

Committee of the Whole Report

DATE: Tuesday, June 04, 2019

WARD(S): ALL

TITLE: INCLUSION CHARTER FOR THE CITY OF VAUGHAN

FROM:

Mary Reali, Deputy City Manager, Community Services

ACTION: DECISION

Purpose

This report seeks Council's endorsement of the Inclusion Charter statement for the City of Vaughan affirming Vaughan's shared vision with York Region on its commitment to fostering inclusive communities.

Report Highlights

- The Inclusion Charter for York Region was developed in collaboration with York Region's Municipal Diversity and Inclusion Group (MDIG) and the Community Partnership Council; both committees have staff representation from the City of Vaughan.
- The Inclusion Charter is the result of extensive community consultation completed between 2015 to 2017 with over 1800 residents and organizations.
- The MDIG includes 20 members from local municipalities, hospitals, agencies, York Region Police, conservation authorities and the United Way.
- The Inclusion Charter is divided into two sections: the first two paragraphs include a common commitment statement to be endorsed by all community partners, followed by an individualized statement crafted by each MDIG partner that reflects their own mandate, strategies and the community it serves.
- In June 2018, York Region Council formally endorsed the Inclusion Charter and has recommended that each municipality endorse the common statement as well as developing its own individualized statement.
- As a future step, the development of an action plan that outlines existing and forthcoming, policies and strategies that represent the actioning of the Inclusion Charter in the community and organization is recommended.

Recommendations

1. That Council endorse the Inclusion Charter statement for the City of Vaughan as outlined in this report; and,
2. That the City Clerk circulate this report for information to York Region Council, and the Municipal Diversity and Inclusion Group of York Region; and,
3. That the Corporate Management Team direct the development of a Vaughan Inclusion Charter Action Plan that may include the appointment of a task force or working group with representation from City staff and community stakeholders as well as containing consultation with the community.

Background

Through its 2015-2019 Strategic Plan, York Regional Council set the strategic priority of supporting community health and well-being and promoting diversity and inclusion. As a result, the York Region Community Partnership Council (CPC) was established to lead the development of strategies for newcomers to York Region. The CPC identified the need to establish an inclusion charter for York Region to address the rapidly changing demographics across the Region. In general terms, “diversity” can be defined as the wide-range of human qualities/attributes such as such as age, sex, race, ethnicity, physical and intellectual ability, religion, and sexual orientation etc. While “inclusion” is the environment wherein unique qualities, differences, strengths and talents are appreciated and respected.

The Inclusion Charter initiative was led by York Region’s Municipal Diversity and Inclusion Group (MDIG)

In 2016, the York Region Municipal Diversity and Inclusion Group (MDIG) was formed to create an “inclusion charter” for its member organizations. MDIG includes 20 members from local municipalities, York Region Police and organizations in York Region such as hospitals, school boards, agencies, conservation authorities and the United Way of Greater Toronto.

The York Region Inclusion Charter is the result of extensive consultations and discussions with individuals, employees, organizations, boards, councils and groups across York Region. Community consultation sessions from 2015 to 2017 informed the Charter model, with over 1,800 people and organizations consulted in its development. The City of Vaughan participated in this process by hosting a community consultation session that provided input on diversity and inclusion issues.

In June 2018, York Regional Council endorsed the Inclusion Charter of York Region. To date, most MDIG members have endorsed a Charter statement for their organization

and have or are in the process of developing an Inclusion Action Plan that achieves or represents the Charter statement endorsed by the municipality/organization.

The Inclusion Charter is divided into two sections: a common commitment statement and an individualized statement that reflects the values, strategies and vision of the organization

The Inclusion Charter is divided into two sections: the first section includes two paragraphs outlining a common commitment to inclusion that is to be endorsed by all participating community partners; the second section is an individualized statement that reflects that mandate, strategies, community and organization it represents and serves.

The following is the common commitment statement to be endorsed by all partners:

“The Inclusion Charter for York Region is a community initiative that brings together businesses, community organization, municipalities, police services, hospitals, school boards, conservation authorities and agencies with a common commitment to create an inclusive environment with equality for all who work, live and play here. Together our organizations share the vision of York Region as a welcoming and inclusive community where diversity is celebrated and the first two paragraphs where everyone can develop to their full potential, participate freely in society and live with respect, dignity and freedom from discrimination.”

The Charter reflects an evolving approach in support of existing federal and provincial legislation that promotes human rights and accessibility. By endorsing this Charter, we affirm our commitment to inclusion, whereby all people feel they belong and have access to the same opportunities.”

The third section is a customized paragraph by each community partner that expresses its commitment to inclusion. In 2019, the City’s Corporate Management Team appointed an internal staff working group with representation from across all portfolios that was tasked with developing a draft Inclusion Charter statement for the City of Vaughan. The following Charter statement drafted by the working group reflects the priorities in the 2018-2022 Term of Council Service Excellence Strategic Plan and recommended for inclusion in the Charter statement:

“Together with other participating organizations, the City of Vaughan is committed to taking action to achieve the vision of the Charter in our organization and in the community.

Vaughan is a vibrant and inclusive multicultural city with a deep respect and appreciation for the multitude of the cultures, creeds and faiths that thrive here.

The City of Vaughan is committed to Service Excellence and will continue to ensure the safety and well-being of all citizens through Mayor and Council approved priorities that promote active, safe and diverse communities.

The City strives to foster a culture that is inclusive and respectful where all citizens, employees, businesses and visitors are valued.

The City is proud to have diverse communities and values the significant contributions they make to the cultural, economic and social achievements of our wonderful civic life. Our citizens speak more than 100 languages and come from all over the world for a promising future in our world-class city.

The City of Vaughan will continue to embrace human differences through its commitment to fostering equality, inclusiveness, respect and acceptance for everyone.

The complete wording of the proposed Inclusion Charter for Vaughan is found in Appendix A.

Previous Reports/Authority

Link to [York Region Diversity and Inclusion](#) page and Inclusion Charter information.

Analysis and Options

The endorsement of the York Region Inclusion Charter aligns with the 2018-2022 Service Excellence Strategic Plan. By supporting the Inclusion Charter statement, we are supporting the following:

- The City's vision as a "City of choice that promotes diversity, innovation and opportunity for all citizens, fostering a vibrant community life that is inclusive".
- The strategic priorities of "Active, Safe and Diverse Communities", "City Building", "Citizen Experience" and "Staff Engagement".
- Fostering strong connections throughout the community and workplace.
- Providing opportunities for all in a vibrant community that embraces human differences.
- Affirming Vaughan's shared vision with York Region and the MDIG partners, on its commitment to inclusive communities and workplace.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

Any future funding that may be required to implement an Inclusion Action Plan will be brought back to Council for consideration.

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

York Region will be advised of the City's Inclusion Charter endorsement.

Conclusion

Vaughan's diversity is a unifying strength. As a community and as an organization, the City of Vaughan has been a leader in supporting diversity and inclusion. The endorsement of the York Region Inclusion Charter and the actioning of Vaughan's commitment statement supports the City's strategic vision of being a community and organization that promotes diversity, and opportunity for all citizens, and supports an inclusive community life.

For more information, please contact Angela Palermo ext. 8139

Attachments

1. Appendix A – The City of Vaughan's Draft Inclusion Charter Statement

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