

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of Committee of the Whole

From: Lina Bigioni
Chief of Staff

Katherine Chislett
Commissioner of Community and Health Services

Date: September 24, 2019

Re: Inclusion Charter for York Region – Update

This memorandum provides an update on the Inclusion Charter for York Region. When endorsed by Regional Council on [June 28, 2018](#), staff committed to provide regular updates on actions and results.

Developed with input from and supported across various sectors, the Inclusion Charter contributes to the Region’s vision of strong, caring, safe communities

In 2016, a group that includes municipalities, police services, hospitals, school boards, conservation authorities, community agencies and the United Way Greater Toronto (called the Municipal Diversity and Inclusion Group) was formed to develop an inclusion charter for York Region. Through the Inclusion Charter, the organizations affirm their commitment to achieving welcoming and inclusive communities, where all people feel they belong and have access to the same opportunities. It reflects a collective vision that each community partner brings to life through specific plans and initiatives.

All Municipal Diversity and Inclusion Group members have endorsed the Charter, taking action individually and collectively to bring the Charter to life

As of June 2019, all 20 member organizations have endorsed the Charter, including all of York Region’s local municipalities. By endorsing, each member affirmed their commitment to taking concrete action to achieve the vision of the Charter within their organization and in the broader

community. Recognizing the diversity of the organizations and the need for targeted approaches, each member has its own charter that uniquely reflects its context, mandate and populations served. To view all the charters, please visit york.ca/inclusiveyr.

The Municipal Diversity and Inclusion Group also identified two priority areas for collective action (i) increasing sense of community belonging and (ii) decreasing incidence of hate crimes. The group is currently working to develop a community education and awareness strategy in support of these priority areas.

Inclusion Charter continues to gain support and has received global recognition as a best practice that communities could use to become more inclusive

Endorsement of the Charter continues to expand. As of August 2019, seven community partners outside of the Municipal Diversity and Inclusion Group have endorsed the Charter, with plans for others to endorse in 2020.

The United Nations' training arm, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, also endorsed the Charter as best practice. The institute recognized the collaborative approach used to develop the Charter as unique and a model others around the world can emulate to create inclusive communities. Representatives from the institute visited in December 2018 when Regional Council was presented with the United Nations flag. Representatives also visited the Region again in September 2019. York Region and York Regional Police were also invited to present on the Charter at the United Nations Headquarters in New York during World Interfaith Harmony Week in February 2019.

Most recently, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, York Region, York Regional Police and York University entered into a three-year partnership to work together to promote inclusive communities. This includes plans for establishment of a hub for capacity development and knowledge sharing (called International Training Centre for Authorities and Leaders) within York University. It will be the 20th Centre in the world, the 3rd in North America and the first in Canada. Staff from the institute will be using their scheduled September visit to further advance this partnership and efforts to create the hub at York University.

York Region is taking concrete steps to promote an inclusive workplace for all employees and received recognitions as a top employer for diversity

York Region is achieving the vision of the Charter within the organization through specific actions. This includes launching 14 Quiet Rooms, undertaking the "Diversity Includes YOU!" training and awareness campaign, and promoting the diversity calendar to employees to raise awareness about various faiths.

Recognizing the important steps the Region has taken to foster an inclusive workforce, York Region was recognized as one of Canada's Best Diversity Employers in 2019. The Region also received the Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity Award for Service and Innovation by the Community Inclusivity Equity Council of York Region.

York Region and its partners remain committed to creating welcoming and inclusive communities. We would like to thank York Regional Council and our community partners for contributing to this important work.

Lina Bigioni
Chief of Staff

Katherine Chislett
Commissioner of Community and Health Services

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Chief Administrative Officer

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