

Subject: Corporate Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Framework

File Number: ACS2024-CSS-GEN-013

Report to Finance and Corporate Services Committee on 3 December 2024

and Council 11 December 2024

Submitted on October 25, 2024 by Clara Freire, General Manager, Community and Social Services

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Ward: Citywide

Objet : Structure-cadre de l'équité, de la diversité, de l'inclusion et de l'appartenance de la Ville

Numéro de dossier : ACS2024-CSS-GEN-013

Rapport présenté au Comité des finances et des services organisationnels

le 3 décembre 2024

et au Conseil le 11 décembre 2024

déposé le 25 octobre 2024 par Clara Freire, directrice générale, Direction générale des services sociaux et communautaires

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Quartier : À l'échelle de la ville

REPORT RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Finance and Corporate Services Committee recommend Council:

- 1. Receive the annual update on the Corporate Diversity and Inclusion Plan, Women and Gender Equity Strategy and Anti-Racism Strategy, including evaluations and outcomes; and**
- 2. Direct staff to develop an overarching Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Framework to streamline equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging work at the City in collaboration with the community.**

RECOMMANDATION(S) DU RAPPORT

Que le Comité des finances et des services organisationnels recommande au Conseil municipal :

1. de prendre connaissance du compte rendu annuel du Plan municipal sur la diversité et l'inclusion, de la Stratégie sur la condition féminine et l'équité des genres et de la Stratégie de lutte contre le racisme, ainsi que des évaluations et des résultats;
2. de demander au personnel de la Ville de mettre au point la Structure-cadre prépondérante de l'équité, de la diversité, de l'inclusion et de l'appartenance afin de rationaliser les travaux portant sur l'équité, la diversité, l'inclusion et l'appartenance à la Ville en collaboration avec la collectivité.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Ottawa is a long-standing leader in equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging (EDIB). The City is one of the few municipalities in Canada that has multiple strategies advancing equity for women, gender diverse and racialized persons, as well as diversity and inclusion in the workplace:

- the Women and Gender Equity Strategy (WGES); [[ACS2021-CSS-GEN-0002](#)], to integrate a women and gender lens in City services, strategies and plans;
- the Corporate Diversity and Inclusion Plan (CDIP) [[ACS2021-CSS-GEN-010](#)], aimed at improving representation and inclusion in the workplace; and
- the Anti-Racism Strategy (ARS); [[ACS2022-CSS-GEN-12](#)], to proactively identify and remove systemic barriers in City policies, programs and services.

Concurrent reviews of the three strategies conducted in 2023-2024 identified key accomplishments and opportunities for improvement in their implementation. Key accomplishments included:

- The application of gender-inclusive language to revise municipal policies and by-laws, such as the Parks and Facilities By-law;
- A targeted communications plan and a Diversity on Boards campaign to increase the representation of equity-denied groups in various City committees and boards;
- The establishment of an EDIB leadership competency with associated core behaviours, job expectations, skills and the application of an anti-racism approach in how we lead;
- The updated Corporate Administrative Policy Framework with an anti-racism approach; and

- The launch of the Leverage Equity to Achieve Diversity and Inclusion Targets (LEAD IT) Strategic Hiring Program via two pilots in 2022 with the Community and Social Services Department and the Planning, Real Estate and Economic Development Department (currently Planning, Development and Building Services Department).

Key challenges identified were largely a result of the redirection of staff throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, which affected the implementation of all strategies. Opportunities for improvement include the development of a common tool, process and resources for the application of the women and gender equity lens and for reviewing the gender and equity implications section on Council reports. Improvements for training associated with data and diverse workforce targets as well as internal and external communications were also identified.

The concurrent reviews of the WGES, CDIP and ARS also identified a need for the City of Ottawa to integrate and streamline all three equity strategies. Staff shared that separate progress tracking and reporting across three different strategies created both duplication and gaps. The current approach also created barriers for the community, with consultation fatigue being noted, particularly by community members from equity-denied groups. Representatives of community organizations also expressed frustration with the lack of coordination and consistency in updates related to equity-driven work at City of Ottawa. Finally, City of Ottawa and beyond have dynamically changed over the past few years, since the three strategies were created. The COVID-19 pandemic, new leadership, new community plans and a new City Strategic Plan have changed the way that City of Ottawa works and serves the community.

By building on what has been learned, the City can focus on increased responsiveness to resident concerns and improve the alignment and success of equity-focused initiatives across City programs and services. Therefore, Gender and Race Equity, Inclusion, Indigenous Relations and Social Development (GREIIRSD) Services is proposing developing a holistic Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB) Framework that would help streamline the City's work towards EDIB. The EDIB Framework will capture greater efficiencies and synergies, consider intersectionality between race and gender and adopt cross-cutting guiding principles aligning the three strategies. In this way, the City can take an intentional and proactive approach to increasing responsiveness to resident concerns and improving the alignment and success of equity-focused initiatives across all departments.

The proposed EDIB Framework will also create an ideal opportunity for stronger alignment with other initiatives and teams across the organization, including the City's Strategic Plan; the Public Engagement Strategy currently under development; the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan; the Human Resources team; the new Strategic Initiatives Department; and departmental strategic plans. Building on the reviews of the three strategies, community engagement, data, and research, staff will work to develop the EDIB Framework and present it to Council in 2025.

For GREIIRSD, key priorities moving forward are to:

- Establish the CSSD Departmental Working Group.

- Lead the development of the EDIB Framework, in collaboration with other City departments and community members;
- Develop the next iteration of CDIP, ensuring inclusion of EDIB principles; and
- Lead the development of an EDIB communications strategy including development of communication guidelines for the organization around equity matters.

In the meantime, work will also continue for each strategy, with key priority items for each strategy and plan including:

- For the WGES: Develop the Women and Gender Equity Lens; refine the content of the draft Gender Lens Guide; and integrate the results from the WGES Phase 2 public engagement into the WGES Action Plan;
- For the CDIP: Strengthen the implementation of the LEAD IT Strategic Hiring Program and integrate the annual results of the City's workforce analysis; develop a corporate EDIB Learning and Development Strategy; and develop a toolkit to support affinity groups in leading learning and development events; and
- For the ARS: Develop the City's anti-racism approach and include it in the next iteration of the City's Equity and Intersectionality Lens; create a data framework; and implement an anti-hate campaign. Due to a dramatic rise of racist hate crimes, in 2023 [City Council directed staff](#) to explore initiatives with an anti-racist, anti-hate focus, in alignment with the ARS. The immediate goal to address hate crimes will be achieved through engaging and uniting key community stakeholders to implement initiatives aimed at reducing hate.

Given all the work completed to date, there is a broad corporate commitment to pursuing these outcomes and priorities, including appropriate resourcing. Departments are responsible for committing staff and resources to EDIB initiatives, incorporating EDIB as a central part of their strategic plans and integrating equity into their ongoing operations. Equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging are a shared responsibility and accountability which will be advanced by all leaders and staff throughout the organization.

