

SOCIAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS

SUBJECT: EQUITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT THE CITY

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the report titled “Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at the City” dated November 15, 2023, be received for information.

REPORT

The Social Planning Committee, at its meeting held on November 15, 2023, received and adopted the attached report providing an overview and update on the City’s equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives.

On behalf of the Social Planning
Committee,

Councillor A. Gu,
Chair

Councillor M. Santiago
Vice Chair

TO: SOCIAL PLANNING COMMITTEE (SPC)
FROM: CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER
GENERAL MANAGER PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
SUBJECT: **EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT THE CITY**
PURPOSE: To provide an overview and update on the City's equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report titled "Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at the City" dated November 15, 2023, be received for information.

1.0 POLICY SECTION

The support for equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives at the City aligns with the goals and values in the following Council-adopted plans, policies and strategies:

- Equity Policy (2020);
- Corporate Strategic Plan (2022); and
- Social Sustainability Strategy (2011).

The Employment Equity, Diversity and Belonging Policy (2023) was authorized by the CAO, and aligns with employment legislation, as well as the Council-adopted policies. It complements these Council-adopted policies, while also reflecting the organization's desire to advance this topic while complying with legislation.

2.0 BACKGROUND

The Equity Policy was first adopted by Council on June 13, 1994, resulting from discussions amongst Council and community members regarding an expansion of City services and hiring practices to better reflect the broad diversity of the Burnaby community. Since this time, the policy has guided and supported all aspects of City operations. However, the understanding of diversity and inclusion (in all forms) has expanded since the 1990's. In September 2020, Council adopted an updated version of the policy to better reflect this broader understanding (see Attachment 1).

To support the implementation of this updated policy, the City created its first Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Senior Manager position in July 2022 within the People & Culture Department to support city-wide internal EDI initiatives. The purpose of this report is to provide Council with information and updates regarding the Equity, Diversity

and Inclusion (EDI) initiatives at the City, highlighting the City's corporate (internal) and community (external) EDI services.

3.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

3.1 Local Context

Today, Burnaby has a population of approximately 249,125 (2021 Census) and has become a hyper-diverse community. For example:

- Burnaby is only one of eight cities in Canada without a 'majority ethnic group'¹;
- over half of those who live in Burnaby were not born in Canada;
- Burnaby is the third highest 'refugee receiving' city in BC and also receives a significant number of 'refugee claimants'² each year;
- over 120 languages are spoken in Burnaby;
- the number of Indigenous persons living in Burnaby is increasing;
- approximately 11% of Burnaby's population live with an activity or health limitation³;
- approximately 20% of Burnaby's population is 65 years of age or older;
- it is generally estimated that approximately 2-5% of the Canadian population identify as 2SLGBTQIA+⁴, including at a municipal level. These numbers have increased over time and are higher among younger people. Approximately 10% of those aged 18 to 34 years self-report as LGBTQIA2S+;
- approximately 14% of all age-brackets of individuals living in Burnaby live with low incomes – after tax⁵; and
- at last count (2023), there were 209 homeless people in Burnaby, with more individuals uncounseled or at risk of homelessness⁶.

As described above, Burnaby has witnessed significant changes in its demographic profile over the last quarter century. It has evolved from a suburban community to a significant urban centre that is demographically, socially, economically and culturally diverse. Therefore, it is important that the City align its programs and services – both internal and external – to better reflect Burnaby's diversity.

¹ Phrasing used by Statistics Canada which indicates that no particular ethno-cultural group accounts for more than 40% of the total municipal population.

² A 'refugee claimant' is defined as a person who is seeking Canada's protection at the borders (arriving via air, over the border with the United States, via boat etc.) or within the country, rather than those who arrive in Canada already being recognized by the Federal Government as a refugee.

³ Term used by Statistics Canada to refer to persons with self-reported disabilities.

⁴ 2SLGBTQIA+ refers to Two-Spirit (2S), Lesbian (L), Gay (G), Bisexual (B), Transgender (T), Queer (Q), Questioning (Q), Intersex (I), Asexual (A) and people who identify as part of sexual and gender diverse communities who use additional terminologies (+).

⁵ As defined by Statistics Canada as low-income measure, after tax (LIM-AT): a fixed percentage (50%) of median adjusted after-tax income of households of households observed at the person level, where 'adjusted' indicates that a household's needs are taken into account.

⁶ Homelessness Services Association of BC (2023). Homeless Count for Greater Vancouver report.

3.2 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives at the City

Under the EDI portfolio, recent initiatives include:

Within the City (2022-2023)

The City has implemented several notable internal EDI initiatives. The following are items that align with our commitment to fostering workplace equity and diversity and with creating a sense of belonging for our employees:

- **Senior Manager Involvement:** The Senior Manager of the EDI division actively participates in and supports various internal and external EDI committees, networks, and working groups, both provincially and nationally, namely the Access Advisory Committee Working Group, Chinese Canadian Reconciliation Advisory Committee, EDI Oversight Committee, EDI Internal Strategic Committee, Burnaby Board of Trade DEI Committee, EDI Learning Group – Lower Mainland, EDI community of practice and Municipal Network of D&I Professionals;
- **Completion of Internal EDI Assessment:** Staff successfully completed an internal assessment that had 1,168 staff respondents. The internal EDI committee, comprising 24 members from different city departments, will be trained to analyze the report and implement its recommendations;
- **Inclusive Learning Modules and Management:** New learning modules and management practices that promote inclusivity within the organization have been introduced;
- **EDI Events:** Regular events that focus on cultural and diverse topics are hosted. These events are witnessing increased attendance and engagement, thus showcasing the success of these initiatives;
- **Transgender Inclusion Working Group:** City-wide staff working group has been established to recommend actions to make the City a more inclusive workplace and for public space to be more inclusive for transgender staff and patrons;
- **Lunch and Learn Opportunities:** Ongoing learning opportunities are provided for staff through lunchtime sessions on a variety of diverse topics;
- **Adoption of Employment Equity, Diversity and Belonging Policy:** Implementation of a policy that promotes equity and diversity, which has been well-received by staff, has been successfully adopted;
- **Diversity Statement on Careers Website and Job Postings:** Staff adopted a diversity statement on the organization's careers website and job postings, reaffirming the commitment to an inclusive workplace;
- **30-day and 90-day Check-ins for New Staff:** Launching in October, these check-ins aim to improve employee retention and productivity by providing structured feedback opportunities during the onboarding process;

- **Exit Review Survey:** Staff have implemented an anonymous exit review survey for departing staff, gathering valuable feedback to support employee retention efforts; and,
- **Ongoing communications via City's internal platforms:** Regular communication throughout the year on various EDI topics are provided, fostering a sense of belonging and connection for staff.

Within the Community:

A component of the Social Planning work program is to advance actions in the areas of 'Community Inclusion' (Social Sustainability Strategy) and 'An Inclusive Community' (Corporate Strategic Plan). This work is usually done in collaboration with other City departments and community partners. The focus on inclusion has been actioned through a myriad of programs and initiatives within the community, with some examples described below:

- Since 1988, an **Access Advisory Committee** has provided advice and input to the City of access and inclusion issues related to persons with disabilities. As of 2023, the Access Advisory Committee is a Committee of Council with staff representatives from various departments;
- The City is a founding member of the **Burnaby Intercultural Planning Table** (2007);
- The City is a member of the **UNESCO Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination** (2012);
- The City is a founding member of the **Burnaby Inter-Faith Network** (2014);
- The City is a founding member of the **Burnaby Together: Organizing Against Racism and Hate Table** (2017);
- The City assisted in the set-up of **Burnaby Pride**, and provides financial and logistical support for an annual Pride event(s) which celebrates and provides visibility in relation to Burnaby's diverse 2SLGBTQIA+ community (2018);
- Burnaby City Council **formally recognized that Burnaby is on unceded Indigenous territory** and approved beginning **Government-to-Government relation** with local First Nations (2019);
- After a multi-year collaborative process, the **Indigenous History in Burnaby Resource Guide** was published in 2019;
- The City is undertaking an exercise to develop **gender neutral and accessible signage** for all City facilities;
- Parks, Recreation and Culture are offering expanded **culturally aware and diverse programming and performances**;
- Burnaby Public Library is **expanding the scope of its public programming**, with explicit focus on equity: e.g. National Indigenous Day Event (June 2019), Introduction to Disability Justice Workshop (December 2019), International Women's Day Event (March 2020), etc. The library is also working to expand its collection with a focus on Indigenous, Black and Person of Colour (IBPOC) authors; and

- The Social Planning Committee's **Anti-Racism Sub-Committee** reviewed two community-based anti-racism research projects to help inform development of the City's Anti-Racism Framework and engagement work (underway);
- The City's **public engagement programs** for the creation of major plans are delivered to expand opportunities for participation. Examples of these activities include: providing a variety of online and in person opportunities to participate; ensuring in-person events can accommodate people with accessibility needs; providing transit subsidies and child-minding services to foster broader participation; and providing language translation assistance when possible.

4.0 COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion initiatives are regularly communicated on the City's webpage and regular media channels.

5.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Not applicable at this time.

Respectfully submitted,

Anita Bhandari, Chief Human Resources Officer

Ed Kozak, General Manager Planning and Development

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – City's Equity Policy (2020)

REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

This report was prepared by Kai Okazaki, Planner 2 and Vishad Deeplaul, Senior Manager Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and reviewed by Margaret Manifold, Planner 3 and Lee-Ann Garnett, Deputy General Manager Planning and Development.



City of Burnaby Equity Policy

The City of Burnaby celebrates the full diversity of its community, and recognizes that this diversity is a source of social, cultural and economic enrichment and strength.

Our Burnaby includes all community members regardless of ability, age, background, ethno-cultural identification, gender, gender identity, immigration status, income, heritage, life experience, housed or unhoused status, sexual orientation, and other factors.

As such, the City of Burnaby reaffirms and is committed to ensuring that all community members are able to safely and equitably access City spaces, programs, employment opportunities, and services - including the most vulnerable members of our community. The City has a duty to its citizens to set a positive example and foster a climate of understanding and mutual respect in its hiring practices and among its employees, patrons at its facilities, users of its services, and within the community at large.

Original policy adopted by Burnaby City Council on 1994 June 13

Updated policy adopted by Burnaby City Council on 2020 September 14