalition. Future actions may require additional staffing resources, subject to approval through the annual budget process.

## Background

Council at its meeting of September 23, 2019 approved the following motion:

That staff report back to Council, in two cycles, on the Declaration to join the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination that is proposed by the Canadian Commission for United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and endorsed by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities including the staffing and financial implications for the City of Peterborough.

This report responds to the above request.

The Canadian Commission for United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is inviting municipalities from across Canada to join a Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination and be part of a larger international coalition being promoted by UNESCO.

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 his or her 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.

A Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination will help broaden and strengthen our society’s ability to protect and promote human rights through coordination and shared responsibility among local governments, civil society organizations and other democratic institutions.

When municipalities become members of the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities, they commit to investing time and resources to create more welcoming and inclusive communities as part of a network of cities seeking to improve policies against racism, discrimination, exclusion and intolerance.

In Canada, 77 cities are currently members of the Coalition. By joining together in a Coalition, municipalities are able to:

- Document and advance work within their own jurisdiction in combating racism and discrimination and building more inclusive communities

- Exchange practices and expertise among municipalities and groups in Canada and around the world
- Cooperate and share responsibility with other institutions and members of civil society to take action, including developing better tools to monitor progress

## **Actions Taken Against Discrimination and Racism:**

### **Employment at the City of Peterborough**

As an employer, the City has taken a number of steps to address discrimination and racism, including:

#### **Recruitment and Selection**

- General Employment Policy that denotes the City as an equal opportunity employer
- Actively follow the corporate Recruitment & Selection Procedure for the purpose of ensuring hiring practices are in compliance with the Employment Standards Act, Ontario Human Rights Code, Accessibility for Ontarian's with Disabilities Act, Freedom of Information legislation, and to ensure employment equity
- Participation in career fairs – Fleming College and Trent University

#### **Workplace Harassment and Discrimination**

- Existence of and enforcement of a corporate Workplace Violence Prevention Policy & Procedure
- Existence of and enforcement of a corporate Workplace Harassment & Discrimination Policy & Procedure
- Existence of and enforcement of corporate Code of Conduct
- Current training on Harassment and Respect in the Workplace
- Provide workplace mediation measures, as needed

#### **Benefits**

- Provide an effective Employee Assistance Program through Shepell Morneau, at no cost to employees to obtain counselling as well as other support for a variety of life events.
- Provide all fulltime employees with Group Health Benefits including Psychology, Psychotherapy and Social Worker coverage for counselling

## **Within the Community**

The City has taken a number of steps to address discrimination and racism outwardly to the broader community, including:

### **Police**

- Police service maintains policies and procedures on bias-free policing, as well as policies in line with provincial standards on workplace harassment and investigating hate/bias-motivated crimes and hate propaganda.

### **Elected officials**

- Land Acknowledgement Statement adopted by Council and read by the Chair at the beginning of meetings
- Support provided to the New Canadians Centre (2019 - \$48,170), the Peterborough Immigration Partnership (2019 - \$14,000), Community Race Relations (2019 - \$27,610), Peterborough Native Learning (2019 - \$3,130)

### **First Nations Communities**

- Participate in Quarterly Update meetings with First Nations Communities
- Consultation on major capital projects

### **Culture and Heritage**

- Promote awareness of the fact that integration of a community's cultural fabric, together with its economic, educational, social and security interests, strengthens and benefits the whole community.

### **Accessibility to Municipal Services**

- Compliant with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act requirements
- Track complaints and feedback about accessibility of city services
- Develop 5-year Accessibility Plan and annually review
- Maintain an Accessibility Advisory Committee

### **Social Services**

- Welcome Statement poster in lobby and all shared spots--"Together, we can foster a safe, inclusive space. Peterborough Social Services is committed to learning, respecting and celebrating diversity, culture and individuality. We expect that all staff delivering service, as well as all people accessing our services respect the dignity, safety and confidentiality of others. We value your feedback to help us improve and make this space inclusive for everyone. Tell us if you have a concern or complete a client feedback card."

- Land recognition artwork in Social Services Hub.
- Social Services Diversity Committee that sends communications on all sorts of diversity and inclusion issues.
- A professional standards operational procedure.
- Indigenous cultural competency training for all staff.
- Housing Providers are subject to landlord requirements under the Human Rights Code. As such, Housing Provider and Centralized Waiting List staff receive regular training and updates from Housing Services

### **Next Steps**

Over the next year, staff will endeavour with existing resources to review current actions with a view to developing and further refining the City's own initiatives.

### **Summary**

Joining the Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination will not only give visibility to the actions that the City has already taken, but aid in eradicating racism and discrimination in our community.

Submitted by,

Richard Freymond  
Commissioner of Corporate and Legislative Services

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Attachments:

Appendix A - Declaration  
Appendix B – Ten Common Commitments

## Appendix A

### **Declaration to join the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination**

Given that:

1. The Canadian Commission for UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) is calling on municipalities to join a Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination and be part of UNESCO's international coalition launched in 2004; and
2. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities endorses the Call for a Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination and encourages its members to join; and

Whereas:

3. Municipal governments in Canada, along with other levels of government, have responsibilities under Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms as well as federal, provincial and territorial human rights codes, and therefore have an important role to play in combating racism and discrimination and fostering equality and respect for all citizens;

Be it resolved that:

4. The Municipality of the City of Peterborough agrees to join the Coalition of Canadian Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination and, in joining the Coalition, endorses the Common Commitments set out below and agrees to develop or adapt its own unique Plan of Action accordingly.
5. These Common Commitments and the Municipality's unique Plan of Action will be an integral part of the Municipality's vision, strategies and policies.
6. In developing or adapting and implementing its own unique Plan of Action toward progressive realization of the Common Commitments, the Municipality will cooperate with other organizations and jurisdictions including other levels of government, Aboriginal peoples, public and private sector institutions, and civil society organizations, all of whom have responsibilities in the area of human rights.
7. The Municipality will set its priorities, actions and timelines and allocate resources according to its unique circumstances, and within its means and jurisdiction. The Municipality will exchange its expertise and share best practices with other municipalities involved in the Coalition and will report publicly on an annual basis on actions undertaken towards realization of these Common Commitments.

**(Date) (Place) (Signature)**

## Appendix B

### **Ten Common Commitments**

Municipalities are urged to develop their own plan of action in keeping with these ten Common Commitments addressing three areas of municipal responsibility:

The municipality as a guardian of the public interest  
The municipality as an organization in the fulfillment of human rights  
The municipality as a community sharing responsibility for respecting and promoting human rights and diversity

In undertaking these Commitments and in developing unique plans of action for addressing racism and discrimination, municipalities are encouraged to take a participative approach that will engage Aboriginal peoples and initiate dialogue among diverse communities.

- 1) Increase vigilance against systemic and individual racism and discrimination.
- 2) Monitor racism and discrimination in the community more broadly as well as municipal actions taken to address racism and discrimination.
- 3) Inform and support individuals who experience racism and discrimination.
- 4) Support policing services in their efforts to be exemplary institutions in combating racism and discrimination.
- 5) Provide equal opportunities as a municipal employer, service provider, and contractor.
- 6) Support measures to promote equity in the labour market.
- 7) Support measures to challenge racism and discrimination and promote diversity and equal opportunity in housing.
- 8) Involve citizens by giving them a voice in anti-racism initiatives and decision-making.
- 9) Support measures to challenge racism and discrimination and promote diversity and equal opportunity in the education sector, and in other forms of learning.
- 10) Promote respect, understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity and the inclusion of Aboriginal and racialized communities into the cultural fabric of the municipality.