The immediate next steps to address the challenges of the previous strategy iterations and respond to community feedback include:

- Streamlining and maintaining continuous community engagement by establishing a new departmental working group that consists of both staff and community members, tasked with providing advice and support on the implementation of the three equity strategies and the development of the EDIB Framework;
- Establishing mandatory EDIB training for leaders across the City;
- Creating specific, public targets for LEAD IT and providing regular external reports;
- Hosting at least two public engagement sessions per year to update the community on progress in the City's EDIB work and gather feedback; and

- Fostering accountability by encouraging departmental leadership and decision makers to attend these community engagement sessions so that equity-denied groups can interact directly with those who can support their needs.

The development of the overarching Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Framework, including performance measurement framework, will be implemented within the current budget envelope. The following will be considered as part of the 2025 Budget process: a one-time \$150,000 requirement to support community initiatives to combat hate as part of the Anti-Hate Campaign in 2025, in direct response to a [Council motion](#) directing staff to address hate-motivated concerns in our city. This funding will allow us to engage with key community organizations and partners such as United for All, ensuring a unified approach to combating hate. It will support the implementation of training equipping the community to effectively respond to hate-related issues.

RÉSUMÉ

La Ville d'Ottawa est depuis longtemps un chef de file de l'équité, de la diversité, de l'inclusion et de l'appartenance (EDIA). Elle est l'une des rares municipalités au Canada à s'être dotée de différentes stratégies de promotion de l'équité des femmes, des personnes de diverses identités de genre et des personnes racisées, ainsi que de la diversité et de l'inclusion en milieu de travail, à savoir :

- la Stratégie sur la condition féminine et l'équité des genres (SCFEG) [[ACS2021-CSS-GEN-0002](#)], afin d'intégrer le point de vue des femmes et des genres dans les services, les stratégies et les plans de la Ville;
- le Plan municipal sur la diversité et l'inclusion (PMDI) [[ACS2021-CSS-GEN-010](#)], destiné à améliorer la représentation et l'interprétation dans le milieu de travail;
- la Stratégie de lutte contre le racisme (SLR) [[ACS2022-CSS-GEN-12](#)], afin de cerner proactivement et d'éliminer les obstacles systémiques dans les politiques, les programmes et les services de la Ville.

Les examens qui ont été menés de front et qui ont porté sur ces trois stratégies en 2023-2024 ont permis de cerner les principales réalisations et occasions d'amélioration dans leur mise en œuvre. Les principales réalisations ont consisté à :

- appliquer le langage inclusif des genres dans la révision des politiques et des règlements de la Ville, dont le *Règlement sur les parcs et les installations*;
- établir un plan de communication ciblé et une campagne de promotion de la diversité au sein des conseils afin d'accroître la représentation des groupes privés d'équité dans les différents comités et conseils de la Ville;
- établir une compétence en leadership de l'EDIA, ainsi que les comportements essentiels, les attentes professionnelles et les compétences correspondants, en appliquant une approche antiraciste dans notre leadership;
- mettre à jour la Politique cadre sur l'administration de la Ville en adoptant une approche antiraciste;

- lancer l'optimisation de l'équité pour atteindre les cibles de la diversité et de l'inclusion (VOIE) du Programme d'embauche stratégique dans le cadre de deux projets pilotes réalisés en 2022 avec la Direction générale des services sociaux et communautaires et la Direction générale de la planification, de l'immobilier et du développement économique (l'actuelle Direction générale des services de la planification, de l'aménagement et du bâtiment).

Les principales difficultés relevées étaient largement dues au fait qu'il a fallu réorienter le personnel tout au long de la pandémie, ce qui s'est répercuté sur la mise en œuvre de toutes les stratégies. D'autres occasions d'amélioration consistent à élaborer un outil, un processus et des ressources communs pour appliquer le point de vue de l'équité des femmes et des genres, et pour examiner la section consacrée aux incidences sur les genres et sur l'équité dans les rapports au Conseil municipal. Des améliorations à la formation sur les cibles statistiques et les cibles liées à la diversité de l'effectif, ainsi qu'aux communications internes et externes ont aussi été relevées.

Les examens menés de front pour la SCFEG, le PMDI et la SLR ont aussi permis de constater que la Ville d'Ottawa devait intégrer et rationaliser les trois stratégies relatives à l'équité. Le personnel a fait savoir que le suivi et le compte rendu distincts des progrès accomplis dans les trois stratégies différentes ont donné lieu à des doubles emplois et à des lacunes. L'approche actuelle a aussi donné lieu à des obstacles pour la collectivité : nous avons constaté une lassitude dans les consultations, en particulier parmi les membres de la collectivité qui représentaient les groupes privés d'équité. Les représentants des organisations communautaires ont aussi fait savoir qu'ils étaient frustrés par le manque de coordination et d'uniformité dans les comptes rendus se rapportant aux travaux portés par l'équité à la Ville d'Ottawa. Enfin, la Ville et les autres organismes ont évolué dynamiquement dans les dernières années, depuis la création des trois stratégies. La pandémie de COVID-19, la nouvelle direction de la Ville, les nouveaux plans collectifs et le nouveau Plan stratégique de la Ville ont changé ses méthodes de travail et les services qu'elle offre à la collectivité.

En misant sur ce qu'elle a appris, la Ville peut se consacrer à mieux réagir aux inquiétudes des résidents et améliorer le cadrage et le succès des initiatives consacrées à l'équité dans l'ensemble de ses programmes et services. Voilà pourquoi le Service de l'équité des genres et des races, de l'inclusion, des relations avec les Autochtones et du développement social (SEGRIRADS) propose de mettre au point une structure-cadre globale de l'équité, de la diversité, de l'inclusion et de l'appartenance (EDIA) qui permettrait de rationaliser les travaux consacrés par la Ville à l'EDIA. La structure-cadre de l'EDIA permettra de miser sur l'amélioration des efficacités et des synergies, de tenir compte de l'intersectionnalité des races et des genres et d'adopter les principes directeurs transversaux, en faisant cadrer les trois stratégies. La Ville peut ainsi adopter une approche réfléchie et proactive pour mieux réagir aux inquiétudes des résidents et pour améliorer le cadrage et le succès des initiatives consacrées à l'équité dans l'ensemble des directions générales.

La structure-cadre proposée pour l'EDIA constituera aussi une occasion idéale d'améliorer le cadrage avec d'autres initiatives et équipes dans l'ensemble de l'administration municipale, dont le Plan stratégique de la Ville, la Stratégie de la

consultation publique que nous sommes en train de mettre au point, le Plan de sécurité et de bien-être dans les collectivités, au sein de l'équipe des Ressources humaines, la nouvelle Direction générale des initiatives stratégiques et les plans stratégiques des autres directions générales. En s'inspirant des examens des trois stratégies, de la consultation de la collectivité, des données, ainsi que des travaux de recherche, le personnel se consacrera à la mise au point de la structure-cadre de l'EDIA, qu'il soumettra au Conseil municipal en 2025.

