

May 23, 2017

Dear Community Partner:

Diversity and inclusion are important priorities for Londoners and City Council. In 2016, Council initiated a process to develop a Community Diversity & Inclusion Strategy, to be led by a group of community volunteers.

Nearly 200 Londoners stepped forward to serve as 'Champions' and work together to write the Community Diversity & Inclusion Strategy. This work took place over a series of workshops from January to March 2017. There were additional opportunities for Londoners to provide input into the work throughout this process. More than 1,000 Londoners provided additional input.

Attached is the draft content for the Community Diversity & Inclusion Strategy, as developed by the Champions. It includes a draft vision, statement of commitment, strategies, and priorities.

1. Have we missed anything in the strategies?
2. Do you have any concerns with any of the strategies being proposed? [Please reference the specific strategies in your response.]
3. For any strategies which would directly affect your organization, what would be required for implementation?
4. Does your organization see itself playing a role in the implementation of the Community Diversity & Inclusion Strategy?
5. Any other thoughts or comments?

Your feedback will be used by the Community Diversity & Inclusion Strategy Steering Committee to help us finalize our draft content.

If you are willing to provide feedback, you can do so by completing the confidential survey <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RJVRBF3> If you would prefer to provide feedback in another way, please contact Kate Graham (kgraham@london.ca) and Kinga Koltun (kkoltun@london.ca) who would be happy to meet with you or speak with you at your convenience.

Steering Committee
Community Diversity & Inclusion Strategy

Community Diversity & Inclusion Strategy

DRAFT Content, as developed by the
Community Diversity & Inclusion Champions

Vision

London is a diverse and inclusive community that honours, welcomes, and accepts all people; one where we empower each other to eliminate systemic oppressions.

Statement of Commitment

The City of London commits to:

- Mandating equity and exemplifying our vision of London as a diverse and inclusive community.
- Learning and honouring the unique histories and lived experiences of all peoples in our community.
- Removing systemic barriers to accessibility as experienced by our community by listening and responding to the voices of marginalized groups.

As Londoners, we commit to:

- Working together with the City of London towards our vision of London as a diverse and inclusive community
- Modeling the community we aspire to be by respecting others, learning, acknowledging our biases, and celebrating the diversity and history of our community
- Being passionate allies with our neighbours and fellow Londoners, and standing up for one another to ensure we live in a city where everyone belongs.

The Change London Needs

What would it take to achieve our vision of a more diverse and inclusive London? Through discussion with nearly 200 Londoners – and with input from hundreds more – five main themes emerged. These are the changes we need to see in London if we are serious about building a more inclusive city.

- 1. Have zero tolerance for oppression, discrimination and ignorance.**

Too many Londoners experience oppression and discrimination in their daily lives. The Champions clearly articulated that some of the best ways to address this are through learning, sharing of knowledge, and building awareness about people with different experiences and perspectives. This also requires a greater awareness about oneself, including acknowledging privilege and addressing bias. Ultimately, understanding each other and ourselves is a vital first step towards overcoming ignorance – and identifying and addressing oppression and discrimination.

2. Remove employment barriers.

Londoners from many backgrounds continue to face barriers at every stage of employment, from application stage and while on the job. These barriers perpetuate inequity and are challenging forms of oppression for individuals to overcome. Employers have an obligation to ensure an inclusive work environment regardless of gender identity, ability, creed, heritage, ancestry, race, sexual orientation, age or non-Canadian professional experience. For London to be an inclusive city, local employers must provide transparent, supportive and inclusive work environments.

3. Connect and engage Londoners.

We live in an increasingly diverse city. Without opportunities to connect with one another, build relationships and contribute to one's community, Londoners can feel isolated and excluded. Community connections and engagement allow London to become more inclusive to all of its residents. All Londoners should feel welcomed, connected, included and engaged.

