



Employee diversity and inclusion: future ready

Diversity and inclusion help us work better together for our future

Our [Strategic Plan: Guelph. Future ready](#) includes five corporate values that help employees work toward our vision of having an inclusive, connected, prosperous city where we look after each other and our environment. Through the Strategic Plan, we've introduced the value of inclusion, which highlights the importance of embracing our differences so we can be stronger together as an organization. A diverse and inclusive workplace comes with many benefits that will help us be successful.

Diversity and inclusion help us be more flexible and responsive to the needs and interests of our workforce

Employee expectations are changing, and this challenges employment systems and practices to be more flexible (Bersin by Deloitte, 2014). Employees are seeking and staying with employers that value their diversity and have programs and work cultures that make them feel welcomed and valued. A City of Guelph employment system review showed that we have a strong foundation, but we have opportunities to take more action in building a workplace where our employees are welcomed, valued and engaged. The Plan will address the items identified in the review to help build more inclusive approaches to

- recognize and develop internal talent; and
- attract talent that is more reflective of the labour market.

Diversity and inclusion encourage a culture of innovation

When workplaces focus on inclusion, they create higher levels of employee engagement and are better able to innovate as an organization.

- [Catalyst](#), a global non-profit that helps organizations build the business case for diversity and inclusion, found in its research that the more included employees felt, the more innovative they were in their jobs, and the more likely they were to go above and beyond to meet their job objectives (What Diversity and Inclusion Mean for Employee Engagement, 2018).
- [Gallup](#), Inc. has found that employee engagement and inclusiveness are connected. It found the combination of employee engagement and gender diversity resulted in 46 per cent to 58 per cent higher financial performance — comparable revenue and net profit, respectively — for business units above the median on both engagement and gender diversity, compared with those below the median on both. It also found that engaged employees are more likely to say their company values diverse ideas and does what is right.

- CEB Inc., now part of [Gartner](#), Inc., found workers in highly diverse and inclusive organizations result in a 26 per cent increase in team collaboration and an 18 per cent increase in team commitment. Additionally, employees who are part of organizations with high levels of diversity report a seven per cent higher intent to stay than their peers in organizations that have low levels of diversity. (What Diversity and Inclusion Mean for Employee Engagement, 2018).

A clear commitment to diversity and inclusion through leadership and trust building will help the organization to value our employees and help build the conditions that we need to make a difference together.

Diversity and inclusion help us create a workforce for our future

It's important that we are future focused and competitive in our goal of recognizing, developing, attracting and retaining the talent that our services need. The diversification of the labour market itself means that we must be more flexible, adaptive and skilled with our approach to recruitment and development. The plan will help our organization to address some of the realities of our labour market such as:

A competitive labour market

Guelph consistently has one of the highest levels of employment in Ontario. There are several public sector employers in Guelph and over 10 municipal governments within an hour drive and train ride from Guelph.

Increasing retirement-aged workers

A 2018 data report showed that 78,000 Ontario municipal employees can retire by 2021, including 51 per cent of all municipal senior leaders (Onward, 2018). 25 per cent of our current workforce is over the age of 55, with 13 per cent of the full-time workforce eligible for retirement by 2021.

Canada's workforce is more diverse than ever before

Older people are re-entering the workforce at greater rates than in the past and many are choosing to work beyond the normal retirement age (Canada, Ontario Labour Market Bulletin - Ontario: June 2018). The labour market is shrinking, and global talent is critical to support Canada's labour market needs. Nearly half of the recent immigrants to Guelph (1,205) are international professionals with transferable skills and experiences (Guelph Wellington Local Immigration Partnership, 2019).

Ontario census data helps us to understand that not all take part in the workforce to the same degree. Youth, people who have immigrated to Canada, people with disabilities and people that identify as being First Nations, Métis or Inuk (Inuit) have significantly higher levels of unemployment than the working population as a whole.

City of Guelph Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan (2019-2022)

The workplace as we know it is changing, and so are we. Today, employees are seeking employers who have strong diverse and inclusive cultures, where people feel welcomed, valued and empowered to bring their skills and perspectives to the workplace.

Vision

City employees feel welcome, valued, and engaged in their service to our teams and our community. Our commitment to diversity and inclusion helps us to become a municipal leader.

Mission

The Employee Diversity and Inclusion Plan (2019-2022) helps us build a more inclusive and engaged workplace. Our employees will seek and value diversity as a strength for their work, and commit to working well together to achieve our corporate [Strategic Plan](#) goals.

Commit to an inclusive culture

Commitment, the first priority area of the plan, focuses on developing the City as a diverse and inclusive workplace. At the City, we will embed diversity and inclusion into our culture through our leaders, employee engagement and policy development.

- Engage our current and potential workforce in understanding the commitment, actions and accountability we all have in building an inclusive workplace.
- Act of reviews of our employment systems and employee engagement results.
- Embed our commitment to diversity and inclusion within Human Resources policy or program changes.

Flexible mindset and work practices

Having a flexible workplace will help our leaders to recognize diversity and practice inclusive skills needed to ensure City employees feel valued. Flexibility also includes providing training opportunities for employees that will aid their professional development, and foster an innovative, resilient workplace.

- Build the capability of leaders to practice more flexibility and agility in their work with employees.
- Innovate and invest in learning and development programs and practices to meet our employee's unique learning needs.
- Continue to develop our employee skills in building effective relationships with their co-workers and community.