Pour le SEGRIRADS, les grandes priorités consistent à :

- mettre sur pied le groupe de travail de la DGSSC;
- encadrer la mise au point de la structure-cadre de l'EDIA en collaboration avec les autres directions générales de la Ville et les membres de la collectivité;
- mettre au point la prochaine déclinaison du PMDI, en veillant à y intégrer les principes de l'EDIA;
- mener l'élaboration d'une stratégie de communication de l'EDIA, incluant la préparation pour l'organisation de lignes directrices sur la communication entourant les questions d'équité.

Dans le même temps, nous poursuivrons les travaux portant sur chaque stratégie, en tenant compte des grandes priorités de chaque stratégie et de chaque plan, à savoir :

- Pour la SCFEG : élaborer le point de vue de l'équité des femmes et des genres; affiner le contenu de la version provisoire du Guide sur le point de vue des genres; et intégrer les résultats de la phase 2 de la consultation publique sur la SCFEG dans le Plan d'action de cette stratégie.
- Pour le PMDI : renforcer la mise en œuvre du Programme d'embauche stratégique VOIE et intégrer les résultats annuels dans l'analyse de l'effectif de la Ville; mettre au point une stratégie organisationnelle d'apprentissage et de perfectionnement dans le domaine de l'EDIA; et élaborer une trousse d'outils pour épauler les groupes affinitaires dans l'encadrement des événements d'apprentissage et de perfectionnement.
- Pour la SLR : élaborer l'approche antiraciste de la Ville et l'intégrer dans la prochaine déclinaison du point de vue de l'équité et de l'intersectionnalité de la Ville; créer une structure-cadre pour les données; et mettre en œuvre une campagne de lutte contre la haine. En raison de l'augmentation spectaculaire des crimes de haine raciste, [le conseil municipal a demandé](#) en 2023 au personnel d'étudier des initiatives axées sur la lutte contre le racisme et la haine, conformément à la SRL. L'objectif immédiat de lutter contre les crimes de haine sera atteint en engageant et en réunissant les principaux acteurs de la communauté pour mettre en œuvre des initiatives visant à réduire la haine.

Compte tenu de tous les travaux réalisés jusqu'à maintenant, la Ville s'engage généralement à produire ces résultats et à respecter ces priorités, en y consacrant les ressources voulues. Les directions générales sont chargées d'affecter des employés et de consacrer des ressources aux initiatives de promotion de l'EDIA, en faisant de

l'EDIA un aspect essentiel de leurs plans stratégiques et en intégrant l'équité dans leurs opérations courantes. L'équité, la diversité, l'inclusion et l'appartenance sont des responsabilités et des obligations communes, qui seront promues par tous les dirigeants et employés dans l'ensemble de l'administration municipale.

Les prochaines mesures à prendre immédiatement pour résoudre les difficultés des précédentes déclinaisons de la Stratégie et pour réagir aux commentaires de la collectivité consistent à :

- rationaliser et soutenir la participation continue de la collectivité en mettant sur pied un nouveau groupe de travail réunissant les différentes directions générales, constitué d'employés et de représentants de la collectivité et dont la mission consiste à donner son avis et à apporter de l'aide dans la mise en œuvre des trois stratégies de promotion de l'équité et dans l'élaboration de la structure-cadre de l'EDIA;
- établir la formation obligatoire sur l'EDIA pour les dirigeants de toute l'administration municipale;
- créer des cibles publiques spécifiques pour la VOIE et établir à intervalles réguliers des rapports externes;
- organiser au moins deux séances de consultation publique par an pour rendre compte, à la collectivité, des progrès accomplis dans les travaux de la Ville dans le domaine de l'EDIA et pour réunir les commentaires;
- promouvoir la redevabilité en encourageant les dirigeants des directions générales et les décideurs à participer à ces séances de consultation de la collectivité pour permettre aux groupes privés d'équité d'interagir directement avec ceux et celles qui peuvent répondre à leurs besoins.

L'élaboration de la Structure-cadre prépondérante de l'équité, de la diversité, de l'inclusion et de l'appartenance, incluant un cadre de mesure du rendement, sera mise en œuvre dans l'enveloppe budgétaire actuelle. Les éléments suivants seront examinés dans le cadre du processus budgétaire 2025 : un besoin unique de 150 000 dollars pour soutenir les initiatives communautaires de lutte contre la haine dans le cadre de la campagne anti-haine en 2025, en réponse directe à [une motion du Conseil](#) demandant au personnel de s'attaquer aux problèmes motivés par la haine dans notre ville. Ce financement nous permettra de nous engager avec des organisations et des partenaires communautaires clés tels que United for All, afin de garantir une approche unifiée de la lutte contre la haine. Il soutiendra la mise en œuvre d'une formation permettant à la communauté de répondre efficacement aux problèmes liés à la haine.

BACKGROUND

The City of Ottawa has been a leader in its efforts to support improvements in equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging (EDIB), both within the organization and for the city. In a [2022 review](#) of 47 Canadian municipalities for gender responsive and inclusive approaches in municipal governance, the City of Ottawa was highlighted as a national leader in equity-based strategies (<https://fcm.ca/en/programs/women-in-local-government/2022-research/resource-list>):

- The City has had Corporate Diversity and Inclusion Plans (CDIP) aimed at improving representation in its workforce and inclusion in the workplace since 2012, with the most recent Plan having been presented to Council in 2021 [[ACS2021-CSS-GEN-010](#)].
- With the City for All Women Initiative and other community partners, City of Ottawa created an [Equity and Inclusion \(EI\) Lens](#) in 2010 and released an updated handbook and snapshot series in 2015 and again in 2018. The EI Lens Handbook has been used as a resource by municipalities and organizations across Canada.
- In April 2021, City Council approved Ottawa's first Women and Gender Equity Strategy [WGES; [ACS2021-CSS-GEN-0002](#)] with the aim of ensuring that the City of Ottawa's services, strategies and plans integrate a women and gender lens and promote women and gender equity.
- On June 22, 2022, City Council approved Ottawa's first Anti-Racism Strategy [ARS; [ACS2022-CSS-GEN-12](#)] to proactively identify and remove systemic barriers in City policies, programs and services.

Women and Gender Equity Strategy

On December 5, 2018, Ottawa City Council approved the development of a Women and Gender Equity Strategy as part of the Term of Council Governance Report [[ACS2018-CCS-GEN-0028](#)]. As part of this direction, Council approved the addition of a full-time equivalent position and a one-time operating budget and appointed a Council Sponsors Group to champion and lead the development of the strategy.

The Women and Gender Equity Strategy (WGES), approved by Council in April 2021 [[ACS2021-CSS-GEN-0002](#)], was developed to ensure that the City's services, strategies and plans integrate a women and gender lens and promote women and gender equity. The WGES included a strategic framework that established key organizational plans and departmental targets for its first phase of implementation from 2021–2022 to guide four priority service areas in the City.

Engagement with community groups, residents and partners played a significant role in shaping the priorities of the strategy. The [WGES Public Engagement Findings](#) and [2SLGBTQ+ Service Needs, Gaps and Recommendations](#) summarize what was heard during the public consultations.

