



City of
Peterborough

To: Members of the General Committee

From: Jen McFarlane, Director, People & Culture

Meeting Date: April 13, 2026

Report: DEI Progress Update, Report CAOPC26-002

Subject

This report provides an update to Council on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives across the corporation. This report also responds to Council's motions c) and d) dated January 19, 2026 in response to [Integrity Commissioner Report 2025-03-CC](#), [Report LSCLK26-005](#).

Recommendations

That Council approves the recommendations outlined in Report CAOPC26-002, dated April 13, 2026 of the Director, People & Culture as follows:

- a) That the proposed plan for DEI and anti-racism training for all Members of Council and City staff as outlined in this report be received for information;
- b) That Council endorses the Inclusion Framework and Outcomes, attached as Appendix A, as the key approach for implementing and measuring DEI work at the City, and direct staff to support and report on this work; and,
- c) That Council approve the proposed amendments to the Council Code of Conduct as outlined in this report, in addition to Report LSCLK26-011 (attached).

Executive Summary

This report provides City Council with a comprehensive update on the progress of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives undertaken across the corporation since [Report CSD23-005](#). This includes a DEI and anti-racism training plan for all Members of Council and City staff, as well as proposed amendments to the Council Code of Conduct, in response to Council's motions dated January 19, 2026 and March 30, 2026.

Background

This report provides a comprehensive update to Council on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives across the corporation since Report CSD23-005. This report also responds to Council's motions c) and d) dated January 19, 2026 in response to [Integrity Commissioner Report 2025-03-CC](#), [Report LSCLK26-005](#), as follows:

- c) All Members of Council and all City staff receive anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion training, with an implementation plan and timeline to be brought back to Council within 90 days;
- d) City staff be directed to review and amend the Council Code of Conduct to explicitly prohibit the use of racial slurs—including but not limited to the N-word—regardless of context or circumstance, in alignment with the Integrity Commissioner's findings and recommendations, with proposed amendments to be presented to Council within 60 days.

It should be noted that recommended amendments to the City's Strategic Plan as per motion b) of the same date will follow in a separate report:

- b) City staff be directed to amend the 2023–2050 Strategic Plan to include anti-racism and race relations as a strategic priority under the Community and Wellbeing pillar, as recommended by the Integrity Commissioner.

This report also provides a high-level overview of initiatives that support the implementation of the Inclusion Framework as outlined below. These include, but are not limited to, policy updates, program reviews, improved recruitment and hiring practices, upholding the City's duty to accommodate, collecting DEI-related data, building alignment across teams, strengthening community partnerships, and advising on research. To further support the City's role in fostering a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment, this report also outlines a DEI and anti-racism training plan, which includes dedicated facilitated training for Council, and a phased approach for all staff that offers a combination of short online learning opportunities with longer, in-person workshops. The aim of this training model is to provide all participants with a foundational understanding of the key themes underlying systems of inequity and oppression along with practical tools for identifying and addressing issues of discrimination, and to offer guidance for applying an inclusion lens to municipal operations and decision-making.

Corporate Inclusion Strategy

The City of Peterborough continues to advance its commitments as a member of the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities, endorsed on November 25, 2019 as per [Report CLSHR19-005](#). The main objective of the Coalition is to provide a platform to broaden and strengthen human rights through coordination and shared responsibility among local governments, civil society organizations, and other democratic institutions.

Member municipalities advance initiatives to: improve their practices for social inclusion; establish policies to eradicate racism and discrimination; and promote human rights and diversity. In return, and through this work, member municipalities can: better understand local realities and develop a Plan of Action to foster inclusion; increase trust, loyalty, and respect for the municipality by promoting greater equality and inclusion; and strengthen partnerships with local organizations, businesses, and individuals.

Since becoming a member of the Coalition, efforts have accelerated to ensure that the City's policies, practices, and workplace culture reflect principles of Reconciliation, Equity, Accessibility, Diversity, and Inclusion (READI). This work supports strengthening City processes and workplace culture, improving employee retention and experiences, enhancing equitable service delivery, and aligning the City with DEI best practices in the municipal sector. This work positions the City as a DEI leader in the community by convening opportunities for learning, sharing, and supporting community partners.

The DEI subject matter expertise is delivered to the City through a combination of education, work, and lived/living experiences. Internally, this unique expertise contributes to enhancing the workplace environment and improving service delivery by aligning with best practices in DEI, thereby supporting a strong workforce that feels proud to work at the City. Externally, this work elevates the City's brand by acting as a catalyst between the City and the community, working with organizations and volunteers to support this work in the community at large.