4. Remove accessibility barriers to services, information and spaces.

Londoners continue to face barriers to accessing services, finding information, and navigating physical spaces. This theme was particularly common among seniors, people with disabilities, newcomers, and other groups. These barriers exclude large portions of our community from accessing all that London has to offer. Particular emphasis was given to the importance of including individuals from non-dominant groups in local decisions making processes and in the development of new policies and strategies.

5. Take concrete steps towards healing and reconciliation.

Indigenous peoples have faced generations of exclusion and oppression. The time has come to take steps towards healing and reconciliation, including working with Indigenous peoples to implement the Calls to Action of the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* and lead the change process in the community. This is a vital part of understanding our history, healing relationships, and building a more inclusive London, Ontario and Canada for all people.

Strategies

Change #1: Have zero tolerance for oppression, discrimination and ignorance.

Questions for you:

1. Have we missed anything in the strategies?
2. Do you have any concerns with any of the strategies being proposed? [Please reference the specific strategies in your response.]
3. For any strategies which would directly affect your organization, what would be required for implementation?
4. Does your organization see itself playing a role in the implementation of the Community Diversity & Inclusion Strategy?
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Strategy	City of London	Businesses & Organizations	Individuals
1. Implement a social media campaign modelled after City of Edmonton's #MakeItAwkward			

2. Learn, share, and recognize the lived experiences, cultures and histories of Londoners.			
3. Recognize and address one's own privilege and bias, and encourage others to take action.			
4. Encourage local media and community figures to promote inclusive messages and to address barriers and oppressions within London.			
5. Build cultural awareness among children and youth through schools, community groups, mentorship, community champions, parent councils, and community engagement activities.			
6. Develop and recognize a common language around racism and discrimination including a definition of Islamophobia, oppression, etc.			
7. Promote courses on diversity and inclusion, accommodations and accessibility.			
8. Advocate to other municipalities and levels of government about faith based discrimination and inclusion.			
9. Acknowledge the existence of anti-black racism, islamophobia, sexism, racism, anti – Semitism, ageism, xenophobia, homophobia, and other forms of discrimination in our community.			
10. Support employers and community members in learning how to assist newcomers with their integration.			
11. Encourage local businesses and organizations to share knowledge, resources, and information and provide			

educational opportunities on issues such as faith-based discrimination, oppression, and accessibility.			
12. Encourage everyone to undertake anti-racism, anti-oppressions, cultural, and diversity training in order to understand those around them.			
13. Work to establish courses on Indigenous culture, cultural competency, diversity and inclusion within all education systems.			
14. Encourage social services and health practitioners to learn about the Indigenous culture.			
15. Create guidelines and evaluation standards to measure the level of diversity within the community.			
16. Promote healthy living within the community by making Londoners aware of where to access courses on nutrition and healthy eating, community gardens and free meal options.			
17. Create guidelines and evaluation standards to measure the level of diversity within the community.			
18. Provide educational opportunities to police officers and staff on racialized Muslim profiling, LGBT2QI+ related barriers and needs, bias and racism.			
19. Provide community training on trans health & HIV.			
20. Provide easily available and accessible education on sexual harassment, sexual assault and safety, including a comprehensive definition of “sexual harassment” and “consent” in order to gain an understanding of boundaries.			

21. Support employers and community member in learning how to assist newcomers with their integration.			
22. Encourage police to continue to provide support and protection to faith establishments.			
23. Work collaboratively with LGBT2QI+ community to ensure visible presence and support from police.			

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Change #2: Remove employment barriers.

Questions for you:

1. Have we missed anything in the strategies?
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Strategy	City of London	Businesses & Organizations	Individuals
24. Implement metrics and regular opportunities to measure diversity and inclusion within the community, including the workforce and local leadership.			
25. Include accommodations in job advertisements.			
26. Include gender specific needs in all health and safety standards.			
27. Develop transparent hiring practices and evaluation processes to ensure women and racialized individuals are actively hired.			
28. Create hiring panels reflective of the community.			
29. Establish a local committee to support women's development in the workplace.			
30. Encourage local businesses and organizations to recognize foreign credentials.			