The WGES was four key strategic outcomes:

- Policy change for women and gender equity
- Safety
- Equitable representation of women
- Gender inclusivity

Towards these outcomes, the WGES has 52 actions organized under five strategic implementation priorities that emerged from engagement and consultations:

- Gender-based analysis and gender lens on City's policies and strategies
- Women- and gender-sensitive data systems
- Meaningful public engagement of intersectional groups of women and gender diverse persons
- Awareness-raising and training on women and gender equity
- Gender-sensitive resource allocation

Phase 1 of the WGES (2021-2023), now complete, included developing and implementing a strategic framework of key organizational plans and departmental targets to introduce gender-sensitive policy changes in the City's plans, strategies and services, raise staff awareness on women and gender equity and ensure that data is representative of women and gender diverse persons' realities.

Corporate Diversity and Inclusion Plan

In January 2020, the City's Senior Leadership Team approved the Corporate Diversity and Inclusion Plan (CDIP) for 2019-2024 as one of the priorities under the Thriving Workforce strategic priority of the 2019-2022 City Strategic Plan [[ACS2019-ICS-ST-0003](#)]. City Council received a report in September 2021 [[ACS2021-CSS-GEN-010](#)] that presented an overview of CDIP objectives, priorities and actions, as well as a summary of accomplishments and progress to date. The CDIP vision was for the City to foster a respectful and inclusive workplace culture where all employees felt welcome and experienced a sense of belonging, and set an example for all residents and municipalities across the country by demonstrating its commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.

The strategic objective of the CDIP was to achieve a representative workforce and inclusive workplace, and the strategic outcomes were:

- Recruit and Hire: Eliminate barriers and enhance knowledge
- Retain and Promote: Respectful workplaces and opportunities for all
- Safe to Self-ID: Candidates and employees feel safe to self-identify

The 34 actions of CDIP were intended to remove barriers, build trust from the community and promote and integrate equity, diversity and inclusion strategies at all levels of operation. The actions were mapped under five focus areas:

- Outreach, recruitment and hiring
- Learning and awareness
- Partnerships and engagement
- Accountability, governance and policy
- Data management and workforce analytics

Anti-Racism Strategy

The City established the Anti-Racism Secretariat in 2020, to begin the work on an anti-racism strategy to confront racism and to ensure that Ottawa is an anti-racist city where systemic racism is no longer a barrier to any individual's access to safety, resources and opportunities. As a result of an extensive multi-stage engagement with Ottawa residents from Indigenous, Black and racialized communities, community partners, subject matter experts and City of Ottawa employees, the City's first Anti-Racism Strategy was approved by Council in June of 2022 [[ACS2022-CSS-GEN-12](#)].

The ARS is a five-year plan (2023-2028) that includes 28 recommendations and 132 actions in seven priority areas: governance; housing; economic development; health outcomes; children and youth development; achieving racial equity in the workplace; and institutional practices. Implementation was envisioned over two phases:

- Implementation Phase I (2023-2025): Focus on raising awareness of systemic barriers, providing education and training on systemic racism, collecting baseline data for future actions and building meaningful relationships with Indigenous, Black and racialized communities
- Implementation Phase II (2025-2028): Focus on housing, economic development and health outcomes, incorporating lessons learned from a mid-term review of Phase I to strengthen efforts in addressing racial inequities

DISCUSSION

Each of the City's equity strategies includes a commitment to report to Council on progress on an annual basis. This report is part of that commitment, presenting an update for 2024 on the implementation of WGES, CDIP and ARS to date through summaries of reviews and evaluations conducted over the last year. It also presents immediate next steps for each strategy, as well as the envisioned future direction of EDIB work at the City under a streamlined Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB) Framework, to be developed in collaboration with the community by 2025.

WGES Mid-Term Review

Part of the WGES Phase 1 (2021-2023) implementation was a commitment to conduct a WGES mid-term review (MTR) to assess the level of implementation in Phase 1 and

identify lessons learned to inform the design of Phase 2. To conduct the MTR, in 2023 GREIIRSD partnered with an Ottawa-based social enterprise (Seasonova) and evaluated the 52 WGES actions through 21 interviews, 5 focus groups and an in-depth desk review of various City Plans and Strategies (i.e., the Official Plan, the Transportation Master Plan, the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan, the Climate Change Master Plan, the Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan 2019-2023, the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan 2020-2030, the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan, the Anti-Racism Strategy and the Corporate Diversity and Inclusion Plan). A brief environmental scan was conducted on government-community models, as well as a review of relevant City Council reports.

Overall, the WGES Phase 1 implementation during 2021-2023 has been evaluated as successful, with 67 per cent or 35 actions achieved. The MTR identified key WGES accomplishments from the first phase, including:

- The application of gender-inclusive language to revise municipal policies and by-laws, such as the Parks and Facilities By-law;
- A Gender, Race and Equity Baseline Study on how the City can implement a gender, anti-racism and intersectionality lens to data;
- Various awareness raising events and learning initiatives to socialize women and gender equity throughout the organization; and
- The application of a gender lens to the Sustainability Fund, which resulted in the City providing \$3.2 million to 17 organizations that serve women and gender diverse residents in 2022.

The MTR also identified key areas of success and accomplishments associated with the five strategic priorities of the WGES:

| WGES priority | Accomplishments |
|---|---|
| Gender-based analysis and gender lens on City policies and strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender and Equity Implications on the Council report template. • Application of WGE Lens to the end-of-term review of Councillors’ office matters completed in Q4 2022. • Identification of safety and security concerns in RCFS facilities through a survey of 19 facilities. • Application of gender-inclusive language to revise municipal policies and by-laws. • Inclusion of WGE considerations in various City plans, including the Official Plan and the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan. |

| WGES priority | Accomplishments |
|---|--|
| Women- and gender-sensitive data systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of the Gender, Race and Equity Baseline Study (GREBS) on how the City can integrate a gender, anti-racism, and intersectionality lens to data. • The launch of the City’s updated Count ME In! self-identification questionnaire, with a completion rate of 85 per cent as of August 2024.. • Inclusion of a Data Equity Pillar in CSSD’s Data Strategy. |
| Meaningful public engagement of intersectional groups of women and gender-diverse persons | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates to the Appointment Policy and collection of socio-demographic data of applicants and appointments to ensure the representation of diverse populations in the City’s governance and decision-making processes. • A targeted communications plan and a <i>Diversity on Boards</i> campaign to increase the representation of equity-denied groups in various City committees and boards. • Various City plans and strategies were informed by the lived experiences of diverse residents, e.g. Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan, Official Master Plan, Transportation Master Plan, Climate Change Master Plan, and the 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan. |
| Awareness-raising and training on women and gender equity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An online learning program, Pathways to Indigenous Learning, was created for the City. • The GREBS included questions related to training to inform learning efforts in WGES Phase 2. • Many awareness raising events and learning initiatives occurred during Phase I, including employee-led initiatives, which helped socialize WGE across the City. For example, 69 Children Services staff had access to 8 learning events and 33 RCFS staff completed 4 training sessions. City-wide initiatives included a Gender-Diverse City campaign that engaged more than 340 staff, and a “Men Speak Up” video that reached more than 500 staff. |

| WGES priority | Accomplishments |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Gender-sensitive resource allocation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A gender lens was successfully applied to the Sustainability Fund which resulted in the City providing \$3.2 million to 17 organizations that serve women and gender-diverse residents in 2022. • RCFS piloted the Period Packs project in six recreational facilities located in priority neighbourhoods to help alleviate period poverty. Access to 3,200 feminine hygiene products was provided in 2021. • City facilities are more gender inclusive by investing and installing gender-neutral signs on single-stall client-facing washrooms in 80 recreational facilities and libraries across Ottawa. |