Staff are building basic levels of knowledge, skills and awareness that can support a change in process. With managers, the learning is focused on embedding an inclusion lens in policies, process, and program design, so that staff can link their DEI outcomes to the City's Inclusion Outcomes and Strategic Plan in a way that ensures collective accountability. Diplomacy, flexibility, and patience are key assets in advancing DEI work, and leadership at all levels can help by setting the tone and structure to support it. This provides staff with the confidence and direction to play a role in building on small wins to move everyone together towards bigger change.

While the outcomes of the Inclusion Framework remain static and consistent, activities under each outcome are prioritized annually based on several factors, including importance, relevance, urgency, and other competing priorities. The visible impacts experienced at a high level are the result of multi-faceted work, often invisible, that happens at the micro level across the corporation.

As noted in the Council report of April 2, 2026, the People & Culture division will be added to the Community Services portfolio, to help support the advancement of the important READI-focused work. The Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities recommends the ongoing engagement and support of elected officials and the review and adoption of an inclusion "plan" once it is developed. The role of elected officials is to act as READI champions locally and to speak about the Coalition with members of Council, local partners, and other elected officials. Elected officials can also help report to residents and local committees on the progress of the municipality's involvement in the Coalition.

By establishing a mechanism for regular READI updates through the Community Services portfolio, elected officials will be able build their capacity to speak about the work and champion it.

A diverse, knowledgeable Council and workforce improve the City's capacity to deliver responsive, equitable, inclusive, and effective services, consistent with the Strategic Plan's emphasis on adaptability and stewardship of resources in a changing social environment. DEI competence also supports fair interactions with residents and strengthens public trust. Further, building a future-ready city requires an organization that can address evolving demographic and social realities by reflecting and representing a diversity of perspectives and lived/living experiences. DEI and antiracism initiatives help the City maintain a progressive, modern, and trustworthy public service, thereby supporting the Strategic Plan's long-term goal of being a bold, inclusive, and innovative municipality.

Inclusion Framework

The City's Inclusion Framework supports staff in using an Inclusion Lens and measuring its impacts on their work. The Framework offers a global scope with overall guiding objectives and practical tools and coaching to support staff in their learning and doing of inclusion work.

It consists of:

- a) An overarching structure that supports collecting reporting;
- b) Short-term and long-term outcomes and actions;
- c) Built-in opportunities for reflection and self-awareness; and
- d) Opportunities to customize initiatives based on the context or department.

The intention of this Framework is to:

- a) **Encourage** staff to think critically, engage with one another, and reflect and listen to challenges of DEI work. It encourages creating safe spaces for staff to generate creative ideas to intentionally advance inclusion.
- b) **Empower** staff to pace the work and evaluate change as they go. It offers staff the flexibility to engage with the work (even within existing workplans) and add their own context, control, and autonomy (with guidance and coaching).
- c) **Enable** staff to introduce immediate implementable DEI actions aligned with corporate DEI work. Staff have the opportunity to identify and work towards immediate outcomes that feed into intermediate and ultimate outcomes for the City.

While other municipalities adopted the approach of developing DEI Plans, the City built a practical Inclusion Framework that not only is specific to the City's work but also encompasses all City operations. This approach is both inwards and outwards focused, supporting staff as they go from theory to action to evaluation. It embeds equity in the

City's work and humanizes it, thereby investing in our community where everyone is served equally. Further, staff are offered a psychologically safe space where they can engage in the challenges of inclusion work, share their learnings with others, and celebrate their individual and collective wins.

The approach of using an Inclusion Framework is respectful of ongoing inclusion work at the City. Rather than assume that the work will only happen when prescribed by a plan, the Framework acknowledges previous and ongoing efforts by staff while building on their existing momentum and guiding them towards greater inclusion. By engaging staff in thinking critically about inclusion, the Framework aims to support collective accountability and responsibility and presents an opportunity for the City to model this work as inclusion leaders in the Peterborough community.

Finally, the approach of developing an Inclusion Framework aligns with one of two approaches recommended by the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities. The approach that the City opted out of is to have a "plan" developed and implemented by a single body/person, who then takes full responsibility for measuring and reporting on all the activities. The approach that the City opted into is to have a corporate-wide "plan" to address inclusion within different departments and divisions, all of whom become responsible for developing and implementing separate parts of the "plan". Like other municipalities, the City also opted to use an equity and inclusion lens to assess all programs and services, where equity and inclusion are not the primary emphasis of each action but are rather integrated into the work of all departments and divisions. This is then measured through annually submitted departmental reports that are then summarized by the DEI Advisor into a City-wide impact report. Through this process knowledge is built and decentralized, thereby increasing the capacity for a broader and long-lasting positive impact across the City.