31. Promote equity within policy, practices and strategies development in businesses, non-profit, public and labour organizations.			
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Change #3: Connect and engage Londoners.

Questions for you:

1. Have we missed anything in the strategies?

2. Do you have any concerns with any of the strategies being proposed? [Please reference the specific strategies in your response.]
3. For any strategies which would directly affect your organization, what would be required for implementation?
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Strategy	City of London	Businesses & Organizations	Individuals
32. Support events, programs, and activities that facilitate community connections and encourage Londoners to be actively engaged in championing diversity and inclusion.			
33. Bring organizations together around common goals of inclusion.			
34. Promote opportunities for Londoners to collaborate, share, and access information and opportunities happening within London.			
35. Recognize and celebrate Londoners, organizations and businesses that promote and undertake diversity, inclusion, and anti-oppression activities.			
36. Promote mentorship, co-op, apprenticeship and internship programs happening within the City of London and the community.			
37. Increase participation of all Londoners from non-dominant groups on City of London Advisory Committees, Boards and Commissions.			
38. Establish long-range plans to grow diversity activities, including grants and recognition programs.			
39. Establish awards for architects and/or other professionals if they build or innovate in the accessibility area.			

40. Establish and implement a policy on accountability for engagement by organizations in London and the City of London.			
41. Promote free and low cost activities available to all Londoners.			
42. Foster open and ongoing communication between all levels of government, local business and organizations.			
43. Establish a community youth engagement strategy.			

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Change #4: Remove accessibility barriers to services, information and spaces.

Questions for you:

1. Have we missed anything in the strategies?
2. Do you have any concerns with any of the strategies being proposed? [Please reference the specific strategies in your response.]
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Strategy	City of London	Businesses & Organizations	Individuals
44. Create awareness about the services available within the community.			
45. Ensure that all current and future transportation options are easily available and accessible to seniors and people with disabilities.			
46. Work to develop population specific housing approaches and make the community aware of the housing opportunities available.			
47. Develop integration and settlement services geared towards seniors.			
48. Include people with disabilities and special needs in policy development, consultations, and implementation process in order to address different accessibility perspectives.			
49. Research and implement best practices for progressive accessibility standards.			
50. Encourage the development of a central resource for assistive technologies in order to make them more available to Londoners.			
51. Ensure transportation options are reviewed from an accessibility perspective with people with disabilities and special needs.			
52. Ensure washrooms have adequate lighting and baby change tables are installed in non-gender specific washrooms.			
53. Create coordinated services network within the city to increase awareness.			
54. Ensure the safety of the community by developing comprehensive and adaptable emergency and safety procedures.			
55. Conduct regular safety audits throughout the community.			
56. Promote the local welcome and assessment centre for newcomers.			
57. Provide accommodation for religious practices.			

Change #5: Take concrete steps towards healing and reconciliation.

Questions for you:

1. Have we missed anything in the strategies?
2. Do you have any concerns with any of the strategies being proposed? [Please reference the specific strategies in your response.]
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Strategy	City of London	Businesses & Organizations	Individuals
58. Establish an Indigenous relations department within the City.			
59. Work with local Indigenous peoples to establish a <i>Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Calls to Action</i> (TRC) accountability and implementation body and plan.			

60. Develop an audit and evaluation process to measure the progress towards the <i>Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Calls to Action (TRC)</i> recommendations.			
61. Ensure Indigenous people lead the change process within our community.			
62. Create a community pledge to encourage everyone to take action towards the recommendation of the <i>Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Calls to Action (TRC)</i> .			
63. Work with local Indigenous peoples to develop a unified Indigenous health strategy.			
64. Forge partnership agreements between 3 communities (Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Munsee Delaware, and Oneida of the Thames) and the City.			
65. Provide opportunities for on-reserve economic development through strategic and innovative partnerships with the City and the private sector.			