The MTR also identified opportunities for improvement to WGES implementation across the priorities, specifically:

| WGES priority | Opportunities for improvement |
|---|---|
| Gender-based analysis and gender lens on City policies and strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a common tool for applying a women and gender equity (WGE) lens to increase consistency in its application. • Develop a clear process and increase resources to systematically review the gender and equity implications section on Council Reports. |
| Women- and gender-sensitive data systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase staff capacity to collect, use and report using women and gender equity data. |
| Meaningful public engagement of intersectional groups of women and gender-diverse persons | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the engagement of gender diverse individuals as well as men in gender equity dialogues. • Systematize engagement with the City’s Affinity Groups. |
| Awareness-raising and training on women and gender equity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the City’s EI Lens and its accompanying Diversity Snapshots. • Clarify the distribution of roles between GREIIRSD and internal learning partners regarding the development and implementation of a corporate-wide WGE-related training. |
| Gender-sensitive resource allocation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding allocations associated with implementing the WGES was a key request from City staff during the WGES Phase 2 public engagement. |

Many of the City plans and strategies were also informed by the lived experiences of equity-denied groups, including women and gender diverse individuals. In addition, GREIIRSD also planned and hosted various awareness raising events and learning initiatives to gradually implement women and gender equity throughout the organization.

CDIP Evaluation

In April 2024, as the five-year term of CDIP concluded (2019-2024), GREIIRSD Services partnered with an Ottawa-based social enterprise (Seasonova) to complete an evaluation of the CDIP implementation and identify tangible results and lessons learned. This evaluation took place between February and June 2024 through a desk review, interviews, discussions and workshops with GREIIRSD staff, analysis of City workforce data and various environmental scans.

The CDIP evaluation showed that 35 per cent of actions were achieved, 12 per cent of actions were underachieved and 17 per cent remained in progress. The evaluation results highlighted areas of success and areas that needed to be prioritized, which included the actions that were in progress or incomplete.

The evaluation also identified key CDIP accomplishments and initiatives associated with CDIP that were pursued and completed in the last five years, including:

| CDIP component | Achievements |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Outreach, recruitment and hiring | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful engagement with community groups about the City’s hiring process through recruitment events, job fairs, the Welcoming Ottawa Week and others. • City engaged directly with members from equity-denied groups through 105 related events. • Targeted partnerships with many community-based organizations for recruitment for hard-to-fill positions. • Foreign credentials became accepted although the solution uncovered new barriers. • The soft launch of LEAD IT in CSSD and PRED was successful, with a total of 45 competitions for 81 positions being held under LEAD IT between November 2021 and January 2024. • Continued support of youth employment. |

| CDIP component | Achievements |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Learning and awareness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various training and awareness events were provided, including Bias Awareness and Indigenous Awareness trainings, Diversity Cafes, newsletters and email broadcasts. • City leaders engaged with the Bias Awareness training for hiring managers, with over 3,360 City employees having completed the Bias Awareness for Leaders training by January 2024. • LEAD IT now has its own learning materials. • Promoting and developing new accommodation supports for managers were completed through the Learning My Way sessions, with 70 training sessions and 525 managers completing the training by January 2024. |
| Partnerships and engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City built partnerships with community-based organizations and worked with more than 25 community partners through the Community Champions Network Table to ensure City diversity initiatives were responding to community needs. • Providing letters of support for community funding applications. • Corporate support for Affinity Groups. Nine Affinity Groups were created with over 200 employees registered in less than a year since implementation. • Intentional efforts to align the equity strategies to build public trust. |
| Accountability, governance and policy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating results and representational targets to the public through media articles and a public CDIP Council update. • Diversity and inclusion competencies in management job descriptions. • Preparations to update the City's Equity and Diversity Policy. • Successful integration of diversity and inclusion principles into corporate policies and procedures, including 19 policies, 2 frameworks and the City's Code of Conduct. |

| CDIP component | Achievements |
|---|--|
| Data management and workforce analytics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Count ME In! questionnaire was successfully used to gather self-identification information from City employees, with 85 per cent completion rate as of August 2024. • GREIIRSD engaged with both internal and external potentially interested/affected parties to facilitate an exchange of ideas regarding equity, diversity and inclusion. This included 12 internal networks (advisory tables, working groups, affinity groups, etc.) and 10 other municipalities. |

One key area of success across several CDIP components consisted of various Workplace Initiatives to support a healthy and inclusive workspace, many of which were aligned also with WGES and ARS, such as:

- Asian Heritage Affinity/Rainbow Employees Network Affinity Group learning event in May 2024
- African Caribbean Black Employee Network affinity group planned learning and development session in October 2024
- Support for the CSSD Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Workplace Assessment
- Women.net Affinity Group organized several workshops and an event for City staff
- ARS and WGES guest speakers at several City events throughout 2024.

These initiatives were made possible through the availability of 2024 Workplace Initiatives one time funding of \$150,000, distributed by GREIIRSD.

Some challenges were identified that affected both the review and, more so, the implementation of CDIP actions, particularly the COVID-19 pandemic which diverted City resources and focus for much of 2020-2022. Opportunities for improvement included:

| CDIP component | Opportunities for improvement |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Outreach, recruitment and hiring | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue efforts to develop a corporate-level hiring pool for equity-denied groups, which was paused during the pandemic • Expand departmental adoptions of LEAD IT • Provide clear description of what is expected for the stated actions, e.g. simplifying the hiring process |
| Learning and awareness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide staff training associated with data literacy and how to use workforce data effectively to set departmental targets |

| CDIP component | Opportunities for improvement |
|---|---|
| Partnerships and engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate duplication of efforts when connecting with community-based organizations • Increase engagement with labour unions |
| Accountability, governance and policy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a coordinated and strategic communications process for CDIP, internally within the City and externally to community organizations and residents |
| Data management and workforce analytics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address gaps in data, such as developing a comprehensive diversity and inclusion dashboard to assist departments to identify gaps, target strategies and measure progress |

As the current report focuses on evaluation findings across the three strategies, workforce data and corporate training metrics are not included. A joint report will be presented to Council in 2025 for the EDIB Framework, including performance measures, progress towards workforce targets, and the new CDIP iteration, after collaboration with the Departmental Working Group.

ARS Process Evaluation

A process evaluation of ARS took place between April and June 2024, one year earlier than the mid-term review originally intended for 2025, to align with the WGES MTR and the CDIP evaluation. This also provided for a thorough review of the City’s equity strategies, evaluation of successes to date, celebrating accomplishments and identifying opportunities for improvement.