Inclusion Outcomes and Community Impact

Peterborough is a growing and changing community and as a service provider, the City must adapt and adjust to the changing needs of its community. The City is working towards positioning Peterborough to be a destination of choice and for the City to be an employer of choice. The goal is to be a future-ready City that is part of a developing region, and for City staff to be ambassadors of these brands.

DEI principles, when embedded, support positive change at all levels. There is a direct correlation between action and change: more equitable services lead to greater efficiency in the future, and more transparency builds better trust and stronger relations with the community.

Intentional DEI goals and outcomes help the City invest in the Peterborough community in a way that serves everyone by embedding equity in our work and humanizing what we do. While there are accomplishments to celebrate, building on the existing momentum requires moving beyond a compliance-only mindset. The Inclusion Framework and its Outcomes encompass all City operations through a work plan that

supports risk aversion, upholds human rights, and builds strong community connections while offering staff a safe space to engage in the challenges of DEI work, learn, and share with others. This work builds on examples from other municipalities and positions the City as an emerging leader in DEI in the municipal sector.

The City's ultimate DEI outcomes are to create a better and more equitable community for all, to advance an inclusive workplace culture, and to improve corporate effectiveness. However, such high-level, long-term, aspirational outcomes require holistic planning that must ensure that initiatives are tied together strategically and are well financed and supported (subject to budget approval). Three intermediate inclusion outcomes were developed that offer more tangible goals (see Figure 1). These outcomes:

- Connect with, compliment, and help action other City plans;
- Offer risk assessment and mitigation opportunities for staff to consider;
- Normalize and extend DEI work across the corporation;
- Encourage the collection of quantitative and qualitative data;
- Translate into an annual reporting mechanism on our collective progress; and
- Comprise of intentionally built-in overlap – an integrated systemic approach, composed of interactive parts connected through process, practices, and relationships.

