

Audit, Finance, & Administration Committee
Response to Human Rights, Diversity, & Inclusion Strategy

The Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion (HCCI) is supportive of the City adopting a Diversity & Inclusion Strategy. We are appreciative of the work done by the Diversity & Inclusion team under the Human Resources Department. As the leading organization in Hamilton that has been addressing issues around Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion we would like to offer some concerns and suggestions as the City continues to develop and work on issues around Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion.

- **Frameworks for Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion** – In any Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion work it is pertinent to explicitly state what framework undergirds one’s analysis. This can take various forms. At HCCI we adopt an **Anti-Oppressive & Anti-Racism** framework. This frame work provides us with an opportunity to better understand how certain people experience social and systemic forms of oppression because of their intersecting identities. It is troubling to find out that the Diversity & Inclusion team have not explicitly stated what framework they are working with as they move forward with their strategic planning. This framework should inform the 100 training sessions being run at the City of Hamilton by the Diversity & Inclusion team.
- **Addressing Systematic forms of Oppression** – Oppression is the use of power to marginalize or disempower an entire social group or category, often while it further provides advantages to those in positions of power. By adopting an Anti-Oppressive framework institutions are able to focus on creating a plan that changes the culture of oppression in various forms (such as racism, sexism, transphobia, classism, ableism, ageism etc); that plan will highlight priorities, recommendations, deliverables and corresponding updates. Culture change requires changing city practices, policies, hiring & retention strategies and service delivery to residents; many of which haven’t been mentioned.
- **The Community has provided answers** – I would like to draw your attention to the City of Hamilton Equity & Inclusion Policy report (FCS10026).¹ In this report there is an exhaustive list of community proposed solutions to ensure the City lives up to the standards of being equitable and inclusive. While the strategy talks about Community Engagement & barriers it fails to validate the numerous times residents have meet as community to provide actions items to be taken up by the City. It might be time to revisit that report.
- **Investing in People** – Residents and organization that have lived experience of various forms of oppression need operational and financial support in order to carry out the nuts and bolts of addressing systematic discrimination in large institutions such as the City of Hamilton. Instead of having a EDI summit it might be well spent support the “Waging action against Hate.”²

¹ <https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/316071/TEN%20LE%20Plans/1%20-%20Hamilton%20Social%20Inclusion%20Policy.pdf>

² <https://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/gandhi/onefifty/Gandhi150Conference.pdf>

Questions Councillors might want to ask

- Who delivers these trainings and what are the guiding principles for the training sessions?
- Are issues of whiteness, microaggressions, implicit bias, stereotypes, white privilege, white fragility discussed in any of the trainings?
- What specific strategies were used to increase diverse pool of applicants to the volunteer Agencies, Boards, & Committees? Can the team provide the rate for white successful applicants? What intersectional analysis was done with respect to applicants & successful applicants?
- How many folks working within the Diversity & Inclusion team have experienced forms of oppression such as Racism, Sexism, Islamophobia, Transphobia, etc?

Matrix of oppression

Matrix of Oppression				
Social Identity Categories	Privileged Social Groups	Border Social Groups ↔	Targeted Social Groups	Ism
Race	White People	Biracial People (White/Latino, Black, Asian)	Asian, Black, Latino, Native People	Racism
Sex	Bio Men	Transsexual, Intersex People	Bio Women	Sexism
Gender	Gender Conforming Bio Men And Women	Gender Ambiguous Bio Men and Women	Transgender, Genderqueer, Intersex People	Transgender Oppression
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual People	Bisexual People	Lesbians, Gay Men	Heterosexism
Class	Rich, Upper Class People	Middle Class People	Working Class, Poor People	Classism
Ability/Disability	Temporarily Able-Bodied People	People with Temporary Disabilities	People with Disabilities	Ableism
Religion	Protestants	Roman Catholic (historically)	Jews, Muslims, Hindus	Religious Oppression
Age	Adults	Young Adults	Elders, Young People	Ageism/Adultism

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Resources

- White Fragility: Why it's so hard for white people to talk about racism – Robin Diangelo
- Pedagogy of the Oppressed – Paulo Freire
- On Intersectionality: Essential Writings – Kimberle Williams Crenshaw