All 132 ARS actions were reviewed for work done during 2022-2024, at which point in time 23 per cent (31 actions) were completed and 21 per cent (28 actions) were in progress. The review identified key accomplishments to date, including:

- The successful launch of the Diversity on Boards campaign;
- Increased awareness across the organization of the City’s cultural calendar;
- The establishment of an EDIB leadership competency with associated core behaviours, job expectations, skills and the application of an anti-racism approach in how we lead; and
- The updated Corporate Administrative Policy Framework with an anti-racism approach.

The evaluation process also aimed to streamline and prioritize ARS actions that were in progress, ongoing or not started/completed by identifying opportunities to:

- Merge similar actions;

- Align actions that duplicated other City strategies (such as Housing-related actions) or were within the purview of other City entities (such as Ottawa Public Health);
- Align 31 actions related to learning and development with the next iteration of the Corporate Diversity and Inclusion Plan and another 10 (7 per cent) to other City initiatives; and
- Remove four actions deemed not actionable as they were either out of scope or outside of municipal jurisdiction.

ARS implementation continues, and the process evaluation has provided useful insights for streamlining and improving the strategy for future success. It is important to note that a process evaluation is focused on identifying the status of each action, rather than results and impacts. More information on the results and impact of ARS will become available through its mid-term review, slated for 2025 when the first implementation phase concludes.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Framework

The concurrent reviews of the WGES, CDIP and ARS validated the need and identified opportunities for the City of Ottawa to better integrate and streamline the three equity strategies:

- Reduced duplication and overlapping efforts;
- Clarity and focus for the organization on EDIB;
- Increased opportunities to celebrate successes to date; and
- Clear direction for the remaining Term of Council.

Moving forward, streamlining the City's EDIB work will provide greater support for recognizing the concurrent impact of social identities such as race and gender on a person's lived experience. As result, the City will be better able to offer equitable resources and services for all Ottawa residents and provide an inclusive workplace for its employees.

During the reviews of WGES, CDIP and ARS, staff shared that separate progress tracking and reporting across three different strategies created both duplication and gaps. Staff found it challenging to report on potential integration or relationships between efforts because the mandate of a program or policy was considered as falling under a single strategy or plan, despite impacting the others as well. For example, LEAD IT as a strategic hiring initiative promotes equitable representation in the workplace and supports both racialized individuals and women and gender diverse persons. However, the full potential and impact of the initiative can be limited if it is not considered in the context of other work across strategies and departments.

The current approach has also created barriers for the community. During engagement by Public Information and Media Relations (PIMR) towards a new Public Engagement Strategy, consultation fatigue was noted by participants, and particularly by community

members from equity-denied groups. Consultations are essential for the City to provide appropriate, responsive and culturally sensitive programs and services to communities. Community engagement on a strategy-by-strategy basis places a burden on residents, who have to repeat the same stories, experiences and expectations. Repeated consultations are also an inefficient use of City staff and resources.

During consultations conducted in preparation for this report to Council, representatives of community organizations expressed frustration with the lack of coordination and consistency in updates related to equity-driven work at City of Ottawa. At a forum held on July 18, 2024, participants did not feel that they had been appropriately informed or given opportunities to advise on activities at the City since the approval of the equity strategies at Council.

Finally, City of Ottawa has changed, since the three strategies were created. The COVID-19 pandemic, new leadership, new community plans and a new City Strategic Plan have changed the way that City of Ottawa operates and serves the community. With the pressures for resources, staff time and staff turnover resulting from the operational needs of the COVID-19 response, efforts supporting the implementation of the three strategies also faced challenges.

By taking what has been learned through the mid-term reviews and evaluations of WGES, CDIP and ARS, the City of Ottawa can refocus on what matters most, increase responsiveness to resident concerns and improve the alignment and success of equity-focused initiatives across City programs and services. Therefore, GREIIRSD is proposing developing a holistic Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB) Framework that would streamline the City's work towards EDIB. The EDIB Framework will help capture greater efficiencies and synergies, consider intersectionality between race and gender and adopt cross-cutting guiding principles aligning the three strategies.

Based on the feedback received at the forum of July 18, 2024 as well as on Engage Ottawa, a renewed commitment to community engagement is required to ensure the success of the City's equity strategies and meeting the needs of equity-denied residents. Through consultation with the Office of the City Clerk, a departmental working group within CSSD will be established to support the three equity strategies and the development of the EDIB Framework. The working group will consist of both staff and residents and will help ensure that community groups are active participants in the City's EDIB work.

Alignment

The proposed EDIB Framework presents an ideal opportunity to strengthen alignment with other initiatives across the organization, including:

- the City's Strategic Plan;
- the Public Engagement Strategy currently under development;
- the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan;
- the Human Resources team;

- the new Strategic Initiatives Department; and
- departmental strategic plans.

The City Strategic Plan highlights four priorities: a city that has affordable housing and is more liveable for all; a city that is more connected with reliable, safe and accessible mobility options; a city that is green and resilient; and a city with a diversified and prosperous economy. Community members from equity-denied groups have historically been excluded from many of these opportunities. Corporately promoting a strong understanding of equity and intersectionality will help improve the inclusion of the most impacted residents. Removing barriers faced by equity-denied groups will be essential to meeting these strategic priorities.

Public Information and Media Relations' (PIMR) work to develop a new Public Engagement Strategy will help to consolidate and streamline community consultations and support members of equity-denied groups. Simplifying engagement for equity work will reduce the burden of consultations placed on residents and address the root causes of consultation fatigue shared during the development of the Public Engagement Strategy.

The Community Safety and Well-Being Plan envisions a sustainable community where everyone is safe, has a sense of belonging, has access to services and can meet their needs for education, health care, food, housing, income and social and cultural expression. Woven into the plan are priorities aligned with City equity and inclusion efforts, including addressing discrimination, marginalization and racism, financial security and poverty reduction, gender-based violence and violence against women, housing, mental well-being and integrated and simpler systems.

Human Resources is a collaborative partner in building the City's culturally responsive and inclusive workforce of the future by attracting and retaining skilled candidates and growing future leaders at all levels. In support of this strategic direction, Human Resources is a key stakeholder in implementing LEAD IT across the corporation to align with workforce planning goals for outreach, recruitment, hiring and promotion. As the lead on the Corporate Wellness Strategy, HR recognizes the importance of a psychologically safe work environment that values diversity and inclusion. HR is a key contributor in developing and delivering EDIB learning tools as part of the overall leadership development plan. The HR Systems team also provides workforce analytics to drive data informed equity goals.

Commitment

While GREIIRSD specialists provide EDIB support, guidance and expertise, the group cannot accomplish progress towards these equity strategies alone. Departments are committed to dedicate staff and resources to advance EDIB initiatives, centralize EDIB in their strategic plans and integrate it into their operational work. GREIIRSD will collaboratively work with departments to support them in this equity journey. Equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging are a shared responsibility and accountability and need to be advanced by all leaders and staff throughout the organization.

Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation

GREIIRSD will work with City departments to determine the reporting mechanisms that support achieving collective outcomes. Coupled with a corporate movement towards an improved data governance model and a dedication to modernizing data systems across the organization, there is an opportunity to bring data into focus and use it to drive decision-making.