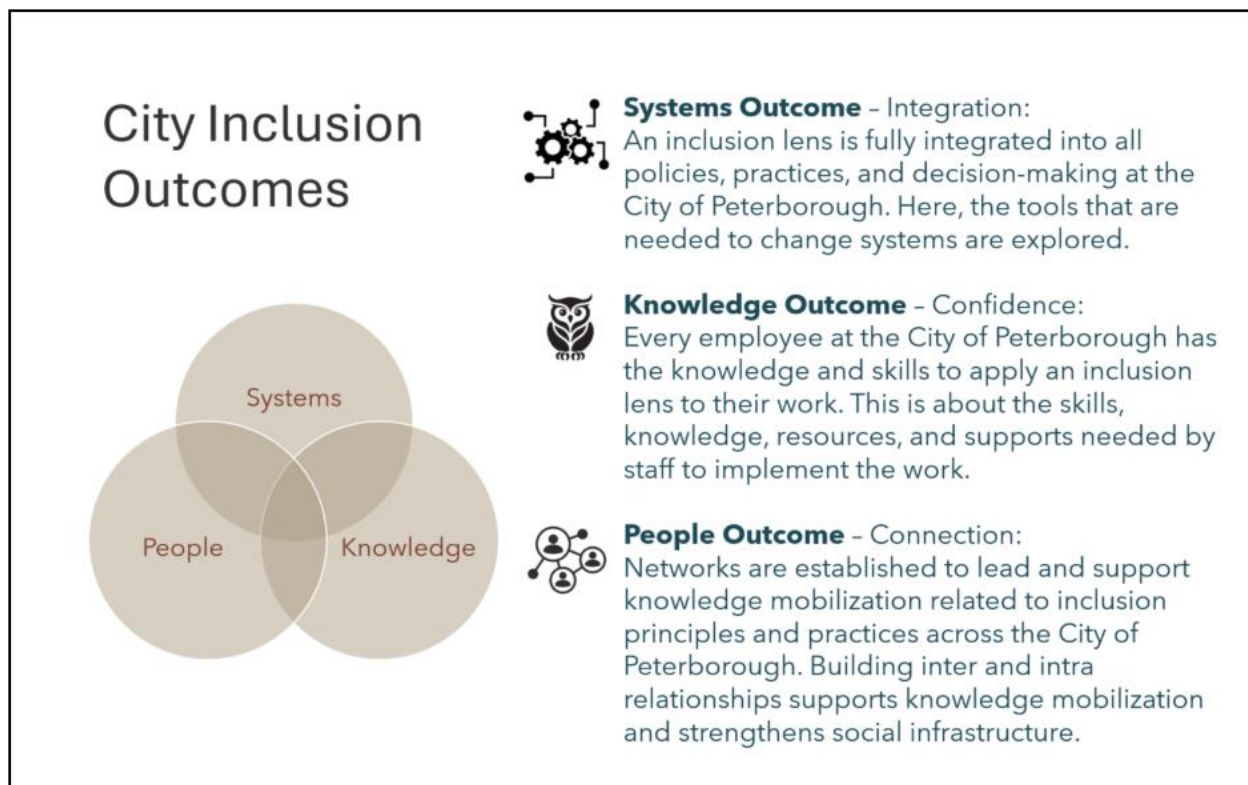


Figure 1: City's Inclusion Outcomes

The Inclusion Framework supplements the Strategic Plan by upholding its values. It defines parameters for effective DEI work that are static and consistent; it directs staff to focus on specific areas and domains; and it offers intermediate, short-term outcomes that inform decision-making on where efforts are best spent, which activities to prioritize, and how impact should be measured.

DEI Tools and Resources

New tools and resources are researched and developed by engaging with, learning from, and adapting best practices used by other municipalities and organizations to advance DEI goals. Given the range and scope of work and services at the City, providing staff with flexible and diverse tactics and approaches is therefore key to achieving successful outcomes of inclusion.

Staff are currently encouraged to use three key tools.

1. Inclusion Lens – a “filter” that helps explore processes through new and expanded perspectives. Similar tools are used by other municipalities such as the City of Ottawa’s Equity and Inclusion Lens, and City of Oakville’s Inclusion Lens. This invites staff to consider intersectional identities, honour lived/living experiences, and encourage critical thinking, self-awareness, and reflection by asking the following:

1. Who is being excluded?
2. What is contributing to their exclusion?
3. What can be done differently to ensure their inclusion?

2. Inclusion Tool – based on the City of London’s Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Framework. This Tool offers a step-by-step approach for addressing systemic inequities and enhancing inclusion efforts. Using this Tool, staff can generate actions towards inclusion, with short-term measurable outcomes that can be connected to the City’s Inclusion Outcomes. This approach also helps staff in building their confidence and increasing their understanding of inclusion. See Appendix A.

3. Inclusion Continuum – adapted from the Global Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Benchmarks, a trusted document and resource in the DEI sector. This is a 5-level scale that helps staff “level up” from being inactive to reactive to proactive to progressive to best practices (see Figure 2). It supports staff in identifying where they are, where they need to go, and what will help get them there, and it complements the other tools available to them. It also helps staff understand that DEI work is not a matter of focusing on one or two activities – work is interconnected, so actions that are taken in one area will eventually impact others in other divisions across the corporation.

