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| TO: | CHAIR AND MEMBERS CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE DECEMBER 13, 2016 |
| FROM: | KATE GRAHAM DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC INNOVATION |
| SUBJECT: | FCM DIVERSE VOICES FOR CHANGE INITIATIVE |

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| RECOMMENDATION |
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That, on the recommendation of Director, Community and Economic Innovation, the following actions to be taken with respect to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Diverse Voices for Change Initiative:

- a) That this update report **BE RECEIVED** for information; and
- b) That the following **BE ENDORSED** as London's objective as a participant in the Diverse Voices for Change Initiative: *to increase the representation of women, particularly women from diverse backgrounds, on City of London advisory committees and the governance bodies of City of London agencies, boards and commissions.*

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| PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER |
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- o "FCM – Women in Local Government – Diverse Voices for Change Initiative", Corporate Services Committee, November 3, 2015.

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| BACKGROUND |
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Diversity and inclusion remain key priorities in the City of London. Council's *2015-2019 Strategic Plan* includes a commitment to "support all Londoners to feel engaged and involved in our community" as a strategy towards a more "Diverse, inclusive and welcoming community."

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) has been a longstanding champion of diversity and inclusion, including a focused effort on increasing the participation of women in local government. The City of London has been represented on FCM's Standing Committee to Increase the Participation of Women in Local Government since its inception, and the City has participated in several related programs. London was selected as one of six municipalities in Canada for the FCM Head Start program in 2011, and developed the 25% documentary – named to reflect the percentage of elected officials in Canada who are women – with support from FCM, City Council, and other partners.

In 2015, FCM launched a new program called Diverse Voices for Change Initiative (DV4C), building on the success of the previous Head Start program. DV4C aims to "increase the number of women across diverse communities who are actively informed by and engaged in municipal decision making processes." With Council direction (November 2015), the City of London applied to be a part of this three-year program (2016-2018):

"That the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) BE ADVISED that the City of London would like to be a program participant in FCM's Standing Committee on Increasing Women's Participation in Municipal Government's new three-year Women in Local Government program entitled Diverse Voices for Change Initiative. (10/25/CSC)"

Interviews were conducted in early 2016, and the City of London was announced as one of five selected municipalities on International Women's Day in March 2016. Halifax Regional Municipality, the City of Montreal, the City of Edmonton and the Municipality of Sioux Lookout were also selected.

The initial stages of the DV4C program occurred during the summer of 2016, including an orientation session and an environmental scan in each of the five municipalities to understand the current landscape. Each municipality works with a community partner, typically a local nonprofit organization, on the initiative. The City of London is working with Women & Politics on the initiative, and there is an opportunity to engage with other partners throughout the program. Each participating municipality is also required to establish a local Working Group. As per guidelines received from FCM, the working group is to include:

- i. a community partner;
- ii. First Nations representative;
- iii. women from diverse backgrounds;
- iv. Councillors; and,
- v. staff support.

An initial meeting of London's Working Group was held in November 2016. The Working Group is currently comprised of the following individuals, noting that there are opportunities for others to join the Working Group over the course of the program:

- Councillor Harold Usher
- Councillor Maureen Cassidy
- Shawna Lewkowitz (Women & Politics)
- Dharshi Lacey (Pillar Nonprofit Network)
- Mary Alikakos (Chippewa of the Thames First Nations)
- Yenny Medina (London-Middlesex Immigration Partnership)
- Kinga Koltun (staff support)
- Kate Graham (staff support)

At the initial Working Group meeting, the team brainstormed objectives for the City of London's participation in the DV4C program. Based on this discussion, this report recommends the following objective:

To increase the representation of women, particularly women from diverse backgrounds, on City of London advisory committees and the governance bodies of City of London agencies, boards and commissions.

Should Council support this objective, London's activities related to the DV4C program would seek to further this objective over the duration of the program until 2018.

All DV4C municipalities are required to conduct focus groups in late 2016 and early 2017 in order to understand the current landscape related to their selected objective or activities. It is recommended that, should Council support the objective identified above, the focus groups would seek to (1) understand current barriers experienced by women from diverse backgrounds for participating in advisory committees and other governance bodies, and (2) identify recommended actions which could increase the participation of women from diverse backgrounds on these groups. The focus groups would specifically target insights from women in the following groups: (1) youth, particularly those already engaged in some form of leadership, (2) First Nations, (3) newcomers, (4) racialized women, and (5) women from diverse background currently participating in advisory committees and governance bodies.

The Working Group would also seek to better understand the current landscape of women's participation in advisory committees and governance bodies, including data collection on current engagement and a review of existing appointment processes. This background work may help

inform further stages of DV4C activities, and provide baseline data against which to measure future results.

The City of London, as a selected DV4C participant, receives \$7,500 per year from FCM to cover costs of activities related to this program. The cost of conducting focus groups (engaging facilitators, room rentals, material costs, etc.) will be covered through this grant.

Should Council support the recommended objective, the focus groups will be conducted in early 2017. The findings of the focus groups, and recommended next steps, will be reported to Council for further direction.

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| CONCLUSION |
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Women make up 51% of Canada’s population but remain underrepresented in local government decision making processes. FCM’s Diverse Voices for Change initiative marks an opportunity to work with other communities in a shared interest to increase the engagement of women from diverse backgrounds in local government. Through participation in this program, the City of London also takes another step to “support all Londoners to feel engaged and involved in our community.” London strives to continuously become a more welcoming and inclusive community, and this program marks another step forward.

Regular updates will be provided to City Council as this work proceeds.

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| PREPARED BY: | RECOMMENDED BY: |
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| KINGA KOLTUN GOVERNMENT AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS OFFICER | KATE GRAHAM DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC INNOVATION |

cc. Senior Leadership Team