This will be complemented by collaborative work with departments and the community to identify relevant actions supporting equity with an intersectional lens. Once actions are identified, GREIIRSD and the departmental representatives, in close collaboration with Human Resources and the departmental working group, will determine the leads for each action, appropriate performance measures and the frequency of reporting on these actions. The goal is to develop a comprehensive performance evaluation framework that will ensure accountability in the City's EDIB work going forward. GREIIRSD will also update the reporting mechanisms to simplify and streamline reporting requirements.

GREIIRSD will lead the implementation of an EDIB report card to track progress of the three equity strategies as integrated into the EDIB Framework and will continue to present an annual update to City Council.

Next steps

All City departments, leadership and staff have a shared accountability and responsibility for EDIB journey of the organization. The City's Senior Leadership Team has committed to:

- Championing EDIB within their respective departments;
- Sharing accountability and responsibility to increase knowledge and understanding of EDIB across all departments, with each department leading a corporate-wide event with related communications for a day or month of significance every year (with GREIIRSD support);
- Supporting mandatory trainings for all leaders in the organization on anti-racism and anti-oppression practices, beginning in early 2025. The training will meet people where they are at and use a variety of formats and methods to ensure a positive adult learning and growth environment. This will be in addition to the EDIB lens being embedded in existing trainings as a common practice in the organization;
- Supporting the development of new and updated existing EDIB-focused training and resources, including EDIB Lens training, Diversity Snapshots reference guides and a refreshed EDIB Lexicon tool; and
- Continuing to support their staff to develop EDIB departmental plans, which will include action items under the EDIB Framework for all equity strategies with appropriate reporting structures.

For GREIIRSD, key priorities moving forward are to:

- Establish the CSSD Departmental Working Group, with clear Terms of Reference and process guidelines, aligning its establishment with the Mid-Term Governance Review, which will address departmental working groups. This review is due to be presented to Council in a report by January 2025.
- Lead the development of the EDIB Framework, in collaboration with other City departments and community members;
- Develop the next iteration of CDIP, ensuring inclusion of EDIB principles;
- Build the performance measurement framework for each strategy, including key performance indicators, data sources, frequency of data collection and suggested leads for each indicator;
- Lead the development of an EDIB communications strategy including development of communication guidelines for the organization around equity matters;
- Lead the implementation of an EDIB report card for the City on the progress of the three equity strategies, as integrated into the EDIB Framework, to be reported annually to Council; and
- Continue socializing EDIB efforts across the organization.

The actions and goals of the WGES, CDIP and ARS were reviewed and categorized to remove redundancies, refine the scope of remaining efforts and determine whether they could be achieved through GREIIRSD efforts and guidance. Key priority items moving forward are listed below.

For the WGES:

- Develop the Women and Gender Equity lens as part of the City's Equity and Intersectionality Lens;
- Refine the content of the draft Gender Lens Guide as part of the capacity-building efforts and of the EDIB Learning and Development Strategy that is currently in development; and
- Integrate the results from the WGES Phase 2 public engagement into the WGES Action Plan as Phase 2 shifts the focus on service delivery and client relations.

For the CDIP:

- Strengthen the implementation of LEAD IT as the City's main approach to achieving representation workforce targets and integrate the annual results of the City's workforce analysis to guide both target-setting and monitoring the effectiveness of the program;
- Develop a robust engagement strategy with the unions and work with Labour Relations and Human Resources to ensure alignment;
- Provide capacity-building mechanisms through the development of a corporate EDIB Learning and Development Strategy, including mandatory EDIB training for

all leaders across the City in 2025. This mandatory training will be developed in partnership with corporate Human Resources; and

- Development of a toolkit to support Affinity Groups in leading learning and development events, further fostering a sense of inclusion and belonging for all employees in the organization.

For the ARS:

- Continue to gather buy-in and support from departments on the ARS actions to be implemented in the remaining term of Council;
- Develop and implement an Anti-Hate Campaign starting in 2025. Due to a dramatic rise of racist hate crimes, in 2023 [City Council directed staff](#) to explore initiatives with an anti-racist, anti-hate focus, in alignment with the ARS. The immediate goal to address hate crimes will be achieved through engaging and uniting key community stakeholders, including the United for All Coalition, to implement initiatives aimed at reducing hate;
- Continue to implement community-led initiatives, an ARS commitment, in 2025;
- Develop the City's anti-racism approach and integrate it in the next iteration of the City's Equity and Intersectionality Lens; and
- Update data collection processes to include race-disaggregated data.

Resources required for this work will be contemplated as part of the 2025 Budget process.

Indigenous Peoples

While this is separate from the EDIB strategies and initiatives, it is important to note that GREIIRSD will also continue to engage with the Anishinabe Algonquin Host Nation, urban Indigenous Peoples and organizations in Ottawa on how the City can assist in advancing their priorities. An EDIB framework does not address the complexity of Indigenous inherent rights, lived experiences and the legacies of colonization.

Due to the diversity amongst First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples, nations and communities, and given their rights and responsibilities to the land, equity will have different manifestations for each person, nation and community. Acknowledging that Indigenous equity differs from colonial equity and inclusion frameworks, the Indigenous Relations team intends to explore the development of a corporate-wide Indigenous governance framework to support consistency in Indigenous engagement, develop respectful and meaningful relationships and include culturally relevant Indigenous protocols. GREIIRSD commits to conducting this work separately from other strategies, as advised by members of the Indigenous community.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The development of the overarching Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Framework, including performance measurement framework, will be implemented within the current budget envelope.

Financial implications are described in the report. The one-time \$150,000 requirement to support community initiatives to combat hate as part of the Anti-Hate Campaign will be presented to Council for approval in Fall 2024 and included in the 2025 City Budget process.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to approving the recommendations in this report.

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)

This report is city-wide.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE(S) COMMENTS

A community engagement session was held on July 18, 2024 (more details in next section) to share findings from the WGES Mid-Term Review and the ARS Process Evaluation, discuss draft logic models for the next phases of these strategies and solicit feedback on how to continue engagement going forward. A total of 121 participants representing residents, community organizations and City staff attended. Among the participants there were many of the individuals who had previously sat on advisory committees that informed the original development of CDIP, WGES and ARS. The mandates of these advisory committees ended once the respective strategies were presented to Council, and the forum was a good opportunity to reconnect with former members and gather their feedback.

Community Engagement Forum

On July 18, 2024, GREIIRSD staff and Seasonova consultants facilitated a community engagement session attended by 121 participants representing residents, City staff and community organizations. Consultants shared evaluation and mid-term review results for ARS and WGES and presented draft logic models for the strategies. Participants provided feedback and guidance that will support the development of a comprehensive EDIB Framework. Participants also shared needs and preferences related to community engagement and consultations going forward. The in-person session was supplemented with a 2.5-week campaign on Engage Ottawa, and the feedback received was reviewed and considered with the forum's contributions.

The forum highlighted the need for more directed engagement, and a CSSD departmental working group will be created to allow for enhanced collaboration between all potentially affected/interested parties. The CSSD departmental working group will consist of community members, as well as internal potentially interested/affected parties.