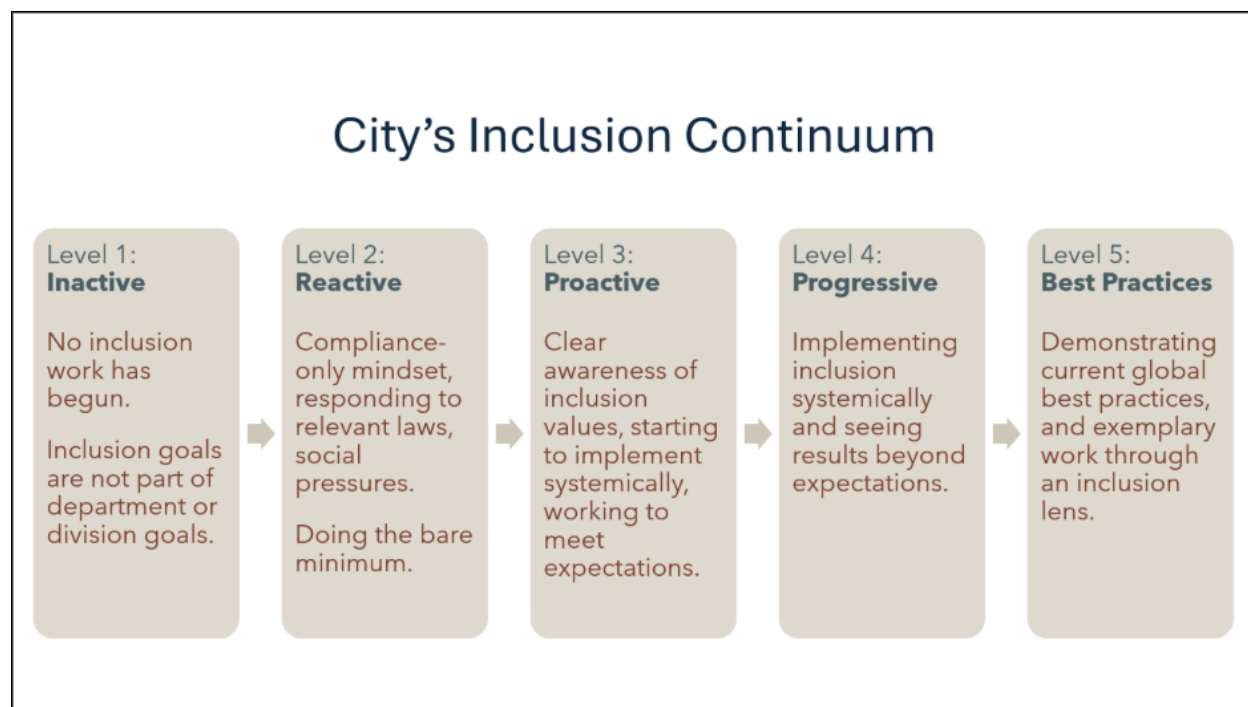


Figure 2: City's Inclusion Continuum

Other City-wide documents and resources that have been developed include:

- Applications of inclusion terminology
- Demographic questions to consider for inclusive surveys
- Calendar of important dates and events
- DEI in grant applications
- Guide to delivering meaningful land acknowledgements
- Guide to using inclusive language (coming soon)
- Guide to planning an inclusive event (coming soon)

DEI Training Sessions

The City strives to offer up-to-date training and knowledge sharing sessions to staff. Learning opportunities are delivered through collaborations with City staff as well as community partners and knowledge holders.

The Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities recommends that member municipalities provide anti-racism and anti-discrimination training for community partners, Council members, municipal employees, potential funders, and local businesses to outline the issues that we are working to address. According to the Coalition, "Anti-discrimination training contributes to the success of your initiatives and the establishment of new partnerships. Do not assume that, because an individual understands one form of discrimination, they have a clear understanding of other forms. Work with community

organizations to develop and implement educational campaigns that examine the various forms of discrimination.”

Additionally, trainings directly support Inclusion Outcome #2: Knowledge and Confidence – Every employee at the City has the knowledge and skills to apply an inclusion lens to their work. Investing in staff’s capacity to understand inclusion helps in building stronger and more transparent and trusting relationships with the community, thereby resulting in a strong and confident workforce and more inclusive service delivery. Further, training and education help build a stronger knowledge foundation and infrastructure that can support the City in realizing its commitments under the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities.

Training sessions are offered in different lengths and styles, and through various modes of delivery.

Lunch and Learn Sessions (60 minutes): These sessions introduce key topics, explore arising contemporary issues, build knowledge and awareness, and reinforce ongoing DEI learning. The content is a mix of short videos and documentaries, presentations by guest speakers, and facilitated discussions. These sessions are offered monthly and are aimed at staff who want to engage in DEI learning on an ongoing basis through short, digestible content.

Half-Day Training Sessions (3-4 hours): These sessions explore DEI-related concepts in depth through a combination of lecture style delivery, interactive activities, and the use of practical scenarios and case studies. These sessions are offered multiple times a year and are intended to develop a deeper and more nuanced understanding of foundational topics of DEI. They engage staff in below-the-surface, transformational learning that invites them to reflect on their work with a critical, intersectional inclusion lens. These sessions are aimed at staff who seek to learn and build on their foundational knowledge to increase their understanding of community and improve service delivery.

Full-Day Symposia and Workshops (6-8 hours): These sessions are offered annually to staff who welcome a space where they can come together with their peers and reflect on their DEI work. During these sessions, new tools are explored, challenges are discussed, and accomplishments are celebrated. A DEI impact report is written and shared for collective accountability. The sessions also serve as immersive micro learning environments for championing DEI and exploring new opportunities where investments can be made in staff’s capacity to do the work. The sessions include presentations, group activities, case studies, and multiple sharing opportunities throughout the day. They are aimed at staff who are actively participating in cultural-shifting initiatives and displaying leadership in DEI.

A comprehensive list of trainings that have been developed and offered to date, as well as trainings that are currently being explored for 2026 is provided in Appendix B. All trainings are currently being offered through the approved budget of the DEI Advisor.