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APPENDIX A: Strategies – Perspectives

During their last meeting the Community Diversity and Inclusion Champions brainstormed ways to address the needs as well as barriers and oppressions faced by specific populations within London. Champions developed strategy ideas that align with the following issues or populations:

- Accessibility
- Ageism and intergenerational relations,
- Anti – black racism
- Faith based discrimination and Islamophobia
- Gender
- Immigrants and newcomers
- Income inequity
- Indigenous and First Nations
- LGBT2QI+
- Racism

When looking at all of these perspectives it is key to understand the concept of Intersectionality.

Intersectionality can be defined as the intersection, or crossover, of our many identities affects how each of us experience the municipality. These intersections occur within a context of connected systems and structures of power (e.g., laws, policies, state governments, other political and economic unions, religious institutions, and media). (*Advancing Equity and Inclusion, A Guide for Municipalities*)

Accessibility

All residents should have free and unrestricted access to all the information and amenities a municipality has to offer in order to fully enjoy the city. Champions discussed ways which will allow people with disabilities and special needs to thrive within the community and fully participate in its decision making processes. The three themes identified within the topic of accessibility are inclusion in decision making, physical environment and awareness and integration. Within this perspective the most common idea was providing people with disabilities and special needs with the ability to participate in the review and consultation process when developing new policies or transportation options. This can be achieved either by using technology or making public meetings fully accessible. Accessibility of information and resources was also mentioned as a way for allowing people with disabilities and special needs to be able to participate in the community and to be fully engaged.

Ageism and Intergenerational Relations

Discussing ways in which to build relationships between generations and how to help seniors continue to be thriving members of the community will help us create a London which can be enjoyed by all. Within the topic of ageism and intergenerational relations Champions identified the following three focus areas; isolation challenges, communication and awareness, and services and amenities available for all ages. Accessible and easily available information was identified as one of the top priorities within this perspective. This involves both the idea of having information in multiple format and educating the community where to access the information they may be looking for (i.e. 211). Accessible and affordable transportation was also identified, this includes making the surrounding environment such as sidewalks, ramps and shelters to be accessible and unobstructed as well as ensuring that the community can afford to access all the transportation options available. Finally, relationship building between generations was also highlighted as important, this may involve intergenerational housing, or free activity nights.

Anti – Black Racism

Anti-black racism was recognized as a form of racism which is present within the community and one that needs to be addressed. Discriminating individuals and communities based on their heritage or skin colour is unacceptable and needs to stop. During their discussion Champions highlighted education, law enforcement and employment barriers as the main focus areas within anti-black racism perspective. The discussion highlighted the aspect of recognition, education and discussion around the topic as being very important. This may involve recognizing the existence of anti-black racism within the community and raising awareness through education and discussion. Employment was also highlighted as an important aspect within this perspective, actions such as recognition of workplaces who have a highly diverse workforce as well as development of transparent hiring practices were recommended.

Faith Based Discrimination and Islamophobia

Religious affiliation often plays a big part in one's identity. Creating a safe and welcoming community where everyone is able to freely express themselves without the fear of being judged or discriminated is important to Londoners. Champions highlighted education, safety and security, and systemic issues as being the three key objectives. Some of the ideas discussed were; making faith-based resources easily available within the community, establishing a common and comprehensive definition of Islamophobia, accurate media representation of all faiths, and higher participation of diverse faith communities on City of London boards and commissions. Gaining a common understanding of the faiths present within the community and making sure their voices are heard and included will help London become a diverse and inclusive community as it strives to be.