Internal consultations

Internal representatives of each City department were consulted throughout the evaluation and mid-term review processes described in this report. Their input validated the status of action items included in the strategies and indicated challenges and opportunities for improvement for the work going forward. As partners in the work,

departments continue to be engaged in the development of actions and planning to improve equity, diversity and inclusion at the City of Ottawa.

The development of the WGES, CDIP and ARS were informed by extensive consultations, externally and internally with relevant potentially interested/affected parties in the organization. These consultations are summarized below, and more details can be found in the respective Council reports.

Consultations that informed WGES

A broad and comprehensive WGES public engagement plan was designed to include the perspectives of City staff, Indigenous and equity-denied community groups in the development of the strategy. The consultations took place in 2019 and consisted of:

- Focus group discussions and meetings with more than 75 City staff and managers from nine different City departments and service areas, as well as more than 150 members of Indigenous and equity-denied groups;
- A WGES Public Engagement Forum to obtain feedback from potentially interested/affected parties on seven draft priorities consolidated from group consultations;
- An Engage Ottawa online survey completed by 150 residents; and
- 2SLGBTQIA+ engagement with 14 community, health and social services agencies and more than 150 community members.

Further details are included in the [“Report on Findings from Women and Gender Equity Strategy Public Consultations”](#) and [“Ottawa 2SLGBTQ+ Service Needs, Gaps and Recommendations.”](#)

In order to complete the WGES Mid-term Review, in 2022 Seasonova completed a total of 21 interviews and five (5) focus groups to get qualitative feedback from City staff from various departments. In addition, two workshops/presentations were held to discuss initial MTR findings.

Consultations that informed ARS

A broad and comprehensive multi-phase engagement plan was developed for residents, potentially interested/affected parties in the community and City staff to participate in developing the ARS. The results of these engagements were compiled in the What We Heard report presented to Council in November 2021 [[ACS2021-CSS-GEN-012](#)]. A total of 1,016 community members and City employees participated in the three phases of engagements through:

- Two iterations of an Engage Ottawa survey
- City Staff virtual sessions
- Ottawa Resident virtual sessions (six sessions) targeting Black (English and Francophone), Asian, Jewish and Muslim residents

- Community Virtual Sessions (12 sessions hosted by community partners)
- Sessions for Elders, Algonquin Anishinaabe, Inuit and Métis residents hosted by an Indigenous-led consultant group hosting, as well as circles hosted in English and Inuktitut for Inuit, Métis and Algonquin residents and Elders in collaboration with the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan team

Once the ARS was approved by Council, GREIIRSD conducted two community information sessions in collaboration with community organizations, as well as several presentations at three community organizations and two conferences. The aim of this engagement was to inform residents and communities about the City's first Anti-Racism Strategy, its priorities and next steps, as well as explore potential partnerships in the community for strategy implementation.

Consultations that informed CDIP

The Community Champions Table Network (CCTN), comprised of 20 representatives from community groups who represent the diverse population served by City of Ottawa, were consulted in quarterly meetings during the development of the CDIP. In addition, various projects and initiatives within the plan were developed through consultation with groups such as the Accessibility Advisory Committee and French Language Services and feedback received from other engagements, such as the employee pulse surveys and the WGES and the ARS engagement sessions.

In Spring 2021, engagement began to develop the Count ME In! self-identification questionnaire. Over 150 employees and community members were consulted including the Accessibility Advisory Committee. Legal opinions were provided during the development and implementation of Count ME In! and for the development of the LEAD IT Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Hiring Program and the Comparative Merit Model and Employment Equity Designated Positions Procedures.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

All activities within the EDIB Framework and associated strategies and plans will be completed in compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) and the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation*, which recognize the history of discrimination against persons with disabilities in Ontario and establish standards for accessibility with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises. The Corporate Accessibility Office will continue to coordinate and collaborate on the City's accessibility commitments and initiatives to ensure they are inclusive of all residents and communities, including City staff.

The WGES was developed using an intersectional approach, which requires that the City listen to many communities, including women, 2SLGBTQQA+, people with disabilities, racialized communities, Indigenous communities, Francophone communities and other communities. The WGES Strategy and its expected outcomes will benefit women and the 2SLGBTQQA+ community with disabilities to make gains in the areas of equality through policy changes; experience increased safety through accountability

mechanisms in City facilities; and achieve more representation in our workforce in welcoming and safe work environments.

The CDIP supports greater and more equitable employment opportunities for people with disabilities through various initiatives and programs, including the actions outlined in the City of Ottawa Municipal Accessibility Plan (COMAP). As per the Accessibility Policy, the City is committed to ensuring that its employment policies, programs, services, goods and facilities are delivered in a manner that respects the dignity of persons with disabilities and that the implementation of accommodations and accessibility standards is equitable in relation to the broader public. This commitment extends to residents, visitors and employees with visible and non-visible disabilities. Departmental accessibility plans articulate how each department ensures accessibility to potentially interested/affected parties and employees, not only by meeting the requirements of provincial legislation and the AODA, but also by implementing best practices wherever possible.

The ARS was created to address the barriers experienced by Indigenous, Black and racialized communities, including people living with disabilities. The progress on the strategy development was presented to the City's Accessibility Advisory Committee in June 2021 during the consultation process. As departments implement their actions, they will be encouraged to consider and work with Indigenous, Black and other racialized communities, including individuals and groups living with disabilities and the agencies that support them.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no asset management implications associated with this report.

CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

There are no climate implications associated with this report.

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no delegation of authority implications associated with this report.

ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

There are no economic implications associated with this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

INDIGENOUS, GENDER AND EQUITY IMPLICATIONS

Updating the equity strategies at the City of Ottawa will directly support racialized, women and gender-diverse residents in Ottawa. At a high level, the benefits of the work described and proposed in this report include:

- Increased representation of underrepresented groups in the workforce including in management and supervisory roles across the City;
- Increased application of the City’s EDIB Lens to inform policies, programs, services, and accountability mechanisms; and
- Increased direct role of equity-denied persons and communities in decision-making for City policies, programs and services.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

Following the implementation of the City’s EDIB Framework, a more equitable distribution of services across all of Ottawa communities is anticipated, including rural areas, with a focus on the residents and communities facing the most barriers to accessing services.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

There are no technology implications associated with this report.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

The proposed EDIB Framework and the associated strategies (WGES, CDIP and ARS) align with the City’s [2023-2026 Strategic Plan](#) through the strategic priority “A city that has affordable housing and is more liveable for all.”

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

n/a

DISPOSITION

The City of Ottawa staff in the Gender and Race Equity, Inclusion, Indigenous Relations and Social Development Branch (GREIIRSD), Community and Social Services Department, will action any direction received as part of City Council’s consideration of this report, and together with all City departments will move to develop the EDIB Framework and implement the ARS, WGES and CDIP Plan actions as outlined in this report.

GREIIRSD staff will monitor, evaluate and report annually to Committee and Council as well as the public on the progress made towards achieving the goals and objectives of the strategies under this framework. The report will also identify and recommend, as appropriate, any corrective action to the strategies and tactics.