Council Specific Training Plan

While members of Council are invited to join and participate in all training sessions that are offered to staff, the following training plan is further recommended for members of Council as per the direction from Council motion dated January 19, 2026:

- Anti-racism training will be offered to members of Council during a closed session in 2026, offered by a community group that is well-experienced and well-versed in delivering anti-racism and anti-oppression trainings. A three-hour DEI training session was offered to members of Council in a closed session in May 2023. The anti-racism training will follow a similar structure to the DEI training.
- Additional and supplemental training on relevant and arising topics will be offered to members of Council during Council's annual orientation sessions, delivered by the City's READI team with support from community groups.
- Additionally, and moving forward, DEI and anti-racism training sessions will be offered in full in year 1 of every term of Council with follow-up, shorter, supplemental sessions offered annually during Council orientation sessions.

DEI Symposia: Opportunities for Reflection and Celebration

The Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities encourages member municipalities to celebrate progress by sharing it with Council and the public, hosting community events, recognizing inclusion champions, and showing pride in the City's DEI accomplishments. Below are examples of opportunities that were hosted for staff to celebrate their efforts and champion their work.

Three Annual DEI Symposia have been offered to City staff since 2023. In December 2023, a DEI Day of Visioning and Reflection invited staff to provide their input and perspectives into DEI work at the City. At this session, participants shared their hopes and expectations for a "DEI Plan", reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the DEI Advisor, and discussed common corporate commitments of DEI. An outcome of this session was the co-creation of a DEI Theory of Change, including City DEI outcomes and examples of activities to achieving these outcomes. This work formed the foundation of what became the City's Inclusion Framework – a living document with aspirational and consistent outcomes that are annually driven by staff actions.

In December 2024, the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) Symposium built on the momentum from the previous year and expanded the DEI Theory of Change to include accessibility and introduce reconciliation. The objective was for staff to enhance their capacity across the City to advance inclusion through knowledge exchange, skill building, and the application of newly developed tools and resources. It was also an opportunity for everyone to share and celebrate their inclusion milestones. Staff worked through case studies that explored how results across divisions can be translated into cross-corporate outcomes. The importance of measuring outcomes, both

quantitatively and qualitatively, was underscored as inclusion work requires substantiating its impact.

On November 3, 2025, City Council adopted the following motion:

“That the City of Peterborough calls on elected officials, organizations and community members to support the Elect Respect campaign and sign the online pledge at www.electrespect.ca; [...] and That the City's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisor be engaged in the implementation and communication of this initiative, and that staff explore opportunities to better integrate their expertise into Council's ongoing efforts to promote a safe, inclusive, and respectful civic environment.”

To begin exploring and co-creating this process, the November 2025 Symposium, *Staying Inclusive in Divisive Times*, was used as an opportunity to convene staff for a workshop to explore building respect as a core value of inclusion. Staff were asked to define “respect” for the City and arrive at a common understanding of what it is, where and how it exists, and who is responsible for upholding it. A summary report for this workshop, including the approach that was used and the outcomes produced, is attached in Appendix C. During this Symposium, the 2025 DEI Impact Report was also shared, inviting participants to share their DEI milestones, celebrate progress, and reflect on challenges.

Evaluating and Reporting on the Impacts of DEI Work

Measuring and reporting on the City's DEI progress upholds accountability and keeps Council, staff and the community informed about DEI initiatives and their impact. Evaluating the work during implementation also allows staff to gauge progress, adjust implementation strategies, and identify future initiatives. The City's DEI progress has been measured and evaluated by capturing outputs and linking them to the City's Inclusion Outcomes. Data is collected, case studies are documented, symposia summary reports are produced, and feedback from training and education sessions is gathered and used to inform future sessions.

Building on these evaluation practices in 2026-2027, the City will develop an impact measurement framework to reflect on the change that has occurred as a result of DEI work across the corporation. For the purposes of this report, the following is a summary of impacts and goals for each Inclusion Outcome and examples of activities or outputs that are linked to, and support the City's Inclusion Outcomes.

Systems Outcome: Integration

An inclusion lens is fully integrated into all policies, practices, and decision-making at the City.

Goals: align and support City work using DEI best practices, strategize new initiatives using an inclusion lens, invest in the City's capacity to be a leader in DEI, and build inclusion ambassadors.

Area of Impact: this outcome is focused on internal processes across the corporation.

Activities, with examples:

- Review/initiate policy: Commemorative Flag and Illumination Policy; Reporting Vandalism, Property Damage, and Bias-Motivated Incidents Policy.
- Advise on projects/programs: Community Grants Program; City Advisory Committees.
- Advocate for the READI team: Orientation for Managers and new City staff
- Collect and leverage data and feedback: DEI Pulse Survey, feedback from training sessions, check-in meetings with staff.
- Embed inclusion in City Plans: Review of the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan
- Advise on staff reports: Amendments to Council Code of Conduct.

