

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL**

TO: *MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS*

**SUBJECT: PROPOSED UPDATE TO THE CITY OF BURNABY EQUITY POLICY**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**THAT** Council revise the Equity Policy to include “caste” as a protected category in the Equity Policy Framework.

**REPORT**

The Executive Committee of Council, at its meeting held on April 5, 2023, received correspondence from the Chetna Association of Canada, advising that on February 21, 2023, the City of Seattle banned caste-based discrimination in businesses and other public settings.

The Committee expressed concern that casteism, a social hierarchy passed down through families that has been outlawed in India since 1948, is still being practiced in Canada and where some South Asian populations exist.

Arising from discussion, the Committee passed a motion requesting Council include “caste” as a protected category in the existing Equity Policy framework.

As the Equity Policy is currently under review by Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) staff, a report and updated policy will be brought forward to Council as soon as practicable.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor S. Dhaliwal  
Chair

Richard T. Lee  
Vice Chair



## **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