Gender

When discussing gender Champions identified workplace, municipal accessibility and safety as being the key focus areas. Allowing both women and men to be thriving members both within the workplace and at home was highlighted through the ideas. Concepts such as supporting women's development within the workforce or having extended paternity leave were mentioned. Safety was also indicated as having a great role in making our community welcoming to all. This was highlighted through the ideas of conducting regular safety audits throughout the community, making sure all city streets are well lit, and having a common understanding of sexual harassment and assault. Finally, making all community meetings, and consultations fully accessible by providing supports such as child minding was also mentioned. This will allow all community members to fully

participate in the local decision making and to have their perspectives heard on issues that may affect their everyday lives.

Immigrants and Newcomers

London has a vast population of immigrants and newcomers, thus creating a friendly community where all are welcomed and included is very important. Champions defined advocacy, education, and services as being important aspects for a successful settlement and integration of immigrants. This includes ideas such as supporting the development of immigrants within the workforce through credential and experience recognition and educating employers on how to assist with this development. In addition, community based cultural competency training was also mentioned as being important when assisting newcomers with their settlement and integration. This will allow both the community members and service providers to understand the needs and experience of newcomers and how to address them. Finally, the availability of information both on how to assist immigrants with their settlement and what services are available within London was stated as being important when creating a welcoming community.

Income Inequity

Income inequity is a characteristic present within numerous communities, and one that is caused by multiple factors. Champions identified health, housing, security, access, and navigation as being aspects of income inequity. The idea of affordability was mentioned as one of the top contributors to income inequity. This includes affordability of things such as housing, medications, and food which play a big role in one's quality of life and health. Also, the idea of making the community aware where to access the necessary resources such as free meals or shelter as well as courses on budgeting, child care and healthy living were expressed as having high importance. Allowing those with lived experiences of income inequity to share their voices with people working in social service will help to create a mutual understating of the community needs and resources available. Providing individuals with the tools and knowledge necessary to break out of the cycle of poverty will help improve their quality of life and of those around them.

Indigenous and First Nations

There are three communities located in close proximity to London, they are the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Munsee Delaware and Oneida of the Thames. Many members of these communities have chosen to make London their home either permanently or temporarily. Champions identified infrastructure, education, changing mindsets, and reconciliation as playing a role in the lives of local Indigenous peoples. A large emphasis was placed on the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Calls to Action* and ways in which both the City of London and the community can work together with the local Indigenous peoples to implement this. This may include an implementation of an accountability plan and creating ways to measure progress. Also, having the local Indigenous peoples to lead the change within the community was highlighted as being important. Finally, the idea of establishing an Indigenous relations department within the City of London and working with the local Indigenous peoples to create a health, and homelessness and housing strategies geared to their needs were also discussed.

LGBT2QI+

London has a well-established LGBT2QI+ community, however its members continue to face many problems within our city. Champions discussed education and awareness, protection and security, and health as being the key focus areas for this community. Two of the key aspects mentioned are awareness and support. This may include being aware of the supports and resources available within London, as well as awareness of the needs the LGBT2QI+ community may have. The idea of collaboration was also mentioned as being important

within this perspective. This includes creating tools and means to help all Londoners to safely collaborate together and learn from each other in order to gain a common understanding and create a safe and inclusive community.

Racism

Racism has been present within our society for centuries, and it has taken on many different forms causing numerous problems. It is a form of oppression present within the London community, and one that has to be addressed. Champions identified education, employment, as well as discussion and dialogue as being the three focus areas for this issue. Ideas such as community based education on cultures, anti-racism training in the workplace, establishment and recognition of common language around the issue, and use of media to promote inclusive messages were mentioned as ways to address racism within London. Community based education and anti-racism training will allow Londoners to establish a common understanding of the causes of racism and how to address it, as well as help them to become more sensitive to the experience of others and to recognize their own privilege and bias. Creating a safe space where everyone is welcomed and able to share their experiences were highlighted as being very important when creating an inclusive community. Finally, accurate media representation plays a large role on how people are perceived, for that reason working with local media to create inclusive and accurate portrayals of Londoners is very important.

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