Knowledge Outcome: Confidence

Every employee at the City has the knowledge and skills to apply an inclusion lens to their work.

Goals: gather information, share resources and best practices, develop tools to support staff, and lay the foundations for the work.

Area of Impact: this outcome supports staff and City work through community connections.

Activities, with examples:

- Explore and develop tools: The 5-Level Inclusion Continuum; Inclusion Tool.
- Develop and deliver trainings: See Appendix B for detailed list of trainings.
- Convene staff for sharing: See section on DEI Symposia and Appendix C.
- Advise on City work: Respond to requests by staff to advise on their specific areas of work (People & Culture duty to accommodate).
- Advise on research: Stay updated on, contribute to, and advise on local and national research studies.
- Advise on communications: Support key messaging and communications by City staff.

People Outcome: Connection

Networks are established to lead and support knowledge mobilisation related to DEI principles and practices across the City.

Goals: nurture relationships, serve a City brand ambassador, lead and model DEI work, share best practices in DEI.

Area of Impact: this outcome is focused on supporting the local community and aligning the DEI goals of the City and the community.

Activities, with examples:

- Municipal DEI Community of Practice: Quarterly meetings with municipal counterparts and DEI Advisors in Ontario municipalities.
- Peterborough DEI Network: Bi-monthly meetings with community partners and individuals engaged in DEI work.
- PIP Coordinating Committee: Bi-monthly meetings with the Peterborough Immigration Partnership, hosted by the New Canadians Centre.
- DEI Committees in the community: Support community partner organizations with their DEI work.
- Internal City Committees: Advise on internal City committees and align with community partners by sharing emerging best practices.
- Represent the City: At local and provincial conferences, events, and speaking engagements.

Council Code of Conduct Amendments

The following section outlines recommended amendments to the Council Code of Conduct, and in response to [Integrity Commissioner Report 2025-03-CC](#), [Report LSCLK26-005](#) and the resulting Council motion dated January 19, 2026, further supplementing [Report LSCLK26-011](#).

The specific Council direction contemplated by paragraph d) in the motion has been addressed in Report LSCLK26-011, which is limited to the discrete issue of explicitly prohibiting the use of racial slurs. This report, CAOPC26-002 addresses the “regardless of context or circumstance” aspect by defining racialized harassment which includes racial slurs, with additional amendments to further strengthen the Code of Conduct language with additional clarity.

The recommendations are as follows:

1. **Adjust gendered language:** All gendered language in the by-law to be updated to reflect non-binary pronouns (his or her = their, he or she = they).
2. **Reference the legislation:** While the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC) protected grounds are listed in 10.b of the Council Code of Conduct, the by-law does not label them as such. The OHRC legally supersedes all City and Council policies, procedures, and bylaws and must therefore be referenced. The absence of citing the OHRC would defeat the purpose of these amendments.

3. **Align definitions:** In response to Paragraph 206. of Integrity Commissioner Report 2024-05-CC, where it suggested that “Council may wish to consider whether to harmonize the definition of harassment in of the Code of Conduct and the harassment definition of the City’s Workplace Discrimination and Harassment Policy”, which also aligns with the definition in the OHRC. The Integrity Commissioner reaffirmed that recommendation in Paragraph 104 of [Integrity Commissioner Report 2025-03-CC](#).

To ensure this harmonization, the existing definition for harassment should be expanded and the definition for discrimination should be added. While the OHRC doesn't provide one single definition for discrimination, it highlights the importance of impact, whether intended or not. It also provides examples of intersectional discrimination where a person’s experience of discrimination is often linked to compounding effects of multiple grounds. It is also strongly recommended that the definition of racial harassment be introduced into the Code and the examples under the definition of sexual harassment be further expanded to be more inclusive.

Recommended definitions:

Discrimination: Unfair treatment of a person or group based on personal characteristics, whether intentional or not, that has the effect of imposing disadvantages on such individual or group or that denies or limits access to opportunities, benefits and advantages available to others.

Harassment: Engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. Harassment can include:

- Spreading rumours or gossip about a person;
- Threatening, intimidating, or hostile behaviour;
- Excluding or isolating someone in a way that undermines their dignity or creates a poisoned environment.