Networks and industry partnerships

Partnerships are important for all the work we do at the City. These partnerships help us to develop our skills with recognizing, developing, attracting and retaining the talented people we need now and into the future.

- Leverage networking and industry partners to foster innovation in our employment systems.
- Develop a working group that helps to build a more inclusive recruitment process.
- Celebrate and recognize both achievements and initiatives to build a more inclusive culture.

Diversity and inclusion in action

Table 1: commitment to inclusive culture goals and actions

Inclusive culture goal	Start in 2019	Start in 2020
Engage our current and potential workforce in understanding the commitment, action, and accountabilities we all have in building an inclusive workplace.	<p>The Executive Team members and union leaders make a commitment to valuing diversity and practicing inclusion as leaders at the City.</p> <p>Communicate within HR, our workforce and externally about the process and plans related to the Plan.</p> <p>Ensure the leadership charter values diversity and reflects inclusive leadership skills.</p>	<p>Establish a steering committee to provide oversight, guidance and support to the plan.</p> <p>Consider diversity and inclusion competencies as part of our recruitment process.</p>
Act on reviews of our employment systems and engagement results.	<p>Human Resources updated or drafted to provide guidance to leaders on when and under what circumstances appointments can be made to fill positions. The number of appointments made without a competitive process should be reported in other Human Resources performance reports.</p> <p>Select search firms based, in part, on their expertise with diversity recruitment.</p> <p>Continue to use the employee census to help inform employee program evaluation and design.</p>	<p>Update core competencies to include diversity and inclusion knowledge and skills.</p> <p>Adequately resource the Human Resources department through the budget process to help build and maintain commitment to diversity and inclusion.</p>
Embed our commitment to diversity and inclusion within Human Resources policy or program changes.	<p>Revise and launch the Recruitment, Assessment and Selection Policy to include a stronger and clearer commitment to outreach recruitment that will help to diversify the applicant pool.</p> <p>Develop policies, guidelines, and tools to welcome and engage with people in our workplace (e.g. religious accommodation, positive space, accessibility and dress codes).</p> <p>Ensure employee engagement surveys ask questions that relate to building an inclusive workplace culture.</p>	None.

Table 2: flexible mindset and work practices goals and actions

Flexible mindset goal	Start in 2019	Start in 2020	Start in 2021
Build the capability of leaders to practice more flexibility and agility in their work with employees.	Increase leaders' commitment to make efforts to know their employees on the front lines and recognize them for the work they do.	Invest in learning, development and performance management that supports a more inclusive leadership culture. Make efforts to ensure the performance review process is free of bias. Foster a group of people that are passionate about diversity and inclusion to help share insight and successes with practicing inclusive leadership.	None.
Innovate and invest in learning and development programs and practices to meet our employee's unique learning needs.	Promote new methods to support employee on the job learning (cross-training, job shadows, and project teams). Launch a buddy-training program for new or transferring employees.	Develop more online learning tools that employees can access.	None.
Employees have more skills in building effective relationships with their co-workers and the community.	Develop training and learning experiences to address the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Report (includes the history of residential schools, and skills training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism).	None.	Develop training that helps build employee relationship building skills. Recognize and learn from employees and teams that have built effective relationships with community groups.

Table 3: Networks and industry partnerships goals and actions

Network and partnership goal	Start in 2019	Start in 2020	Start in 2021
Leverage networks and industry partners to foster innovation in our employment systems.	Collaborate with community partners to share ideas and build our skills with diversity and inclusion.	None.	Launch a reciprocal mentorship program to support leaders and Human Resources with developing diversity and inclusion skills.
Develop a working group that helps to build a more inclusive recruitment process.	Embed inclusive messaging into all job adverts, employment outreach activities and onboarding materials to attract a diverse candidate pool and reinforce messaging for all new team members. Develop strategic outreach to engage a greater breadth of qualified people with City employment opportunities.	None.	None.
Celebrate and recognize both achievements and initiatives to build a more inclusive culture.	Share the progress of our plan with external stakeholders, and Council.	None.	Work with community partners and networks to create, promote and take part in events and initiatives that recognize the value of diversity.

Tracking our Journey 2019-2022

The Global Benchmark for Diversity and Inclusion (GBDI) offers several leading indicators to help understand our progress. We selected two indicators from each of the three focus areas to help us track our journey.

Table 4: performance measurement

Focus areas	Indicators
Commit to an inclusive culture	<p>Employees develop more clarity about the behaviours that help us to create an inclusive workplace.</p> <p>Leaders are talking about our Plan with more confidence and frequency.</p>
Flexible mindset and work practices	<p>Employee engagement data is showing progress towards greater and more consistent levels of engagement.</p> <p>Demographic data on workforce across the talent management trajectory is more reflective of the labour market.</p>
Networks and industry partnerships	<p>A GBDI audit shows upward progress with recognizing, valuing and embedding inclusion competencies within our employment practices.</p> <p>Network and industry partners have greater awareness of the progress of the Diversity and Inclusion plan.</p>

Diversity and inclusion project team members

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- Joanne Oliver, Project Coordinator, Talent and Organizational Development Specialist, Human Resources
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- Nicole Borics, Learning and Development Coordinator, Human Resources
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Consultation with the following Union Executives

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- Liz McGee, CUPE 973
- Celine Renaud, ATU1189
- Colin Hunter, Guelph Professional Fire Fighters' Association

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