Racial Harassment: harassment on the ground of race. It may also be associated with the grounds of colour, ancestry, where a person was born, a person’s religious belief, ethnic background, citizenship or even a person’s language. Racial harassment/discrimination can include:

- Racial slurs or jokes;
- Ridicule, insults or different treatment because of your racial identity;
- Posting/e-mailing cartoons or pictures that degrade persons of a particular racial group;
- Name-calling because of a person’s race, colour, citizenship, place of origin, ancestry, ethnicity or creed.

Sexual Harassment: Engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct because of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, where the course of comment or conduct is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome; or making a sexual solicitation or advance where the person making the solicitation or advance is in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit or advancement to the worker and the person knows or ought reasonably to know that the solicitation or advance is unwelcome.

Additional examples to be added to the current list include:

- Use of homophobic or transphobic epithets, slurs or jokes;
- Spreading rumours about, “outing”, or threatening to “out” someone;
- Refusing to refer to a person by their self-identified name or personal pronoun.

The recommendations outlined above will bring the Council Code of Conduct in line with similar guiding documents in other municipalities. For example, the City of Toronto’s Council Code of Conduct references the OHRC and aligns its definitions of discredited conduct with definitions of hate and discrimination as listed in the City of Toronto’s Human Rights and Anti-Harassment/Discrimination Policy. It also offers sections on equal treatment and duty to accommodate. The County of Peterborough’s Code of Conduct similarly references the OHRC and aligns definitions with the County’s Workplace Bullying and Harassment Policy, which also include racial discrimination as well as examples of actions that fall under this definition. Reviewing and strengthening the City’s Council Code of Conduct and Workplace Harassment and Discrimination Policy will align the City with such best practices.

Strategic Plan

Strategic Pillar: Community & Well-being

Strategic Priority: Encourage our neighbourhoods to be safe, diverse, accessible, and affordable across all ages, incomes, and abilities.

The City’s mission, as stated in the Strategic Plan, is to commit to proactive, effective, and efficient service delivery through a collaborative, engaged, and values-driven organizational culture that reflects its growing and diverse community. DEI initiatives strengthen this cultural foundation and build the competencies needed to deliver on that mission. The DEI work completed to date, along with the proposed DEI and anti-racism training plan for Council and all City staff, aligns directly with the City’s Strategic Plan, which highlights the need for a community that is “inclusive... and respects its past, heritage, and culture while embracing its future”. Investing in DEI and anti-racism education and equity-focused initiatives enhances organizational culture, improves equitable service delivery, strengthens relationships of trust with the community, advances overall community wellbeing, and contributes to the long-term vision of a future-ready, and inclusive City.

Engagement and Consultation

The DEI Advisor engages and consults with staff, community partners, and DEI Advisors in other municipalities on a regular basis. Depending on the initiative, multiple strategies are employed to ensure participation and result in a positive impact. These strategies include: informing, consulting, engaging, collaborating, and empowering.

The Inclusion Framework is the result of the successful use of all of these strategies. The process started by connecting with DEI advisors in other municipalities and researching best practices to share with a steering committee comprised of City staff and community partners. This was followed by consultations through small group discussions, engagement surveys, and a visioning and reflection session with staff. The findings were then presented back to staff and community partners requesting their engagement in the process of co-creating the Framework. Once a draft was produced, the DEI Advisor collaborated with select divisions to pilot the draft Framework and finalize it, thereby empowering staff with the agency to contribute to and support the City's Inclusion Framework and Outcomes.

Budget and Financial Implications

The estimated cost for delivering the comprehensive training plan for Council and staff listed in Appendix B is estimated at \$10,000 to \$15,000. These costs can be accommodated within the existing People & Culture operating budget. No additional budget allocation is anticipated at this time, however, if required, funds may be supplemented through the corporate Organizational Development reserve.

Conclusion

The City has made significant progress in strengthening its DEI foundation to promote an inclusive workplace, enhance community well-being, and align with best practices in the municipal sector. DEI initiatives help the City in fulfilling its duty as a member of the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities: to be a guardian of the public interest, to respect and promote human rights, and to provide residents with a safe and inclusive environment. The Inclusion Framework further supports the City in fulfilling these duties as a public organization. Compared to other levels of government, municipalities are well placed to support anti-racism and anti-discrimination. The proposed DEI and anti-racism training plan provides Council and staff with consistent, evidence-informed learning that supports respectful service delivery and organizational excellence and reflects the needs of the community.

Attachments

Appendix A – The City's Inclusion Tool

Appendix B – Detailed List of DEI and Anti-Racism Training Session
Appendix C – Respect Workshop, Summary Report
Appendix D – LSCLK26-011

Submitted by,

Jen McFarlane B.Sc. R. Kin. CDMP
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